

# The Nizkor Project

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What proof exists that the Nazis practiced [genocide](#) or deliberately killed six million Jews?

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1. What proof exists that the Nazis practiced genocide or deliberately killed six million Jews?

The IHR says (original, Samisdat, and revised versions combined):

None. The only evidence is the postwar testimony of individual "survivors." This testimony is contradictory, and no "survivor" claims to have actually witnessed any gassing. There are no contemporaneous documents and no hard evidence whatsoever: no mounds of ashes, no crematoria capable of disposing of millions of corpses, no piles of clothes, no human soap, no lamp shades made of human skin, no records, no credible demographic statistics.

Nizkor replies:

Lie piled upon lie, with not a shred of proof.

This is as good a place as any to present some detailed evidence which is consistently ignored, as a sort of primer on Holocaust denial. It will make this reply much longer than the other sixty-five, but perhaps the reader will understand the necessity for this.

Let's look at their claims one at a time:

- Supposedly the only evidence, "the postwar testimony of individual survivors."

First of all, consider the implicit conspiracy theory. Notice how the testimony of every single inmate of every Nazi camp is automatically dismissed as unconvincing. This total dismissal of inmates' testimony, along with the equally-total dismissal of the Nazis' own testimony (!), is the largest unspoken assumption of Holocaust-denial.

This assumption, which is not often spelled out, is that the attempted Jewish genocide never took place, but rather that a secret conspiracy of Jews, starting around 1941, planted and forged myriad documents to prove that it did; then, after the war, they rounded up all the camp survivors and told them what to say.

The conspirators also supposedly managed to torture hundreds of key Nazis into confessing to crimes which they never committed, or into framing their fellow Nazis for those crimes, and to plant hundreds of documents in Nazi files which were never discovered until *after* the war, and only then, in many cases, by sheer luck. [Goebbels'](#) diary, for example, was barely rescued from being sold as 7,000 pages of scrap

paper, but buried in the scattered manuscript were several telling entries (as translated in Lochner, *The [Goebbels](#) Diaries*, 1948, pp. 86, 147-148):

*February 14, 1942:* [The Führer](#) once again expressed his determination to clean up the Jews in Europe pitilessly. There must be no squeamish sentimentalism about it. The Jews have deserved the catastrophe that has now overtaken them. Their destruction will go hand in hand with the destruction of our enemies. We must hasten this process with cold ruthlessness.

*March 27, 1942:* The procedure is a pretty barbaric one and not to be described here more definitely. Not much will remain of the Jews. On the whole it can be said that about 60 per cent of them will have to be liquidated whereas only 40 per cent can be used for forced labor.

[Michael Shermer](#) has [pointed out](#) that the Nazis' own estimate of the number of European Jews was eleven million, and sixty percent of eleven million is 6.6 million. This is fairly close to the actual figure. (Actually, forty percent was a serious overestimate of the survival rate of Jews who were captured, but there were many Jews who escaped.)

In any case, most of the diary is quite mundane, and interesting only to historians. Did the supposed Jewish conspiracy forge seven thousand pages to insert just a few lines? How did they manage to know Goebbels' affairs intimately enough to avoid contradictions, e.g. putting him or his associates in the wrong city at the wrong date?

As even the revisionist [David Cole](#) has [admitted](#), revisionists have yet to provide a satisfactory explanation of this document.

Regarding postwar testimony from Nazis, were they all tortured into confessing to heinous crimes which they supposedly did not commit? This might be believable if only a few Nazis were captured after the war, or maybe if some had courageously stood up in court and shouted to the world about the supposed attempt to silence them. But hundreds testified regarding the Holocaust, in trials dating from late 1945 until the 1960s. (For example, see [Böck](#), [Hofmann](#), [Hössler](#), [Klein](#), [Münch](#), and [Stark](#).)

Many of these Nazis testified as witnesses and were not accused of crimes. What was the basis for their supposed coercion?

Many of these trials were in German courts. Did the Germans torture their own countrymen? Well, Holocaust-deniers sometimes claim that the Jews have secretly infiltrated the German government and control everything about it. They prefer not to talk too much about this theory, however, because it is clearly on the lunatic fringe.

