

BY GERMAR RUDOLF

THE RUDOLF REPORT

**EXPERT REPORT ON CHEMICAL
AND TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE
'GAS CHAMBERS' OF AUSCHWITZ**

2ND REVISED AND EXPANDED EDITION
EDITED BY DR. WOLFGANG LAMBRECHT

PUBLISHED BY THE BARNES REVIEW
P.O. BOX 15877
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20003

HOLOCAUST HANDBOOK SERIES—VOLUME 2:

The Rudolf Report: Expert Report on Chemical and Technical Aspects of the 'Gas Chambers' of Auschwitz'

Revised and Expanded Second Edition

By GERMAR RUDOLF

Second revised and expanded edition edited by Dr. Wolfgang Lambrecht.
First edition translated from German by Carlos Porter, Michael Humphrey,
James Damon and the author.

Revised second edition by THE BARNES REVIEW: August 2011
First edition published in 2003 by Theses & Dissertations Press

ISBN: 978-0-9846312-7-8
ISSN: 1529-7748

Published by THE BARNES REVIEW
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Manufactured in the United States of America

Distribution USA/America:

THE BARNES REVIEW, P.O. Box 15877
Washington, D.C. 20003, USA
1-877-773-9077 toll free charge line

Distribution Europe/Africa: Castle Hill Publishers
P.O. Box 243
Uckfield, TN22 9AW, UK

Distribution Australia/Asia: Peace Books,
P.O. Box 3300, Norwood, 5067, Australia

www.BarnesReview.com • www.HolocaustHandbooks.com
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ON THE COVER: Various photos show chemist Germar Rudolf during his on-site investigation on existing structures at the Auschwitz labor camp. This book is the result of his extensive scientific analysis of the data he gathered there.

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¹ *Akribeia, Annales d'Histoire Revisionniste, Deutschland in Geschichte und Gegenwart, The Journal of Historical Review, The Revisionist, Revue d'Histoire Révisionniste, Smith's Report, Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung.*

Part I: Science

1. Prelude

1.1. Slow Death in U.S. Gas Chambers

On June 15, 1994, dramatic events unfolded during the execution of capital punishment. David Lawson, sentenced to death for a capital felony, was scheduled to be killed by hydrogen cyanide in the gas chamber located in the state prison of Raleigh, North Carolina – but the prisoner refused to assist his executioners.² Lawson repeatedly held his breath for as long as possible and took only short breaths in between.³ Lawson exhibited enormous willpower, calling out to both executioners and witnesses throughout his execution:

“I am human.”

At first his cry was clearly audible, but as the minutes went by he became less and less understandable and finally, more than ten minutes into the execution, there was just a mutter. He was declared dead only after eighteen minutes. The witnesses to the execution were horrified.

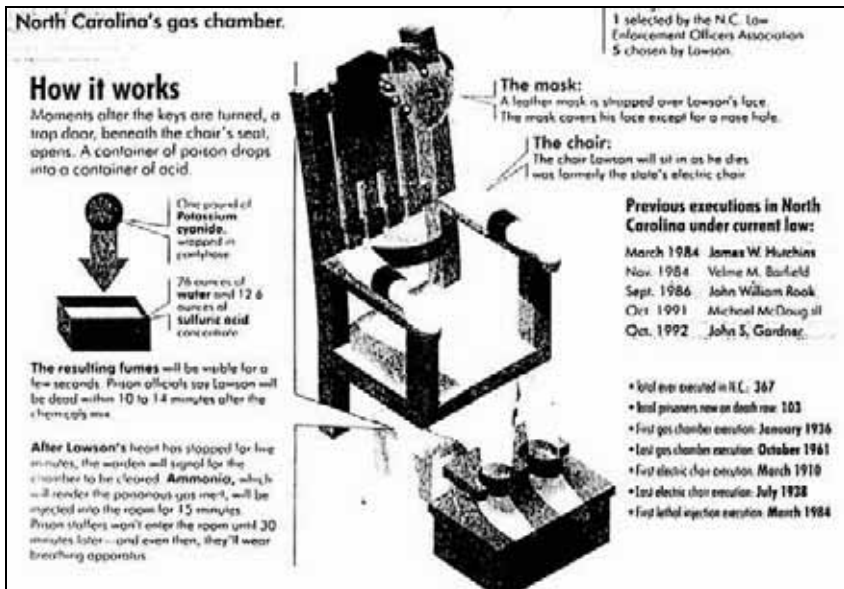


Fig. 1: Schematic drawing of the U.S. execution gas chamber in North Carolina.⁵

² A detailed description of this execution can be found at: Bill Krueger, “Lawson’s Final Moments,” *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, North Carolina, June 19, 1994, p. A1.

