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Peter Loewenberg: Mischling Physician

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In his book entitled At the Mind's Limits, Jean Améry writes:

Society, concretized in the National Socialist German state,... had just made me formally and beyond any question a Jew.... After I had read the Nuremberg Laws I was no more Jewish than a half hour before. My features had not become more Mediterranean Semitic; my frame of reference had not suddenly been filled by magic power with Hebrew allusions, the Christmas tree had not wondrously transformed itself into the seven branched candelabra. If the sentence that society had passed on to me had a tangible meaning, it could only be that henceforth I was a quarry of death.ⁱ

Other than accident of birth, one might ask what determined "formally and beyond any question" a Christian? According to a statement made by Dr. Hans Kerrl on February 13, 1937, "True Christianity is represented by the party, and the German people are now called by the party, and especially by the Führer to a real Christianity."ⁱⁱ This "real Christianity," was the stance of a German Protestant Church which had not existed as such before the National Church Movement of 1933. One of the policies of this National Protestant church read as follows:

As with every people, the eternal God also created a Law for our people especially

suited to its racial character. It acquired form in the Führer Adolph Hitler and in

the National Socialist state which he formed...
In [this Law] alone does the Saviour meet the German people and
bequeath to it the gift of a strong faith. It is from these communities of German
Christians that the "German Christian National Church" must rise in the
National Socialist state of Adolph Hitler, embracing the whole people.ⁱⁱⁱ

In protest to the nationalization of the Protestant Church, Pastor Martin Niemöller, head of the Berlin-Dahlem congregation, and fifteen other pastors rejected this "Aryan paragraph," thereby bifurcating the Protestant Church in Germany into two distinct groups. Every pastor who joined what was to be known as the Confessing or Confessional Church was required to take the following pledge: "...I testify that the application of the Aryan paragraph within the Church of Christ has violated the confessional stand."^{iv} Nine thousand clergymen joined the Confessing Church, while five thousand joined anti-Semitic Christian Protestant churches. Several of these Confessing Evangelical churches set up relief organizations for Jews, although most did not openly oppose anti-Semitism.

Pastor Niemöller was arrested in 1937, leaving his Church rather weak and unorganized. There were others, such as such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Pastor Heinrich Bell, who tried to enlist the aid of their colleagues in opposing anti-Semitism, but they met with little success. A few Catholic leaders opposed racial persecution, but even fewer Protestants.^v

Christian leadership, however, was not necessarily limited to church pastors, noted scholars, or leaders of anti-Nazi groups, such as the White Rose, although many who opposed the Nazi regime followed Pastor Niemöller and his successors. Often it was the average citizen who, in his or her own quiet way, did whatever possible to avoid adherence to that which he

regarded as contrary to his Christian beliefs. One who considered himself a good Christian was Dr. Peter Loewenberg who, despite his membership in the Church, was considered by the racial laws in Germany to be a "first degree mischling" because of his Jewish paternal grandparents from the Polish city of Poznan.^{vi} For this reason, although he was not a leader per se, he became, as did Jean Améry and many others, a victim of the regime.

A kindly older man, Dr. Loewenberg had attended the Annual Scholars' Conference on the Holocaust and the Churches until his demise in 1994. He was born on May 27, 1915, during the First World War. His father had at first been sent to Russian front to dig trenches, and then served as a guard in a POW camp. Because he had converted to Christianity, he was disinherited by his mother, his father having died many years earlier. Thus Peter never knew his paternal grandparents. His mother, on the other hand, originally from Old Saxony, was able to trace her Christian heritage as far back as the fourteenth century.

After the war, he remembers what he called the "prosperous times" of the Weimar Republic, from 1924 to 1929. After this time, he recalls the declining prosperity during the great depression of 1929, which helped to engender increased nationalism and the subsequent birth and rise of Nazism. He also remembers, when he was three-and-a-half years of age, the abdication of the Kaiser.