The main point is that not one of these supposed torture victims -- in fifty years, *not one* -- has come forth to support the claim that testimony was coerced.

On the contrary, confirmation and reconfirmation of their testimony has continued across the years. What coercion could have convinced Judge [Konrad Morgen](#) to testify to the crimes he witnessed at the International Nuremberg Trial in 1946, where he was not accused of any crime? And to later testify at the Auschwitz trial at Frankfurt, Germany, in 1963-65? What coercion was applied to SS Doctor [Johann](#)

[Kremer](#) to make him testify in his own defense in 1947, and then, after having been convicted in both Poland and Germany, emerge after his release to testify again as a witness at the Frankfurt trial? What coercion was applied to [Böck](#), Gerhard Hess, Hölblinger, Storch, and Wiebeck, all former SS men, all witnesses at Frankfurt, none accused of any crime there?

Holocaust-deniers point to small discrepancies in testimonies to try to discredit them. The assumption, unstated, is that the reader will accept minor discrepancies as evidence of a vast, over-reaching Jewish conspiracy. This is clearly ludicrous.

In fact, the discrepancies and minor errors in detail argue *against*, not for, the conspiracy theory. Why would the conspirators have given different information to different Nazis? In fact, if all the testimonies, from the Nazis' to the inmates', sounded too similar, it is certain that the Holocaust-deniers would cite *that* as evidence of a conspiracy.

What supposed coercion could reach across four decades, to force former SS-Untersturmführer Dr. [Hans Münch](#) to give an [interview](#), against the will of his family, on Swedish television? In the 1981 interview, he talked about [Auschwitz](#):

*Interviewer:* Isn't the ideology of extermination contrary to a doctor's ethical values?

*Münch:* Yes, absolutely. There is no discussion. But I lived in that environment, and I tried in every possible way to avoid accepting it, but I had to live with it. What else could I have done? And I wasn't confronted with it directly until the order came that I and my superior and another one had to take part in the exterminations since the camp's doctors were overloaded and couldn't cope with it.

*Interviewer:* I must ask something. Doubters claim that "special treatment" could mean anything. It didn't have to be extermination.

*Münch:* "Special treatment" in the terminology of the concentration camp means physical extermination. If it was a question of more than a few people, where nothing else than gassing them was worthwhile, they were gassed.

*Interviewer:* "Special treatment" was gassing?

*Münch:* Yes, absolutely.

And what supposed coercion could reach across four decades, to force former SS-Unterscharführer [Franz Suchomel](#) into giving an interview for the film *Shoah*? Speaking under (false) promises of anonymity, he told of the crimes committed at the [Treblinka](#) death camp (from the book *Shoah*, Claude Lanzmann, 1985, p. 54):

*Interviewer:* You are a very important eyewitness, and you can explain what Treblinka was.

*Suchomel:* But don't use my name.

*Interviewer:* No, I promised. All right, you've arrived at Treblinka.

*Suchomel*: So Stadie, the sarge, showed us the camps from end to end. Just as we went by, they were opening the gas-chamber doors, and people fell out like potatoes. Naturally, that horrified and appalled us. We went back and sat down on our suitcases and cried like old women.

Each day one hundred Jews were chosen to drag the corpses to the mass graves. In the evening the Ukrainians drove those Jews into the gas chambers or shot them. Every day!

Ask the deniers why they shrug off the testimony of Franz Suchomel. Greg Raven will [tell you](#) that "it is not evidence...bring me some evidence, please." Others will tell you that Suchomel and Münch were crazy, or hallucinating, or fantasizing.

But the fantasy is obviously in the minds of those who choose to ignore the mass of evidence and believe instead in a hypothetical conspiracy, supported by nothing but their imaginations.

That total lack of evidence is why the "conspiracy assumption" almost always remains an *unspoken* assumption. To our knowledge, there has not been one single solitary "revisionist" paper, article, speech, pamphlet, book, audiotape, videotape, or newsletter which provides any details about this supposed Jewish/Zionist conspiracy which did all the dirty work. Not one.