³ “Killing Me Cruelly,” *Newsweek*, November 8, 1993, p. 73; *The New York Times*, October 6, 1994, p. A20; *ibid.*, June 16, 1994, p. A23.

The warden of the prison who had also supervised the execution was so shaken that he resigned. Because of this execution fiasco, executions with poison gas have been abandoned for a short period of time in the USA and replaced with lethal injections.

In early March 1999, however, this horror had already been forgotten. This time, the victim was a German national. Despite intervention by the German government, Walter LaGrand was executed in the state prison at Florence, Arizona. LaGrand's death struggle against lethal cyanide gas lasted eighteen minutes. Thirty witnesses peered through a bulletproof window as the confessed, convicted murderer died horribly behind an armor-reinforced door.⁴

It is now clear to the experts, and especially to those still waiting on death row, that a quick and painless execution by gas requires the cooperation of the intended victim. Prisoners about to be gassed were usually encouraged to inhale deeply as soon as the cyanide was released in order to make their deaths come easily. However, if an intended victim was uncooperative, the execution could easily become a fiasco. By simply refusing to take the deep breaths needed to quickly inhale a lethal dose of cyanide, the agony could last for more than eighteen minutes, even under ideal conditions. Publications in the United States reveal that executions lasting from 10 to 14 minutes are the rule, rather than the exception. Amnesty International calls them "botched executions."⁵⁻⁸

The method used in American execution gas chambers was introduced in 1924, and has since been improved to technical perfection. The expense to kill just one single person is tremendously high, since neither the witnesses, nor the prison personnel or the environment may be endangered by the poison gas released for such an execution. Re-

⁴ Bettina Freitag, "Henker warten nicht," *New Yorker Staats-Zeitung*, March 13-19, 1999, p. 3.

⁵ *The News & Observer*, Raleigh (NC), June 11, 1994, p. 14A (according to the prison warden, normally 10-14 min.).

⁶ C.T. Duffy, *88 Men and 2 Women*, Doubleday, New York 1962, p. 101 (13-15 min.); C.T. Duffy was warden of San Quentin Prison for almost 12 years, during which time he ordered the execution of 88 men and 2 women, many of them executed in the local gas chamber.

⁷ Stephen Trombley, *The Execution Protocol*, Crown Publishers, New York 1992, p. 13 (approximately 10 minutes or more.); Amnesty International, *Botched Executions*, Fact Sheet December 1996, distributed by Amnesty International USA, 322 Eighth Avenue, New York, NY 10001-4808 (more than 7 min). See also more recently: Scott Christianson, *The Last Gasp. The Rise and Fall of the American Gas Chamber*, University of California Press, Berkeley, CA, 2010.

⁸ These paragraphs are based on an article by Conrad Grieb, "The Self-assisted Holocaust Hoax" (www.vho.org/GB/c/FPB/SelfAssisted.html); Ger.: "Der selbstassistierte Holocaust-Schwindel," *Vierteljahreshefte für freie Geschichtsforschung*, 1(1) (1997), pp. 6ff. (subsequently abbreviated as *VffG*).

inforced-glass windows, massive, heavy, hermetically-sealed steel doors, powerful ventilation systems with a device to burn the evacuated poisonous gases, and a chemical treatment of the chamber interior to neutralize all remaining traces of the poison make this execution method the most cumbersome of all.⁹

During the last two decades of the 20th century, the only technical expert in the United States able to build and maintain this equipment was Frederick A. Leuchter Jr., sometimes referred to in the media as “Mr. Death,”¹⁰ since his profession was the design, construction and maintenance of various kinds of execution devices.¹¹

A feature article in *The Atlantic Monthly* (Feb. 1990), for example, factually described Leuchter as

“the nation’s only commercial supplier of execution equipment. [...] A trained and accomplished engineer, he is versed in all types of execution equipment. He makes lethal-injection machines, gas chambers, and gallows, as well as electrocution systems [...]”

