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The Buna/Monowitz Concentration Camp

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J.W. Goethe-Universität / Fritz Bauer Institut
Frankfurt am Main, 2010

The Decision of I.G. Farbenindustrie to Locate a Plant in Auschwitz

The Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, which was erected by the SS in October 1942, was the first German concentration camp that was located on the plant grounds of a major private corporation.¹ Its most important function was the furnishing of concentration camp prisoners as slave laborers for building the I.G. Auschwitz plant, I.G. Farben's largest construction site. Instead of establishing an industrial production location on the grounds of an existing concentration camp, a company-owned branch camp of a concentration camp was put up here, for the first time, on a site belonging to an arms manufacturer. This new procedure for construction of the I.G. Auschwitz plant served as a model and influenced the subsequent collaboration between the arms industry and the SS in the process of expanding the concentration camp system in Nazi territory throughout Europe, particularly toward the end of the war, when numerous sub-camps were established in the course of shifting industrial war production to underground sites.²

The Buna/Monowitz concentration camp was located in East Upper Silesia within the western provinces of Poland, which had been annexed by the German Reich. By Hitler's decree, these provinces had been incorporated into the German Reich as "annexed eastern territories" (*eingegliederte Ostgebiete*) in late October 1939, after the Wehrmacht's military conquest of Poland.³ The Buna/Monowitz camp was erected about 7 kilometers east of the Auschwitz main camp (*Stammlager*), which was built in May 1940. It stood on a site of several square kilometers be-

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- 1 In April 1942, 500 prisoners were transferred from the Buchenwald concentration camp to the first concentration camp established at the partially state-owned Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg. These inmates were to be employed in a light metal foundry at the concentration camp, which was called Arbeitsdorf. In fall 1942, after Albert Speer, the Reich Minister of Armaments and Munitions, deemed the startup of the foundry no longer strategic, the planned production of armaments was never taken up, and VW's Arbeitsdorf concentration camp was closed in October 1942. See Hans Mommsen / Manfred Grieger: *Das Volkswagenwerk und seine Arbeiter im Dritten Reich* (Düsseldorf: Econ, 1996), pp. 496–515; Susanne Willems: "Monowitz." In: Wolfgang Benz / Barbara Distel, eds.: *Der Ort des Terrors. Geschichte der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Bd. 5. Hinzert, Auschwitz, Neuengamme* (Munich: Beck, 2007), pp. 276–284, here pp. 276–277.
 - 2 Falk Pingel: *Häftlinge unter SS-Herrschaft: Widerstand, Selbstbehauptung und Vernichtung im Konzentrationslager* (Hamburg: Hoffmann und Campe, 1978), p. 125f.; Bernd C. Wagner: *IG Auschwitz. Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung von Häftlingen des Lagers Monowitz 1941–1945* (Munich: Saur, 2000), pp. 212ff.; Dietrich Eichholtz: *Geschichte der deutschen Kriegswirtschaft 1939–1945. Bd. II (1941–1943)* (Berlin, GDR: Akademie, 1985), p. 225.
 - 3 "Erlass der Führers und Reichskanzlers über Gliederung und Verwaltung der Ostgebiete," October 8, 1939. In: *Reichsgesetzblatt I*, 1939, p. 2042f.

longing to I.G. Farbenindustrie AG, on land that bordered on the town of Auschwitz and the Weichsel and Soła rivers. There, in April 1941, the building of a major chemical plant for annual synthetic production of 75,000 tons of gasoline from coal and fuel oil, 30,000 tons of synthesized rubber (Buna), and plastics⁴ had begun. There is scholarly debate regarding the date on which the property in Auschwitz-Monowitz became known to the top management of I.G. Farben as a potential site for a large industrial plant. A document of the Department of Economic Efficiency Control of Ammoniakwerke Merseburg GmbH, dated December 4, 1939, indicates that at least some top managers were aware of the building site in Auschwitz-Monowitz as early as December 1939.⁵ In December 1939, two task forces within I.G. Farben were working independently of one another on the site location search for Farben's new building and participation projects in Silesia and Upper Silesia. Board member Otto Ambros headed a group from Farben's Ludwigshafen plant that was planning the "Buna III" project in Rattwitz, near Breslau. The construction of the third Buna plant was put on hold in July 1940 because, in the estimation of the war economy experts at the Reichsamt für Wirtschaftsausbau, the Wehrmacht's needs for rubber could be supplied by natural rubber produced in the Dutch East Indies and in French colonies, as a result of the Nazi occupation of the Netherlands.⁶ Under the direction of Farben board member Heinrich Bütefisch, managers at Ammoniakwerke Merseburg GmbH

4 *Buna* derives its name from the German names of the chemicals butadiene and sodium: *Butadien* and *Natrium*.

5 Cf. Florian Schmaltz / Karl Heinz Roth: "Neue Dokumente zur Geschichte des I.G. Farben Werks Auschwitz-Monowitz. Zugleich eine Stellungnahme zur Kontroverse zwischen Hans Deichmann und Peter Hayes." In: 1999. *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts* 13 (1998), no. 2, pp. 100–116. Objections to this attempt to reinterpret the multi-stage process of location selection were raised by Piotr Setkiewicz, Peter Hayes, and Raymond Stokes: Piotr Setkiewicz: "Eine wenig wahrscheinliche Hypothese." In: *Pro Memoria. Information Bulletin* 11 (1999), pp. 125–128, as well as the preface to the new edition of Peter Hayes: *Industry and Ideology: IG Farben in the Nazi Era. New Edition* (Cambridge/New York: Cambridge UP, 2001), p. xiv, fn. 18. Although no detailed consideration of the points of criticism can be given here, it must be said for the record that Peter Hayes cannot possibly have viewed the document dated December 4, 1939, from the Department of Economic Efficiency Control of Ammoniakwerke Merseburg, as he claims, in the 1980s in the Bundesarchiv Koblenz, in the collection of the Reichsamt für Wirtschaftsausbau. At that time, the source in question was in the company archives of the Leunawerke in the GDR, and these holdings were transferred to the Staatsarchiv Merseburg in the 1990s. See also the critical discussion of the hypotheses in: Raymond G. Stokes: "Von der I.G. Farbenindustrie AG bis zur Neugründung der BASF (1925–1952)." In: Werner Abelshäuser, ed.: *Die BASF. Eine Unternehmensgeschichte* (Munich: Beck, 2002), pp. 221–358, here pp. 302–305.

were engaged in planning a new fuel synthesis plant in Auschwitz and a coal mine 18 kilometers west of Auschwitz. It took an entire year for the two teams to work out the practical and organizational aspects of merging their plans with the I.G. Auschwitz/Fürstengrube project arranged by Merseburg and to create a cross-divisional construction project.⁷ In mid-December 1939, I.G. Farben's Technical Committee decided to acquire a corporate "coal source for the I.G. in Upper Silesia."⁸ An ad hoc commission of in-house mining experts was tasked with examining the Upper Silesian coal deposits under consideration for acquisition, with regard to their quantity and quality and the economic profitability of their exploitation.⁹ An encouraging expert assessment of the anticipated coal deposits in the three seams of the Fürstengrube was presented in July 1940.¹⁰ According to Günther Falkenhahn, the former general manager of Fürstlich Plessisches Bergwerk AG, in July 1940 I.G. Farbenindustrie (IGF) launched "an initiative to found the Interessengemeinschaft IGF-Pless for the purpose of exploiting coalfields as an energy source for the planned IGF-Auschwitz Buna

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- 6 Peter John Turnbull Morris: "The Development of Acetylene Chemistry and Synthetic Rubber by I.G. Farbenindustrie Aktiengesellschaft: 1926–1945" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Oxford, 1982), pp. 321–326; Hayes: *Industry and Ideology*, pp. 347–348.
 - 7 Exactly how and when this cross-divisional cooperation on the I.G. Auschwitz construction project came about cannot be reconstructed in detail to date on the basis of the available sources. A major mediating role, however, seems to have been played by Carl Krauch, the General Plenipotentiary for Special Questions of Chemical Production. The negotiations of Ambros and Bütetisch regarding possible cooperation with Schlesien-Benzin in Auschwitz, however, were mutually settled in January 1941 at the latest, cf. Schlesien-Benzin Wk/S., Besprechung am 16.1.1941 in Ludwigshafen über Möglichkeiten der Zusammenarbeit von Buna und Schlesien-Benzin in Auschwitz, January 18, 1941, NI-11784. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Document Book (= PDB) 72 (g), pp. 18–28, here p. 23. In mid-December 1940, Wilhelm Biedenkopf, the director of Buna-Werke Schkopau, also took part in the exploratory trips of the Leunawerke fuel experts, cf. Besprechung in der Kokserei Odertal der Gräfl. Schaffgotschen Werke am 16.12.1940, NI-11110. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 3–13, here p. 8.
 - 8 Niederschrift über die Sitzung des TEA am Mittwoch, den 13.12.1939 in Berlin [excerpt], Bü-125. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Bütetisch Defense Document Book (= DDB) VIII (g), pp. 78–79, here p. 78.
 - 9 The members of the commission were its head, Direktor Scharf (I.G. Bergwerke), who soon was represented by Heinrich Bütetisch because of illness, Direktor Dr. Lehmann (Essen), Direktor Dr. Lennartz (Halle/S), and a mining engineer, Bergassessor Stein (Recklinghausen), as well as the Leunawerke technical manager, an expert in coal carbonization, Dr. Friedrich Henning; cf. Dr. Friedrich Henning, affidavit [excerpt], October 13, 1947, Bü-176. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Bütetisch DDB VIII (g), p. 86.
 - 10 The expert opinion dated July 2, 1940, is not included in the volumes of documents from the Farben Trial. The dating is based on an additional opinion, prepared later, cf. Stein, Lennartz, Lehmann, Die Kohleversorgung der I.G. Werke in Oberschlesien (Grubenfelder Pless). 2.

plant.”¹¹ At an I.G. Farben management board meeting on November 14, 1940, Bütetisch explained the plan to acquire a controlling interest in Fürstengrube AG, and it was endorsed by the board.¹² The board’s decision to conclude a contract with Pless regarding the founding of Fürstengrube GmbH fits into the chronological procedures of the location decision for Auschwitz. As former I.G. Farben employee Hans Deichmann testified, he was present at a meeting between Fritz ter Meer and Georg von Schnitzler on November 12, 1940, at which the two Farben board members agreed to propose Auschwitz as the location for building a fourth Buna plant the following day in the Central Committee, the board’s top committee.¹³ The preliminary decision in principle in favor of I.G. Auschwitz was discussed and made the next day, on November 13, 1940, in the Central Committee as part of the “General Debate.”¹⁴ The order given by the board on November 14, 1940, to proceed promptly with the conclusion of the sales agreement with Pless, makes sense only against this background.¹⁵ Thus the Fürstengrube coal mine, located near Auschwitz, was to supply the raw material and energy for Farben’s construction project in Auschwitz, which had been ap-

Nachtrag zu dem Gutachten vom 2. Juli 1940, February 20, 1941, NI-12012. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 80 (g), pp. 3–16.

- 11 Günther Falkenhahn, affidavit, September 30, 1947, NI-12010. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 81 (g), not paginated. Historian Bernd C. Wagner noticed that Falkenhahn’s statement and the expert opinion on the properties of the Fürstengrube coal seams in summer 1940 cannot be satisfactorily placed in a chronology of the historical events that were part of the location decision if—as has been the case thus far in historical scholarship—one assumes that the building of a Buna plant in Auschwitz was first considered by Farben in fall 1940, after construction work in Rattwitz was halted in July 1940 (cf. Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, pp. 245–246). On the other hand, if one considers the possibility that in summer 1940, employees of Ammoniakwerke Merseburg GmbH and Mineralölbau GmbH were planning the construction of a fuel synthesis plant in Auschwitz, the intended acquisition of Fürstengrube by I.G. Farben is comprehensible. In this regard, see: Schmaltz / Roth: “Neue Dokumente,” pp. 108–110.
- 12 Notizen des Herrn Buhl über die 22. Vorstandssitzung vom 14.11.1940 [excerpt], Bü-276. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Bütetisch DDB VIII (g), pp. 83–85, here pp. 84–85. See also the affidavit of the secretary of board member Buhl: Siegrun Bojunga, affidavit, February 9, 1948, Bü-276. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Bütetisch DDB VIII (g), pp. 83–85, here p. 83f.
- 13 Cf. letter from Hans Deichmann to Peter Hayes, August 6, 1990. In: Hans Deichmann / Peter Hayes: “Standort Auschwitz: Eine Kontroverse über die Entscheidungsgründe für den Bau des I.G. Farben-Werks in Auschwitz.” In: 1999. *Zeitschrift für Sozialgeschichte des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts* 11 (1998), no. 1, pp. 79–101, Document 2, p. 84.
- 14 I.G. Farbenindustrie, Zentralaussschuss-Büro, Tagesordnung für die ZA-Sitzung am 13.11.1940 in Frankfurt a.M., November 8, 1940. Industrie und Filmmuseum Wolfen / Unternehmensarchiv Filmfabrik Wolfen, A 1696, p. 312.
- 15 This decision supports Deichmann’s dating of the conversation on November 12, 1940, which Hayes challenges, cf. Deichmann / Hayes: “Standort Auschwitz,” here: Document 3, p. 85, and Document 13, p. 96.

proved the previous day. In the further probing of the Auschwitz location, the coal mine figured prominently in the building of the Buna plant. In Ludwigshafen, in mid-January 1941, when board member Otto Ambros once again weighed the pros and cons of the Auschwitz location for the fourth Buna plant, he attributed great significance to the well-developed preliminary work of the managers from Leuna and the corporation's mining experts with regard to acquisition by I.G. Farben, because the fourth Buna plant was to be built "as close to the coal as possible."¹⁶ The purchase agreement for the Pless coal mines, prepared under the guidance of Bütefisch, was "already exchanged" by I.G. Farben and ready for signing by mid-January 1941.¹⁷ In early February, the "coal supply from the Fürstengrube mine, 18 kilometers away," for the the future I.G. plant in Auschwitz was regarded as "guaranteed by now."¹⁸ On February 8, 1941, the I.G. Farben managers signed a limited liability company agreement with Pless, giving Farben a 51-percent majority and thus an exclusive right of direct purchase for the new large-scale project.¹⁹ The construction volume of the plant, labeled I.G. Auschwitz, was more than 770 million Reichsmark, which made it I.G. Farben's largest investment project in the 1940s.²⁰ With its innovative technological combination of high-pressure chemistry and acetylene chemistry, I.G. Auschwitz not only was intended to meet the military demands of the army, air force, and navy for synthetic fuels and Buna rubber, but was designed simultaneously to expand the product range by adding plastics, which had a promising future.²¹

16 Schlesien-Benzin Wk/S., Besprechung am 16.1.1941 in Ludwigshafen über Möglichkeiten der Zusammenarbeit von Buna und Schlesien-Benzin in Auschwitz, January 18, 1941, NI-11784. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 18–28, here p. 18.

