

Researcher: Car parts firm has Nazi ties

by UPI

WARSAW, Poland - Financially troubled German car parts supplier Schaeffler may have been more involved in the Third Reich than once thought, a Polish researcher said.

While it is known that the company bought by Wilhelm Schaeffler in 1940 in Kietz in what is now Poland employed forced laborers, Polish researchers now link Schaeffler to the processing of human hair from the Auschwitz death camp, Der Spiegel reported Tuesday.

Jacek Lachendro, deputy chief of the Auschwitz Museum's research department, told Spiegel television that part of the hair exhibited in Auschwitz was found in a factory in Kietz at the end of World War II. Original statements about the site indicated the factory belong to the Schaeffler's company, Lachendro told the television station.

He said transcripts of former factory workers claim that in 1943, two train wagon loads of hair were delivered to the factory in Kietz. Tests conducted later by Polish authorities found that it was human hair containing traces of Zyklon B, a poison used in the camp's gas chambers.

The Schaeffler group's official company history doesn't begin until 1946, when INA was founded, Der Spiegel said. Two years ago, another historian conducted the Nazi-era company history at the family's request.

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