

## New NS proceedings for aiding and abetting the 36,000-fold mass murder of the former SS guard Hans-Werner H. in Berlin 2019.

At the moment, the public prosecutor's office is investigating whether the defendant is fit to stand trial.

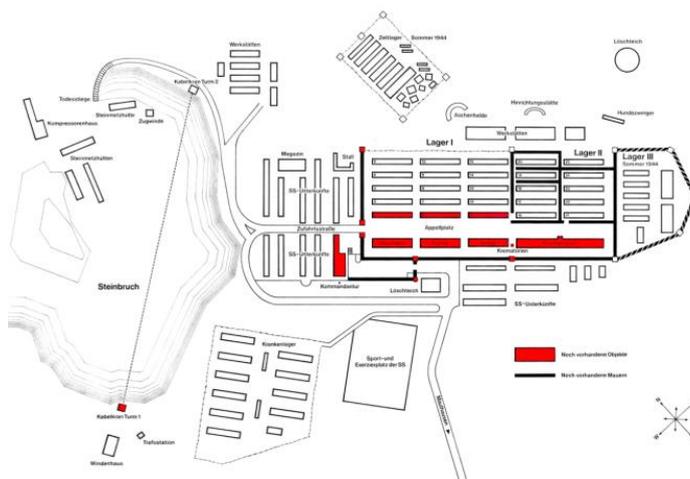
Allegation:

In summer 1944 and spring 1945, the defendant Hans-Werner H. worked as a member of the 16th company of the "SS-Death head troop" in the guard area of the Mauthausen concentration camp (inner and outer guard chain).

The public prosecutor's office accuses the now 95-year-old Hans-Werner H. (born in Austria) of having tried to promote or at least facilitate the thousands of killings of inmates of the Mauthausen concentration camp with his guard duty. At least 36,223 people were killed in the concentration camp during the time of the crime. The killings were therefore carried out mainly by gassing, but also by "dead bath actions", injections and shootings. Other concentration camp inmates starved to death or froze to death. Hans-Werner H. is said to have known all the killing methods as well as the disastrous living conditions of the prisoners. The public prosecutor's office reported that he was aware that the killings were constantly carried out on a large number of people and that in this way and with the regularity that had occurred; it was only possible to kill if the victims were guarded by persons such as him.

Survivors (or relatives of these) of the Mauthausen concentration camp in the period from summer 1944 to spring 1945 described above are now being sought, who feel able to participate in the trial against the accused Mr. Hans-Werner H. in terms of health. The trial is free of any costs for the victims or their relatives. Survivors who cannot attend the trial for health reasons can write a written statement which will then be read out by Mr. Ali Mohammed Khubaib in their place during the trial.

## Mauthausen Concentration Camp 1938-1945



Map KZ Mauthausen

"Nature is cruel; therefore we must also be cruel"

*Adolf Hitler*

After Adolf Hitler seized power in 1933, various concentration camps or so-called re-education camps were set up in 1934, depriving people of all their rights and dignity. The first of all camps was "Dachau" near Munich. It originally served as a camp for political prisoners, enemies of the state and criminals.

Commander of the camp was Theodor Eicke. Through Eicke, Dachau became the SS training centre for all coming camps in the "III Reich" and the annexed areas by the Nazis. Mauthausen was the largest camp on Austrian territory. Mauthausen was also one of the first camps of "category III" about 20 km away from Linz, which Hitler wanted to completely redesign in his megalomania. "Category III" means "annihilation through work" of the prisoners, which was also implemented 100% in Mauthausen with the knowledge and also the partial acceptance of the population and the ruthless zeal of the SS guard. In 1938, the first prisoners arrived at the station with special trains, and then had to walk the steep path across the city of Mauthausen to the concentration camp under the harassment of the SS guards. But the most brutal form of extermination, which was carried out in a sadistic manner, was "death bathing" in icy cold. Prisoners were sprayed with water in the freezing cold in a pool built for the purpose. Some of them tried to climb out of the pool, but were then pushed back by the SS guards. Some of the prisoners also drowned in the pool, which led to amusement among the guards. The second brutal and inhuman variant after shooting, starving and finally gassing was working in the nearby quarry called the "Wiener Graben". The prisoners had to carry granite blocks weighing up to 50 kilograms up a steep 186-step "death staircase" to a height of 31 meters, which required enormous physical effort.