17 Ibid., p. 18f.

18 Fritz ter Meer, Aktenvermerk über eine Besprechung mit Herrn Krauch am 6. Februar 1941 (Geheim), Betr. Buna IV, February 10, 1941, NI-11113. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 47–50, here p. 47.

19 The bulky agreement on the founding of Fürstengrube GmbH on February 8, 1941, is excerpted in: NI-12011. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 80 (g), pp. 17–51.

20 Information regarding the size of the investment varies: Peter Hayes: "Die IG Farbenindustrie und die Zwangsarbeit von KZ-Häftlingen im Werk Auschwitz." In: Hermann Kaienburg, ed.: *Konzentrationslager und deutsche Wirtschaft 1939–1945* (Opladen: Leske & Budrich, 1996), pp. 129–148, here p. 142, fn. 38, gives the amount as 776 million RM, while Gottfried Plumpe, in *Die I.G. Farbenindustrie AG. Wirtschaft, Technik und Politik 1904–1945* (Berlin: Duncker & Humblot, 1990), p. 595, takes 569 million RM as a starting point.

21 Karl Heinz Roth: "I.G. Auschwitz. Normalität oder Anomalie eines kapitalistischen Entwicklungssprungs?" In: Hamburger Stiftung zur Förderung von Wissenschaft und Kultur, ed.: *„Deutsche Wirtschaft.“ Zwangsarbeit von KZ-Häftlingen für Industrie und Behörden.*

In the end, several factors were decisive for the choice of location: Besides the large, level, flood-proof building site, which was expropriated from the Polish owners by the occupation authorities and made available at low cost, there was a guaranteed supply of water from the nearby rivers and of cheap energy from the expropriated Upper Silesian coal mines.²² Because there was already a serious manpower shortage in Upper Silesia in early 1941, due to other construction projects, the commitment of the SS, made before building began, to supply thousands of prisoners from the nearby Auschwitz concentration camp as laborers was an additional factor in determining the choice of location.²³ In early January 1941, Otto Ambros, the Farben board member involved in planning the Buna factory in Auschwitz, learned of the plans made by the SS for a substantial increase in the size of the Auschwitz concentration camp, and of the impending forced expulsion of Poles and Jews from the town of Auschwitz and the surrounding villages.²⁴ The forced resettlement was arranged by the occupation authorities in Upper Silesia under the direction of the local representatives of the Reich Commissioner for the Strengthening of the German Nation (RKF, Reichskommissar für die Festigung Deutschen Volkstums), Heinrich Himmler, and was embedded in a comprehensive concept of Germanization based on ethnic

Symposium ‚Wirtschaft und Konzentrationslager‘ (Hamburg: VSA, 1991), pp. 79–95, here p. 86.

- 22 Berthold Puchert: "Aus der Praxis der IG Farben in Auschwitz-Monowitz." In: *Jahrbuch für Wirtschaftsgeschichte* 1963, II, pp. 203–211, here pp. 204 and 206; also, Berthold Puchert: "Fragen der Wirtschaftspolitik des deutschen Faschismus im okkupierten Polen 1939 bis 1945, mit besonderer Berücksichtigung der IG Farbenindustrie AG" (professorial dissertation, unpublished, Humboldt-Universität Berlin, 1968), here pp. 301–311; Morris: "Development," pp. 330ff.; Hayes: *Industry and Ideology*, pp. 347–361; Roth: "I.G. Auschwitz," p. 86; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, pp. 44–55.
- 23 On the controversy regarding the significance of the prisoner labor force in the location decision, cf. Peter Hayes: "Zur umstrittenen Geschichte der I.G. Farbenindustrie AG." In: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 18 (1992), no. 3, pp. 405–417, and the reply by Gottfried Plumpe: "Antwort auf Peter Hayes." In: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 18 (1992), no. 4, pp. 526–532, as well as the response of Thomas Sandkühler / Hans Walter Schmuhl: "Noch einmal: Die I.G. Farben und Auschwitz." In: *Geschichte und Gesellschaft* 19 (1992), no. 2, pp. 259–267; Franciszek Piper: *Arbeitseinsatz der Häftlinge aus dem KL Auschwitz* (Oświęcim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 1995), p. 239; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, pp. 37–58; Schmaltz / Roth: "Neue Dokumente," pp. 100ff.
- 24 Director Simmat (Mineralöl-Baugesellschaft GmbH) to Ambros, January 11, 1941, and enclosure: Auszug aus dem Besprechungsbericht vom 10.12.1940 (Kattowitz). Betr.: Baugelände für 2 neue Hydrieranlagen [Excerpt from the meeting report for December 10, 1940 (Kattowitz), regarding site for two new hydrogenation facilities], January 11, 1941, NI-11783. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), p. 17.

policy.²⁵ In late January 1941, Ambros received additional information about the plans of the SS for expansion, according to which the Auschwitz concentration camp with its approximately 7,000 inmates was to be enlarged to a “an area of around 10 square kilometers for a concentration camp settlement” and there would be a possibility of “employing prisoners in the construction project following negotiations with the Reichsführer SS.”²⁶ Thus, in the region around Auschwitz, the demographic policy schemes of Himmler as RKF affected the building of the I.G. Auschwitz plant with regard to three central points: First, through the impending withdrawal of the regionally available workforce owing to the racist settlement policy, which called for forcible expulsion of the Polish and Jewish population; second, regarding the potential for employing concentration camp prisoners at I.G. Farben’s future plant construction site; and third, on account of the purchase negotiations for the construction site, which was under the administration of Himmler as RKF.

After the far-reaching resettlement plans became known to the management board of I.G. Farben, the firm’s top executives immediately established communication with Himmler to secure access to the potential labor force of workers threatened with deportation, as a source of manpower for building their plant in Auschwitz. At the request of Ambros, Carl Krauch, the chairman of Farben’s supervisory board, in his function as General Plenipotentiary for Special Questions of Chemical Production, took the initiative and proposed that his boss Hermann Göring give an indicatory order for Farben’s planned construction project in Auschwitz. The decree sent to Himmler by Göring on February 18, 1941, provided for delaying the intended expulsion of the potential workforce of non-Jewish Poles in the Auschwitz region until such time as the plant was completed, and for supplying as many concentration camp prisoners as possible for the

25 Roth: “I.G. Auschwitz,” p. 82f.; Götz Aly / Susanne Heim: *Vordenker der Vernichtung. Auschwitz und die deutschen Pläne für eine neue europäische Ordnung* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1993), pp. 168–197; Robert-Jan van Pelt / Debórah Dwork: *Auschwitz. Von 1270 bis heute* (Zürich/Munich: Pendo, 1998), pp. 163ff.; Sybille Steinbacher: *„Musterstadt Auschwitz.“ Germanisierungspolitik und Judenmord in Oberschlesien* (Munich: Saur, 2000), pp. 79–138.

26 Camill Santo, Aktenvermerk über eine Besprechung mit der Landesplanung in Kattowitz [file memo on a discussion with the regional planning office in Kattowitz], January 31, 1941, NI-11785. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 29–39, here p. 33f.

building of the Buna plant.²⁷ Accordingly, on February 27, 1941, the Reichsführer SS, Heinrich Himmler, instructed the Inspector of Concentration Camps, Richard Glück, and the Chief of the SS Main Office for Budget and Construction, Oswald Pohl, "to support the construction project with prisoners from the concentration camp to every extent possible."²⁸ On March 1, 1941, Himmler made an initial inspection trip to Auschwitz, where he appeared "very pleased" with "the progress and the work accomplished in the concentration camp," as the report on the visit stated.²⁹ At the end of the visit, the Reichsführer SS ordered the camp commandant, Rudolf Höss, to enlarge the Auschwitz concentration camp. According to Höss, Himmler not only gave the order to expand the concentration camp to hold "30,000 prisoners in peacetime," but also directed that an additional camp for 100,000 prisoners of war be erected in the area of the village of Birkenau (Brzezinka).³⁰ As more recent research has shown, this information regarding Himmler's visit in March 1941, which was reconstructed from memory by Höss after the war's end, is doubtful to some extent.³¹ While the particulars on the fur-

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- 27 Göring to Himmler, letter: Betr. Bevölkerungspolitische Maßnahmen für das Buna-Werk Auschwitz in Ostoberschlesien (Geheime Reichssache) [Re.: demographic policy measures for the Auschwitz Buna plant in Eastern Upper Silesia (Secret Reich Business)], February 18, 1941, NI-1240. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 66–67, here p. 66.
- 28 Cf. Krauch to Otto Ambros, letter: Betr. Bunawerk IV Auschwitz, gez. i.A. Wirth [Re.: Bunawerk IV at Auschwitz, signed Wirth], March 4, 1941, NI-11086. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 107–114, here p. 114.
- 29 SS-Untersturmführer Heinrich Schwarz, (Auschwitz concentration camp, prisoner deployment I/5): Monatsbericht der Außenstelle I/3 an den Leiter der Hauptabteilung I/5 Hauptamt Haushalt und Bauten [monthly report of Außenstelle I/3 to the head of Hauptabteilung I/5, Main Office for Budget and Construction] [Burböck], March 17, 1941. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, D-AuI-3a/1, p. 47.
- 30 Rudolf Höss: *Kommandant in Auschwitz. Autobiographische Aufzeichnungen* (Munich: dtv, 1996), p. 271. This account was followed by, among other, Danuta Czech: *Kalendarium der Ereignisse im Konzentrationslager Auschwitz-Birkenau 1939–1945* (Reinbek bei Hamburg: Rowohlt, 1989), p. 79; Irena Strzelecka / Piotr Setkiewicz: "Der Bau, der Ausbau und die Entwicklung des KL Auschwitz." In: Waclaw Długoborski / Franciszek Piper, eds.: *Auschwitz 1940–1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz* (Oświęcim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 1999), Vol. 1, pp. 73–155, here p. 81, and Piotr Setkiewicz: "Ausgewählte Probleme aus der Geschichte des IG Werkes Auschwitz." In: *Hefte von Auschwitz* 22 (2002), pp. 7–147, here p. 28. Wagner, who mentions Steinbacher's objections to the date of March 1, 1941, also says that in March 1941 Himmler ordered "concrete planning for setting up a concentration with a capacity of 100,000 inmates near the village of Birkenau," cf. Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 58 and p. 209, fn. 6.
- 31 *Der Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42*, Forschungsstelle für Zeitgeschichte in Hamburg, Peter Witte et al., eds. (Hamburg: Christians, 1999), p. 123, fn. 2; Steinbacher: *'Musterstadt'*, p. 211; Karin Orth: *Das System der nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Eine politische Organisationsgeschichte* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 1999), p. 100, fn. 140, and p. 144; Rainer Fröbe: "Bauen und vernichten. Die Zentralbauleitung Auschwitz und die 'Endlösung'." In: *Beiträge zur Geschichte des Nationalsozialismus* 16 (2000), pp. 155–209,

ther project planning for the main camp are entirely in conformity with the surviving sources,³² there is no evidence at all in the contemporary sources to support the dating of the order to expand the Birkenau camp to March 1, 1941, the date used in numerous historical studies.³³ Not until September 26, 1941, did SS-Oberführer Hans Kammler, Chief of the Main Office for Budget and Construction, give the oral and, on the following day, the written, order to construct the Auschwitz prisoner of war camp.³⁴ Höss's claim that Himmler met with top I.G. Farben managers during this visit and once again confirmed to them the agreement to "provide 10,000 prisoners as needed and depending on the progress of the structures,"³⁵ however, was not questioned by more recent research.³⁶ Himmler's order of March 1941 called for the erecting of additional prisoner housing facilities in the Auschwitz main camp in order to accommodate the prisoner detachments designated for the expansion of I.G. Farben's Monowitz plant. At the end of March 1941, the key points of the deployment of prisoners were set forth in several top-level discussions between I.G. Farben and the SS leadership. The daily flat rate for hiring each concentration camp prisoner, payable by I.G. Farben to the SS, was RM 3 per unskilled worker and RM 4 per skilled worker, for a work day of 10 to 12 hours in summer and at least 9 hours in winter.³⁷ By the end of 1941, the Buna external labor detachment was to reach a size of 1,000 to no more than 1,500 prisoners. In accordance with the request of I.G. Farben's construction management, the Auschwitz camp commandant, Rudolf Höss, agreed to increase the Buna detachment to 3,000–4,000

here p. 159 and p. 199, fn. 12. For a detailed, source-critical discussion of the account given by Höss, see: Karin Orth: "Rudolf Höss und die ‚Endlösung der Judenfrage.‘ Drei Argumente gegen die Datierung auf den Sommer 1941." In: *Werkstatt Geschichte* 18 (1997), pp. 45–58.

32 Reichsführer SS (Head of the Main Office for Budget and Construction), general development plan for Auschwitz, June 1941, documented in: van Pelt / Dwork: *Auschwitz*, Table 6 (following p. 200); Strzelecka / Setkiewicz: "Der Bau," p. 86f.

33 Steinbacher: *‚Musterstadt‘*, p. 211; Jan Erik Schulte: *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung: Das Wirtschaftsimperium der SS. Oswald Pohl und das Wirtschaftsverwaltungshauptamt 1933–1945* (Paderborn: Schöningh, 2001), p. 337.

34 Steinbacher: *‚Musterstadt‘*, p. 38f.; Fröbe: "Bauen und vernichten," pp. 159 and 199, fn. 12; Jan Erik Schulte: "Vom Arbeits- zum Vernichtungslager. Die Entstehungsgeschichte von Auschwitz-Birkenau 1941/42." In: *Vierteljahrshefte für Zeitgeschichte* 50 (2002), no. 1, pp. 41–69, here p. 50.