At best, the denial literature makes veiled references to the World Jewish Congress perpetuating a "hoax" (in [Butz](#), 1976) -- no details are provided. *Yet the entire case of Holocaust-denial rests on this supposed conspiracy.*

As for the testimony of the survivors, which the "revisionists" claim is the *only* evidence, there are indeed numerous testimonies to gassings and other forms of atrocities, from Jewish inmates who survived the camps, and also from other inmates like POWs. Many of the prisoners that testified about the gassing are not Jewish, of course. Look for instance at the testimony of Polish officer Zenon Rozansky about the first homicidal gassing in Auschwitz, in which 850 Russian POWs were gassed to death, in Reitlinger, *The Final Solution*, p. 154:

Those who were propped against the door leant with a curious stiffness and then fell right at our feet, striking their faces hard against the concrete floor. Corpses! Corpses standing bolt upright and filling the entire corridor of the bunker, till they were packed so tight that it was impossible for more to fall.

Which of the "revisionists" will deny this? Which of them was there? Which of them has the authority to tell Rozansky what he did or did not see?

The statement that "no 'survivor' claims to have actually witnessed any gassing" is clearly false; this was changed to "few survivors" in later versions, which is close to the truth.

But we do not need to rely solely on testimony, from the survivors, Nazis, or otherwise. Many wartime documents, *not* postwar descriptions, specifically regarding gassings and other atrocities, were seized by the U.S. armed forces. Most are in the National Archives in Washington, D.C.; some are in Germany.

Regarding the [gassing vans](#), precursors to the gas chambers, we find, for example, a top secret document from SS Untersturmführer Becker to SS Obersturmbannführer Rauff (from *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 999-1001):

If it has rained for instance for only one half hour, the van cannot be used because it simply skids away. It can only be used in absolutely dry weather. It is only a question now whether the van can only be used standing at the place of execution. First the van has to be brought to that place, which is possible only in good weather. ...

The application of gas usually is not undertaken correctly. In order to come to an end as fast as possible, the driver presses the accelerator to the fullest extent. By doing that the persons to be executed suffer death from suffocation and not death by dozing off as was planned. My directions now have proved that by correct adjustment of the levers death comes faster and the prisoners fall asleep peacefully.

And Just wrote of the gas vans to Rauff, on June 5, 1942, in a letter marked both "top secret" and "only copy". This is a horrific masterpiece of Nazi double-talk, referring to killing as "processing" and the victims as "subjects" and "the load." (See Kogon, *Nazi Mass Murder*, 1993, pp. 228-235.)

Since December 1941, for example, 97,000 were processed using three vans, without any faults occurring in the vehicles. ...

The normal capacity of the vans is nine to ten per square meter. The capacity of the larger special Saurer vans is not so great. The problem is not one of overloading but of off-road maneuverability on all terrains, which is severely diminished in this van. It would appear that a reduction in the cargo area is necessary. This can be achieved by shortening the compartment by about one meter. The problem cannot be solved by merely reducing the number of subject treated, as has been done so far. For in this case a longer running time is required, as the empty space also needs to be filled with CO [the poison exhaust gas]. ...

Greater protection is needed for the lighting system. The grille should cover the lamps high enough up to make it impossible to break the bulbs. It seems that these lamps are hardly ever turned on, so the users have suggested that they could be done away with. Experience shows, however, that when the back door is closed and it gets dark inside, the load pushes hard against the door. The reason for this is that when it becomes dark inside, the load rushes toward what little light remains. This hampers the locking of the door. It has also been noticed that the noise provoked by the locking of the door is linked to the fear aroused by the darkness.

Slip-ups occurred in written correspondence regarding the gas chambers themselves, some of which, fortunately, escaped destruction and were found after the war. A memo written to SS man Karl Bischoff on November 27, 1942 describes the gas chamber in Krema II not with the usual mundane name of "Leichenkeller," but rather as the "Sonderkeller" "special cellar."

And two months later, on January 29, 1943, Bischoff wrote a memo to Kammler,



referring to that same chamber as the "Vergasungskeller." (See Gutman, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, 1994, pp. 223, 227.) "Vergasungskeller" means exactly what it sounds like: "gassing cellar," an underground gas chamber.