Peter's father, Harry Richard Loewenberg, although he was fortunate to escape incarceration in the concentration and death camps, experienced many of the same feelings so eloquently stated by Jean Améry. For example, Améry writes, "To be a Jew... meant for me, from this moment on, to be a dead man on leave, someone to be murdered...."^{vii} Similarly, Harry Loewenberg also experienced a loss of identity, which he recorded in a diary. Anyone who reads

about these feelings and experiences, gains insight into the tragedy of the baptized Jew. Due to the accident of birth, he or she was forced to go into hiding. He begins by expressing his fears of the burgeoning Nazi government:

It was the 14th of September, 1930. We were guests in the house of a family we were friendly with and listened to the radio giving the results of the election of the Reichstag with the overwhelming victory of the Nazis who, in one fell swoop, had gained over 100 seats due to the ruthless propaganda among a population that was suffering severely from the effects of the Great Depression. An oppressive sense of impending doom came over me.... But neither I nor anybody else could, in his wildest imagination, foresee how things would turn out.^{viii}

Members of the Confessing Church, Peter's parents were not Nazi sympathizers, although two thirds of the friends of his family were. Nevertheless, at the time he remembers there being very little hatred, although there was what he called a "little good natured joking," mainly in his school. He comments, however, that at this time it was "never malignant."

By 1933, when he finished high school, the Nazis had come into power, and his father's apprehension was now reality:

On March, 1933, the evening after the election of the Reichstag, I was downtown. The streets were bursting with marching storm troopers, their swastika flags streaming, filled with the hooting, jubilant rabble, flags on every house. I watched all this with the oppressive feeling you get seeing a tidal wave come at you. The Nazi terror was raging ruthlessly with a boycott of Jewish stores, with a most

brutal maltreatment of innocent people, and with all sorts of suppression.... Posters were put up by the Nazi student union proclaiming, "whenever a Jew speaks German, he is lying."^{ix}

Peter recalls the general boycott of Jewish stores on April 1, 1933 and the subsequent firing of his father, the editor-in-chief of a local journal. The man who took his place, although kind to the Loewenbergs, was a Storm Trooper. Regarding this boycott, Peter states that, "the reaction, particularly in the United States, was so violent... that the government retreated and didn't continue this boycott. And so my father got his job back. Of course he was a Jew, but [did not practice] the religion." Soon after there was a law which prevented Jews from being journalists, although there was a provision that those who had served the German government in the First World War could be exempt from this prohibition. This was revoked in the summer of 1936.

During the early years of Nazism, Peter experienced an increasing feeling of isolation, of not being able to trust anyone. As he puts it, "How do I know what this man feels like? How do I know that if he seems to be a nice and decent person, he is not going to denounce me? You don't trust anybody." People with whom he had grown up suddenly withdrew from his company. "Before long you were very much alone."

Regarding the opening of Dachau and the sudden disappearance of many people, he contends that the general population did indeed know about the atrocities. Of this he states, "If the man who lived next door suddenly disappeared and after four weeks came back with all sorts of black and blue marks and told what [the Nazis] had done to him," the people talked about it. It was impossible to keep these things hidden from public view. Despite this, the general belief was

that "the Führer doesn't know about these things." As he put it, "People were so infatuated with Hitler that they saw him as a new Messiah." His mother, however, thought the man was crazy, and Peter, who saw him drive by once, thought he had "seen the devil himself."

Peter, although Christian, was, because of his father, considered to be of "Jewish blood" and therefore "non-Aryan." For this reason, he had "considerable trouble being admitted to the university." Nevertheless, despite the difficulty, because his father had been a front line veteran during World War I, by the time he was eighteen years of age, he was finally accepted as a medical student at the University of Berlin. The director of the university was addressed as "His Magnificence" and the dean "His Respectability." Because Peter was not permitted to be a member of the Hitler Youth Organization, however, he was distinguished from other students by being issued a yellow university identity card, while those considered to be full blooded Aryans received brown cards.

In the early years of the Nazi regime, medical students were not taught "racial hygiene," and began to boo whenever one of their professors mentioned Freud or Albert Einstein. During those early years, however, there were still some professors who were openly anti-Nazi. Nonetheless, Peter being "non-Aryan," was not allowed to study gynecology, and by the following year, "non-Aryans" were no longer permitted to take their exams. Despite this ruling, because he had already taken and passed one exam, Peter was granted a waiver and finally passed his medical exams after writing his doctoral thesis. Despite his efforts, only those considered to be "full Aryans" were licensed and allowed to practice medicine in Germany. For this reason, he had classroom knowledge but no practical experience.

