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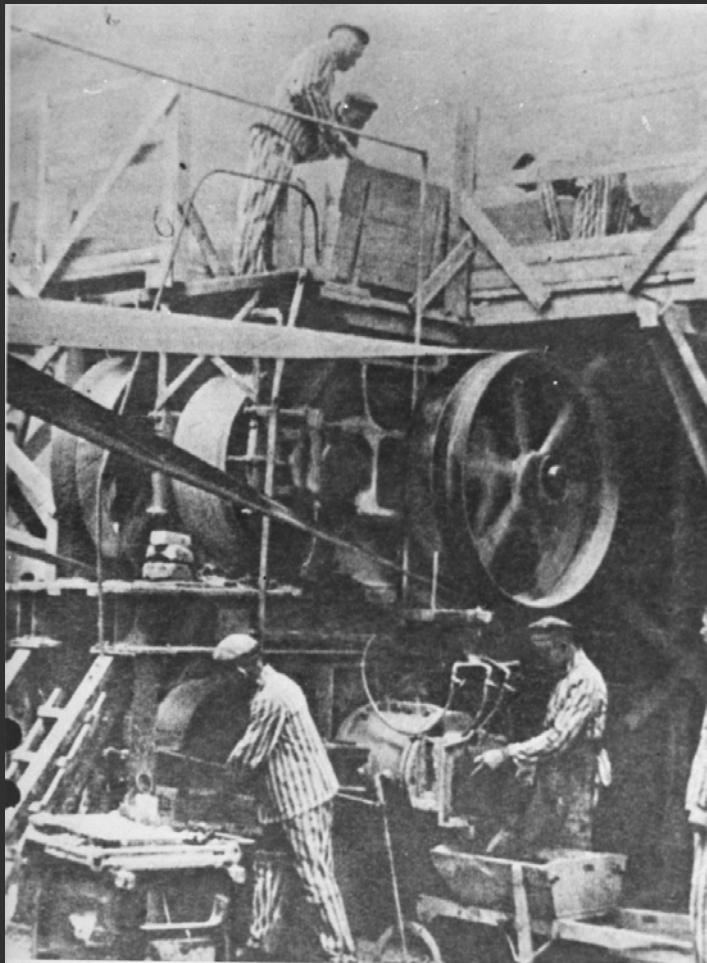
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The Concentration Camps Inside the Nazi System of Incarceration and Genocide

Part 4A: Forced Labor Camps

This document contains historical images
of the Holocaust and the concentration camps.

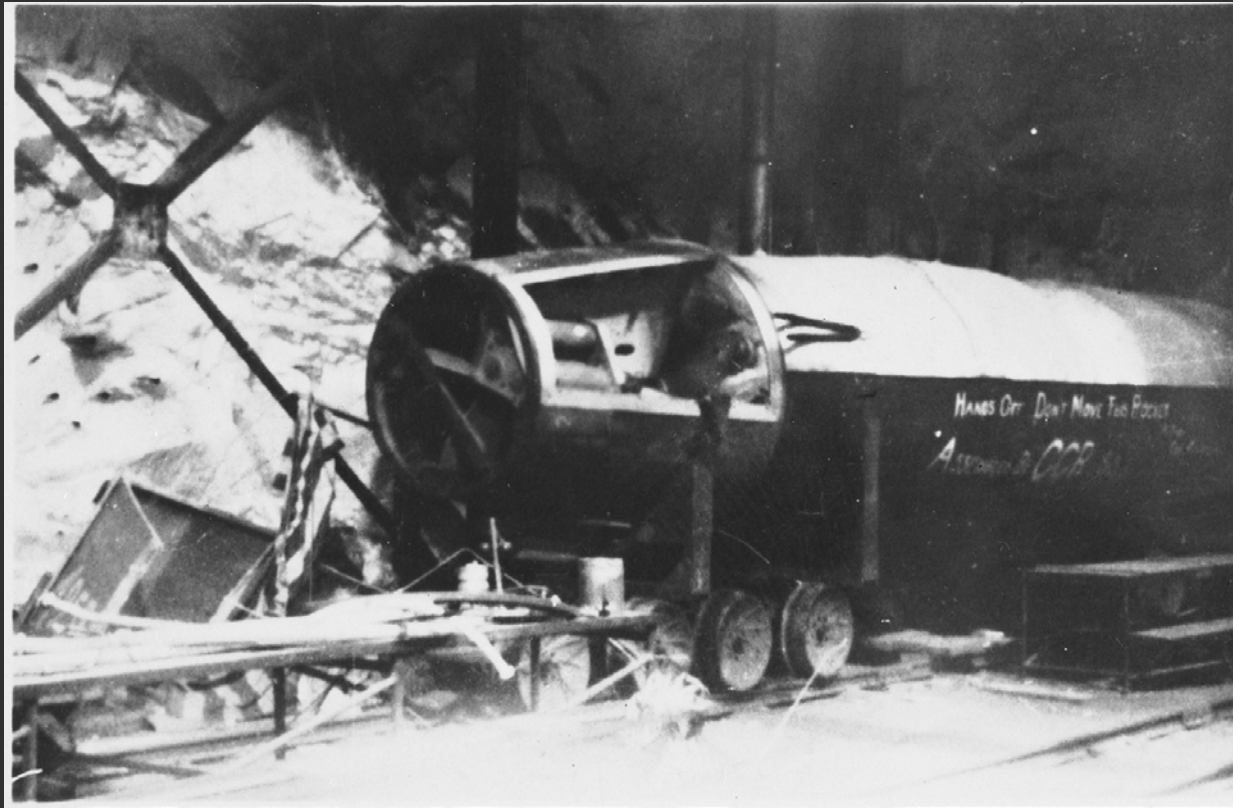
Please be advised that some of these pictures
and descriptions are graphic
and may be disturbing to viewers.