35 Höss: *Kommandant*, p. 271; Czech: *Kalendarium*, p. 79.

36 Steinbacher: *‚Musterstadt‘*, p. 211; Schulte: *Zwangsarbeit und Vernichtung*, S. 337.

37 Besuchsbericht. Besprechung mit dem Lagerkommandanten des Konzentrationslagers bei Auschwitz am 27.3.1941, gez. Dürrfeld, Leuna-Werke, den 30.3.1941, NI-15148, pp. 1–4, here p. 2. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

prisoners in 1942, provided the "necessary accommodations in the camp for increasing the previous number of 8,000 prisoners have been created."³⁸ In the following months, I.G. Farben and the Reichsamt für Wirtschaftsausbau, headed by Carl Krauch, supported the expansion of the Auschwitz concentration camp. For that purpose, the I.G. Auschwitz construction management provided the necessary code numbers for obtaining strategic building materials, which were required for the prisoner buildings, laundry shop, delousing facility with prisoner bath, two commandant's office buildings, electrically charged fences surrounding the concentration camp, and crew housing for the SS guard force.³⁹

The Buna "Aussenkommando" (April 1941 to July 1942)

In mid-April 1941, the Buna external labor detachment (*Aussenkommando*) left camp and headed for I.G. Farben's plant construction site in Auschwitz-Monowitz for the first time. On April 21, 1941, this labor brigade consisted of 150 concentration camp prisoners.⁴⁰ The prevailing euphoria of Farben's construction experts at the "fine, trouble-free work"⁴¹ with the concentration camp quickly vanished when it became clear that the deployment of prisoners was linked with transportation problems and repeated conflicts between Farben's construction management and the SS regarding the strict control and supervision of the prisoners at the construction site. In the early days, the prisoners were transported daily by truck to the plant construction site 6–7 kilometers east of the Auschwitz concentration camp. After the Buna detachment had soon grown to a workforce of several hundred men, the use of trucks was discontinued.⁴² Starting in May 1941, the prisoners had to make the long trip from the main camp to the plant construction site and back each day on foot. The march of many kilometers

38 Ibid., p. 1.

39 On this, see the building programs in: Florian Schmaltz: "Die IG Farbenindustrie und der Ausbau des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz 1941–1942." In: *Sozial.Geschichte. Zeitschrift für historische Analyse des 20. und 21. Jahrhunderts* 21 (2006), no. 1, pp. 33–67, here pp. 55–60.

40 I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht Nr. 3 für die Zeit vom 14.4. bis 5.5.1941, NI-14737, p. 1. Archiv des Zentrums für Antisemitismusforschung (Berlin), Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 64f.

41 I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht Nr. 1 für die Zeit vom 24. bis 27.3.1941, 1.4.1941, gez. Murr, NI-14528, p. 1. Archiv des Zentrums für Antisemitismusforschung (Berlin), Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

42 Strzelecka / Setkiewicz: "Der Bau," p. 125.

robbed the already ailing and undernourished prisoners of their last reserves of strength and increased the mortality rate. In the eyes of the plant management, the prisoners' strenuous march was a useless physical wastage of manpower, which diminished performance and consumed many hours of valuable work time. In late July 1941, therefore, the plant management arranged for the Reichsbahn to convey the prisoners between the concentration camp and the train station in the village of Dwory, located at the northern edge of the plant grounds. The transport of 1,000 to 1,300 prisoners of the Buna detachment, accompanied by SS guards, in 10 to 12 Reichsbahn freight cars remained inconvenient and time-consuming.⁴³ In fall 1941, when Wehrmacht transports to the Eastern Front also were routed onto the already overburdened railroad line, these troop transports were given the right of way and frequently caused train traffic to be delayed by hours. In late December 1941, construction work was largely interrupted by heavy frost, and rail transport was discontinued.⁴⁴ Not later than March 1942, the use of prisoners was augmented once again and the Reichsbahn transports were resumed.⁴⁵ By October 21, 1941, the plant manager of I.G. Auschwitz had suggested to the camp commandant of the Auschwitz concentration camp, Rudolf Höss, that accommodations directly on the firm's premises be arranged for all the 4,000 to 5,000 concentration camp prisoners who were scheduled to work on plant construction in the following year. This push by the I.G. Farben managers was tantamount to a demand for setting up a subcamp of the concentration camp. At this time, Höss professed himself unable to comply with the wish of the plant management because of a shortage of guard personnel and resources.⁴⁶ Nonetheless, agreement was reached on the permanent housing of

43 Letter from Reichsbahndirektion Oppeln to Deutsche Reichsbahn, Eisenbahnabteilungen des Reichsverkehrsministeriums, Betr.: Beförderung von Häftlingen des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz, February 28, 1942, Bundesarchiv Berlin, R 5/3056, p. 480.

44 Cf. I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht Nr. 33 für die Zeit vom 5. bis 11.1.1942, gez. Faust, NI-15109, p. 1. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie; Strzelecka / Setkiewicz: "Der Bau," p. 127; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 74.

45 Strzelecka and Setkiewicz: "Der Bau," p. 127, fn. 88, referring to: Secret message from Pastor Konrad Szweda. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Mat. RO, Vol. 12, p. 2 [IZ-12/89, p. 45f.].

46 The reasoning behind Höss's refusal (lack of personnel and resources), recorded in the I.G. Auschwitz weekly report, indicates that the I.G. construction management did not expect the SS to build the Monowitz concentration camp, but instead planned as early as late October 1941 to do the construction work itself. Otherwise, Höss could have adduced the obvious argument that having the SS build another camp at the plant construction site was out of the question because of shortages of construction materials, cf. excerpt from: [Faust], I.G. Far-

200 prisoners from the Buna detachment in two Reich Labor Service (RAD, Reichsarbeitsdienst) barracks at the construction site, in the immediate vicinity of the ready-mixed-concrete buildings. This decision marks a significant step on the way to creation of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp. Among scholars, there is debate about the exact dating of the start of construction for the Buna/Monowitz camp.⁴⁷ The policy decision to build a corporate concentration camp on the plant grounds was made around the turn of the year 1941/42, and was mutually agreed on by the plant management of I.G. Auschwitz and the firm's top executives.⁴⁸ On January 8, 1942, I.G. Farben's Technical Committee, which was responsible for loan allocation, finally approved a proposal that included the financing of what later became the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, known in-house as "Camp IV."⁴⁹ The construction site manager of I.G. Auschwitz began building the camp in March 1942: that is, even before obtaining approval from the SS commandant's office in the negotiations for erection of the subcamp on the plant grounds. Besides the three barracks camps already scheduled and intended to house a workforce of 15,000 to 20,000 men for I.G. Auschwitz, plans now called for building a fourth camp in Monowitz for 5,000 workers.⁵⁰ This established a new division of responsibilities in the collaboration

benindustrie AG – Werk Auschwitz, Wochenbericht Nr. 22 für die Zeit vom 20. bis 26.10.1941, October 27, 1941. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, D-Au-III Monowitz/4, Tygoniowe sprawozdania IG Farben, t. 2, p. 104.

- 47 Shmuel Krakowski dates the start of construction to late 1941: Shmuel Krakowski: "The Sate-lite Camps." In: Yisrael Gutman, ed.: *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1994), pp. 50–60, here p. 52. This is disputed by Bernd C. Wagner, who assumes that "the decision to build was not made until summer 1942," cf. Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 247, fn. 209; on this, see also p. 94.
- 48 This was confirmed unanimously, under oath, by several former I.G. Farben managers before the Nuremberg Military Tribunal. Cf. Walther Dürrfeld, affidavit, February 18, 1947, NI-4184. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 115–119, here p. 116; Carl Krauch, affidavit, February 13, 1947, NI-4033. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 105–106, here p. 106; Otto Ambros, affidavit, April 22, 1947, NI-9542. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 80–104, here p. 92, and also PDB 75 (g), pp. 1–25, here p. 13.
- 49 I.G. Auschwitz, Kaufmännische Abteilung an TEA-Büro, February 8, 1943, enclosure: I.G. Auschwitz, Unterkunftsbaracken Stand 31.12.1942, February 6, 1943, NI-2777. National Archives Washington, National Archives Microfilm Publications NI-Series Original German Documents, Microfilm T 301, reel 140, and Aufstellung der in der Sitzung des Technischen Ausschusses am 8. Januar 1942 in Frankfurt a.M. vorliegenden Kreditanforderungen. Industrie und Filmmuseum Wolfen / Unternehmensarchiv Filmfabrik Wolfen, A 1529, p. 32.
- 50 I.G. Werk Auschwitz, Protokoll der 16. Baubesprechung am 6.3.1942 in Ludwigshafen, March 28, 1942, NI-11132. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 73 (g), pp. 140–165, here p. 147. The erection of the branch camp in Monowitz was the "subject of repeated discussions in the site consultation meetings," as Camill Santo, a site

between I.G. Farben and the SS. The SS, as owner of the slave laborers, retained full power of control over the prisoners, whose labor was hired out in return for a fee. The SS remained the provider of the concentration camp prisoners and was responsible for guarding them. I.G. Auschwitz, by sharing in the construction costs for the concentration camp and financing the housing of the prisoners, assumed part of the reproduction cost for the prisoner workforce. That had been rejected, as late as spring 1941, by the construction management for I.G. Auschwitz in the negotiations with the SS regarding the amount of the per capita daily flat rate payable for prisoner labor.⁵¹ The formal assent of the SS commandant's office to the conversion of "Camp IV" into a concentration camp was obtained by the I.G. plant management in late June 1942.⁵² On July 17 and 18, 1942, Himmler once again made a two-day inspection trip to Auschwitz, viewed the camp and the SS undertakings, and was briefed by the I.G. construction management on the chemical plant that was being built.⁵³ Shortly after Himmler's departure, on July 21, 1942, the work deployment administrator at the concentration camp, SS-Obersturmbannführer Heinrich Schwarz, notified the I.G. plant management of a camp lockdown, as a result of which—because of the high risk of typhus infection—"no more prisoners [would] be deployed on the plant grounds."⁵⁴ Two days later, Höss issued a garrison order for a "total camp

manager for I.G. Auschwitz, explained after the war. I.G. Auschwitz, he said, in seeking its objective had encountered "quite a few difficulties on the part of the SS." Finally, however, the SS declared itself willing "to comply with the wish of the IG to accommodate the prisoners at the IG construction site." Cf. Camill Santo, affidavit, August 1, 1947, NI-9820, pp. 1–8, here p. 5. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

- 51 Besuchsbericht [record of visit]. Besprechung mit dem Lagerkommandanten des Konzentrationslagers bei Auschwitz am 27.3.1941, gez. Dürrfeld, Leuna-Werke, March 30, 1941, NI-15148, pp. 1–4, here p. 2. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.
- 52 Excerpt from: Wochenbericht Nr. 57 für die Zeit vom 22. bis 28.6.1942 – I. Teil – Vorbericht 22.6.–25.6., gez. Faust, NI-14524. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Exhibit 2126, reel 034, pp. 122–124; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 94.
- 53 Höss: *Kommandant*, p. 243, pp. 270ff.; *Dienstkalender Heinrich Himmlers 1941/42*, pp. 187–190. On the viewing of the plant grounds of I.G. Auschwitz, cf. excerpt from: Wochenbericht Nr. 60/61 für die Zeit vom 13.7. bis 26.7.1942, gez. Faust, NI-14551. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Exhibit 1991, reel 033, pp. 353–355, here p. 354f., and Roth: "IG Auschwitz," p. 85 and p. 92, fn. 27.
- 54 Excerpt from: Wochenbericht Nr. 60/61 für die Zeit vom 13.7. bis 26.7.1942, gez. Faust, NI-14551. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Exhibit 1991, reel 033, pp. 353–355, here p. 355. In the relevant literature, there is a widespread but inaccurate claim that the deployment of prisoners in the Buna-Kommando was interrupted from August to October 1942, cf. Antoni Makowski: "Organisation, Entwicklung und Tätigkeit des Häftlings-Krankenbaus in Monowitz (KL Auschwitz III)." In: *Hefte von Auschwitz* 15 (1975), pp. 113–181, here p. 114; Piper: *Arbeitseinsatz*, p. 241.

lockdown.”⁵⁵ The abrupt absence of the 2,000 or more prisoners who were part of the Buna external detachment greatly intensified the already existing labor shortage in late July 1942, right in the middle of the building season.⁵⁶ The camp lockdown crippled substantial parts of the construction site.⁵⁷ Not until mid-August 1942, when Organisation Todt assisted with the building of the concentration camp, did work speed up again.⁵⁸ Nonetheless, completion of the camp was delayed for weeks by bottlenecks in the delivery of wire mesh and barbed wire.⁵⁹ Thus, as late as the first week of September, the electrically charged “double ring fence” for the camp was still unfinished.⁶⁰ The electric fence required by the SS was built, at the order of the I.G. Auschwitz plant management, by the firm’s specialized personnel with construction materials from the warehouses of the SS.⁶¹ Along the camp fence were installed sentry towers, 4 meters high and equipped with searchlights, for the armed SS guards.⁶² For a subcamp, the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp was exceptionally large in terms of its physical dimensions. According to a “construction volume report” by the construction site management of I.G. Auschwitz in September 1942, a total of 57 “workers’ housing barracks,” five washroom barracks, and five double latrine

55 Standortbefehl Nr. 19/42, gez. Höß, July 23, 1942. In: Norbert Frei / Thomas Grotum / Jan Parcer / Sybille Steinbacher / Bernd C. Wagner, eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz 1940–1945* (Munich: Saur 2000), p. 155.

56 This figure for the strength of the Buna-Kommando is taken from a chart for May 1942, cf. Arbeitseinsatz Werk Auschwitz. – Stand Mai 1942 – Soll-Bedarf 1942, NI-11134, p. 1. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie. This chart is an enclosure for a letter from Otto Ambros to Krauch: Einschreiben, June 10, 1942, NI-11135. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 73 (g), pp. 186–189. See also Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 82.

57 Excerpt from: Wochenbericht Nr. 60/61 für die Zeit vom 13.7. bis 26.7.1942, gez. Faust, NI-14551. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Exhibit 1991, reel 033, pp. 353–355, here p. 353.

58 Letter: Faust an Santo, Eisfeld, Mach, Kaiser, Dürrfeld, von Lom, Höpke, Sitzenstuhl, Betr.: Einsatz einer Bauleitung der Aussenstelle Breslau der Abteilung Rüstungsbau des Reichsministers für Bewaffnung und Munition, August 17, 1942, OA-421. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Ambros DDB VII (g), p. 47.

59 I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht 66/67 für die Zeit vom 24.8. bis 6.9.1942, NI-14555, p. 2. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

60 I.G. Auschwitz, 20. Baubesprechung am 8.9.1942 in Auschwitz O/S, September 24, 1942, NI-11138. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 72–101, here p. 77.

61 Rudolf Dömming, affidavit, August 28, 1947, NI-10930, p. 4. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente. NI-Serie, and Friedrich Killet, affidavit, July 15, 1947, Dü-108. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Fall VI, Dürrfeld DDB I (g), pp. 87–89, here p. 88.