According to Peter's recollections, the Protestant Church was ruled by the Nazi

government. It was said that Hitler was something like the new Messiah, that "Jesus was great, but Hitler was greater." There were even those who maintained that "Jesus had actually been an illegitimate child [of] his Jewish mother and a Roman soldier who probably came from Germany. They wanted... racial purity [in] the German Church. Those born Jewish, whether they were members of the Church or even ministers...had no part in this place." He recalls some that members of the Catholic Church attempted to separate the Church from the rule of the government, and some priests and nuns who actually spoke out against the Nazis. At this time Pastor Niemöller founded the Pastor's Emergency League to assist ministers who were going to be fired from their jobs by the Nazi regime. They opposed Nazi doctrine regarding the identity of Jesus. As he put it, "That is not Christian doctrine; there is something very strange [and] foreign to the Church." Those who adhered to "the Church that confesses Christ.... followed Niemöller's view that, "The persecution of the Jews must by necessity lead to the persecution of Christians...."

During this period the Confessing Church was located in St. Ann's Church, originally a medieval Catholic church in Dahlem, a suburb of Berlin. After the members of Niemöller's congregation took it over, it was called the Jesus Christ Church. It had about 800 seats and became so well attended that if worshippers did not arrive at least a half hour before services, they had no place to sit.

Members of the secret police came to church from time to time, but their presence was obvious because they did not participate in the services. According to Peter's recollections, Pastor Niemöller said to them, "I can see that friends from the secret police don't have hymnals. Somebody give them hymnals so they can sing with us." Correspondents from the *New York*

Times, the *Register Guardian*, the *New London Times* and Paris papers also frequently attended services, and by the next morning, had printed Niemöller's sermons.

Peter recalls the arrest of Pastor Niemöller in 1937, after he had founded a theological seminary for the Confessing Church. Niemöller's divinity school was immediately declared to be illegal, as all universities were run by the State. As he put it, "[Niemöller] had offended Hitler fairly early and Hitler hated him." Peter states that Niemöller was first confined at Sachsenhausen and later transferred to Dachau, where he experienced a deep depression. At this time he considered turning Catholic, believing that "'this is the only real Church.'"

Despite the family's devout adherence to Christianity, Harry Loewenberg, born Jewish, provides a graphic description of the events and fears he faced during Kristallnacht:

Then came November 9, 1938. The Nazi government unleashed the worst persecution of Jews and renewed the disgraceful, shameful medieval tradition of the Pogrom, an evil moral inheritance of the German people....I had to work late and had gone to sleep on the couch on the ground floor in order not to disturb my wife....About 2:15, I heard a car coming and stop close to our house. Then, the bell at the entrance was ringing several times, however, I didn't respond, thinking that maybe a neighbor coming home late was making a bad joke.. Seconds later, the first window pane shattered in my study.... A pack of four men had invaded our yard in order to bash in our window panes.... The house was resounding from the noise of the splintering glass, from the crashing of the stones landing in the rooms with a dull thud and rolling on the floor, and the filthy raving of the brutish gang venting its uninhibited desire for destruction.... When their "work" was

completed and no windows left..., things became quiet. The gang moved on.... I felt [the members of my family] were looking at me full of reproach - which was not the case - reproach that I, with my existence and my origin as a member of the "vilest of all races," had brought on this disaster.... I felt that my personal existence was now completely worthless, as I was actually putting them in personal jeopardy by my presence....

Two days after the raid...I got a telephone call from my former colleague..., a member of the Nazi party who warned me not to stay in the house any longer, as in these days all over Berlin, thousands of Jews were being arrested and sent to concentration camps. This phone call...saved me from a harsh fate and, very probably saved my life.^x

Although his father was lucky to escape, Peter was arrested. According to his description: "One night my sister had been working in a soup kitchen at the church in Zehlendorf, and she had been fired. That night the doorbell rang, and there were two policemen with an arrest truck. They told me to get my coat and get out and get up on the truck. They were looking for my father, and my father wasn't there." Peter said that he was actually "proud to be arrested." As a young student, he had been living through a period of increasing personal isolation and had found friends whom he could trust only in the Confessing Church. For this reason, he felt that in being arrested, he was experiencing what some of others had endured. When asked how the police knew whom to arrest, he replied that they could tell where Jews were living due to the fact that "their blinds had been closed because they all had broken windows."