**Austria - Mauthausen concentration camp, prisoners in the quarry on the death staircase**

**Source: Federal Archives**

**\* Inscription at the foot of the death staircase \***

"At the time of the concentration camp, their steps, which today are uniform and of normal height, were arbitrarily lined up, unevenly large boulders of various shapes. The boulders, often half a meter high, required a great deal of effort to climb. Among other things, the SS enjoyed making the last rows of a descending column glide out by kicking and blows from the butt, so that they rolled down the steps in a desert pile in a fall, rousing their foremen. At the end of a working day, when the march into the camp began with a stone on their shoulder, the SS men who made up the end of the day drove stragglers with blows and kicks. Those who could not join in ended up on this death staircase."

The "Todesstiege (death staircase)" was the site of numerous accidents and murders of prisoners committed by Capos and the SS guards. From time to time, as they walked down or up the stairs, the guards would put the prisoners' legs on, so that they would inevitably fall and others would tear themselves down the steep stairs to their deaths. This, too, served the purpose of amusement and was never punished by the superiors.

Another unimaginable cruelty of the Nazis was the demolition edge of the quarry at the end of the Death Staircase, with the sarcastic name

### **"Parachute wall"**

A 50 meter, almost vertical rock wall that led into the depth. It was given the name "Falschirmspringerwand (parachutist's wall)" by the SS, who misused this cliff to push prisoners down. On impact, the bodies inevitably crashed into the granite blocks below.



**"Parachute wall"**

### **\*Inscription at the bottom of the parachute wall \***

"This steep wall in the quarry was thrown down by hundreds of prisoners. They crashed at the foot of the wall or drowned in the deep puddles of water. Prisoners who could no longer endure the pain often threw themselves down this wall. With gruesome jest, the SS called these consecrated men 'parachutists'. The first group of Dutch Jews who came to Mauthausen in the summer of 1942 was thrown down this wall by the SS."

### **\*Simon Wiesenthal (Mauthausen survivor and contemporary witness) reports\***

"Jews in Mauthausen were rarely shot. The "Wiener Graben" was intended for them. On a single day, 31 March 1943, 1,000 Dutch Jews were thrown down from a height of over 50 meters in front of Heinrich Himmler (RFSS-high leader of the SS ). The SS called them "parachutists". The brown people enjoyed themselves!

## "Legal prosecution of perpetrators in Austria" 1946-1975



Testimony of the Mauthausen survivor Francisco Boix before the International Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, 1946 (Photo: US National Archives and Records Administration)

Only a few days after the liberation of the Mauthausen concentration camp, an investigative commission of the US Army began to gather evidence of war crimes trials. Many of this evidence had saved concentration camp prisoners from extermination despite the threat of a death sentence. Photos smuggled out of the camp, documents of the camp SS as well as testimonies with eyewitnesses of the crimes taken on site were the basis for the fact that SS members and also individual prisoner functionaries could be convicted for their crimes.

From 29 March to 13 May 1946, the largest trial for crimes committed in the Mauthausen concentration camp took place in Dachau. In the so-called Main Case or Parent Case, named after the first of the accused according to alphabetical order, "United States vs. Hans Altfuldisch", 61 accused persons were convicted. This main trial was to be followed by a further 61 trials on the same set of facts. The selection of the defendants should represent a cross-section of the perpetrators: Not only were all SS ranks represented, from SS marksmen to SS- leader of the storm trooper, but also civilian workers and prisoner functionaries.



The former site doctor Eduard Krebsbach (left) in front of the Dachau Military Court, 1946 (Photo: US National Archives and Records Administration)