62 Rudolf Dömming, affidavit, August 28, 1947, NI-10930, p. 5. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

barracks were scheduled.⁶³ On September 23, 1942, SS-Obergruppenführer Oswald Pohl, in the meantime promoted to head of the SS Economic and Administrative Main Office (SS-Wirtschafts- und Verwaltungshauptamt, WVHA), was received in Auschwitz by I.G. Farben managers, including management board member Otto Ambros, and briefed, at his request, on the "overall situation of the plant."⁶⁴ In the process, Pohl held out the prospect of the prompt provision of the prisoners requested by October 15, 1942, the expected completion date of the concentration camp.⁶⁵ The I.G. Farben construction site management did not yield to the new demands presented by the SS camp commandant's office on October 2, 1942, calling for building of an additional prison, various detention cells, a mortuary for 30 to 40 corpses, and an autopsy room in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, because this would have placed the date of the camp's completion in question once again.⁶⁶ At the same time, the conclusion of the construction work—and thus the opening date for the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp—was delayed another two weeks.

The Opening of the Buna/Monowitz Camp – Demographics of the Prisoner Population

In late October 1942, the SS transferred an initial group of prisoner functionaries from the Auschwitz main camp to the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.⁶⁷ The first transport earmarked for Buna/Monowitz, a group of 405 prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp, had arrived in Auschwitz on the evening of October 19.⁶⁸ Of the prisoners in this transport, who were housed in the main

63 Anlage zu Bauvolumenmeldung BU-Anlage Auschwitz, September 22, 1942. Bundesarchiv Berlin, R 8128/A 2000, pp. 217–218.

64 I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht 70/71 für die Zeit vom 21. Sept. bis 4. Okt. 1942, gez. Faust, NI-14489, p. 1. Archiv des Zentrums für Antisemitismusforschung (Berlin), Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid., p. 2.

67 Wagner dates the opening of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp on October 28, 1942, cf. Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 97. Irena Strzelecka and Piotr Setkiewicz, however, assume that the first prisoner functionaries were transferred to the Buna-Monowitz concentration camp as early as October 26 and 27, 1942, cf. Strzelecka / Setkiewicz: "Der Bau," p. 129, fn. 91; Setkiewicz: "Ausgewählte Probleme," pp. 46–47.

68 Copy: Liebehenschel, SS-WVHA Amtsgruppe D - Konz.-Lager DII/1 23/4 So/Ha. an die Lagerkommandanten Buchenwald und Auschwitz, nachrichtlich Chef des Amtes D I/1, Betr.: Überstellung jüdischer Häftlinge, October 12, 1942, NI-10854. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts,

camp at first, the SS had 76 gassed in Birkenau in the next few days.⁶⁹ On October 27, 1942, another deportation train, bringing 841 Jewish prisoners from the Westerbork concentration camp in the Netherlands, reached Auschwitz. Only 224 men who were selected as being “fit for work” were transferred to the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp; all the others were gassed in Birkenau.⁷⁰ Two days later, a transport including Jewish, German, Polish, Czech, and Ukrainian prisoners from the Dachau concentration camp arrived at the main camp; they were to be deployed at the construction site of I.G. Farben’s Buna plant.⁷¹ On October 30, 1942, around 800 male prisoners from the German Reich were selected by the SS in the main camp as “fit for work” and moved to Auschwitz-Monowitz.⁷² By the last weekend of October 1942, 2,100 prisoners had arrived in Monowitz.⁷³ Under questioning in the compensation lawsuit brought against I.G. Farben by Norbert Wollheim after the war, Josef Löwenstein—who in October 1942 was among the first prisoners transferred to Buna/Monowitz in a transport of around 600 prisoners from Buchenwald—spoke about the state of the camp at the time of its opening:

In the camp itself, there were eight barracks, only six of which we were allowed to occupy. We were the first prisoners who came there. The barracks had no heating, though it was already November. [...] On average, there surely were five people in two beds placed side by side, sometimes even four people per bed. We had no dayroom, no toilets, no water or water fountains or anything else. For the entire workforce, two so-called washhouses had been prepared. They had two water fountains apiece. In this cold weather, this was quite a lot to ask of the prisoners. The toilets were the worst thing. There were approximately six side by side,

Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 72 (g), pp. 180–181; Czech: *Kalendarium*, p. 322; Setkiewicz: “Ausgewählte Probleme,” pp. 46–47.

69 Ervin Schulhof, affidavit, June 21, 1947, NI-7967. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 128–133, here p. 128.

70 Czech: *Kalendarium*, pp. 326–327.

71 Ibid., p. 328.

72 Ibid., pp. 328ff.; Graphische Darstellung der Belegstärke des Nebenlagers Buna für den Zeitraum vom 1. Oktober bis zum 31. Dezember 1942, Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, D-AuIII-3a. The chart is also found in the trial records of the criminal proceedings against Gerhard Maurer, head of Office D2 at the SS-WVHA and responsible for “labor deployment issues regarding prisoners” as of May 1942, in the holdings of the Bundesarchiv Berlin, cf.. Maurer-Prozess, Vol. 12, pp. 298–302. BA Berlin, Bestandsergänzungsfilm Nr. 42056. A duplicate copy of the document is also to be found at the Institut für Zeitgeschichte München, IfZ München, Fa 67.

73 I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht Nr. 74/75 für die Zeit vom 19.10.–1.11.1942, Dü-1402, Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Dürrfeld DDB XVII (g), p. 33.

and on the other side there were six more. The first half of these toilets were off limits to Jews, only *Reichsdeutsche* could use them. And that with a workforce of 900 Jewish men.⁷⁴

In January 1943, the camp's prisoner strength already had reached 3,750, and it increased at a rapid rate over the course of the year. In the northwestern part of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, a separate work education camp run by the Katowice Gestapo Central Office was established on January 15, 1943.⁷⁵ In five barracks surrounded by barbed wire, around 400 to 500 prisoners destined for "work education" were incarcerated.⁷⁶ Assigned to the camp for discipline and punishment were "people who defaulted on employment contracts, refused to work, and were slackers."⁷⁷ The SS guarded the Gestapo-run camp, which remained in existence until the Buna/Monowitz camp was vacated in January 1945.⁷⁸

In September 1943, 5,400 of the 6,500 inmates were deployed as workers for I.G. Auschwitz.⁷⁹ In summer 1944, the camp's strength reached its height with more than 11,000 prisoners, as a result of the deportations of hundreds of thousands of Jews from Hungary to Auschwitz-Birkenau, beginning in May 1944. The deportees selected by the SS at the ramp in Birkenau as "fit for work" were, in part, transferred to the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.⁸⁰ They were quar-

74 Josef Löwenstein, hearing of witness, December 4, 1952. Hessisches Hauptstaatsarchiv Wiesbaden (=HHStAW), Abt. 460, Nr. 1424 (Wollheim gegen IG Farben), Vol. I, pp. 158R–164R, here p. 158R.

75 Letter from Oberregierungsrat Dr. Mildner (Gestapo – Staatspolizeileitstelle Kattowitz) to the Regierungspräsident in Kattowitz, January 11, 1943. Archiwum Państwowe Katowice, RK 2910, p. 19.

76 On this, see the biography of the camp elder of the Monowitz "workers' educational camp": Siegfried Halbreich: *Before—During—After. Surviving the Holocaust* (Los Angeles: Schor, 2000), p. 73. On the history and function of this camp in general, see: Gabriele Lotfi: *KZ der Gestapo. Arbeitserziehungslager im Dritten Reich* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003).

77 Communication from the Katowice Gestapo: Gestapo Kattowitz an Polizeipräsidenten, Polizeiämter und Landräte, Betr.: Arbeitserziehungslager Auschwitz der Staatspolizeileitstelle Kattowitz, January 11, 1943. Archiwum Państwowe Katowice, RK 2909, p. 4.

78 Strzelecka / Setkiewicz: "Der Bau," pp. 150ff.

79 I.G. Werk Auschwitz, 25. Baubesprechung in Auschwitz am 9. September 1943, September 10, 1943, NI-11143. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 77 (g), pp. 123–138, here p. 129.

80 The information is based on the account of the former head of the Welfare Department of I.G. Auschwitz, cf. Martin Rossbach, affidavit, January 21, 1948, NI-14287. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 93 (g), pp. 34–50, here p. 41; see also Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 333.

tered in two tents set up next to the barracks.⁸¹ On New Year's Day 1945, there were 10,350 prisoners in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.⁸²

Composition of the Prisoner Groups in Monowitz

The Buna external detachment, which began work in spring 1941, consisted primarily of Polish prisoners; Jewish prisoners from France were added to it in the spring of 1942.⁸³ In June 1942, as part of a major relocation initiative, non-Jewish Polish prisoners were transported from Auschwitz to the concentration camps of the *Altreich*, and in return, Jewish prisoners were deported from the camps in the *Altreich* to Auschwitz.⁸⁴ The result was an increase in the proportion of Jewish prisoners in the Buna external detachment. About 90 to 95 percent of the prisoners in Monowitz were Jews, who came from the German Reich, Austria, Poland, France, the Netherlands, Belgium, Norway, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Serbia, Italy, Luxembourg, and Czechoslovakia. Among the non-Jewish prisoners, the largest groups were Poles, Soviet citizens, and *Reichsdeutsche*. In addition, there were Sinti and Roma of unknown nationality, who constituted around 1 to 2 percent of all prisoners in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.⁸⁵ In the summer of 1943, after successful attempts to escape, the SS transferred a large part of the Polish and Czech prisoners from Buna/Monowitz to the Buchenwald

81 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 217. The architect Rudolf Dömming, who planned the concentration camp at the behest of I.G. Farben, spoke of two tents that were set up in the roll-call square in the summer of 1943. One tent had a capacity of 250 "beds," and the other had an additional 500, cf. Rudolf Dömming, affidavit, January 17, 1948, Dü-102. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Dürrfeld DDB I (g), pp. 74–80, here p. 78, and Rudolf Dömming, affidavit, January 20, 1948, Dü-435. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Dürrfeld DDB I (g), pp. 90–91. Also see August Mayer, affidavit, June 25, 1947, NI-9815, p. 2. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokument NI-Serie. Dömming admitted after 1945 that this was "an emergency solution, which was irresponsible both from a fire-protection standpoint and from a human standpoint." He was aware that for the inmates of these two tents, only "2 washroom barracks were available, in which 100 men could wash at the same time" (Rudolf Dömming, affidavit, August 28, 1947, NI-10930, p. 5. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokument NI-Serie).

82 Übersicht über die Konzentrationslager unter Angabe der Belegungsstärke mit SS-Wachmannschaften und Häftlingen am 1.1. und 15.1.1945. Bundesarchiv Berlin, NS 3/439, p. 1.

83 Wieslaw Kielar: *Anus Mundi: 1,500 Days in Auschwitz/Birkenau* (New York: Times Book, 1980), pp. 87ff.

84 Excerpt from: Wochenbericht Nr. 58/59 für die Zeit vom 29.5. bis 12.7.1942, gez. Faust, NI-14515, pp. 1–2. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokument NI-Serie.

and Sachsenhausen concentration camps within *Altreich* territory.⁸⁶ As a consequence of the great mass deportations of Hungarian Jews, their percentage share increased sharply between spring and summer 1944. The Buna/Monowitz camp contained male inmates almost exclusively. The exception was a small group of some 10 to 20 women forced into prostitution, who were housed by no later than summer 1944, possibly even by late 1943, in a brothel block. This block, surrounded by a fence of its own, was located between Blocks 29 and 30.⁸⁷ The functionary jobs inside the camp as block elders, prisoners on barracks-room duty, block and camp clerks, prisoner-physicians and prisoner-nurses, or outside the camp as Kapos of work detachments, were held principally by prisoners from the Reich, Austria, and Poland. The decisive factor in the manning of the functionary positions, in addition to political and personal connections, frequently was the ability to understand the orders of the SS, which were issued in German.

The Commandant of Buna/Monowitz

After its opening in October 1942, the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp was initially subordinated to the commandant's office in the main camp. After an independent administrative unit was set up in November 1943, SS-Hauptsturmführer Heinrich Schwarz became the first camp commandant.⁸⁸ He held this position until the pull-out from the concentration camp on January 18, 1945. Schwarz was born in Munich on June 14, 1906, the son of Marie Schwarz and Heinrich Schwarz, an electrician. In 1919, as a youth, he joined the Freikorps Epp, which took part in the crushing of the Bavarian Soviet Republic (*Räterepublik*) in Munich. Schwarz served as the civilian orderly of the Oberkommando Möhl, quartered in the Hotel Continental. After completing his training as a reproduction photographer, Schwarz worked intermittently in this field.

85 Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 829; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 105.

86 Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, p. 869.

87 *Ibid.*, p. 826; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 101, p. 221; Piotr Setkiewicz: "Häftlingsarbeit im KZ Auschwitz-III-Monowitz. Die Frage nach der Wirtschaftlichkeit der Arbeit." In: Ulrich Herbert / Karin Orth / Christoph Dieckmann, eds.: *Die nationalsozialistischen Konzentrationslager. Entwicklung und Struktur* (Göttingen: Wallstein, 1998), Vol. II, pp. 584–605; Setkiewicz dates the construction of the brothel in late 1943, see *ibid.*, p. 598.

In the years 1926–1931, he was unemployed. In late 1931, he joined the SS (No. 19,691) and the NSDAP (No. 786,871). He carried out his duty in the SS unit Stamm 2/I Casella and became deputy guard commander in the security service of the NSDAP party headquarters in the “Brown House” in Munich. After the transfer of power to the Nazis, Schwarz was assigned to a guard detail of the police authority in Munich on March 9, 1933. After June 7, 1933, he was deployed under the command of Reinhard Heydrich in the surveillance of the switchboard of the *Münchner Neueste Nachrichten* by the Political Police. In December 1933, Schwarz was working as a reproduction photographer once again. On August 15, 1935, he married Amalie Gascher. Within the SS, he rose to the rank of SS-Unterscharführer in 1937 and was promoted to SS-Obersturmführer in 1939, and to SS-Hauptscharführer four years later. Schwarz began his career in the camp system of the SS one week after the invasion of Poland, starting in the Dachau concentration camp on September 7, 1939. On September 27, 1939, Schwarz was assigned to the Mauthausen concentration camp. In June 1941, he was transferred to the SS Main Office for Budget and Construction and on September 30, 1941, he switched to the Concentration Camps Inspectorate in Oranienburg, for which he worked at Field Office I/5 (Prisoner Deployment) in Auschwitz and occasionally in Birkenau. In mid-August 1943, the camp commandant of Auschwitz, Rudolf Höss, appointed him to act as deputy during his absence.⁸⁹ On November 10, 1943, Schwarz switched to the newly created office “KL Auschwitz III,” which was in charge of both the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp and the subcamps. Twelve days later, he advanced to the position of camp commandant of Auschwitz III.⁹⁰ Schwarz’s adjutant from June 1, 1944, to January 18, 1945, was SS-Untersturmführer Rudolf Orlich.⁹¹ After the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp was vacated in January 1945, Schwarz became camp commandant of the Natzweiler-Struthof (Alsace) concentration camp on February 1,

88 Der SS-Standortälteste, Standortbefehl 53/43, gez. Liebehenschel, November 22, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 367.