Similarly, a lengthy *New York Times* article (October 13, 1990), complete with a front-page photo of Leuchter, called him

“The nation’s leading adviser on capital punishment.”

In his book about “America’s Capital Punishment Industry,” Stephen Trombley confirms that Leuchter is, in fact,¹²

“America’s first and foremost supplier of execution hardware. His products include electric chairs, gas chambers, gallows, and lethal injection machines. He offers design, construction, installation, staff training and maintenance.”

Killing someone in a gas chamber is very dangerous for those who carry out the execution, above all because the body of the dead prisoner is saturated with lethal gas. After the execution, explains Leuchter:¹³

“You go in. The inmate has to be completely washed down with chlorine bleach or with ammonia. The poison exudes right out through his skin.

⁹ Re. the technical proceedings cf.: F.A. Leuchter, “The Third Leuchter Report,” in: F.A. Leuchter, R. Faurisson, G. Rudolf, *The Leuchter Reports. Critical Edition*, 2nd ed., The Barnes Review, Washington, DC, 2010, pp. 183-212.

¹⁰ Such is the title of a documentary movie directed by Errol Morris about Fred Leuchter, shown at the Sundance Film Festival in Park City (Utah, USA) on January 27, 1999: Errol Morris, *Mr. Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter, Jr.*, Fourth Floor Productions, May 12, 1999; VHS: Universal Studios 2001; DVD: Lions Gate Home Entertainment, 2003 (www.video.google.com/videoplay?docid=654178281151939378). The original version first shown on Jan. 27, 1999, during the Sundance Film Festivals in Park City (Utah) has been reworked after protests.

¹¹ The following paragraphs were adapted from taken the paper “Probing Look at ‘Capital Punishment Industry’ Affirms Expertise of Auschwitz Investigator Leuchter,” *The Journal of Historical Review* 17(2) (1998), pp. 34ff. (subsequently abbreviated as *JHR*)

¹² Stephen Trombley, *op. cit.* (note 7), p. 8.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

And if you gave the body to an undertaker, you'd kill the undertaker. You've got to go in, you've got to completely wash the body."

Bill Armontrout, warden of the Missouri State Penitentiary in Jefferson City, confirms the danger:¹⁴

"One of the things that cyanide gas does, it goes in the pores of your skin. You hose the body down, see. You have to use rubber gloves, and you hose the body down to decontaminate it before you do anything [else]"

In Leuchter's opinion, gas chamber use should be discontinued, not just because of the cruelty of this method of execution, but because of his beliefs relating to gas chambers as such:¹⁵

"They're dangerous. They're dangerous to the people who have to use them, and they're dangerous for the witnesses. They ought to take all of them and cut them in half with a chain saw and get rid of them."

With a career built on the motto "Capital punishment, not capital torture," Leuchter takes pride in his work. He is glad to be able to ensure that condemned prisoners die painlessly, that the personnel who carry out executions are not endangered, and that taxpayer dollars are saved.

1.2. Hydrogen Cyanide – a Dangerous Poison

Hydrogen cyanide, is not, of course, utilized solely for the purpose of executions in American gas chambers, but for much more constructive purposes as well. Since approximately the end of WWI, hydrogen cyanide, or HCN, has been used to exterminate vermin such as bedbugs, lice, corn weevils, termites, cockroaches, and other pests. It is, of course, important to be extremely cautious while applying hydrogen cyanide in order to avoid disaster, because it is in many ways a highly dangerous poison.