He was interned in the fire station in Stahnsdorf. As he describes it, "They had two cells that they kept for vagrants staying overnight, and so they brought us to the fire station and we

went into these two cells. We were four in each, but they had only one bed and one chair." Of the four in his cell, he was the only Christian. Nonetheless, the prisoners were treated equally by the police, the Nazis not as yet having infiltrated this region. During Peter's imprisonment, his father was given refuge by various pastors as well as members of his church. Although he knew about his son's arrest, he writes:

The wife of another prisoner had found out the arrested men had been brought to a firehouse in Stahnsdorf.... She had gone to the man in charge of the firehouse Wednesday morning and Peter Christian had given her a short message for my wife written on an empty cigarette package: "Don't worry; even in the firehouse in Stahnsdorf, God is the Lord." My wife had sent him a winter coat, a Bible and something to eat, and he had talked of his Christian faith among his Jewish fellow prisoners. Thursday morning they had been brought to Potsdam to the Gestapo prison there and after a lengthy interrogation with all sorts of surprise trick questions, he had been released when it became clear that he was really no "Jew". I was happy and proud of my son, that he too now had seen a Nazi prison from the inside and had stood his ground. I knew his imperturbable confidence in God of which he had now, during his arrest, given proof.^{xi}

During the police interrogation the police asked Peter if he had a girlfriend. When he said no, his interrogator said, "You can tell me. It is not illegal, it is simply undesirable." As he describes his release, "During the statement they found out that I actually was not a Jew, but that I was only half a Jew. They said, 'We don't want half, we want only real Jews, full Jews.'" When they tried to find out where his father was, however, he denied any knowledge of his

whereabouts, and indeed, by that time Mr. Loewenberg was moving from one refuge to another. Of his experiences and the worsening conditions in Germany he writes:

During the next days, I visited friends and acquaintances during the day who gave me shelter and food, for I dared not enter a restaurant. Understandably, I had every kind of delusion of persecution and was frightened by every Brown Shirt, S.S. man or policeman in the street or on a train. I remember... walking along Potsdam Street one evening and seeing a police truck with armed S.S. men standing in front of a house. I feared for my personal safety and crossed over to the other side of the street in order not to run into the arms of my executioners for in those days, all Jews without exception, were arrested....

With sadness, I frequently noticed that people were deriving pleasure from these acts of destruction; I myself have seen mothers leading their children through the streets so that they could enjoy the rare and historical spectacle of this senseless deed of the "devil". The street mob in the city not only enjoys any disorder and disturbance, but also derives a sense of deep satisfaction seeing "fat cats" finally getting "theirs". I have been told... of revolting scenes of looting of stores, how out of the shop windows and stores women took coats, dresses, furs, suits and whatever they thought they could use, tried the clothes on in the streets, and left happy and proud with the plundered stuff without the slightest thought that this bonanza was paid for with the misfortune of innocent people. He continues, "One child in a class of fifty children confessed that he had been the only one not to have participated in the looting of a store."^{xii}

Although Peter was, at least for the time being, safe from arrest, it was becoming

increasingly clear to his father that despite the efforts of his friends in the church, he would not only have to leave Germany, but, in the interest of her safety, divorce his wife as well. His recollections give insight as to the feelings and fears of those who were endangered and outcast by the Nazi regime:

That I would have to leave Germany was now clear. For years, I had refused to accept this idea. For I considered myself German just as much as anybody else who had been born in Germany...

The result of my hard work of more than 36 years in my profession was now completely destroyed. I had to leave the country, the rulers of which wanted to take my life, or, under the best of circumstances, wanted to make me a slave. I was forced to emigrate, as the only service I could still render to my family was to free them of my dangerous presence.^{xiii}

Harry Richard Loewenberg, emigrating to England in May 1939, describes his overwhelming sadness: "As the train slowly pulled out of the station and I was waving one last greeting from the window of the railroad coach, I felt as if I had died."^{xiv} His wife remained in Germany and did not see her husband again until after the war when, with their daughter as a witness, they were remarried in England.

In 1940, when the Germans overran Belgium, the English arrested all male German nationals between the ages of 18 and 55. Thus, ironically, Harry Loewenberg spent almost a year as a POW on the Isle of Man, although he was allowed to write letters home.