89 Kommandantur des Konzentrationslagers Auschwitz, Standortsonderbefehl vom 18.8.1943, gez. Höss. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 326.

90 Der SS-Standortälteste, Standortbefehl 53/43, gez. Liebehenschel, November 22, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, S. 367.

91 Kommandantur KL Auschwitz III – Kommandanturbefehl Nr. 7/44, gez. Schwarz, June 19, 1944. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 458; Alexander Lasik:

1945.⁹² For the crimes he committed in the Natzweiler concentration camp, Schwarz was sentenced to death by a French military tribunal in Rastatt and executed near Sandweier on March 20, 1947.⁹³

The Administrative Structure of the Camp

The order issued by Reichsführer-SS Heinrich Himmler on November 22, 1943, was of fundamental importance. It subdivided the Auschwitz concentration camp into three administrative units: Auschwitz I (main camp), Auschwitz II (Birkenau), and Auschwitz III (Monowitz and subcamps). Apart from the subcamps with agricultural breeding and production operations, which were administered by the commandant's office of Auschwitz II-Birkenau, Himmler thus subordinated all the subcamps at industrial plants to the SS camp commandant's office in Monowitz.⁹⁴ In December 1943, the name of the camp, initially "Lager Buna" (Buna Camp) was changed to "Arbeitslager Monowitz" (Monowitz Labor Camp).⁹⁵ Only a few weeks before the pull-out, however, the administrative responsibilities were rearranged again. On November 25, 1944, the commandant of Auschwitz issued a garrison order calling for administrative reassignment of the Birkenau extermination camp (Auschwitz II) to the main camp once again, while the Monowitz camp now was to be named "Konzentrationslager Monowitz" (Monowitz Concentration Camp) and made independent.⁹⁶

The internal organizational structure of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp was modified over the course of time, depending on the setup of the camp, and corresponded to the administrative breakdown of the German concentration camps into five departments, an arrangement that had evolved after 1933. The

"Die Organisationsstruktur des KL Auschwitz." In: Długoborski / Piper, eds.: *Auschwitz 1940–1945*, Vol. I, pp. 165–320, here p. 186.

92 Data based on: Bundesarchiv Berlin, BDC-Personalakten Heinrich Schwarz, geb. 14.6.1906 in München (Rasse und Siedlungshauptamt (RuSHA) und SS-Offiziersakte (SSO)). In 1947, after his arrest, he was sentenced to death by a French military tribunal in Rastatt and executed, cf. Staatliches Museum Auschwitz-Birkenau, ed.: *Auschwitz in den Augen der SS. Rudolf Höß, Pery Broad, Johann Paul Kremer* (Oświęcim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 1997) p. 243.

93 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 80, p. 109; Ernst Klee: *Das Personenlexikon zum Dritten Reich. Wer war was vor und nach 1945* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 2003), p. 572.

94 Der SS-Standortälteste, Standortbefehl 53/43, gez. Liebehenschel, November 22, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, pp. 366ff.

95 Der SS-Standortälteste, Standortbefehl 54/43, gez. Liebehenschel, December 1, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 370.

commandant's office (Department I) was in charge of all the subcamps of the Auschwitz concentration camp. The Political Department (II) in Monowitz existed at first only as an Auschwitz concentration camp outpost, created by SS-Hauptsturmführer Meister.⁹⁷ He soon was succeeded by SS-Unterscharführer Ernst Hofmann.⁹⁸ Other members of the SS who functioned there were SS-Unterscharführer Josef Hofer and SS-Oberscharführer Josef Erber-Houstek, who was transferred to Birkenau and replaced by SS-Oberscharführer Josef Wieczorek. Under the leadership of SS-Oberscharführer Johann Taute, the Political Department was expanded to become a branch.⁹⁹ The Political Department consisted of an intake and release office as well as a unit for registry, organization, and file and card-index management. In close coordination with the Gestapo, the Political Department initiated search procedures after attempted escapes and countered organized resistance in the camp by conducting investigations and interrogations, which included brutal mistreatment and systematic torture of the prisoners. In contrast to the Auschwitz I main camp, no photographic identification unit (Erkennungsdienst) was set up in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.¹⁰⁰ The Protective Custody Camp Management Department (III, Schutzhaftlagerführung) in Monowitz, under the leadership of SS-Obersturmführer Vinzenz Schöttl, however, was independent.¹⁰¹ In November 1943, the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, like Birkenau, was assigned an independent department for "work deployment" (IIIa, Arbeitseinsatz), headed by SS-Oberscharführer Richard Stolten, who was replaced in this function by SS-Unterscharführer Rudolf Wilhelm Buchholz on September 1, 1944.¹⁰² Appointed

96 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 110; cf. Standortbefehl 29/44, November 25, 1944. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, pp. 514–516, here p. 514.

97 Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 844.

98 Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," p. 212, fn. 85.

99 Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," p. 217; Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 844.

100 Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," p. 212.

101 Kommandantur Konzentrationslager Auschwitz III – Kommandanturbefehl 1/43, gez. Schwarz, December 2, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 374f.; Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," p. 241.

102 Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," p. 255; Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 840; Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 107, adopts

as work detachment supervisor of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp was SS-Hauptscharführer Bernhard Rakers, who had been transferred from Sachsenhausen for disciplinary reasons and was greatly feared because of his brutal ill-treatment of prisoners.¹⁰³ Department IV, responsible for food, clothing, housing, and financial affairs, set up branches in Auschwitz-III-Monowitz for certain functions, such as food warehouses and a camp kitchen.¹⁰⁴ Subdivisions of this department, however, such as the prisoners' property management office (Gefangenen-Eigentums-Verwaltung) and the prisoners' money management office (Häftlings-Geld-Verwaltung), had no branches in Auschwitz III.¹⁰⁵ Department V, the chief garrison physician's office (SS-Standortarzt) obtained an independent structure in Auschwitz III concentration camp as a result of the appointment of a managing physician, who also supervised all the subcamps from his headquarters.¹⁰⁶ In the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp itself, there was a prisoner infirmary, where the following SS camp physicians served in turn: From October 1942 to December 1942, SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Bruno Kitt; from December 1942 to January 1943 or March 1943, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Hellmuth Vetter; from March 1943 to October 20, 1943, SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Friedrich Entress.¹⁰⁷ They were followed by, from October 1943 to November 1943, SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Werner Rohde; from November 1943 to September 1944, SS-Hauptsturmführer Dr. Horst Fischer;¹⁰⁸ and finally, from September 1944 to January 1945, SS-Obersturmführer Dr. Hans Wilhelm König.¹⁰⁹ The SS medical orderlies who reported to the camp physician in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp also rotated frequently: From October 1942 to December 1942, the orderly was SS-Oberscharführer Franz Wloka, who was replaced from Janu-

the first name for Stolten erroneously given by Posener and thus refers to him as Wilhelm, rather than Richard, Stolten.

103 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 198. On Bernhard Rakers, see also the biographical article at http://www.wollheim-memorial.de/en/bernhard_rakers_19051980.

104 Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," p. 268.

105 Ibid., p. 271.

106 Ibid., p. 291.

107 Information based on Makowski: "Organisation," p. 129. Wagner views Makowski's dating of the appointment of Friedrich Entress as camp physician in March 1943 as implausible, but cites no source with information to the contrary, cf. Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 165, fn. 299. Entress himself confirmed in an affidavit that as of March 1943, he was the camp doctor in Monowitz, cf. Friedrich Entress, affidavit, April 14, 1947, NI-6190. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 39–57, here p. 40.

108 Information based on Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 165.

109 Ibid., p. 165.

ary 1943 to July 1943 by SS-Unterscharführer Kock and then, in turn, by the following: from February 1943 to March 1943, SS-Rottenführer Joseph Schmucker; from February 1943 to March 1943, SS-Oberscharführer Egon Bruno Grosse; from August 1943 to September 1943, SS-Rottenführer Alexander Godwinski; from April 1944 to June 1944, SS-Unterscharführer Emil Hantl; and in the final two years, from January 1943 to January 1945, SS-Unterscharführer Gerhard Neubert.¹¹⁰ The incompleteness of the available documentation makes it impossible to know with certainty whether the Buna/Monowitz camp also had a branch of Department VI, Welfare, Training, and Special Services, which was responsible for the cultural support and entertainment of the SS troops.¹¹¹

Guard Forces

The guard force of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, which was erected in October 1942, was recruited from the "Buna guard battalion," which had been in existence since April 1941. From June 1942 to May 1943, SS-Untersturmführer Otto Ludwig Schulz functioned as its company leader, and in November 1942 he was temporarily represented by SS-Obersturmführer Max Otto Ehser. His successors were, from May 1943 to October 1943, SS-Obersturmführer Hans Karl Möser and, from November 1944 to January 1945, SS-Hauptsturmführer Otto Broßmann.¹¹² The camp commandant's garrison order of November 22, 1943, placed the "Buna Guard Company" and the 5th Guard Company under the camp commandant of Auschwitz III, Heinrich Schwarz.¹¹³ On May 28, 1944, by special order of the office of the Buna/Monowitz camp commandant Heinrich Schwarz, the SS-Totenkopfsturmbataillon KL Auschwitz III (Auschwitz III Concentration Camp SS Death's-Head Assault Battalion), which consisted of seven companies,

110 Makowski: "Organisation," p. 129f. On Gerhard Neubert, see also the biographical article at http://www.wollheim-memorial.de/en/gerhard_neubert_19091993.

111 Lasik: "Organisationsstruktur," pp. 297ff.

112 Aleksander Lasik: "Die SS-Besatzung des KL Auschwitz." In: Długoborski / Piper, eds.: *Auschwitz 1940–1945*, Vol. I, pp. 321–384, here p. 353.

113 Der SS-Standortälteste, Standortbefehl 53/43, gez. Liebehenschel, November 22, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 366; and Kommandantur Konzentrationslager Auschwitz III – Kommandanturbefehl 1/43, gez. Schwarz, December 2, 1943. In: Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 374f.

was formed.¹¹⁴ The 1st Company, under company commander SS-Obersturmführer Paul Heinrich Theodor Müller, was given the duty of guarding the camp. The remaining six companies, as well as the 8th Company, which was formed later, guarded the subcamps that were subordinated to the Auschwitz-III-Monowitz concentration camp.¹¹⁵

The Work Deployment of the Prisoners

The prisoners served as a labor force for the SS and commercial enterprises both inside and outside the camp. In the camp, the SS used prisoners to maintain the camp organization. The camp Kapo was in charge of a small camp detachment, which was given jobs requiring skilled manual work, as well as other assignments. Around 20 to 30 prisoners worked in the infirmary as physicians and nurses. In each block, there were a block elder, two men on barracks duty who were responsible for cleanliness, and a block clerk, who was responsible for reporting on the occupancy of the block at roll-calls and for making the food-ration and death reports. In addition, there were various detachments of skilled workers (carpenters, glaziers, shoemakers, and tailors), each of which consisted of around 20 to 30 men. Some 40 prisoners worked in the camp kitchen, allocated to the potato-peeling kitchen, the prisoner kitchen, and the SS kitchen. Directly reporting to the SS were another 4 to 5 prisoners who had to work as general handymen for the SS, and 3 more who worked in the Political Department.¹¹⁶ Approximately 10 prisoners, including Paul Kozwara, Gustav Herzog, and Stefan Lembke, were assigned to the camp office.¹¹⁷ It is not known how many prisoners were forced to play in the Buna/Monowitz camp orchestra, beginning in summer 1943, while the work detachments marched out of camp and back into it each day.¹¹⁸ Outside of the camp, thousands of prisoners were compelled to work for private firms at the plant construction site. For the most part, the slave la-

114 Frei et al., eds.: *Standort- und Kommandanturbefehle*, p. 452f.; Lasik: "SS-Besatzung," p. 354, erroneously dates the order on May 27, 1944.

115 Lasik: "SS-Besatzung," p. 355.

116 They reported to the camp elder, Josef Windeck, cf. Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. *Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia*, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 830.

117 *Ibid.*, p. 830.

118 *Ibid.*, p. 877.

borers hired out by the SS to I.G. Farben worked directly for the chemical concern, but thousands also were further hired out to subcontractors that were fulfilling construction contracts for I.G. Auschwitz. Exploitation of the prisoners was profitable for I.G. Farben. The daily rate payable to the SS for prisoner labor was about one-third lower than the prevailing regional wage for free labor in Upper Silesia. In addition, by exploiting concentration camp prisoners, the firm avoided substantial expenditures for housing, severance pay, sick pay, social welfare, or cultural activities, etc., which accounted for about 25 percent of the labor costs for free laborers. That more than compensated for the lower productivity of the emaciated concentration camp prisoners, in comparison with free laborers.¹¹⁹

The transportation and earth-moving detachments in particular, viewed by the prisoners as death squads, were usually large work detachments, whose members were continually driven to perform at higher speeds by brutal beatings. This category included the life-threatening cement detachments (Detachments 1 and 4). In Detachment 4, more than 100 prisoners, moving at a quick pace, had to haul 50-kilogram sacks of cement.¹²⁰ In the concrete detachment (Detachment 8), prisoners had to build bunkers 15 to 30 meters below ground to serve as air-raid shelters. In 1944, the construction managers of I.G. Auschwitz did not hesitate to make 35 Jewish children from Hungary between the ages of 8 and 12 do heavy labor in this death squad, urging them with kicks and slaps in the face to work at a faster pace.¹²¹ Numerous inmates also fell victim to the infamous cable-laying detachment, whose contingent of 200 prisoners made it one of the largest squads: frequently, several prisoners died in a single day in accidents or from whippings.¹²² In Detachment 19, which was deployed at the lumberyard,

119 Setkiewicz: "Häftlingsarbeit," p. 589f.

120 Rudolf Vitek, affidavit, March 3, 1947, NI-4830. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 61–69, here p. 62. On Detachment 4 (cement), cf. Josef Löwenstein, hearing of witness, December 4, 1952. HHStAW, Abt. 460, Nr. 1424 (Wollheim gegen IG Farben), Vol. I, pp. 158R–164R, as well as Jozef Jakubik, affidavit, May 23, 1947, NI-9818. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 73 (g), pp. 137–146, here p. 142f.; Norbert Wollheim, affidavit, June 3, 1947, NI-9807. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 122–130, here p. 122.