Holocaust-deniers turn to [Arthur Butz](#), who provides a specious explanation for the Vergasungskeller: "Vergasung," he says, cannot refer to killing people with gas, but only to the process of converting a solid or liquid into gas. Therefore, he says the "Vergasungskeller," must have been a special room where the fuel for the Auschwitz ovens was converted into gas -- a "gasification cellar."

There are three problems with this explanation. First, "Vergasung" certainly *can* refer to killing people with gas; Butz does not speak German and he should not try to lecture about the language. Second, there is no room that could possibly serve this function which Butz describes -- years after writing his book, he admitted this, and helplessly suggested that there might be another building somewhere in the camp that might house a gasification cellar. Third, the type of oven used at Auschwitz did not require any gasification process! The ovens burned solid fuel. (See Gutman, *op. cit.*, pp. 184-193.)

So what does the term "gassing cellar" refer to? Holocaust-deniers have yet to offer any believable explanation.

An inventory, again captured after the war, revealed fourteen showerheads and one gas-tight door listed for the gas chamber in Krema III. Holocaust-deniers claim that room was a morgue; they do not offer to explain what use a morgue has for showerheads and a gas-tight door. (See a [photograph](#) of the document, or [Pressac](#), *Auschwitz: Technique and Operation*, 1989, pp. 231, 438.)

A memo from the Auschwitz construction office, dated March 31, 1943, says ([Hilberg](#), *Documents of Destruction*, 1971, pp. 207-208):

We take this occasion to refer to another order of March 6, 1943, for the delivery of a gas door 100/192 for Leichenkeller 1 of Krema III, Bw 30a, which is to be built in the manner and according to the same measure as the cellar door of the opposite Krema II, with peep hole of double 8 millimeter glass encased in rubber. This order is to be viewed as especially urgent....

Why would morgues have urgently needed peepholes made out of a double layer of third-of-an-inch-thick glass?

The question of whether it can be proved that the cyanide gas was used in the Auschwitz gas chambers has intrigued the deniers. Their much-heralded [Leuchter Report](#), for example, expends a great deal of effort on the question of [whether traces of cyanide residue remain](#) there today. But we do not need to look for chemical traces to confirm cyanide use (Gutman, *op. cit.*, p. 229):

Letters and telegrams exchanged on February 11 and 12 [1943] between the Zentralbauleitung and Topf mention a wooden blower for Leichenkeller 1. This reference confirms the use of the morgue as a gas chamber: Bischoff and Prüfer thought that the extraction of air mixed with concentrated prussic acid [cyanide] (20 g per cu m) required a

noncorroding ventilator.

Bischoff and Prüfer turned out to be wrong, and a metal fan ended up working acceptably well. But the fact that they *thought* it necessary demonstrates that cyanide was to be routinely used in the rooms which deniers call morgues. (Cyanide is useless for disinfecting morgues, as it does not kill bacteria.)

Other captured documents, even if they don't refer directly to some part of the extermination process, refer to it by implication. A captured memo to SS-Brigadeführer Kammler reveals that the expected incineration capacity of the Auschwitz ovens was a combined total of 4,756 corpses per day (see a [photograph](#) of the document or Kogon, *op. cit.*, p. 157).

Deniers often claim that this total could not be achieved in practice (see [question 45](#)). That's not the point. These crematoria were carefully designed, in 1942, to have sufficient capacity to dispose of 140,000 corpses per month -- in a camp that housed only 125,000. We can conclude that massive deaths were predicted, indeed planned-for, as early as mid-1942. A camp *designed* to incinerate its full capacity of inmates every four weeks is not merely a detention center.

Finally, apart from the abundant testimonies, confessions, and physical evidence of the extermination *process*, there is certainly no want of evidence of the Nazis' *intentions and plans*.

Here are just a few examples. [Hans Frank](#)'s diary (from *Nazi Conspiracy and Aggression*, 1946, Vol. I, pp. 992, 994):

But what should be done with the Jews? Do you think they will be settled down in the 'Ostland' [eastern territories], in [resettlement] villages? This is what we were told in Berlin: Why all this bother? We can do nothing with them either in the 'Ostland' nor in the 'Reichkommissariat.' So liquidate them yourself.