Peter states that despite the horror of the general population due to the daily actions of the Storm Troopers, they felt unable to rise up in arms against them. When the euthanasia

program began, the Nazis attempted to keep it "under wraps." It was never mentioned in public. Still, after two or three months citizens heard about it through the grapevine. At the time Peter was a member of the Hemlock Society, which specified that euthanasia was contrary to their beliefs, as only the patient should be allowed to determine whether or not to end his or her life; neither the family nor anyone else had the right to make that decision. He also knew about the Lebensborn program because, as he states, "people will talk." Although the "Final Solution" was never publicized, people were aware of a "resettling program" but not of the exterminations. In his words, "They knew enough to know it was better not to know."

By this time, although members of the Confessing Church, as well as many of the other German citizens, hated the government. The feeling was that there was nothing the individual person could do to overthrow it. Peter, severely depressed, considered suicide. Not only was he not permitted to practice medicine, but as a half Jew, his situation seemed hopeless. Nonetheless, he was told by the new pastor, Dr. Gollwitzer, that he had to survive and began to look for a job.

During the war he worked for a pharmaceutical company, mainly reviewing literature. In this way he was able to keep abreast of advancements in medicine, such as the introduction of penicillin, although he denies having had any knowledge of the medical experiments in the camps. By 1943, Berlin was declared "cleansed" of Jews, and in fall 1944, the government began to summon half Jews for work in labor camps. Peter convinced his medical examiner that even though he had no license to practice medicine, he was a medical colleague. Because of this he was given a letter allowing him to return, at least for the time being, to his family. Realizing that the next time things might not go so smoothly, he volunteered for medical work in the Organization Todt. He was first sent to Bremen, then to Osnabrück. Because his knowledge of

medicine was mainly from textbooks - he had no practical experience - he feels that he made many terrible errors in treatment. Still, he was assigned to care for 3,000 French, Italian, Dutch, and Polish workers.

Conditions in the labor camps were poor. There were ten to twenty people to a room, and although there were stoves, there was no central heating. The food was poor, mainly bread, sauerkraut soup, or turnips cooked in water and sweetened with saccharin. The infirmary was primitive at best. He used a bench as an examining table and could sit on the one the one chair that was available. There were two rooms, each of which contained three beds for inpatients. The only medications were aspirin and phenacetin to ease pain, aminopyrine to treat fevers, and some red ointment for rashes. There was also some sulfa for infections, although he does not recall the name of the drug. Visits to the infirmary began very early because between 8:00 and 9:00 A.M. there was usually an air raid and everyone had to take refuge in the basement. There was no operating theater; if patients needed surgery, they went to a fairly new building, actually a wooden cottage that was used as a hospital, in the Teutoburger Wald Mountains in the spa of Rothenfelde, about twenty miles from the labor camp.

The main complaints were ulcerations on the legs due to injuries at work, ill fitting clothing and shoes, lack of soap, and general unhygienic conditions in the camp. At first because there being mostly male inmates, he did not have to contend with obstetrics.

By April 1945, American, British, and Russian troops were regularly bombing and attacking the area in and around Osnabrück. The feeling among the population was, "Hurry up. Please come." By this time very few Germans still believed in the Nazis and the Third Reich. They wanted the Americans and British to come first as everyone feared the Russians. In order to

protect themselves from further bombings, all those remaining in the camp hung out white sheets and took refuge in a covered trench. Peter, by now married and a father, remembers his little boy carrying his white teddy bear, as he too wanted to have something white. On Easter Sunday, 1945 the OT and the German army marched off, and the next day Allied troops occupied the city. Even though he worked for the Organization Todt, Peter was advised to stay with the patients and did so. Once in the city, the Russians began to drink methyl alcohol; subsequently there was a massive epidemic of methyl alcohol poisoning. The British and Americans, however, refrained.

Peter responded to a British officer's request for someone who spoke English, as he needed an interpreter. When the officer asked him about his identity, Peter replied that being of Jewish descent, his identity card as a physician for the OT had been marked with a big "B," for "Second Class Citizen." Although the officer stated that technically he was considered a prisoner of war, he asked Peter to work as a doctor in the dispensary in which there were four hundred patients and no physician. This occurred on April 7, 1945, and by the following week, he began to work there.