121 Marcel Stourdzé, hearing of witness, January 15, 1953. HHStAW, Abt. 460, Nr. 1424 (Wollheim gegen IG Farben), Vol. II, pp. 213–217R, here p. 214.

122 Tibor Wohl: *Arbeit macht tot. Eine Jugend in Auschwitz* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1990), pp. 48ff., and the statement of Karl Wagner, a metal worker employed at I.G. Auschwitz: Karl

prisoners had to unload logs, some of which measured 16 meters long and 30 centimeters around, from rail cars while being beaten and clubbed by German master craftsmen.¹²³ The chances of survival were greater, however, in the electricians' detachment, in which 120 to 180 Jewish prisoners worked on building electrical facilities.¹²⁴ During the course of 1943, the percentage of prisoners deployed in assembly detachments increased. As the construction progressed, the focal points of the work changed, which led to a growing share of prisoners who were deployed as skilled workers. They took on jobs as metal workers, masons,¹²⁵ carpenters,¹²⁶ painters,¹²⁷ or welders.¹²⁸ Finally, starting in 1944, there was an increase in the percentage of production detachments, in which prisoners did highly skilled work even in chemical labs, as in the case of Primo Levi in Detachment 98.¹²⁹ In the clerical detachments, prisoners even handled correspondence and processed statistical tables.¹³⁰ However, prisoners also were preferred for risky, life-endangering jobs, such as working in the bomb-clearing detachment, which had to retrieve unexploded shells on the plant grounds after the air-raids in 1944.¹³¹

Wagner, affidavit, September 3, 1947, NI-11051, p. 1f. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

123 Arnest Tauber, affidavit, May 3, 1947, NI-4829. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 147–149, here p. 148; Salomon Kohn, affidavit, May 29, 1947, NI-10824. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 110–115, here p. 113.

124 Kurt Rödiger, affidavit, August 26, 1947, Dü-449. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Dürrfeld DDB IV (g), pp. 68–77, here p. 68.

125 In Detachment 30, cf. Anton Ottowitz, affidavit, March 6, 1947, Dü-1253, p. 3. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Dürrfeld DDB XIV (g), pp. 121–124, here p. 123.

126 In Detachment 43, cf. Isaac Spetter, affidavit, November 13, 1947, NI-12383. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 N (d), pp. 1–8, here p. 3.

127 Adam König, examination by judge (Kreisgericht Leipzig), February 2, 1963, LG Frankfurt am Main, 4 Ks 2/63. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-1, HA-82, pp. 15698–15699R, and examination by judge (Bezirksgericht Leipzig), July 1, 1963, LG Frankfurt am Main, 4 Ks 2/63. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-1, HA-86, pp. 16637–16637R.

128 Wohl: *Arbeit macht tot*, p. 80.

129 Primo Levi: *Survival in Auschwitz: The Nazi Assault on Humanity* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996), see the chapters "Chemical Examination," pp. 101ff., and "Die drei Leute vom Labor," pp. 136ff.

130 Curt Posener, affidavit, June 3, 1947, NI-9808, p. 1. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

131 Arnest Tauber, affidavit, May 3, 1947, NI-4829. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 147–149, here p. 148; Salomon Kohn, affidavit, May 29, 1947, NI-10824. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 110–115, here pp. 114–115.

Casualty Figures

Estimates of the number of dead at I.G. Auschwitz vary considerably. A principal reason for this divergence is the systematic destruction of files that took place shortly before the war ended. Systematically and on a large scale, both the SS and I.G. Farben employees destroyed huge quantities of secret documents in the final months of the war in an effort to conceal the crimes committed in Auschwitz and impede the Allies' investigation and prosecution of the offenders.¹³² Historical reconstruction of the number of deaths is complicated, because the prisoner card index and the "death books" for the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp survived only in fragmentary form. In the research literature, therefore, information on the number of prisoners murdered at the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp are based mostly on estimates made by former inmates. These estimates range from a minimum of 23,000 to a maximum of 40,000 dead.¹³³ The Polish historian Piotr

132 On the dispute between employees of I.G. Farbenindustrie and the American investigators concerning the destruction of I.G. Auschwitz files by I.G. Farben employee Wolfgang Alt after the war ended, see the bulky bundle of papers in: Document No. 330, Official Court File, Vol. 49, pp. 1440–1520. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, reel 109, Official Court File, Vol. 49, pp. 154–235.

133 The figure of 120,000 dead given by Gustav Herzog, the former head of the office that kept the prisoner card files, seems greatly exaggerated, cf. Gustav Herzog, affidavit, October 21, 1947, NI-12069. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 79 (g), pp. 44–53. Under examination in the I.G. Farben Trial at Nuremberg, Herzog amended the figure to 60,000 prisoners who passed through the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp. He corrected himself, saying that the figure of 120,000 prisoners referred to the total number of all prisoners in the Auschwitz concentration and extermination camp, cf. Gustav Herzog, hearing of witness, November 12, 1947. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Protocol of the Main Trial (= Prot.) (e), reel 005, Vol. 11, pp. 3621–3639, here p. 3624, and, respectively, Prot. (g), reel 050, Vol. 11a, pp. 3643–3661, here p. 3646. Herzog's figure of 60,000 for the number of prisoners who passed through the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp also seems too high. According to Ervin Schulhof, a former clerk in the Work Deployment Department, between October 1942 and January 1945 around 35,000 passed through the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, cf. Ervin Schulhof, affidavit, June 21, 1947, NI-7967. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 128–133, here p. 130. The former prisoner-physician Stefan Budziaszek (Stefan Buthner) puts the number of dead at 23,000, cf. Stefan Budziaszek, affidavit, October 27, 1947, NI-12070. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 79 (g), pp. 54–64, here p. 61. Moses Zlotolow, on the basis of unspecified reports, speaks of approximately 40,000 dead, cf. Moses Zlotolow, affidavit, September 2, 1947, NI-11081. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 204–205. Hayes: *Industry and Ideology*, p. 359, bases his figure of around 23,000 dead on the estimates of Schulhof and Budziaszek. Raul Hilberg, also with reference to Schulhof, accepts that 35,000 prisoners passed through the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, of whom at least 25,000 died, cf. Raul Hilberg: *Die Vernichtung der europäischen Juden* (Frankfurt am Main: Fischer, 1990), p. 994. Karl Heinz Roth, taking the available sources as a basis, proceeds on the assumption that "around 30,000" prisoners were murdered, cf. Roth: "I.G. Auschwitz," p. 87. With reference to I.G. Auschwitz and the associated coal mines, Bernd C. Wagner also

Setkiewicz, however, using surviving original sources as a basis, thinks a death toll of at least 10,000 is plausible.¹³⁴

On the other hand, Bernd C. Wagner, in his work on the history of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, states that a death toll of “30,000 prisoners in all who died as a direct result of work for the IG is not too high,” and of these victims, “around 25,000 men lost their lives while working in the Buna plants, in the Monowitz camp, in the prisoner infirmary, or as a result of selections.”¹³⁵ Here he relies, on the one hand, on the statements of the former prisoners Schulhof (25,000)¹³⁶ and Buthner (23,000).¹³⁷ Former inmate Ludwig Hess, who was present during the questioning of the previous plant manager of I.G. Auschwitz, Walther Dürrfeld, testified that the statistics kept in the camp office covered “about 30,000 people” and that “20,000 people were used up,” for a final tally of 10,000 to 11,000 prisoners.¹³⁸ Dr. Horst Fischer, the SS physician responsible for the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, estimated 20 years after the events that during his time at Buna/Monowitz alone, from spring 1943 to fall 1944, 10,000 prisoners died in the camp.¹³⁹ The estimates of the surviving prisoners, according

finds the figure of “a total of 30,000 prisoners who died as a direct result of working for the IG not overstated.” (Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 282).

134 Piotr Setkiewicz: *Zdziejów obozów IG Farben Werk Auschwitz 1941–1945* (Oświęcim: Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, 2006), pp. 156–158, p. 163. For her help with translation from Polish, I am grateful to Anna Słobodzianek. See also: Piotr Setkiewicz: “Mortality among the Prisoners in Auschwitz III-Monowitz.” In: *Pro Memoria. Information Bulletin* 26 (2007), pp. 61–66.

135 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, pp. 280–282.

136 Ervin Schulhof, affidavit, June 21, 1947, NI-7967. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 128–133, here p. 130.

137 Stefan Budziaszek, affidavit, October 27, 1947, NI-12070. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 79 (g), pp. 54–64, here p. 61.

138 Wagner erroneously attributes this statement by Ludwig Hess to the former plant manager of I.G. Auschwitz, Walther Dürrfeld, when he claims that “in statements by former employees of IG Auschwitz, there is mention of similar figures” (Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 281, fn. 360). The transcripts of the examination, however, make it clear that it was not Dürrfeld but Hess who asked questions of his own in the interrogation and commented on Dürrfeld’s statements, mentioning the estimate of 20,000 dead. Cf. Interrogation No. 743. Examination of Dr. Walther Dürrfeld by Mr. Benvenuto von Halle, in the presence of attorney Moses L. Kove (Economies Section Sprecher Trial Team) and Ludwig Hess (former inmate of Monowitz) and stenographer Lotte Kluge on February 24, 1947, NI-11046, pp. 1–74, here p. 65. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie. This also applies to another statement cited by Wagner, that of Christian Schneider, a former I.G. Farben board member. The figure of 30,000 dead mentioned in the examination comes from Benvenuto von Halle, the American interrogator, not from Schneider, who comments when confronted with this. See Interrogation No. 888c. Examination of Christian Schneider on March 27, 1947, by Arthur T. Cooper and Benvenuto von Halle, April 17, 1947, NI-11686, pp. 1–117, here p. 93. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

139 Rogatory commission hearing of Horst Fischer, StA Frankfurt am Main, 4 Js 798/64 (preliminary investigation of Ontl et al.), p. 1425. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts.

to Wagner, were "also supported by comparison with the available information on the life expectancy and selections of prisoners in Monowitz." For 1943, he proceeds on the assumption "of an average of 3,000 prisoner laborers, for 1944, 7,000." After "subtraction of citizens of the German Reich and other non-Jewish prisoners, who had considerably better living conditions, and of the prisoner functionaries as well," he estimates that "around 80 percent, that is, 2,400 and 5,600 respectively, belong to the category of 'ordinary' prisoners," who were "exposed to the most intense pressure of the extermination machinery." From the fact that the testimonies of former witnesses unanimously "assumed an average life expectancy of three to four months," Wagner concludes that "the number of 'ordinary' prisoners was 'winnowed' roughly three times per year by means of death or selection." This, he says, results "in a figure of 7,200 for 1943 and 16,800 for 1944, that is, altogether 24,000" prisoners who died at the construction site of I.G. Auschwitz, which conforms "with surprising accuracy to the information given in the witness reports."¹⁴⁰

Furthermore, he says, these data also are in agreement with the contemporary sources on the number of prisoners selected by SS doctors to be sent from the Buna/Monowitz prisoner infirmary to Birkenau for extermination or, in the initial phase, to the main camp. The surviving transfer lists of the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp for the period from November 1, 1942, to October 1944 contain a total of 7,293¹⁴¹ names or numbers of prisoners who were transferred to Birkenau or, in the initial phase, to the Auschwitz main camp. Wagner rightly emphasizes that the transfer lists do not include the camp selections, which in his estimate "also must have claimed the lives of several thousand prisoners."¹⁴² Further, "the persons who died or were killed directly on the plant grounds also" must be added on; in the concentration camp's book of deaths, they are to be estimated at "1,647, at least."¹⁴³ Wagner views the "assumption of a figure of

140 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 281.

141 Wagner gives the figure of 7,295, which deviates slightly from the source cited by him, probably because of a typing error. There, Herbert Ungar's estimate of 7,293 transfers appears, cf. Herbert Ungar, affidavit, May 19, 1948, NI-15299 and NI-14997. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Exhibit 2262, reel 035, pp. 1-318.

142 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 282, fn. 362; cf. NI-14997. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, Prosecution Exhibit 2262, reel 035, pp. 5-318.

143 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 281, fn. 363. In this regard, see the book of deaths kept by the Buna/Monowitz prisoner infirmary from November 16, 1942, to January 15, 1945, Archiwum

around 23,000 to 25,000 dead” in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp as being confirmed by the surviving sources. Still to be added to this are the prisoners who died in the coal pits of I.G. Auschwitz at subcamps, whom Wagner estimates at “several thousand additional prisoners.” Therefore a death toll of “30,000 prisoners in all who died as a direct result of work for the IG,” according to Wagner, is “not too high an estimate.”¹⁴⁴

The Polish historian Piotr Setkiewicz puts the number of prisoners employed at I.G. Auschwitz during the entire construction phase at 20,000 men in total, markedly lower than the estimates long accepted by historical research.¹⁴⁵ Opposed to that, however, is the statement of former prisoner Ervin Schulhof, whose task it was in the camp to administer the prisoner card index. According to his information, recorded in an affidavit after the liberation, the total number of Buna/Monowitz prisoner files maintained by him in the camp’s office was around 35,000.¹⁴⁶ In keeping with the lower overall number of prisoners in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, Setkiewicz also puts the number of dead at a minimum of 10,000 prisoners, substantially lower than assumed by the previous research. In his calculations, Setkiewicz relies solely on surviving sources, rather than on statements by survivors.¹⁴⁷ A central source for his line of reasoning is a curve and bar chart that contains figures for the Buna/Monowitz prisoner population for the period from November 1, 1942, to December 31, 1944. The document, found in a latrine on the camp grounds in 1947, after the war was over, uses variable scaling to record the size of the camp population, the number of prisoners away from work because of sickness, the number of prisoners treated in the prisoner infirmary on an out-patient basis, the number of transfers from the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp to the main camp or to Birkenau,

Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, D-AuIII-5/4, excerpts in: NI-15295. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

144 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, pp. 281–282. The prisoners in the Buna external detachment, who also were exploited for I.G. Auschwitz, are not taken into consideration in Wagner’s calculation.

145 Setkiewicz: *Zdziejów obozów*, p. 167.

146 Ervin Schulhof, affidavit, June 21, 1947, NI-7967. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 74 (g), pp. 128–133, here p. 130.

