

Advertisements

SOMEWHERE INSIDE
SOMEWHERE INSIDE
 Few can say they made it out of a North Korean torture session to tell their story.
LAURA & LISA LING MONDAY OCTOBER 11 7:30PM
 \$35 INCLUDES A FREE COPY OF BOOK
 Hear Lisa & Laura Ling discuss one of the most talked-about news stories of 2009.
 Click to register! or call 310.440.1246
 AMERICAN HOVOT UNIVERSITY

Advertisements

JOIN OUR NETWORK EVERY Jew.com
 The Chosen Network



Not yet a member? Register now.

Username

Password

LOGIN

2ND ANNUAL MITZVAHS & MORE EXPO
 OCTOBER 24, 2010 • 11A.M. - 4P.M. JW MARRIOTT LOS ANGELES AT L.A. LIVE

Advertise | Subscribe | Email Newsletter | Archive Search | SEARCH

LOS ANGELES NEW YORK ISRAEL ITALY CHICAGO NEW JERSEY PHILLY LONDON SAN FRAN

NEWS | BLOGS | HOLLYWOOD | BOOKS | EVERYJEW.com | OPINION | SPECIAL SECTIONS | EVENTS | WEB EXCLUSIVE | TRIBE MAG |

INFO

LATEST NEWS

IMPORTING CREATIVITY FROM ISRAEL

Avoid unilateral declarations, Netanyahu tells Palestinians

Court removes 'co-conspirator' tag from Muslim groups

Mike Huckabee: Defund NPR for violating Juan Williams' first amendment right

Israeli chess grandmaster achieves world record

Robert Katz, writer about the Holocaust, dies at 77

Aid convoy enters Gaza

Israeli chess grandmaster going for world record

New campaign pushing genetic screenings

U.S. counterterrorism experts visit Israel

★ Most Popular Stories

Mel Gibson Is A Pig But He's Not A Rapist

Hello Match.Com - Do You Have A Nice Jewish Locksmith Available?

Rain in Los Angeles, Road Rage Looming, Special Driving Permits Are Needed

February 3, 2000

Flawed Logic

On Auschwitz: The Trial Continues

BY DOUGLAS DAVIS

Follow JewishJournal.com on **twitter**

0 tweet

Share

join our email list

A Holocaust revisionist who is suing a U.S. historian for libel has dismissed eyewitness accounts, drawings and photographs of Auschwitz gas chambers that showed vents in the roof through which lethal gases were introduced.

David Irving, who is suing Deborah Lipstadt, a professor of Jewish studies at Emory University in Atlanta, and her British publisher, Penguin Books, for libel, insisted at his trial last week that there were no such vents and that their absence "totally demolished" evidence that the gas chambers were used to kill inmates at Auschwitz.

He asserted that the Nazis used the Auschwitz gas chambers solely for the purpose of delousing corpses and their clothing.

The comments by Irving, who is representing himself, came in the course of cross-examining Auschwitz expert Robert Van Pelt.

Irving, who is seeking damages, claims to have been professionally ruined after being described as a Holocaust denier and a distorter of historical data to conform with his own ideological disposition in Lipstadt's 1994 book "Denying The Holocaust: The Growing Assault On Truth And Memory."

Van Pelt, a Dutch historian who works at the University of Waterloo in Canada, served as adviser to the Auschwitz authorities on the reconstruction of the site, which was demolished by the Germans in late 1944 and early 1945.

Van Pelt referred to an SS photograph taken in February 1943 that showed openings on the roof of Crematorium II at Auschwitz through which lethal Zyklon-B pellets were introduced into the gas chambers.

But Irving, who is defending himself, claimed that the picture was taken during building works in December 1942 and that the objects on the roof were drums of sealant.

Van Pelt also produced an aerial photograph taken by the Americans in the summer of 1944 that showed "four dots" -- which he described as "introduction devices" -- on the roof of Crematorium II.

Irving questioned the authenticity of the photograph and said that the dots were too big for such a purpose.

Irving also said the testimony of Henryk Tauber, a Jewish inmate forced to work in Crematorium II, stretched "a reasonable historian's credibility."

He dismissed as "lurid" Tauber's eyewitness accounts of how he saw the SS set one Jew on fire and throw another into a pit of boiling human fat -- and he rejected Tauber's description of how he had helped to incinerate the corpses of up to 2,500 Greek, French and Dutch Jews a day in Crematorium II.

He also rejected Tauber's contention that he had seen cyanide pellets poured into the gas chambers through small "chimneys."

He was unmoved, too, by an account of a "field of ashes" from human remains, some of which was spread on icy roads to assist the passage of vehicles.

According to Irving, a number of revisionist researchers had entered the ruins of Crematorium II, where Holocaust historians have determined that 500,000 people were slaughtered.

The revisionists, said Irving, photographed the collapsed underside of the roof but found no vents, which, he contended, "blows holes in the whole gas chambers story."

"I do not accept that the Nazis, in the last frantic days of the camp, when they were in a blue funk, would have gone around with buckets of cement filling the holes that they were going to dynamite," he told the High Court in London.

Irving has denied that the gas chambers at Auschwitz were used for human extermination, and he has insisted that fewer than 100,000 Jews died -- mostly of natural causes -- at Auschwitz, which he has sought to portray as a particularly brutal labor camp.

But Van Pelt told the court there was "a massive amount of evidence" that 1 million Jews were systematically exterminated in the death camp by the Nazis.

