This document is a key that was prepared in June 1945 by the US Army for postwar investigations of crimes committed at the Buchenwald concentration camp. It explains the symbols and abbreviations for the causes of death given on an associated list of deceased Russian POWs. Allied investigators frequently presented Nazi documents (and their translations) as evidence in war crimes investigations, and the ITS holds many such documents. This list is presented here to give the reader a sense of the many ways prisoners perished in Nazi camps, although in most cases Nazi record keepers listed deaths as having been due to tuberculosis or heart attack no matter the actual cause.

**Translated List of Causes of Inmate Deaths**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>German Term</th>
<th>Translation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Auf der Flucht erschossen</td>
<td>shot while trying to escape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Herzschwäche</td>
<td>weakness of heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BB</td>
<td>Akute Herzschwäche</td>
<td>acute weakness of heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Herz- und Kreislaufschwäche</td>
<td>weakness of heart and of circulation of the blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CC</td>
<td>Körper- und Kreislauf- schwäche</td>
<td>weakness of body and of circulation of the blood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Lungenentzündung</td>
<td>pneumonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DD</td>
<td>Bronchopneumonie</td>
<td>bronchopneumonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Ruhr</td>
<td>dysentery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Altersschwäche</td>
<td>senile decay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Blutvergiftung</td>
<td>blood poisoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>Selbstmord</td>
<td>suicide</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Nierenentzündung</td>
<td>nephritis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>Tod durch feindlichen Bombenangriff</td>
<td>killed by bombs during an enemy air raid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>Harnfelltenschwäche</td>
<td>pleuritis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Gripppe</td>
<td>influenza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Herzschlag</td>
<td>heart failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>Infektiöser Magen- und Darmkatarr</td>
<td>infectious gastritis and enteritis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>Lungentuberkulose</td>
<td>tuberculosis of the lungs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>Zellgewebeszündung</td>
<td>phlegmonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>Herzusbeulentartung</td>
<td>myocardiitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Lungenoedem</td>
<td>pulmonary oedema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>Hirnschlag</td>
<td>apoplexy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>Rose</td>
<td>erysipelas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>Dickdarmentzündung</td>
<td>colitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>Akute Dickdarmentzündung</td>
<td>acute colitis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Herzinsuffizienz</td>
<td>insufficiency of the heart</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z</td>
<td>Allgemeine Körperschwäche</td>
<td>general bodily weakness</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Translated list of causes of inmate deaths, 1.1.5.0/82065042/ITS Digital Archive.
TRANSLATED LIST OF CAUSES OF INMATE DEATHS

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

• What does this document indicate about the quality of medical care provided to camp inmates?

• What can be inferred from this document about inmates’ living conditions?

• Some of the causes of death are medically nonspecific. Identify these and discuss ways in which such terms might have been applied euphemistically.

• Who might have applied these symbols to inmates’ documents? Would camp guards, medical professionals, or both have been involved in creating documentation of inmates’ deaths?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

• Living conditions within the camp system

• German medical professionals’ roles within the camp system

• Inmate escape attempts and other forms of resistance

• Death rates among inmate populations within the camp system
SS OFFICERS GATHERED TO BID FAREWELL TO A PLATOON COMMANDER AT GROSS-ROSEN IN 1941. Originally established as a subcamp of the Sachsenhausen concentration camp in 1940, Gross-Rosen became an independent camp at the center of a vast network of approximately one hundred forced labor subcamps in 1941. Inmates were forced to work in a granite quarry owned by the Deutsche Erd- und Steinwerke (DEST), an SS-owned company, and in armaments factories operated by German civilian companies such as Krupp, I.G. Farben, and Daimler Benz. The inmate population of the Gross-Rosen camp complex grew to more than 76,000 people before it was evacuated in February 1945. At the time of this picture in 1941, camp officers were gathered to say goodbye to a colleague who had been responsible for the expansion of the camp in 1940. The man with the dog is SS Lieutenant Colonel Arthur Roedl, the commandant of Gross-Rosen. Roedl and his officers posed for several such photographs together, demonstrating the camaraderie they enjoyed with one another even amidst the sufferings of the camp complex they administered.