147 Setkiewicz: *Zdziejów obozów*, p. 156, p. 163, and Setkiewicz: “Mortality among the Prisoners.”

and the number of dead recorded in the camp and in the prisoner infirmary.¹⁴⁸ Robert Waitz, a former prisoner-physician in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, who was associated with the medical school of the Université Strasbourg before and after his imprisonment, stated in 1976 that the graph had been prepared by two political prisoners, Felix Rausch and Stefan Heymann, in the office of the sick bay in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.¹⁴⁹ The place of its discovery and the information provided by Waitz suggest that the source was a chart put together by prisoners as an act of resistance, to document the number of dead and thus the dimensions of the crimes perpetrated in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.

According to Setkiewicz's calculations, some 7,200 to 7,300 prisoners were transferred from Buna/Monowitz to Auschwitz-Birkenau and to the Auschwitz main camp, of whom at most 20 percent survived.¹⁵⁰ An additional 1,670 dead, as Setkiewicz emphasizes, are documented by the book of deaths for the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.¹⁵¹ He gives an estimate of 800 to 1,000 dead for prisoners who were selected in places other than the prisoner infirmary and killed. In addition, there were at least three large selections in early and late January 1943 and at the end of September 1944, whose death tolls Setkiewicz calculates on the basis of the graph from the prisoner infirmary. Accordingly, an initial large selection of 1,200 prisoners took place on January 3 or 4, 1943; around 200 of these men were from the prisoner infirmary. In a second selection on January 31 or February 1, 1943, 1,000 more prisoners, including around 150 from the prisoner infirmary, were seized and transferred to Auschwitz-Birkenau to be gassed. The third selection took place on September 25 or 26, 1944, and at this time around 600 prisoners, including 214 from the prisoner infirmary, were selected.¹⁵²

148 Graph of the prisoner strength of the Buna auxiliary camp for the period from October 1 to December 31, 1942. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, D-Au III-3a (Monowitz).

149 Robert Waitz: "Le graphique de l'infirmerie du camp de Buna-Monowitz (Auschwitz III)." In: Benoist Ady-Brille / Pierre Paraf, eds.: *Les techniciens de la mort* (Paris: Fédération Nationale des Déportés et Internés Résistants et Patriotes, 1976), pp. 222–225.

150 Setkiewicz: *Zdziejów obozów*, p. 156 and p. 163. Thus Setkiewicz revises downward by several hundred the estimates of about 8,000 transfers given by former prisoner Antoni Makowski, cf. Makowski: "Organisation."

151 Setkiewicz: *Zdziejów obozów*, p. 153.

152 Setkiewicz: *Zdziejów obozów*, p. 158.

The estimates of 25,000 to 30,000 dead in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp, recorded after the war in the affidavits of surviving prisoner functionaries, and the data from the surviving residual sources remain contradictory. However, the precisely documented chart kept over an extended period of time by Felix Rausch and Stefan Heymann, recording the prisoner strength, transfers, and deaths in the camp, speaks in favor of the lower estimates made by Setkiewicz, who assumes a death toll of at least 10,000 for the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp. These secretly recorded statistics, however, document only the selections conducted by the SS in the prisoner infirmary. They did not include selections conducted in the camp in places other than the prisoner infirmary, which remain an instability factor because they are only incompletely documented in other sources that have survived. For these reasons, the number calculated by Setkiewicz—10,000 deaths at the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp—is to be regarded as absolutely the lowest minimum estimate. More research, using all available sources, is required in order to gain a more precise picture of the death tolls at the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp and at the three subcamps with the coal pits belonging to I.G. Farben (Fürstengrube, Janinagrube, and Günthergrube), which were part of the Auschwitz III subcamp system.

At the I.G. Auschwitz plant construction site, many prisoners died in accidents at work, often caused by lack of occupational safety measures. The most common causes of death, however, were physical emaciation due to the boundless exploitation of the workforce, chronic hunger, and untreated illnesses. When their performance declined or they became unable to work because of prolonged illness or disability, the prisoners—at the instigation of I.G. Farben employees—were transferred to Birkenau in regularly held selections; the vast majority were gassed there. The selections took place at the camp gate when the prisoners marched out in the morning, in the prisoner infirmary, and in the roll-call square, the *Appellplatz*.¹⁵³ According to a former prisoner-physician, among the participants in the selections at the camp gate were “always several civilians who belonged to the I.G. Farben task force,”¹⁵⁴ in addition to the camp commandant, the head of the protective custody camp, the SS official responsible for the allo-

153 Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 173 and p. 282.

cation of labor, and the SS camp doctor. This practice was sanctioned by SS-Obersturmbannführer Gerhard Maurer, head of Amtsgruppe D II (labor allocation) of the SS-WVHA, who had traveled to Auschwitz for negotiations regarding an increase in the deployment of prisoner labor, on February 10, 1943. Maurer assured the I.G. plant management that "all the weak prisoners can be shunted out of the way," so that "almost full efficiency, in comparison with a German unskilled laborer, can be arrived at."¹⁵⁵ The selections in the prisoner infirmary were directly linked to the number of workers sick and absent from work in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp. As Dr. Friedrich Entress, an SS physician, stated: "The number of patient blocks available in Monowitz proportional to the occupancy of the entire Monowitz concentration camp meant in practical terms that no more than 5 percent of the prisoners could be admitted to the infirmary. Tables were kept to record the number of men out sick. Whenever that number exceeded the 5 percent mentioned, the camp doctor had to conduct selections."¹⁵⁶ The average length of survival of the prisoners was three to four months in Monowitz.¹⁵⁷ At the coal pits that were operated by the I.G. Farben affiliate Fürstengrube GmbH in the subcamps of Fürstengrube¹⁵⁸ and Janinagrube,¹⁵⁹ the concentration camp inmates had to do slave labor under even more extreme conditions, and there they survived, on average, only four to six weeks.¹⁶⁰ At Günthergrube alone, which also belonged to Fürstengrube GmbH,

154 Rudolf Vitek, affidavit, March 3, 1947, NI-4830. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 61–69, here p. 67.

155 I.G. Auschwitz, Wochenbericht Nr. 90/91 für die Zeit vom 8.2 bis 21.2.1943, gez. Faust, NI-14546, p. 1. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

156 Friedrich Entress, affidavit, April 14, 1947, NI-6190. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 39–57, here p. 59.

157 Cf. the statement of Berthold Epstein, who was deployed as a male nurse in the prisoner infirmary at Buna/Monowitz: Berthold Epstein, affidavit, March 3, 1947, NI-5847. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 193–197, here p. 195; also Rudolf Vitek, affidavit, March 3, 1947, NI-4830. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 (g), pp. 61–69, here p. 66.

158 Tadeusz Iwaszko: "Das Nebenlager ‚Fürstengrube‘." In: *Hefte von Auschwitz* 16 (1978), pp. 5–92, and Andrea Rudorff: "Fürstengrube." In: Benz / Distel, eds.: *Der Ort des Terrors*, pp. 221–225.

159 Emeryka Iwaszko: "Das Nebenlager ‚Janinagrube‘." In: *Hefte von Auschwitz* 10 (1967), pp. 41–65, and Andrea Rudorff: "Janinagrube." In: Benz / Distel, eds.: *Der Ort des Terrors*, pp. 256–260.

160 According to the prisoner-physician deployed at the Janinagrube concentration camp: Erich Orlik, affidavit, June 18, 1947, NI-12385. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 75 N (g), pp. 18–24, here p. 20.

the mortality rate was somewhat lower, because the food supply and hygienic conditions were less abysmal.¹⁶¹

The Camp Elders

The first camp elder of Buna/Monowitz was Josef Windeck. He was born in Rheydt in 1903, the son of a construction worker.¹⁶² After school in Mönchengladbach, he worked in construction.¹⁶³ After being sentenced several times for property crimes, he was accused in 1936 of having prompted his colleagues to stop work at the construction site. He served his time as a political prisoner in the Esterwegen-Papenburg concentration camp. Next, the SS transferred him to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp, from which he was released in the summer of 1937. In October 1937, he was once again convicted of property crimes and sentenced to two and one-half years in jail. After serving the sentence, Windeck was moved to the Düsseldorf police prison and then sent back to Sachsenhausen. From there, on August 29, 1940, he was deported to Auschwitz, where he was given prisoner number 3221. Initially assigned as a Kapo with a black triangle ("asocial"), he rose within a short time to the position of camp Kapo. From April 1941 to spring 1942, with interruptions caused by the weather, he was the Kapo of a work detachment involved in building I.G. Farben's Buna plant. On October 28, 1942, the SS moved him with 600 prisoners to Buna/Monowitz. Windeck was placed in Block 4, where the office was housed, and advanced to the position of camp elder. After accusations of corruption, the SS transferred him to a penal company in Birkenau, where he was given the position of camp Kapo in mens' camp BIIId a few weeks later. In the late summer of 1944, he was transferred to the Ohrdruf concentration camp, and finally, late in

161 Tadeusz Iwaszko: "Das Nebenlager ‚Günthergrube‘." In: *Hefte von Auschwitz* 12 (1970), pp. 113–144, and Andrea Rudorff: "Günthergrube." In: Benz / Distel, eds.: *Der Ort des Terrors*, pp. 243–247.

162 The information about Windeck's life is based on trial documents from the Third Frankfurt Auschwitz Trial: Strafsache gegen Grönke, Bonitz, Windeck – 4 Ks 1/67, LG Frankfurt am Main, Anklageschrift vom 20.8.1966. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-3, HA-2. See also Hermann Langbein: *Der Auschwitz-Prozeß. Eine Dokumentation*, 2 Vols. (Frankfurt am Main: Neue Kritik, 1995), p. 940, and Wagner: *IG Auschwitz*, p. 117f.

163 Strafsache gegen Grönke, Bonitz, Windeck – 4 Ks 1/67, LG Frankfurt am Main, Anklageschrift vom 20.8.1966, p. 67. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-3, HA-2.

1944, he was sent to the Buchenwald concentration camp.¹⁶⁴ In 1968, Windeck was sentenced by the Landgericht Frankfurt am Main "for murder on two counts to life in prison, and for attempted murder on two counts, with credit for time in investigative custody and forced labor in Russia, to a total of 15 years in prison."¹⁶⁵ In June 1969, Windeck was paroled for health-related reasons.¹⁶⁶ He died in Mönchen-Gladbach in July 1977.¹⁶⁷ After Windeck's dismissal, the function of camp elder in Buna/Monowitz was taken on temporarily by Franz Raschke, a native of Upper Silesia who was imprisoned as a "professional criminal." After a few weeks he was replaced by Hans Georg Scholle, who previously was assigned to the camp kitchen; he, too, was in the camp as a "professional criminal." From the end of 1943 until the camp was vacated in January 1945, Paul Kozwara functioned as his successor.¹⁶⁸

Escapes and Resistance

In view of the daily destruction, the saving of human lives was one of the top priorities of the resistance movement. Other focal points of the illegal resistance activities were the political schooling of young prisoners and the procuring of foodstuffs, medicines, and various materials for improving the situation of the prisoners.¹⁶⁹ At the I.G. Farben plant, prisoners attempted to exchange information through forbidden contact with civilians, forced laborers, and prisoners of war. The resistance movement also succeeded in delaying the completion of the plant's construction by means of active sabotage in the work deployments. For example, a work squad of electricians caused a short circuit in the power sta-

164 Urteil im 3. Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozess, June 14, 1968, LG Frankfurt am Main, 4 Ks 1/67. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-3, HA-3, p. 47f., and also in: *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen. Sammlung deutscher Strafurteile wegen nationalsozialistischer Tötungsverbrechen 1945–1999*, Christiaan F. Rüter et al., eds., Vol. 29 (Amsterdam: Amsterdam UP, 2003), pp. 420–523, here p. 449.

165 Urteil im 3. Frankfurter Auschwitz-Prozess, June 14, 1968, LG Frankfurt am Main, 4 Ks 1/67. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-3, HA-3, p. 1a, and in *Justiz und NS-Verbrechen*, Vol. 29, pp. 420–523, here p. 423.

166 Beschluss des LG Frankfurt/Main vom 12.6.1969, Strafsache gegen Grönke, Bonitz, Windeck – 4 Ks 1/67. HHStAW, Abt. 461, no shelfmark (Vol. 108, pp. 20748–20749).

167 Ibid., HHStAW, Abt. 461, no shelfmark (Vol. 108, p. 20775).

168 Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 854.

169 Ibid., p. 871.

tion's turbines during a trial run.¹⁷⁰ According to the testimony of former inmate Walter Petzold, the prisoners' resistance movement thwarted the planned start-up of a section of the plant for fuel synthesis on May 1, 1943, in celebration of the "Day of National Labor." Three days previously, on April 28, 1943, prisoners caused an explosion at the high-pressure plant. Simultaneously, "a car shed with about 50 trucks and 20 tractors" burned down.¹⁷¹ At the top of the international network of resistance created in the camp, the leaders were mainly Poles, along with German and Austrian Jews. They held important functionary positions in the camp administration, working in the office (Gustav Herzog), labor service, or Arbeitsdienst (Walter Freiser), prisoner infirmary (Stefan Heymann, Leiser Sylmann, Felix Rausch, Eric Eisler, Nathan Hirschtritt, Erich Markowitz, Ludwig Wörl, and Sepp Luger) or in the external detachments (Louis Nissel, Walter Petzold, Erwin Taubert, Robert Wolff, Eduard Besch, Kasimir Stankiowitz, and Curt Posener).¹⁷²

In September 1944, two German Jewish prisoners, Max Drimmer and Mendel Scheingesicht (who adopted the name Herman Shine after the war), successfully escaped from the plant grounds. Józef Wróna, a Polish civilian worker with whom they had become acquainted at the I.G. Auschwitz plant construction site, helped them hide in Nowa Wieś (Neudorf) and then in Rybnik until the liberation.¹⁷³ Another successful escape was made in early August 1944 by a group of five Polish prisoners from the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp: Tadeusz

170 Hans Frankenthal: *The Unwelcome One: Returning Home from Auschwitz*. In collaboration with Andreas Plake, Babette Quinkert, and Florian Schmaltz (Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 2002), p. 57.

171 Walter Petzold, examination by public prosecutor, Berlin, February 10, 1960, LG Frankfurt am Main, 4 Ks 2/63. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-1, HA-25, pp. 4201–4211, here p. 4302.

172 Report on Auschwitz-Monowitz (Buna) by Curt Posener, undated. Archiwum Państwowe Muzeum Auschwitz-Birkenau, Zespół Oświadczenia, t. 6, Syg. Osw/Posener/14, pp. 824–882, here p. 870.