Gentlemen, I must ask you to rid yourself of all feeling of pity. We must annihilate the Jews, wherever we find them and wherever it is possible, in order to maintain the structure of the Reich as a whole. ...

We cannot shoot or poison these 3,500,000 Jews, but we shall nevertheless be able to take measures, which will lead, somehow, to their annihilation....

That we sentence 1,200,000 Jews to die of hunger should be noted only marginally.

[Himmler](#)'s speech at Posen on October 4, 1943 was captured on audiotape (*Trial of the Major War Criminals*, 1948, Vol. XXIX, p. 145, trans. by current author):

I refer now to the evacuation of the Jews, the extermination of the Jewish people. This is one of those things that is easily said: "the Jewish people are being exterminated," says every Party member, "quite true, it's part of our plans, the elimination of the Jews, extermination, we're doing it."

The extermination effort was even mentioned in at least one official Nazi court verdict.

In May 1943, a Munich court wrote in its [decision](#) against SS-Untersturmführer [Max Taubner](#) that:

The accused shall not be punished because of the actions against the Jews as such. The Jews have to be exterminated and none of the Jews that were killed is any great loss. Although the accused should have recognized that the extermination of the Jews was the duty of Kommandos which were set up especially for this purpose, he should be excused for considering himself to have the authority to take part in the extermination of Jewry himself.

And [Hitler](#) spoke quite clearly in public on no fewer than three occasions. On January 30, 1939, seven months before Germany invaded Poland, he spoke publicly to the Reichstag (transcribed from [Skeptic magazine](#), Vol. 2, No. 4, p. 50):

Today I want to be a prophet once more: if international finance Jewry inside and outside of Europe should succeed once more in plunging nations into another world war, the consequence will not be the Bolshevization of the earth and thereby the victory of Jewry, but the annihilation of the Jewish race in Europe.

By the way, this last phrase is, in German, "die Vernichtung der jüdischen Rasse in Europa," which German-speakers will realize is quite unambiguous.

In September, 1942:

...if Jewry should plot another world war in order to exterminate the Aryan peoples in Europe, it would not be the Aryan people which would be exterminated but Jewry...

On November 8, 1942:

You will recall the session of the Reichstag during which I declared: if Jewry should imagine that it could bring about an international world war to exterminate the European races, the result will not be the extermination of the European races, but the extermination of Jewry in Europe. People always laughed about me as a prophet. Of those who laughed then, countless numbers no longer laugh today, and those who still laugh now will perhaps no longer laugh a short time from now.

There are many other examples of documents and testimonies that could be presented.

Keep in mind that the [IHR](#)'s answer to "what proof exists?" is "none." It has certainly been demonstrated already that this pat answer is totally dishonest. And this is the main point we wish to communicate: that Holocaust-denial is dishonest.

We continue by analyzing the remaining, more-specific, claims about what evidence supposedly does not exist.

- "No mounds of ashes" is an internal contradiction. In an article in the journal published by the same IHR that publishes these Q&A, the Journal's editor reported that a Polish commission in 1946 found human ash at the Treblinka death camp to a



depth of over twenty feet. This article is available on [The IHR's web site](#).

(Apparently some survivors claimed that the corpses were always thoroughly cremated. Because uncremated human remains were mixed with the ash, the editor suggested that the testimonies were false. Amazingly, he had no comment on how a twenty-foot layer of human ashes came to be there in the first place. Perhaps he felt that to be unworthy of mention.)

There are also piles of ashes at [Maidanek](#). At [Auschwitz-Birkenau](#), ashes from cremated corpses were dumped into the rivers and swamps surrounding the camp, and used as fertilizer for nearby farmers' fields.

