

WILHELM SCHNEPPKE

The enclosed interrogation report of Dr. Wilhelm
Gustav Schnepke, shows that the SD as stated the
No. 1 program to exterminate political undesirables.

TESTIMONY OF: Dr. Wilhelm Gustave
SCHURFFE

TAKEN BY: Capt. Robt. Larson
Inf., Act. Asst. Army
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INTERPRETER: T/4 Fred Howard, 32799350, G-2, First U. S. Army

TAKEN AT: Master Interrogation Center. DATE: 14 April 1945

1. Q. State your full name, age, organization, and home.
A. Dr. Wilhelm Gustave Schurffe, age 33; Volksturm, Frick Corps,
Cecorland, 20th Battalion; home address, Mielfeld.

2. Q. Are you a member of the Nazi Party?
A. Yes, since 1933.

3. Q. Could you give me information very briefly of the time you
spent in Kiev, Russia?

A. I was in Radom in March 1941 and after the fall I went to
Kiev. In June 1941 I was ordered there (Kiev) and to remain there
until March 1942.

4. Q. By whom were you employed?

A. I acted in the order of the Sonderbeauftragter Des Reichs-
sanitäts Fuchrer (Special Envoy of the Reich Medical Department),
who was my immediate superior.

5. Q. Could you tell me something about your immediate superiors
and the other people who worked with you?

A. Yes, Dr. Muller of Herdrige, Westphalia, was the chief of the
Pathological Institute. Assistant to Dr. Muller was I personally,
whose office I took over five months later. I worked under the cover
name of Hilbert Neum. Dr. Dehnke from Munich was in the Psychological
Department of the hospital. Dr. Edward Hartstein, Westend, Berlin. Dr.
Bertilsmann, Hamburg, from George Hospital. Dr. Opmann, from
Regendortfer of the Hamburg Hospital. Professor Dr. Felixhausen
from Greifswald, near Berlin, being sort of an inspector of our
hospital. Assistant Doctor Layman from Orftswald, near Berlin. Dr.
Neumann from Neu-Sup in, near Berlin. Dr. Hartenstein from Emige-
burg. Dr. Hartwege from Nurnburg. Dr. Berndt from Berlin, Charite
Hospital. Dr. Blausmann from Stettin. Dr. Schneemann, from Cologne.
Dr. Erichson from Hamburg. Dr. Bohr from Nurnburg. Other help
in this hospital were women who were there at all times. The non-
professional members of that group were SD personnel from the
Abschnitt, Ukraina. After this group was in operation for about
five months, I as previously stated took charge of this group,
replacing Dr. Muller.

6. Q. Were previously mentioned doctors of the group in Kiev there as long as you were?

A. No, other doctors worked only for a shorter period than I. After doctors were once discharged from Kiev, they would not be used again in this place; in other words, they were only used once.

7. Q. What was your job in the Kiev hospital?

A. The liquidation of the "living unworthy to live people."

8. Q. What do you mean by that?

A. I understand that under that heading these people were people with inherited diseases, were people with poor health. We were working on a special measure which was directed against people unworthy to live, women and men. The unworthy living people, we differentiate in two groups, people old and sick, physically and mentally undesirable. Some of these people had epilepsy, syphilis or the brain or heart, cancer, and other similar diseases. That is the first group. The other group were the political or unreliable elements, such as inferior races -- Jews, Gypsies, and so forth.

9. Q. For what reason did you participate in that?

A. As order of the Sonderbeauftragter Des Reichsaerztes Fuehrer (Special Envoy of the National Medical Department).

10. Q. Could you give me your personal opinion about that?

A. Personally, I was convinced of the righteousness of the destroying of living unworthy to live people but did not believe in the destruction of the upper classes of these inferior races, especially the Jews.

11. Q. Is it true that you worked in the Pathological Institute of Kiev where liquidation by means of injections was administered?

A. Yes.

12. Q. Give me the number of persons which were brought to the Institute?

A. Railroad transports which arrived in Kiev three to four times weekly with a capacity of 1,000 men and women. These people were then brought into camps in the vicinity of Kiev. From there these people were brought to us in closed trucks. Each transport arrived at the hospital would bring three to four hundred persons at a time.

13. Q. Were these people treated by the entire hospital staff at a time?

A. No. A trained group which was composed of four or five doctors. They would in turn be relieved by another group. By using this rotation system each individual doctor worked only three or four days a week.

14. Q. What was the personal average of each doctor per day? How many did each doctor kill a day?

A. The daily achievement of an individual doctor was around 100 persons.

15. Q. That figure 100 -- is that the maximum number of people killed per day?

A. The figure would usually run around a 100, which would mean that one doctor liquidated in form of injections, three to four hundred people in a week.

16. Q. It seems to me that figures you just gave me don't agree.

A. No, I made a mistake before. The figure ran most likely between two and three hundred per week. You should not forget that not all of the SD men personnel were trained.

17. Q. Through what method were the lives of the "living unworthy to live" taken?

A. Through injection of morphine.

18. Q. What kind of injector did you use?

A. One injector each has a capacity of 10 cubic centimeters. In the beginning we tried to work with only five cubic centimeters but had difficulty at times. We changed later to using 10 cubic centimeters. The reason for that was that the amount of the injection was not high enough for some people.

19. Q. Could you describe the death of a person if liquidated by this method?

A. First of all, signs of breathing difficulties are visible, then shrinking of the pupils of the eyes, blue discoloring of the face, after that quicker breathing, then breathing stops altogether. Next stage is death.