The residents of a house in Los Angeles, California, had to learn this in a quite painful way shortly before Christmas 1947. They had hired the Guarantee Fumigation Company to destroy the termites which threatened to eat up the wooden structure. The pest controllers, however, were apparently not very competent, because when using a container of pressurized HCN to fill the house, which had been wrapped up like a Christmas present, they exceeded safe limits and pumped in too much gas. (Fig. 2, p. 16).¹⁶ Due to unknown reasons, the mixture of air and HCN, which can be highly explosive under certain circumstances, ig-

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 102

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

¹⁶ A gassing requires 1-2% by volume, while an explosion requires 6% by volume or more; see, in this regard, chapter 6.3.

nited during the fumigation. The resulting explosion destroyed the entire dwelling.¹⁷

However, hydrogen cyanide has yet another insidious characteristic: it is highly mobile. This mobility is highly welcome when it comes to killing vermin: Wherever fleas and bugs try to hide, the gas will still reach them! Unfortunately, hydrogen cyanide does not restrict itself to attack vermin. Rather, it indiscriminately seeps into the smallest cracks and even penetrates porous substances such as felt sealing materials and thin walls, thereby leaking into areas where it is not welcome. The failure on the part of disinfestors to ensure that all places to be fumigated are adequately sealed off have been described in toxicological literature:¹⁸

“Example: J.M., a 21 year old female home decorator, was working in the cellar of the house, the second floor of which was being treated for vermin with cyanide gas. Due to insufficient sealing during fumigation, the gas penetrated the corridors, where it poisoned the disinfestor, and reached the cellar through air shafts. Mrs. M. suddenly experienced an intense itching sensation in her throat followed by headache and dizziness. Her two fellow workers noticed the same symptoms and they all left the cellar. After half an hour, Mrs. M. returned to the cellar whereupon she suddenly collapsed and fell unconscious. Mrs. M. was taken to a hospital together with the unconscious exterminator. Mrs. M. recovered and was released. The exterminator, by contrast, was pronounced dead on arrival.”

But the dangers of this type of poison gas are not merely restricted to persons in the same house in which fumigation is taking place. Large quantities of gas may penetrate the open air and endanger the entire neighborhood, as shown by an accident in the fall of 1995 in a Croatian holiday resort:¹⁹

“That failed profoundly. Three local residents suffering from symptoms of poisoning and a number of surviving woodworms were the results of the botched action against vermin in a church in the Croatian holiday resort Lovran, close to Rijeka. The exterminator’s clumsy work necessitated the evacuation of several hundred residents of the locality.

¹⁷ “How to get rid of termites,” *Life*, Dec. 22, 1947, p. 31; see also *Liberty Bell*, 12/1994, pp. 36f.

¹⁸ Sven Moeschlin, *Klinik und Therapie der Vergiftung*, Georg Thieme Verlag, Stuttgart 1986, p. 300.

¹⁹ DPA, “Dilettantische Kammerjäger,” *Kreiszeitung – Böblinger Bote*, Nov. 16, 1995, p. 7. Research has failed to determine which toxic gas was involved. Since hydrogen cyanide is one of the most poisonous and most rapidly diffusing of all gases used in disinfestation, the reported damage would have been at least as great if caused by hydrogen cyanide, even if hydrogen cyanide was not in fact involved in this accident. A number of additional examples are described by K. Naumann: “Die Blausäurevergiftung bei der Schädlingsbekämpfung,” *Zeitschrift für hygienische Zoologie und Schädlingsbekämpfung*, 1941, pp. 36-45.