In order to establish the camp, all the houses on top of a hill in a development called Fernblick (distant view), mainly duplexes with backyards, were evacuated. The German inhabitants were allowed to take their furniture but had to leave their coal stoves behind. As there were no sewers, the houses had outhouses in back. Because this area was somewhat isolated and away from Osnabrück, very little had been damaged by the bombing raids. At first the camp consisted of these houses along three streets on top of the hill as well as a camp of small huts that had been built during the war to house slave laborers. One of the four wooden buildings

contained a central kitchen and a storage area for provisions. The next building was turned into the administrative center.

Many of the inmates were blue collar workers and peasants who had been forcibly transported into Germany as workers. A few had been allowed to bring their families with them; each family was assigned to one room. There were separate rooms for single men and single women - about three or four to a room. Because there was nothing to hinder their coming or going, the population was in constant flux and variable. Many came in search of family members and others left to see how conditions were in other camps. Whereas initially there had been 2,400, prisoners, the number soon grew to 3,000 and eventually 4,000. Although there were initially very few Jews in this particular area, most Jews who did come left soon after for the Jewish DP camps.

Most DPs had very few, if any, personal possessions when they came into the camp. Having to stay for an indefinite period of time, most wanted to acquire a few things to improve their sparsely furnished surroundings. Food rations in the camp exceeded that available to the German population; therefore, local residents began to exchange food for supplies in a growing black market. Because there was no definite boundary, no fence, and no guard at the entrance, it was easy for outsiders to come and go in order to conduct their "business." Camp police frequently picked up German girls who had come from the Ruhr Valley, where food was even more scarce, to exchange sex for sustenance. These girls were often brought to Peter to be examined for venereal disease, but he lacked the means and equipment for these examinations.

If there were mattresses in the infirmary patients were able sleep on beds. However, there were no bed linens, and blankets were not readily available. To keep warm they often had to

cover themselves with whatever coats they had. There were a few pillows which were stuffed with chicken feathers. After Peter had brought about some semblance of order, he found the infirmary was actually a bit better equipped than the one in the OT camp. He had a stethoscope, a reflector, a blood pressure cuff, although it gave inaccurate readings, and a set of instruments that had been used in the field, which were probably from Italy. There were a few syringes, and although methods of sterilization were less than adequate, he was able to boil water. Each new arrival in the camp had to be examined. He needed some means of keeping a record of infirmary visits, but at the time, because of the lack of adequate personnel, it was next to impossible to maintain individual charts. At first a few German girls were recruited to be trained as nurses. Later he had some Polish girls who worked for him as well as a few nuns from the area. Again, there was no operating room, but he was able to transfer patients in an ambulance to the better equipped hospital in Teutoburger Wald.

For the first few weeks immediately following the war, the military ran the camp, but by the end of April the UNRRA (United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration) took over the outward administration.^{xv} The inmates elected Jan Jankowski as their camp commander. Actually a high school teacher in Warsaw, he had passed himself off as an unskilled laborer during the war. At this time there were about three men to every woman in the camp. Consequently, there were quite a few pregnancies. To quote Peter, "When four women here in the camp are staying together, three-and-a-half of them are pregnant." Although he tried to send these women to the hospital for labor and delivery, this was not always possible. In 1945 and 1946, the infant mortality rate in Germany was very high, at least twenty to twenty-five percent, and the same held true in the DP camp. Inadequate sanitation, crowded conditions, ignorance on

the part of the mothers, and inadequately trained physicians and nurses all played a role. In a number of cases, childless couples took over or purchased babies from single mothers. They claimed these children as their own when they returned to Poland. There were no formal adoption procedures; it was sufficient to cross out the old family name and write the new last name on the registration card.

The dispensary was very busy, Peter frequently seeing as many as eighty patients per day. All inmates were vaccinated for smallpox, typhus, and typhoid fever, although most had to be bribed, mainly with a promise of food from a CARE package. The most common diseases were pneumonia, sore throats and fevers. There were a few streptococcal infections and some cases of smallpox and typhus. There were many accidents requiring first aid, upper respiratory infections, and scabies from infested blankets in the small jail to which inmates had been sent by the camp judicial system for such infractions as drunkenness. He was able to treat these patients with benzyl benzoate.^{xvi} There was very little hepatitis or tuberculosis, and the patients, by and large not former inhabitants of the death camps, were not severely malnourished. Periodically everyone in the camp had to be sprayed with D.D.T. to treat and prevent further lice infestation.