20. Q. What was the time element between injection and death?

A. The average was approximately one hour.

21. Q. Did you need any help while administering the injection?

A. Yes, doctors were aided by two SD personnel in the hospital clinic.

22. Q. Does that apply to the patients that were in bed also?

A. This applied, of course, to all patients in bed. Everyone was put to bed after arriving at the hospital.

23. Q. Were the aiding SD personnel trained?

A. Yes, they had received a four weeks course.

24. Q. The deaths, as it seems, were given in a humane fashion?

A. Yes, the people were put into a sleeping stage very fast, giving them a feeling of happiness. This feeling was ended only by death.

25. Q. Did you personally administer injections the first five months of your stay there, before you became head of this organization?

A. During the first five weeks I was fully occupied administering injections. Thereafter my activities tapered off to the extent of ceasing entirely when I became head of the hospital.

26. Q. Were men, women, and children liquidated at this hospital?
A. We did not inject any children according to my knowledge.
27. Q. And how about women?
A. I believe that women which we injected were diseased through mealy contact or diseased through inheritance.
28. Q. You mentioned that women receiving injections at your hospital had diseases. Are you trying to say that similar patients ever arrived in your hospital because of their race or religion?
A. A high percentage we received were diseased.
29. Q. Did you interest yourself in these cases, and did you convince yourself that persons that arrived in your institution were actually sick?
A. Every patient who entered the hospital was catalogued according to his medical history, which means that every patient before liquidation by form of injection, received a medical diagnosis.
30. Q. Do you know of any persons that were ever discharged from your hospital after being examined?
A. Some persons were discharged after examination proved that they were not diseased.
31. Q. Are you trying to say that people in the hospital who upon examination proved to be not diseased were discharged?
A. Yes, this did not pertain to the political undesirable, and to the inferior races.
32. Q. Could you be more precise on the last-mentioned point. Why couldn't political undesirables and persons of inferior races be discharged?
A. None of these people ever were discharged because they were brought directly by the SD to the hospital. The first liquidation acts were directed against Turminians and low Caucasian races.
33. Q. And the later acts?
A. With the establishing of the German Health Department, only diseased and inferior elements were brought to our hospital.
34. Q. Did that mean that political undesirable bias and minor races and Jews were handled by your organization through the German Health Department?
A. No.
35. Q. Then, please explain yourself?
A. This category of people came to us directly from the SD.
36. Q. In other words, you as the operating doctor were unable to determine whether the patient was detained to your hospital through the Health Department or directly through the SD?

37. Q. Was the reason the patient was there at the hospital indicated on the Health Department report?

A. Certainly. On the medical form the disease of the people was indicated by the form of disease they had, such as syphilis, herpes, scabies, or the ones who were deformed.

38. Q. But weren't you convinced that you received patients of the non-medical type?

A. Yes, through the SD. Those who did not arrive through the Health Department were SD cases.

39. Q. What, then, separated the medical forms of the two groups?

A. There were two definite sorts of history forms. One type stating the various types of disease and the other merely stating SD.

40. Q. What was indicated on the medical forms as to sickness or disease of the patients?

A. The SD cases were not required to give any explanation.

41. Q. What percentage of your patients were SD cases?

A. It fluctuated.

42. Q. Then let me put my question differently. I personally believe that the SD percentage was by far the larger percentage, don't you agree?

A. Yes.

43. Q. What happened to the corpses?

A. The bodies were handled by Mongols, who were furnished by the Health Department, and were transported to a nearby crematory.

44. Q. After you departed from Kiev, did your organization continue its work?
A. I know that it operated for a few months after I left and then it closed.
45. Q. Do you know who your successor was at the hospital?
A. No. I do not know my successor. I left before he was picked by the SD.
46. Q. Could you give me an approximate figure of how many people were liquidated during your nine months stay at this hospital at Kiev?
A. I can only calculate a figure on an average weekly basis since exact figures were kept by the SD. I estimate a figure, however, of 110,000 to 140,000 people.
47. Q. Before your work at Kiev, you stated that you had been at Radom. Were your activities at Radom similar to those while at Kiev?
A. I was in Radom merely for studying purposes and worked as a surgeon in the hospital. With the fall of Kiev I was ordered from Radom.
48. Q. Are you trying to say that prior to Kiev you performed the normal duties of a doctor?
A. Yes, and I would like to point out that also after my Kiev period I worked as a normal doctor and never performed duties similar to those at Kiev again.
49. Q. Were you ever asked to do work similar to that at Kiev?
A. No.
50. Q. Why did you leave Kiev?
A. Because my nerves were shot. It is obvious that this type of activity is not pleasant, especially not in my case, since I saw it was my highest duty to practice surgery.
51. Q. You are, of course, completely aware of what your work meant to Germany, and was just as much aware that many people went through your institution were innocent?
A. Obviously. In our circle of German Doctors we were completely aware of the large responsibility which was placed upon our shoulders by the Special Envoy of the Reich Medical Department. At that time we did not have any choice in the matter, aside from the mistakes which were made, I believe in this system. It is comparable to pruning a tree, thereby removing the old undesirable branches in order to produce the highest yield. In a nation this system must be carried out to prevent decadence.
52. Q. Do you believe the SD are responsible for the methods you mentioned whereby certain innocent persons were eliminated?
A. Yes.
53. Q. You are, in other words, a believer of the Voelkischesedanka (the ideology of a pure Aryan race as typified by the ideology of the Nazis)?
A. If you will understand under the Voelkischesedanka, the will of the nation to exist like it was kept by the German race, Jewish race, and other high qualified races, yes, I agree with you.
54. Q. Did you say that in order to keep a race clean, maybe even improve its standards, methods of liquidation or sterilization are justified to be used within the nation or within the race?
A. In the living of two races together it should not be necessary to create a disturbance of any sort since force is usually met by force. It is certainly left to each individual race to protect his biological power through certain measures such as National Socialistic Culture Laws from Nurnburg.
- 102