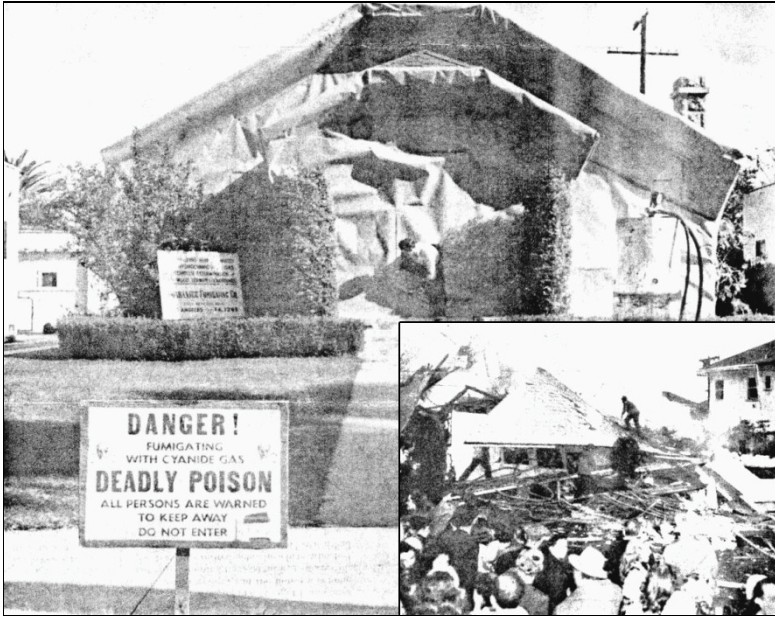


Fig. 2: How to get rid of termites: Larger photo: Before. Smaller photo: After.

The exterminators tried to treat the Church of the Holy Juraj for wood-worm during the night, using the highly toxic gas. But since they failed to seal off the church appropriately, the gas seeped into surrounding houses in which people were already asleep. 'Fortunately, the people woke up immediately because of sudden attacks of nausea – that's what saved them from certain death,' wrote the newspaper, 'Vecernji List.' Three residents nevertheless suffered severe intoxication. The mayor decided to evacuate the center of the town. The exterminators were arrested. The woodworms survived. DPA"

But that is still not all: on top of this, hydrogen cyanide is also a tenacious poison. It adheres wherever it is utilized, especially in a moist environment. Deadly cyanide gas continues to evaporate slowly from moist objects for hours and days, involving a permanent environmental hazard where sufficient ventilation cannot be assured. This is emphasized by an especially dramatic and simultaneously macabre accident in the United States in the fall of 1998:

Los Angeles Times

Oct. 13, 1998 | STEVE BALL, TIMES STAFF WRITER

9 Hurt After Student's Apparent Suicide by Cyanide

Toxic fumes produced when a college student from Orange County died of an apparent suicide Monday forced the evacuation of an Iowa dormitory and the hospitalization of nine people, authorities said.

Carl T. Grimm, 20, a sophomore from Placentia, ingested potassium cyanide about 7:30 a.m. in his dormitory room at Grinnell College, a private liberal arts school about 50 miles east of Des Moines, Iowa, Grinnell Fire Chief Jerry Barns said.

Four paramedics who responded to the call at Younkers Hall came in contact with fumes from the poison, as did two college staff members and three other students.

Grimm was taken to Grinnell Regional Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead. [...]

The others who became ill on the Iowa campus were treated and released from the hospital. [...]

Firefighters sent to the dormitory evacuated the three-story structure until the Des Moines Hazardous Materials Unit arrived to ventilate the building.

Authorities could not say immediately where or how Grimm acquired the potassium cyanide.^[20]

Another case, which occurred somewhat differently, nevertheless led to an accident which was no less tragic. Salts of cyanide, which release cyanide gas in the presence of moisture, are used for the separation of gold and silver during the processing of precious metals. In the case in question, a company was engaged in the processing of the cyanide-rich residues of such chemical reactions contained in large tanks, which is not without risk. The employer directed the workers, who were not equipped with gas masks or protective clothing, to go into the tanks which were still releasing cyanide gas. The consequences were tragic:

²⁰ <http://articles.latimes.com/1998/oct/13/local/me-32064>



Department of Justice

Department of Justice National News Release

MONDAY, MAY 10, 1999

On May 7, the jury in Pocatello, ID, found that Allan Elias ordered employees of Evergreen Resources, a fertilizer manufacturing company he owned, to enter and clean out a 25,000-gallon storage tank containing cyanide without taking required precautions to protect his employees. Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors repeatedly had warned Elias about the dangers of cyanide and explained the precautions he must take before sending his employees into the tank, such as testing for hazardous materials and giving workers protective gear.

Scott Dominguez, an Evergreen Resources employee, was overcome by hydrogen cyanide gas while cleaning the tank and sustained permanent brain damage as a result of cyanide poisoning.[...]