Photo credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, courtesy of Martin Mansson.
This order to concentration camp commandants was originally written in November 1941, several months after the invasion of the Soviet Union, when many Soviet prisoners-of-war had been captured. It relates a policy change designed to exploit the captured soldiers for their labor. This transcription and an English translation were prepared for the US Army in the course of its postwar investigations of activities at the Buchenwald concentration camp. Both documents include an added notation that indicates its review by a board of former prisoners who conveyed opinions and impressions of the evidence for analysis in the larger investigations.

ORDER REGARDING SOVIET PRISONERS OF WAR

Abschrift:

Der Reichsführer - SS
Ingenieur der Konzentrationslager
Feldpost, Nr. 167419/III
Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Natzweiler, Auschwitz, Groß Rosen.

Betreff: Beauftragung der SS zur Herstellung von Arbeiterlager Stalag Vb

An die Lagersünder der Konzentrationslager
Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Natzweiler, Auschwitz, Groß Rosen.

Abteilung: Lagerführer, Schutzhaftlagerführer (SS), Verwaltungsstellen

Der Reichsführer - SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei hat sich grundsätzlich damit einverstanden erklärt, dass von den in den Konzentrationslagern zur Herstellung von Arbeiterlagern (insbesondere Kommisaren), die auf Grund ihrer körperlichen Arbeitsteilung im Lager, Betriebsorganisation, herangezogen werden, die Herstellung von Arbeiterlagern durchgeführt werden soll.

Hierzu wird befohlen:


gez. Käldor (?)
SS-Brigadeführer und Generalmajor der Waffen-SS
abzeichnet: W.

Anmerkung der Prüfstelle K.L.Bu.: Es ist anzunehmen, dass diese Verordnung überhaupt nicht beachtet wurde; das hätte den Widerstand nur noch mehr erhöht. Wir werden daher das Verfahren strenger beachten und durch die SS erweitern. Die im Krematorium eingelagerten Russen waren durchweg körperlich nicht erwachsen.
Order Regarding Soviet Prisoners of War

Transcription/Duplicate:

Reich Commander - SS
Inspector of Concentration Camps
Oranienburg, 15 November 1941
Pol. / file no.: 14 f 14 /L/Or.
Confidential journal entry no. 213/41

Subject: Execution of Russian Prisoners of War
Reference: None
Attachments: None

To the
Camp Commandants of the
Concentration Camps
Dachau, Sachsenhausen, Buchenwald, Mauthausen, Flossenbürg,
Neuengamme, Auschwitz, Groß Rosen.

Abd. to: Camp doctors, POW camp commandants (E), Administration

The Reich Commander - SS and Chief of the German Police have agreed that Russian POWs (especially high level officers) who have been transferred to concentration camps for execution but whose physical condition permits them to work in the stone quarry shall have their executions postponed for this reason.

Approval for these measures must be obtained in advance from the head of the Security Police and the SD [Security Service].

It is hereby ordered:

Upon the arrival in camps of transports of prisoners for execution, the physically strong Russians, who are suitable for work in a quarry, are to be selected by the commandant of the POW camp (E) and the camp doctor.

A list of the selected Russians should be submitted in duplicate. The doctor must note on the list that there are no medical concerns contradicting assignment for labor. After the consent of the head of the security police and the SD, the transfer of Russian POWs to the quarry camp will be ordered.

Signed: Klüder (?)

SS-Major General and
Major General of the Waffen-SS.
Signed: W.

Note from the inspection authority of the Buchenwald concentration camp:
It is to be assumed that this order was not observed at all; it would have only made more work for the murderers. Moreover this procedure would have required a higher level of oversight by the SS. The Russians who were sent to the crematorium were always able-bodied men.
ORDER REGARDING SOVIET PRISONERS OF WAR

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

• What is the subject of this order, and to whom was it addressed?

• When was this memorandum written and in what context? In what stage was the war at the time?

• What might be inferred from the details in this document concerning the development and planning of Nazi occupation policies?