Nazis subjected millions of prisoners to forced labor in camps and ghettos to help their war effort. This included work for German companies producing engines in tanks, planes, and vehicles for the Nazi government.

The death rate of prisoners who were subjected to forced labor was high, and their “wages” were often garnished by the Nazi SS.

Male forced laborers in the Klinker-Grossziegelwerke brickworks factory adjacent to the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. *Photo credit: USHMM #19179.*



View of an subterranean rocket factory at Dora-Mittelbau. *Photo credit: USHMM #62980.*

Many prisoners in Dora-Mittelbau concentration camp in central Germany were forced to live underground for up to a year. One inside the factory tunnels, prisoners had insufficient air, food, light, and water, as well as high exposure to toxic chemicals.

Because of this harsh treatment, Dora-Mittelbau had the highest death rate among concentration camps in Germany.



The Płaszów concentration camp (adjacent to city of Kraków, Poland) was built specifically for Polish political prisoners. There, they were detained with no intention of release and designated “to be re-trained by work.”

Prisoners in Płaszów, Poland carry food containers to be distributed to fellow forced laborers. *Photo credit: USHMM #05270.*



In 1941, half of the 70,000 Jews living in Latvia were murdered by Nazi killing squads (Einsatzgruppen).

Remaining Jews were confined to various ghettos where they were subjected to forced labor and subsequently killed.

A group of Jewish prisoners marching towards forced labor in Liepāja, Latvia, August 1941.

Photo credit: USHMM #55155.



The Płaszów concentration camp (near Kraków, Poland) was divided into subsections that separated men from women and Jews from non-Jews. There, they were all subjected to forced labor.

Jewish women at forced labor in the Płaszów camp. *Photo credit: USHMM #03390.*



View of a German V-2 rocket-missile manufactured with the use of slave labor at Dora-Mittelbau. *Photo credit: USHMM #21333.*

In 1943, approximately 10,000 prisoners from the Buchenwald concentration camp were transported to one of its satellite camps, Dora-Mittelbau.

There, they were forced to work in a huge underground rocket factory manufacturing the Nazi V-2 rockets.



The Nazis privileged certain prisoners to help run the camps. Prisoners called “kapos” supervised other prisoners or worked in the camp offices. Kapos were treated much better by the Nazis and also helped torture other prisoners.

A kapo (right) oversees prisoners at the Płaszów concentration camp near Kraków, Poland.
Photo credit: USHMM #05272.



Jewish women at forced labor in the Płaszów, Poland concentration camp, 1943. *Photo credit: USHMM #62979.*

Women were subject to forced labor under conditions that often led to their deaths. German physicians and medical researchers used Jewish and Roma women as subjects for unethical human experiments.

In both camps and ghettos, women were particularly vulnerable to beatings and rape. Additionally, pregnant Jewish women often tried to conceal their pregnancies or were forced to submit to abortions.



Prisoners at large forced labor camps were frequently used for Nazi weapons manufacturing.

The Nazi SS feared that the prisoners would arm themselves or sabotage planes and weapons, so the number of prisoners at each worksite was intentionally kept low.