Over a period of two days in August 1996, Elias directed his employees – wearing only jeans and T-shirts – to enter an 11-foot-high, 36-foot-long storage tank and clean out cyanide waste from a mining operation he owned. Elias did not first test the material inside the tank for its toxicity, nor did he determine the amount of toxic gases present. After the first day of working inside the tank, several employees met with Elias and told him that working in the tank was giving them sore throats, which is an early symptom of exposure to hydrogen cyanide gas.

The employees asked Elias to test the air in the tank for toxic gases and bring them protective gear – which is required by OSHA and which was available to the defendant free of charge in this case. Elias did not provide the protective gear, and he ordered the employees to go back into the tank, falsely assuring them that he would get them the equipment they sought. Later that morning, Dominguez collapsed inside the tank. And he could not be rescued for nearly an hour because Elias also had not given employees the required rescue equipment.^[21]

²¹ Occupational Safety & Health Administration, news release, May 10, 1999; Allan Elias was sentenced to 17 years imprisonment on April 28, 2000, www.justice.gov/opa/pr/2000/April/239enrd.htm; an entire book has been written about the case: Joseph Hilldorfer, Robert Dugoni, *The Cyanide Canary*, Simon & Schuster, New York 2004. The cyanide-contaminated sludge in the tank also contained phosphoric acid, resulting in the release of cyanide gas.

Even this example fails to convey the full scope of the insidious nature of cyanide gas, since it does not just kill by means of inhalation; even a gas mask may prove insufficient, especially if a person is sweating heavily. Hydrogen cyanide is dissolved most readily on moist surfaces, and it easily penetrates the skin. This was proven by a dramatic accident in 1995 in a cave in the French city of Montérolier.²²

“The death of nine persons on June 21, 1995, in the cave of Montérolier (Seine-Maritime) was said to have been caused by the release of cyanide gas originating from the poison gas used during First World War, the so-called Vincennite. This was announced Wednesday by former Professor of Physical Chemistry, Louis Soulié. [...] At a press conference in Buchy, he said that ‘neither the children nor the firemen rushing to the rescue – one of whom wore a gas mask – died of carbon monoxide poisoning.’

[...] ‘Even six days after their deaths, a cyanide concentration twice as high as the fatal dose was still observed in the victims’ blood.’

According to the professor’s remarks, the three children lit a fire in the cave and threw a Vincennite bomb found in the cave into the fire. The bomb exploded. The gas caused the deaths of three children, four firemen, the father of one of the children and an amateur spelunker.

According to Prof. Soulié, the deaths of the firemen looking for the children in the cave, including the fireman wearing a gas mask, were due to the fact that hydrogen cyanide dissolves in the sweat and penetrates the body through the skin, where it causes poisoning.”

1.3. The Acid that Causes Blue Stains

Great excitement was caused by a strange occurrence in a Protestant church at Wiesenfeld, Lower Bavaria, Germany, in the spring and summer of 1977. The congregation had renovated the deteriorating church at great expense during the previous year, but now they faced a disaster. Huge blue stains were found to have formed in all parts of the plastered interior of the church. The experts having renovated the church were now called in for consultation, and found themselves confronted by a riddle which was only solved by a chemical analysis of the stained portions of the walls. The entire interior surface of the church was impregnated by Iron Blue.²³ No explanation could be found for this

²² “Un expert évoque la présence de gaz mortel dans la grotte,” *Le Quotidien de la Réunion*, June 25, 1998.

²³ Iron Blue is the ISO designation (ISO 2495) for iron cyanide blue pigments of various composition, which are also known as Berlin Blue, Turnbull’s Blue, Prussian Blue, Vossen Blue®, Milori Blue, Paris Blue, French Blue, China Blue, Bronze Blue, Steel Blue, Ink Blue, among others, and as ferric ferrocyanide.

in the literature. It nevertheless proved possible to reconstruct the sequence of events.