173 Hendryk Świebocki: "Die lagernahe Widerstandsbewegung und ihre Hilfsaktionen für die Häftlinge des KL Auschwitz." In: *Hefte von Auschwitz* 19 (2000), pp. 1–187, here pp. S. 70–71, and Hendryk Świebocki: "Widerstand." In: Waław Długoborski / Franciszek Piper, eds.: *Auschwitz 1940–1945. Studien zur Geschichte des Konzentrations- und Vernichtungslagers Auschwitz* (Oświęcim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 1999), Vol. 4, pp. 1–472, here pp. 273–274. In both publications, Świebocki gives different dates for the escape. In the former, he dates it on June 20/21, 1944. In the latter, he says that Drimmer and Scheingesicht escaped from the plant grounds in "June 1944" and that Wróna concealed them on September 20, 1944, in a previously prepared hiding place on the plant grounds. Max Drimmer himself dates the escape on September 20, 1944. On this, see Max Drimmer, oral history interview [Eng.], July 3, 2007. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Norbert Wollheim Memorial, http://www.wollheim-memorial.de/en/max_drimmer.

Petrykowski, Józef Toporek, Franciszek Petersil, Antoni Lao, and Władisław Tomasiak. First they concealed themselves for three days in a hiding place prepared by the Polish Home Army (Armia Krajowa) on the plant grounds of I.G. Auschwitz. Then, during an air-raid alarm, they used prepositioned ladders to get over the plant's fence and succeeded in joining a partisan unit of the Armia Krajowa that was operating in southern Poland.¹⁷⁴

After attempted escapes, all the prisoners in the camp had to stand in their roll-call positions for hours on end, as a punishment.¹⁷⁵ If escaped prisoners were caught, they were hanged before the eyes of their fellow inmates. Several prisoners testified to the last execution at the camp: that of the three prisoners Leo Diamant, Janek Grossfeld, and Nathan Weissmann.¹⁷⁶

Air Attacks on Auschwitz

The first air strike on the I.G. Farben plant in Auschwitz carried out by Allied forces and involving several aircraft took place during the night of May 4 and early morning of May 5, 1943. According to a report from the head of Amtsgruppe A (Troop Administration) of the WVHA, SS-Gruppenführer August Frank, to Himmler on May 13, 1943, the Monowitz camp was "attacked by enemy aircraft" and hit by nine bombs in the vicinity of the prisoners' camp, but without suffering any damage. An airplane had attacked the watchtowers, he stated, and "fired machine-gun rounds at them." As a result, the camp commandant was instructed to call for "appropriate defense, consisting of one dozen 2-cm antiaircraft guns, provided by the *Luftgaukommando* [air defense district command] in charge."¹⁷⁷

174 Świebocki: "Widerstand," p. 194, p. 274.

175 Frankenthal: *The Unwelcome One*, p. 42.

176 Stefan Buthner, examination by public prosecutor, Hannover, May 3, 1960, LG Frankfurt am Main, 4 Ks 2/63. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, FAP-1, HA-31, pp. 5281–5289, here p. 5286; Wohl: *Arbeit macht tot*, p. 143f., puts the execution in October 1944; Frankenthal: *Verweigerte Rückkehr*, p. 80f. The account by Oszkár Betlen: *Leben auf dem Acker des Todes* (Berlin: Dietz, 1962), p. 325f., which alleges that one of the men executed was the Communist prisoner Fritz Hansen, is not confirmed by other statements, as far as can be seen.

177 Communication: SS-Gruppenführer und Generalleutnant der Waffen-SS August Frank (Chef der Amtsgruppe A des SS-WVHA – Truppenverwaltung) an Reichsführer SS Himmler, Betr.: KL Auschwitz (Geheim!), May 13, 1943. Bundesarchiv Berlin, NS 19/994, p. 1. The strike is mentioned in Czech: *Kalendarium*, p. 485.

As Auschwitz was not within the range of the Western Allies' air forces until December 1943, it is still not known with certainty to which air force formation the aircraft involved in the May 1943 attack belonged. It could have been a strike carried out by the air forces of the Red Army.¹⁷⁸ The radius of action of American and British bomber formations was determined by the range of their fighter escorts, which could not yet reach Auschwitz. After the landing of Allied troops in southern Italy and the capture of the Italian military airfield at Foggia in December 1943, the use of Mustang fighter planes became possible for the first time. That extended the radius of action of the U.S. Army Air Force from 650 to 1,400 kilometers (from 403 to 870 miles), which meant that targets in Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, southern Poland, and Upper Silesia were within range.¹⁷⁹ In preparation for strategic air strikes on industrial facilities of high significance to German war production, the I.G. Farben plant in Auschwitz was photographed for the first time on April 4, 1944, during an American aerial reconnaissance mission. When interpreting the aerial photographs, Royal Air Force specialists based in Medmenham identified "a power plant, a carbide factory, a factory for synthetic rubber, and a (Bergius process) plant for the production of synthetic oil."¹⁸⁰

Additional reconnaissance flights followed between May 31 and mid-August 1944.¹⁸¹ On July 18, the I.G. Farben plant was defined as a target for the first time.¹⁸² With this prerequisite in place, the 15th U.S. Army Air Force flew the first major bombing raid on the factory buildings of I.G. Auschwitz on August 20, 1944. Thanks to the heavy escort of 100 Mustang fighters, only one of the 127

178 The American historian Joseph Robert White assumes that it most likely was a strike carried out by the Soviet air forces. His conjecture that it may possibly have been an accident during a German Luftwaffe exercise is not borne out by the account of SS-Gruppenführer Frank, which refers to machine-gun fire deliberately aimed at watchtowers in the camp and to "enemy aircraft" that carried out the attack. White's hypothesis that a skirmish with partisans may have been involved is highly improbable. In the historical research, there is no evidence of a capability on the part of the Polish resistance movement to carry out military air operations in 1943. Cf. Joseph Robert White: "Target Auschwitz. Historical and Hypothetical German Responses to Allied Attack." In: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 16 (2002), no. 1, pp. 54–76, here p. 56. Martin Gilbert: *Auschwitz und die Alliierten* (Munich: Beck, 1982), makes no mention of the attack on May 4/5, 1943.

179 Gilbert: *Auschwitz*, p. 225.

180 Ibid.

181 Reconnaissance flights were made on May 31, June 26, and August 9 and 12, 1944. Ibid., p. 226, p. 254, p. 293, p. 323, and p. 355.

182 Ibid., p. 332.

bombers participating was shot down. The strike inflicted considerable damage on the production facilities of I.G. Auschwitz.¹⁸³ During the air strike, the Monowitz prisoner Adam Szaller was able to escape.¹⁸⁴ According to the testimony of another Monowitz prisoner, Siegfried Pinkus, before the Nuremberg Military Tribunal, "around 75 prisoners [were] killed and more than 150 prisoners injured, some slightly, others seriously," in this attack. Pinkus attributed a share of the responsibility for this to the I.G. Auschwitz plant management, because it had forbidden prisoners to take cover in shelters they themselves had fashioned.¹⁸⁵ Though they were in mortal danger, many prisoners welcomed the Allied air attacks because they terrified the SS guard details, reduced the capacities of German war production, and brought the longed-for liberation closer.¹⁸⁶ Though one of the bombing raids rendered the concentration camp's kitchen inoperable, as it used a district heating system, the I.G. Auschwitz plant management refused to provide the prisoners with food from the plant's kitchen as an alternative.¹⁸⁷ Martin Rossbach, an I.G. Auschwitz company officer with statutory authority, said after the war that the plant management had sounded the air-raid alarm at Auschwitz too late and "only when there was a truly immediate threat to the plant," in an effort to minimize production losses.¹⁸⁸ The construction of air-raid shelters, which did not begin until 1943, was completely inadequate. Until December 1944, air-raid shelter facilities were available for only 7,800 of the approximately 29,000 workers at the plant construction site.¹⁸⁹ The plant management forbade prisoners, under threat of a shoot-to-kill order, to take cover in air-raid shelters.¹⁹⁰

183 Gilbert: *Auschwitz*, pp. 360–361; Hilberg: *Vernichtung*, pp. 1204–1206.

184 Czech: *Kalendarium*, p. 856.

185 Siegfried Pinkus an US-Militär-Tribunal Nürnberg, Betr.: Prozess gegen IG-Farben-Direktoren, August 29, 1947, NI-10820, p. 3. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

186 On this subject, see the statements of former prisoners Arie Hassenberg and Shalom Lindenbaum in: Gilbert: *Auschwitz*, p. 361, p. 370, and p. 435, fn. 10.

187 Interrogation No. 743. – Vernehmung des Dr. Walther Dürrfeld durch Mr. von Halle, am 24.2.1947, NI-11046, p. 27f. Archiv der Stiftung für Sozialgeschichte Bremen, Nürnberger Dokumente, NI-Serie.

188 Martin Rossbach, affidavit, January 21, 1948, NI-14287. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 93 (g), pp. 34–50, here p. 47.

189 White: "Target Auschwitz," p. 57.

190 Martin Rossbach, affidavit, January 21, 1948, NI-14287. Archiv des Fritz Bauer Instituts, Nürnberger Nachfolgeprozess Fall VI, PDB 93 (g), pp. 34–50, here p. 40.

Additional air attacks followed in the fall of 1944. On September 13, 1944, the airstrikes of a U.S. Army Air Force bombardment group consisting of 96 Liberator bombers severely damaged I.G. Farben's Auschwitz plant. The main camp, too, and the Auschwitz II camp in Birkenau were hit. In this air raid, an estimated 300 persons, including SS men, were injured or killed.¹⁹¹ A further airstrike on December 18, 1944, did heavy damage to the pumping and compressor plants of I.G. Auschwitz. As an Allied analysis report mentions, five barracks of the concentration camp also were damaged in the bombing raid.¹⁹² The fourth air attack on the I.G. Farben plant in Auschwitz, which occurred on December 26, 1944, was evaluated as a success by Allied aerial reconnaissance on the basis of the severe damage suffered by the plant.¹⁹³ The last raid carried out by the U.S. Army Air Force took place on January 19, 1945, one day after the evacuation of the camp complex began, when the SS forced the prisoners to head westward on the death march.¹⁹⁴ In the United States and Great Britain, since the late 1970s there has been controversy regarding the reasons for the Allied air forces' failure to use bombing raids to destroy the extermination facilities or the access tracks on which the deportation trains rolled toward Auschwitz, in order to slow the pace of the mass murder.¹⁹⁵

191 Gilbert: *Auschwitz*, p. 370–371; Czech: *Kalendarium*, p. 876.

192 Gilbert: *Auschwitz*, p. 389.

193 Ibid., p. 390.

194 Ibid., p. 393.

195 An important source and point of reference for these discussions is the ex post facto analysis by CIA aerial reconnaissance experts, published in 1979, cf.: Dino A. Brugioni / Robert G. Poirier: *The Holocaust Revisited: A Retrospective Analysis of the Auschwitz-Birkenau Extermination Complex* (Washington, D.C.: Central Intelligence Agency, 1979). On the question of what knowledge Allied air force leaders had of the mass murder of the European Jews in German concentration camps, which criteria determined the priorities for strategic aerial targeting, and the issue of the Allies' possible shared responsibility for the unhindered continuation of the genocide, see, among other sources: Gilbert: *Auschwitz*; Stuart G. Erdheim: "Could the Allies Have Bombed Auschwitz-Birkenau?" In: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 11 (1997), no. 2, pp. 129–170; Michael J. Neufeld / Michael Berenbaum, eds.: *The Bombing of Auschwitz. Should the Allies Have Attempted It?* (New York: St. Martin's, 1999); Edward B. Westermann: "The Royal Air Force and the Bombing of Auschwitz: First Deliberations, January 1941." In: *Holocaust and Genocide Studies* 15 (2001), no. 2, pp. 70–85; White: "Target Auschwitz."

The Evacuation of the Camp

On January 18, 1945, the SS gave the order to vacate the Auschwitz-III-Monowitz concentration camp complex, which included the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp and the subcamps. Approximately 800 to 850 sick prisoners, who were too weakened to take part in the death march, stayed behind in the Buna/Monowitz concentration camp.¹⁹⁶ Around 10,000 were forced to set out on the death march,¹⁹⁷ which subsequently claimed the lives of many. Thousands died of exhaustion, froze to death in the icy cold, starved to death on the march, and were beaten to death or shot by the SS because they could go no farther.¹⁹⁸ The death march took them via Mikołów to Gleiwitz (Gliwice), where the prisoners who were still alive were loaded onto open freight cars and transported to concentration camps located farther west. Many went to the Mittelbau-Dora concentration camp, where they were exploited for several more harrowing months as slave laborers in the arms industry, until their liberation. The prisoners who stayed behind at Auschwitz were liberated by Red Army troops of the 60th Army of the First Ukrainian Front on January 27, 1945.¹⁹⁹

(Translated from German by Kathleen Luft)

196 Primo Levi: *The Reawakening* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1995), p. 15. A description of the final days of the camp is found in the autobiographical novel by Primo Levi: *Survival in Auschwitz*, pp. 151ff., as well as the historical study by Andrzej Strzelecki: *Endphase des KL Auschwitz. Evakuierung, Liquidierung und Befreiung des Lagers* (Oświęcim: Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum, 1995), pp. 247ff.

197 According to the former clerk of Cement Detachment 4, Josef Löwenstein, 9,700 prisoners from Monowitz set out on the death march, cf. Josef Löwenstein, hearing of witness, December 4, 1952. HHStAW, Abt. 460, Nr. 1424 (Wollheim gegen IG Farben), Vol. I, pp. 158R–164R, here p. 164R.

198 On this subject, see the descriptions of the death march given by surviving prisoners: Halbreich: *Before—During—After*, pp. 94–96; Bert Linder: *Verdammt ohne Urteil. Holocaust-Erinnerungen eines Überlebenden* (Graz/Vienna/Cologne: Syria, 1997), pp. 241–245; Imo Moszkowicz: *Der grauende Morgen Eine Autobiographie* (Munich: Knauer, 1998), pp. 162–175; Paul Steinberg: *Speak You Also: A Survivor's Reckoning* (New York: Henry Holt, 2000), pp. 133–144; Henry Wermuth: *Atme, mein Sohn, atme tief. Die Überlebensgeschichte* (Frankfurt am Main: bLoch, 1996), pp. 211–217; Elie Wiesel: *Night* [1960] (New York: Hill and Wang, 2006), pp. 81–103; Wohl: *Arbeit macht tot*, pp. 161–177. See also the numerous descriptions of the death march in the video portraits on the Website of the Wollheim-Memorial: <http://www.wollheim-memorial.de/en/ueberlebendeninterviews>.

199 Strzelecki: "Endphase," p. 255.