



28 DPA SERIES: THE NAZI HOLOCAUST - SERIES II - When the German Wehrmacht invaded the U.S.S.R. on June 22, 1941, four special task forces, the Einsatzgruppen (Special Action Groups) followed in the wake of the army. Their job was to slaughter all Jews and "Bolsheviks." The four groups totaled less than 4,000 men but they killed almost 2,000,000 people, mostly Jews. (The entire concentration camp system was run by a mere 70,000 functionaries, a tribute to Nazi efficiency.) A typical killing was described at Nuremberg by Otto Ohlendorf, commander of Einsatzgruppe D (Ohlendorf boasted that Group D executed 90,000 Jews in one year: "The unit selected for this task would enter a village and order the prominent Jewish citizens to call together all Jews for the purpose of resettlement. They were requested to hand over their valuables . . . and shortly before the execution, to surrender their outer clothing. The men, women and children were led to a place of execution which in most cases was located next to a more deeply excavated antitank ditch. Then they were shot, kneeling or standing, and the corpses thrown into the ditch.") The above photo aid shows victims of an Einsatzgruppen unit preparing for the execution. Liepaja (Libau), Latvia, U.S.S.R.

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