The Krupp factory, an arms manufacturing center, being constructed by prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau. *Photo credit: USHMM #11069.*



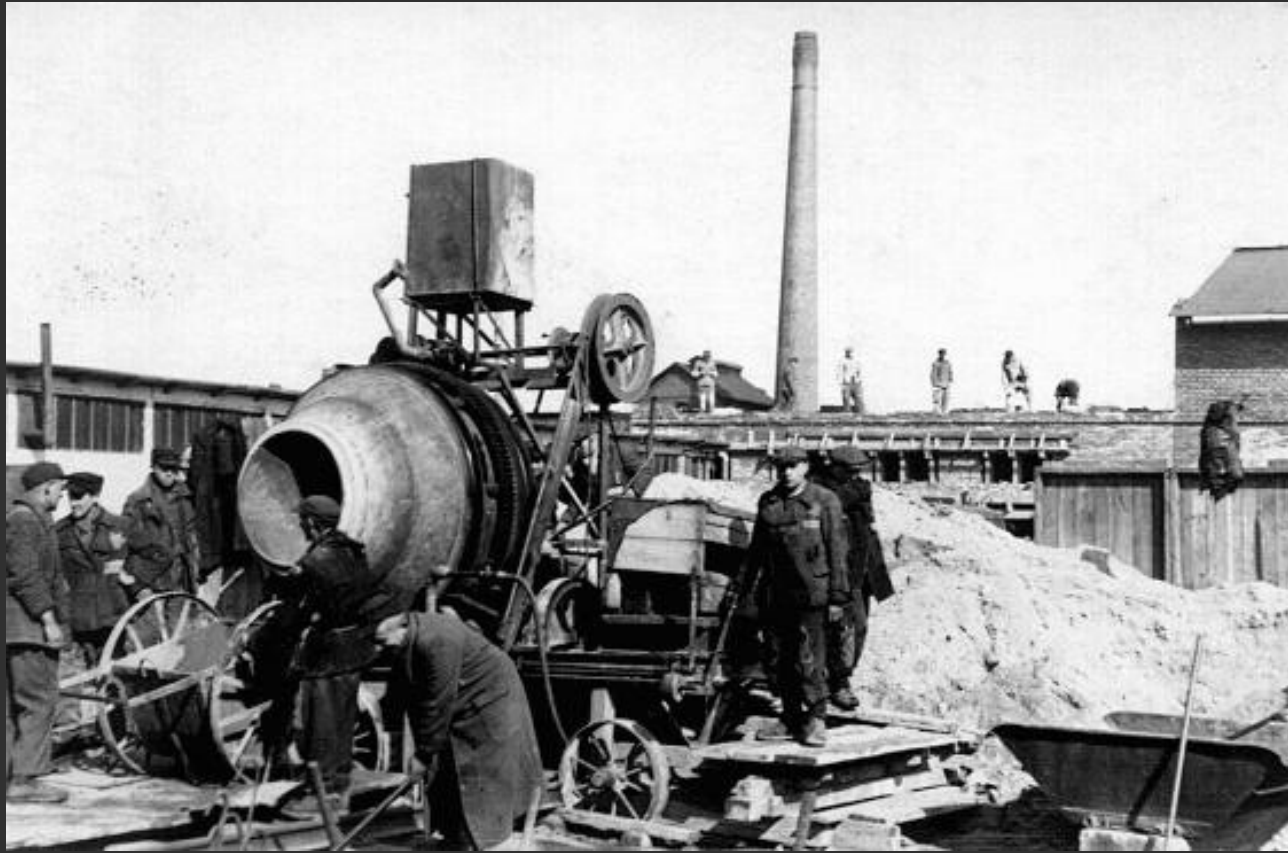
Forced labor played a major role in the German economy during World War II. At least 2,000 German companies used forced laborers, including Bosch, Siemens, Volkswagen, Mercedes, and Porsche.

Forced laborers building airplane parts at the Siemens factory. *Photo credit: USHMM.*



There were 7.5 million foreign forced laborers in Nazi Germany by August 1944, accounting for 20% of the German work force.

Forced laborers hauling cartloads of earth for construction.
Photo credit: USHMM #12352.



Nazi leaders deployed prisoners outside their concentration camp to work in weapons factories and coalmines on war-related construction projects. These outlying detention sites are known as subcamps.

Construction of Oskar Schindler's armaments factory in Brünnlitz, Czechoslovakia. *Photo credit: USHMM.*



Concentration camps often had dozens of satellite and subcamps, many quite removed from the main camp. Auschwitz-Birkenau had more than 40 subcamps, while Mauthausen had at least 100.

Prisoners carry large stones up the “stairs of death” at Mauthausen, a main camp that had as many as 100 satellite and subcamps. *Photo credit: USHMM #15622.*