

HIMMLER'S LUNCH IN MINSK, 15 AUGUST 1941

By Bonnie Maurer

(from his diary and excerpt on the museum wall at Terezin)

What did he eat for lunch
in the Lenin House, the SS headquarters,
at 1400, just after attending the morning
Einsatzkommando squad boys
taking turns to execute Jews near Minsk,
where reportedly brains splashed his face,
and he turned a greenish shade of pale,
and hey! he told the boys there,
terrible it all might be,
even for him as a mere spectator,
how much worse it must be for them
to carry the killing out and
he could not see any way around it.
“And reportedly he came to the view that it would be
necessary to find a more suitable and effective
killing method that would not have
such a disheartening influence on the executors,
particularly with women and children among the victims.”
With what relish did he dig in his knife and fork? Was he
ravenous for lunch? With what eureka! This inspection trip—
the moment the gas chambers came into being.
With what hearty hale did he slug back his beer and lick his lips?