He said the accumulated evidence and corroborating testimony that had emerged since World War II made it a "moral certainty" that the gas chambers were the main instruments of murder at Auschwitz

Advertisements

ON SALE NOW 4 WEEKS ONLY!
PERFORMANCES BEGIN OCTOBER 12

ED ASNER AS FDR
SAVE 20%*
 USE CODE **FDRJJ20**
 *Purchase by Sept. 26 subject to availability
PASADENA PLAYHOUSE
 STATE THEATRE OF CALIFORNIA

RELATED

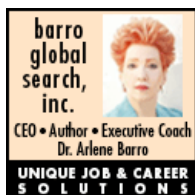
Testing for Ari

Kol HaMispalle!—All those who pray

After 40, it's all maintenance

Cervical cancer vaccine stirs hope and debate

Advertisements



between the summer of 1942 and the fall of 1944.

"It will be clear that, by early 1947, there was a massive amount of evidence of the use of the camp as a site for mass extermination," said Van Pelt.

"This evidence had become slowly available during the war as the result of reports by escaped inmates," he said. "It had become more substantial through the eyewitness accounts by former Auschwitz inmates immediately after their liberation, and was confirmed in the Polish forensic investigations undertaken in 1945 and 1946.

"Finally," he said, "this evidence was corroborated by confessions of leading German personnel employed at Auschwitz during its years of operation."

Confessions given by leading German personnel at the camp included that of SS officer Pery Broad, who testified to gassings and burning of corpses, and former camp commandant Rudolf Hoess.

The court also learned that there was also evidence from the 1961 Eichmann trial in Jerusalem, documentary evidence of the construction of the camp, including workers' time sheets, plans, photographs and scientific studies of cyanide compounds in the walls of the gas chambers.

"In short," Van Pelt said, "it has become possible to assert as moral certainty the statement that Auschwitz was an extermination camp where the Germans killed around 1 million people with the help of gas chambers."

Questioned by Irving, Van Pelt said he had been "more than deeply moved" by his experience of visiting Auschwitz.

"I was frightened," he said. "I don't believe in ghosts. I have never seen any at Auschwitz. But it is an awesome place and an awesome responsibility as an historian."

Asked by Irving about the dangers of conducting historical work at Auschwitz, Van Pelt responded, "One's duty is to be unemotional and objective but to remain human in the exercise."*

Letters

In response to Gene Lichtenstein's editorial last week, the Journal has received about 100 letters addressed to Professor Deborah Lipstadt. We will print excerpts from them in next week's issue. For a report on the Los Angeles Times' retraction to its story on the trial, see [Gene Lichtenstein's editorial](#).

Post your comment below!

[Click here to return to the homepage.](#)

Advertisement

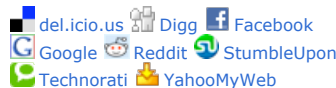


Tags and Sharing

TAGS

[auschwitz](#), [david irving](#), [deborah lipstadt](#), [douglas davis](#), [holocaust](#), [libel suit](#), [penguin books](#)

SHARE THIS STORY



EMAIL

[Tell a friend about this story by email](#)

Discussion

We welcome your feedback. Please share your views and insight in [The Jewish Journal Reader Forums](#).

PRIVACY POLICY

Your information will not be shared or sold without your consent. [Get all the details.](#)

Israeli photo application promises more beautiful you

Mud's a dirty business but entrepreneur digs it

Advertisements

MORE LIKE THIS

- o [Auschwitz museum won't let Holocaust denier lead tour](#)
- o [Anne Frank's tree collapses](#)
- o [American Muslim leaders visit concentration camps](#)
- o [Webcasts: Greek Jewish Holocaust Survivor speaks out](#)

COMMENTS

We welcome your feedback. Comments may not exceed 700 characters.

PRIVACY POLICY

Your information will not be shared or sold without your consent. [Get all the details.](#)

Post a Comment

Name:

Email:

URL:

Type the word you see below:



Comment:

Remember my personal information

Notify me of follow-up comments?

[SUBMIT COMMENT](#)

Advertisements



We're asking Big Questions

Dr. Ruth asks:
What is the Meaning of Sex?



NOV. 07. 10
1 WORLD. 1 PEOPLE. 1 DAY.

Advertisements



Site Sections

- o [Home](#)
- o [Arts](#)
- o [Calendar](#)
- o [Education](#)
- o [Food](#)
- o [Israel](#)
- o [Kids and Teens](#)
- o [Los Angeles](#)
- o [Obituaries](#)
- o [Opinion](#)
- o [Singles](#)
- o [Sports](#)
- o [EveryJew.com](#)
- o [Simchas](#)
- o [Torah Portion](#)
- o [U.S.](#)
- o [World](#)

Newspaper

Serving a community of 600,000, The Jewish Journal of Greater Los Angeles is the largest Jewish weekly outside New York City. Our award-winning paper reaches over 150,000 educated, involved and affluent readers each week. [Subscribe here.](#)

© Copyright 2010 Tribe Media Corp.
All rights reserved. JewishJournal.com is hosted by [Nexcess.net](#). Homepage design by [Koret Communications](#).
Widgets by [Mijits](#). Site construction by [Hop Studios](#).

- o [Current Edition](#)
- o [Archive](#)
- o [Contact Us](#)
- o [FAQ](#)
- o [Privacy Policy](#)
- o [Terms of Service](#)
- o [Site Map](#)
- o [Advertise](#)
- o [Site Credits](#)