

SPECIAL B.B.C. BROADCAST ON  
GERMAN CRIMES AGAINST THE JEWS  
Sunday, December 5th, 1943.

It is a year ago this month since the Foreign Secretary, speaking in the House of Commons, warned the German Government that those responsible for terrible crimes against the Jews should not escape retribution at the hands of the United Nations. Here is a short report, compiled with every care, to tell listeners some of the things that the Germans have done to the Jews since that declaration was made.

Poland's geographical position has left her an isolated country in this war; a country where the Germans can carry out their frightfulness in fairly secure knowledge that little will leak to the outside world. So Poland has become the killing ground for Jews deported from all parts of Europe.

In January, the first Jews from Bulgaria arrived in Poland. In February, those from France; in March, the trainloads from Greece started arriving. In Poland itself, the thirteenth of the month saw the beginning of the three-day liquidation of the Cracow Ghetto. By the end of March, it is estimated that one million — yes, one million — Jews had been executed or had died in Polish camps.

Then April, and the Vilna Ghetto was "evacuated"; fifty thousand Jews lived in Vilna in 1940. Deportations from Holland began with the announcement that Jews in that country were to be sent for employment in the east.

In France, during July, SS Officer Brunner took over the Drancy concentration camp because — so it was said — the French officials were "too lenient." He began a small scale terror. No letters were allowed in or out, except for new arrivals, and they were ordered to write to their families to reveal their addresses. Then the families were told: "Report for 'voluntary' internment or your parents will be shot."

In July, too, 150 Dutch Jews were machine-gunned at Tursk, in Poland; 340 Dutch Jews were machine-gunned at Socky, in Poland; 100 Jewish Dutch women and children were murdered at Potock, in Poland.

On to September, 15,000 Jews were living in frightful conditions at the Velodrome d'Évier, a covered bicycle racing-track in Paris. Each was allotted one square metre of sleeping space. There was no water for washing, little to drink. The food supplied was meagre or none at all. Hysterical Jews pleaded with the guards: "Please kill us." Some jumped from the windows. Epidemics swept through the camp — especially among children.

And what happened in Poland?

Most of Warsaw's Jews perished in the infamous Treblinka camp. Many accounts have leaked through. One report says that after a 48-hour train journey without food and water, those who survived were driven to the camp. The men were separated from the women and children. Then the German spoke: "Up till now you have worked so little for the German State. That is why you have been sent here to work more. This is a transit camp. Leave your clothing here and, after a bath, you will get two sets of new clothing." Some believed him. Others took poison. Then the men, and the women and children were led into separate courtyards. From there they reach the so-called baths -- which were gas chambers. There was a little screaming, and then silence.

Gangs of Jews were forced to clear out the gas chambers and bury the dead. The clothing is sorted out for despatch for German use. Those able-bodied men who were picked out for this work were spared, for the time being -- but not for long. The man who escaped says that these picked men have a maximum expectation of life of 20 days. They also die by the same route, in relays of 100. The Germans want no living Jewish witnesses of the horrors they commit in Treblinka.

These are some -- a few only -- of the things the Germans have done to the Jews in Europe.

The World Jewish Congress' Institute of Jewish Affairs in America estimates that well over 3,000,000 of the Jews in Europe have been killed since the beginning of the war.

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