With hundreds of DPs arriving every day, the dispensary soon became overcrowded. Fights broke out daily between people of different nationalities, particularly between Russians and Poles and Italians and Yugoslavs. To prevent further mishaps, those in charge of the camp decided to establish different sections for those of different nationalities. Everyone coming into the camp had to be examined, and on the physical examination cards was the question, "Where do you want to go?" Many, not wishing to return to a country ruled by Communists, replied "*Nord Ameriki.*" According to the conditions set by UNRRA, no one could be forced to go where

they did not wish to, although Russians were obliged to return to their homeland. Still, many Poles who wanted to emigrate changed their minds when they discovered that their wives and children, having survived the war, were awaiting their return. On April 17, 1945, Peter was assigned to the Polish sector, where there was no Polish doctor.^{xvii} UNRRA began to organize transports in spring 1946, after an average time in the camp of about nine to twelve months.

Peter worked in the Polish DP camp in Osnabrück for fourteen months, from April 1945 to June 1946. The work was exhausting and demanding, and only infrequently was he able to sleep through the night without being disturbed. His experiences as a camp physician had shown him that he needed to fill many gaping holes in his medical education before he could go into private practice. In June 1946, he was offered the position of camp doctor in Camp 18, a small camp in Lebenstadt which was far less hectic than the large camp in Osnabrück. There he was able to attain a separate apartment for his family. In the area there was also a camp for people from Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania which initially had its own physician. After he left, however, Peter was given the responsibility of caring for these patients as well. Even so, the number of patients in this camp was less than a quarter of those he had seen in Osnabrück.

At this point he began to send résumés to various hospitals for residencies, although there was a glut of doctors after the war. At last he found a position under Professor Siebeck at the University of Heidelberg and resigned his position in Lebenstedt on December 31, 1946. He and his family immigrated to the United States in 1953 and settled in Waterbury, Connecticut, where he practiced medicine until his retirement.

Notes

i. Jean Améry, At the Mind's Limits Contemplations By a Survivor on Auschwitz and Its Realities, trans. Sidney Rosenfield and Stella P. Rosenfeld, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980), p. 85.

2. William L. Shirer, The Nightmare Years, 1930-1940: A Memoir of the Times, (Boston, Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1984), p. 154.

iii. George L. Mosse, Nazi Culture: Intellectual, Cultural and Social Life in the Third Reich, trans. Salvator Attanasio and others, (New York: Schocken Books, 1981), pp. 242-244.

iv. Arthur Cochrane, "The Message of Barmen for Contemporary Church History," pp. 201-202, as quoted in Sarah Gordon, Hitler, Germans, and the "Jewish Question", (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 254-255.

v. Ibid., p. 255.

vi. Unless otherwise indicated, quotes and paraphrasing are from Peter Loewenberg, Interview, Dallas, Texas, May 20-23, 1993.

vii. Ibid, p. 86.

viii. Harry Richard Loewenberg, "Homeless in Exile, Days of Persecution in Fall and Winter, 1938-39. For my Dear Daughter, Barbara at Christmas 1939," unpub. ms, p. 1.

ix. Ibid.

x. Ibid., pp. 5-7.

xi. Ibid., p. 13.

xii. Ibid., p. 14.

xiii. Ibid., p. 12.

xiv. Ibid., p. 23

xv. Anticipating the need to provide relief and rehabilitation for the victims of war, President Roosevelt created UNRRA on November 9, 1943. By autumn 1945 there were six main groups with which UNRRA was concerned: Poles, Polish Ukrainians, Balts, Yugoslavs, Jews and Greeks. Diane Plotkin, A Historiographic Analysis of a Survivor's Narrative: the Story of Leo Laufer, unpub. dissertation (The University of Texas at Arlington, 1990), p. 213.

^{xvi} Used topically to treat lice and scabies.

xvii. Information in this section from Interview and Peter Loewenberg, "Lekarz Obozu Polakow," (Polish for "Physician of the Polish Camp") unpub. ms.