- "No crematoria" capable of disposing of millions of corpses? Absolutely false, the crematoria were more than capable of the job, according to both the Nazis' own internal memos and the testimony of survivors. Holocaust-deniers deliberately confuse civilian, funeral-home crematoria with the huge industrial ovens of the death camps. This is discussed in much detail in the replies to questions [42](#) and [45](#).
- "No piles of clothes"? Apparently, the IHR considers piles of clothes to be "hard evidence"! This is strange, because they do not deny the other sorts of piles found at Nazi camps: piles of [eyeglasses](#), piles of shoes (at [Auschwitz](#), [Belzec](#), and [Maidanek](#)), piles of [gold teeth](#), piles of [burned corpses](#), piles of [unburned corpses](#), piles of artificial limbs (see Swiebocka, *Auschwitz: A History in Photographs*, 1993, p. 210), piles of human hair (*ibid*, p. 211), piles of ransacked luggage (*ibid*, p. 213), piles of shaving-brushes (*ibid*, p. 215), piles of combs (*ibid*), piles of pots and pans (*ibid*), and yes, even the piles of clothes (*ibid*, p. 214) that the IHR claims do not exist.

Perhaps the authors of the 66 Q&A realized that it was dangerous for them to admit that these piles were hard evidence, because then they would also be forced to admit a number of other things as "hard evidence." Perhaps this is why they removed this phrase from the revised 66 Q&A.

If items were not generally found in mass quantities, it is only because the Nazis distributed them to the German population. A [memo](#) on this was captured, revealing that they even redistributed women's underwear.

- "No human soap"? This is true, but misleading. Though there is [some evidence](#) that soap was made from corpses on a very limited experimental scale, the rumored "mass production" was never done, and no soap made from human corpses is known to exist. However, there is sworn testimony, never refuted, from British POWs and a German army official, stating that soap experiments were performed, and the recipe for the soap was captured by the Allies. To state flatly that the Nazis did not make soap from human beings is incorrect.
- "No lamp shades made of human skin?" False -- lampshades and other human-skin "ornaments" were introduced as evidence in both trials of Ilse Koch, and were shown to a U.S. Senate investigation committee in the late 40s. We know they were made of human skin because they bore tattoos, and because a microscopic forensic analysis of the items was performed. (A detailed page on this is being prepared.)
- "No records"? This is nonsense (which may explain why this claim was removed from the "revised" versions of the 66 Q&A). True, extermination by gassing was

always referred to with code-words, and those victims who arrived at death camps only to be immediately gassed were not recorded in any books. But there are slip-ups in the code-word usage that reveal the true meanings, as already described. There are inventories and requisitions for the Krema which reveal items anomalous with ordinary use but perfect for mass homicidal gassing. There are deportation train records which, pieced together, speak clearly. And so on. Several examples have been given above.

- "No credible demographic statistics"? This is the second internal contradiction -- see [question 2](#) and [question 15](#). The Anglo-American committee who studied the issue estimated the number of Jewish victims at 5.7 million. This was based on population statistics. Here is the exact breakdown, country by country:

Germany	195,000
Austria	53,000
Czechoslovakia	255,000
Denmark	1,500
France	140,000
Belgium	57,000
Luxemburg	3,000
Norway	1,000
Holland	120,000
Italy	20,000
Yugoslavia	64,000
Greece	64,000
Bulgaria	5,000
Rumania	530,000
Hungary	200,000
Poland	3,271,000
USSR	1,050,000
Less dispersed refugees	(308,000)
Total number of Jews killed	5,721,500

(This estimate was arrived at using population statistics, and not by adding the number of casualties at each camp. These are also available -- for instance, a [separate file](#) with the ruling of a German court regarding the number of victims in [Treblinka](#) is available. The SS kept rather accurate records, and many of the documents survived, reinforced by eyewitness accounts).

Some estimates are lower, some are higher, but this is the magnitude in question. In an article in CMU's student newspaper, the head of CMU's History Department, Peter Stearns, is quoted as saying that newly discovered documents -- especially in the former USSR -- indicate that the number of victims is higher than six million. Other historians claim not much over five million. The *Encyclopedia of the Holocaust* uses 5,596,000 as a minimum and 5,860,000 as a maximum (Gutman, 1990, p. 1799).

- In summary:

"Revisionists" often claim, correctly, that the burden of proof is on historians. The proof, of course, has been a matter of public record since late 1945, and is available in libraries around the world. The burden has been met, many, many times over. You've just seen a brief presentation of some of the highlights of that immense body of proof; much more is readily available.

To even argue that the Holocaust never happened is ludicrous. To claim straight-faced that none of this proof even exists is beyond ludicrous, and it is a clear example of "revisionist" dishonesty.

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