• What role does this order assign to camp doctors? What does this suggest about the role of the medical profession within the camp system?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

• The Nazi occupation of the territories of the Soviet Union

• Nazi policies regarding the treatment of Soviet soldiers, officers, and political commissars

• The conflicts and tensions between Nazi policies of destruction and exploitation

• The improvisational nature of Nazi policies and ideologies
German authorities established several labor camps in southeast Poland near the small town of Bełżec on the western bank of the Bug River in 1940, when the Bug served as the demarcation line between the Nazi and Soviet spheres of occupied Poland. The labor camps were dismantled at the end of 1940, but SS authorities constructed a killing center on the site in November 1941 after the invasion of the Soviet Union and the escalation of Nazi genocidal practices. In many ways, the experience of the Roma under the Third Reich paralleled that of the Jews, as Nazi racial concepts deemed Roma “racially inferior” and characterized them as itinerant, wandering “Gypsies” that comprised a parasitic criminal underclass requiring concentration, segregation, and ultimately annihilation. The exact number of Roma murdered by the Third Reich and its allies is unknown but likely exceeds 220,000. After the war, the Roma continued to face discrimination, including great difficulties achieving recognition or compensation for their sufferings.
This telegram ordered the deportation of all Jews from concentration camps in greater Germany in November 1942. The anti-Jewish policies officially adopted by the Third Reich became incrementally more radical, especially in the context of the war. The regime committed itself to the complete destruction of Jewish life in Europe in the months after German forces invaded the Soviet Union in summer 1941. The complicated transfers of all Jewish camp inmates within the Reich to killing centers on occupied Polish territory required that camp authorities, police, and unknown numbers of railway workers become complicit in the processes of deportation and destruction.
ORDER TO REMOVE JEWS FROM REICH TERRITORIES
TRANSLATION

TO ALL STATE POLICE CONTROL CENTERS, COMMANDANTS, COMMANDING OFFICERS AND REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CHIEFS OF THE SIPO [abbreviation for Sicherheitspolizei, the state security police] AND THE SD [abbreviation for Sicherheitsdienst, the intelligence service of the Nazi Party].

SUBJECT: INSTRUCTIONS FOR JEWISH PRISONERS IN THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS.

THE RFSSU CHIEF DDT POL [abbreviation for Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei (Heinrich Himmler)] HAS COMMANDED THAT ALL THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS IN THE REICH ARE MADE FREE OF JEWS, AND THAT ALL JEWS ARE TO BE TRANSFERRED TO THE AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP AND THE LUBLIN PRISONER-OF-WAR [POW] CAMP. THE INSPECTOR OF THE CONCENTRATION CAMP HAS ALREADY ORDERED THE RELOCATION ARRANGEMENTS. ON THE TRANSFER OF SUCH PRISONERS AGAINST THE RESPECTIVE CONCENTRATION CAMP’S KNOWLEDGE — ADMISSIONS OF JEWISH PRISONERS TO CONCENTRATION CAMPS — EXCEPT AUSCHWITZ CONCENTRATION CAMP AND LUBLIN POW CAMP — ARE THEREFORE NO LONGER IN QUESTION. IF IN ANY CASE ANOTHER CONTRARY ARRANGEMENT EXISTS, I REQUEST COMPLIANCE TO THE CFSS UCHDDTPOL [sic; this abbreviation for Reichsführer SS und Chef der Deutschen Polizei (Heinrich Himmler) includes a typo and should have read “RFSS UCHDDTPOL”] ORDER TO APPLY TO JEWISH PRISONERS. FIRST-DEGREE MISCHLINGE [literally “mongrels” or “half-breeds,” “Mischlinge” referred pejoratively to those with both Jewish and non-Jewish heritage] ARE ALSO TO BE COUNTED AS JEWISH PRISONERS.
ORDER TO REMOVE JEWS FROM REICH TERRITORIES

SUGGESTED APPROACHES TO THIS DOCUMENT

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

• Who were the intended recipients of this telegram, and why was this sent to them?

• To which locations were Jewish camp inmates to be transferred? Why might this have been so?

• Which police services were included in the list of recipients? What roles did police play in deportation actions? How did police become involved in the regime’s crimes?

• How did Nazi anti-Jewish policies become incrementally more radical before and during the war?

FURTHER RESEARCH TOPICS RELATED TO THIS DOCUMENT:

• The development and radicalization of Nazi anti-Jewish policies

• Deportations of European Jews

• The relationship between policies of forced labor and mass murder

• The historical controversy surrounding the origins of the so-called Endlösung (literally, “Final Solution,” which the Nazis used as a euphemism for the destruction of Jewish life in Europe)