A few weeks after the replastering of the church with a water-resistant cement mortar, the entire church had been fumigated with Zyklon B (hydrogen cyanide) to exterminate woodworm in the choir stalls. The hydrogen cyanide, released by the Zyklon B, did not just kill woodworm: it also reacted chemically with the plaster. The hydrogen cyanide contained in the Zyklon B reacted with the iron oxides contained in quantities of 1-2% in all plasters, thus forming Iron Blue, a highly stable compound well known for centuries.²⁴

Another case had occurred five years earlier in 1972 in the Catholic church of St. Michael in Untergriesbach, also in Bavaria. Here, too, the church had been recently refurbished with fresh plaster, which turned blue after the church had been gassed with Zyklon B to combat woodworms, just as it would happen in Wiesenfeld five years later.²⁵

Reports of blue pigmentation of walls resulting from fumigation with hydrogen cyanide for the destruction of vermin in areas with moist, ferrous plaster are not unknown in technical literature, as shown by a recent survey.²⁶ The necessary prerequisite for this reaction ap-



Fig. 3: In August 1976, the Protestant church at D-96484 Meeder-Wiesenfeld was fumigated with Zyklon B.

Subsequently, blue-colored stains appeared all over the plaster (see Fig. 4).

²⁴ G. Zimmermann (ed.), *Bauschäden Sammlung*, vol. 4, Forum-Verlag, Stuttgart 1981, pp. 120f., relating to the case of building damage occurring in August 1976 in the Protestant church at D-96484 Meeder-Wiesenfeld. We wish to thank Mr. W. Lüftl, Vienna, for discovering this information, as well as Mr. K. Fischer, Hochstadt am Main, who was held liable for damages as responsible architect, and who supplied me with further details. Reproduced from: G. Rudolf, "Wood Preservation through Fumigation with Hydrogen Cyanide: Blue Discoloration of Lime- and Cement-Based Interior Plaster," in: G. Rudolf (ed.), *Dissecting the Holocaust*, 2nd ed., Theses & Dissertations Press, Chicago 2003, pp. 557-561.

²⁵ www.pfarrei-untergriesbach.de/pfarrbrief11.htm.

²⁶ E. Emmerling, in: M. Petzet (ed.), *Holzschädlingsbekämpfung durch Begasung*, Arbeitshefte des Bayerischen Landesamtes für Denkmalpflege (Working Notebooks of the Bavarian State

pears to be that the fumigated plaster must be new and must exhibit high humidity. In other cases, there was also damage to the structure and interior installations, but no blue stains, perhaps because the plaster was old and had already set.²⁷

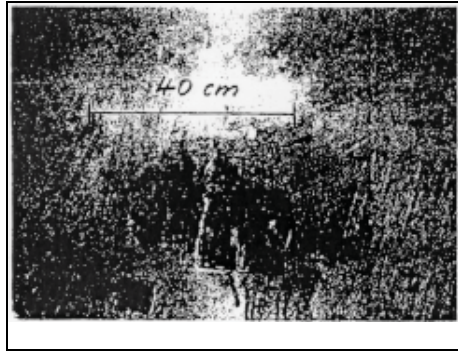


Fig. 4: Inky blue stains on the plaster of a church fumigated with hydrogen cyanide.

Office for Monument Maintenance), vol. 75, Lipp-Verlag, Munich 1995, pp. 43-56. Whether the examples cited in the paper may perhaps refer to the above mentioned case only in a roundabout way, must remain open for the time being. Carl Hermann Christmann reports the case of a farm building belonging to an 18th century monastery; the farm building was sold to a farmer following secularization, and the farmer then used it as a barn. Approximately 20 years ago, an investor converted the beautiful Baroque building into a luxury holiday restaurant. The existing interior plaster was repaired and painted white. After some time, blue stains appeared in the white paint; the stains were identified by a consulting expert as Iron Blue. The expert assumed that the former owner must have fumigated the building with hydrogen cyanide between 1920 and 1940, which then caused the stains 40-50 years later. Personal communication from C.H. Christmann according to his recollection on July 13, 1999; Mr. Christmann was unfortunately unable to find the source of the information. I would be extremely grateful for any references to passages in the literature in relation to this case.

²⁷ In one case, the fumigation of a church freshly painted with iron-free lime paint led to dark stains caused by the polymerization of hydrogen cyanide: D. Grosser, E. Roßmann, "Blausäuregas als bekämpfendes Holzschutzmittel für Kunstobjekte," *Holz als Roh- und Werkstoff*, 32 (1974), pp. 108-114.