

THE HIDDEN GENOCIDE
by James Bacque

for the conference entitled The Forgotten Genocide to be held at St. Louis, MO on April 28-9, 2011

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen. First let me thank you, Ann Morrison for your courageous enterprise in arranging this wonderful conference which has been needed for many years and now, thanks to you, has come into existence.

I am not German, nor have I been expelled, not even from a school anywhere, although I have certainly been naughty enough sometimes, for sympathizing with the *Vertriebene* and the *Kriegsgefangene*. I am a Canadian and a writer, and I was in Europe in 1986 starting the long trek which has brought me here. I was in a kitchen in Bonn with a middle-aged solid German burgher. I remember him seated at the table with his wife, also solid in her blouse and sensible skirt as she hands her guests a glass of white wine. The burgher, whose name is Hans Goertz, has been a streetcar conductor in the city for forty years making sure everyone pays the right fare and gets off *ting a ling* at the correct Strasse. Across from him is this middle-aged Canadian writer with his blonde young assistant running the tape recorder. What could a German burgher have to say of such interest that these two Canadians have come thousands of miles to hear it and to record it?

The answer is that Goertz had been a prisoner in a French prison camp after world war two who had been released early from the camp in January 1945 by a kindly Frenchman named Raoul Laporterie. The Frenchman took pity on an unfortunate enemy, and simultaneously acquired an extra tailor in his store for virtually nothing. The book I was writing described Laporterie who, during the war, saved thousands of refugees from German death camps. To me it was very interesting that Laporterie also helped the enemy, after the war. But Goertz was guarded and said little of interest.

The interview was disappointing and Jessica shut down the tape recorder, Hans Goertz noticed her doing that and his attitude changed. He leaned

across the table and said, "I can call M'sieur Laporterie my friend," he said and I replied, "Of course, I see that."

"No, I mean something special," says Goertz.

"M'sieur Laporterie saved my life."

"How did he do that?"

"He took me out of that camp."

"What was the matter with the camp?"

"Ecoute, M'sieur, twenty five per cent of the men in that camp died in one month."

And Jessica said, "What did they die of?"

"Starvation, dysentery, disease."

And that was all. Goertz refused to say another word on the subject. But his few words on that day in April, 1986, just 25 years ago now, changed my life dramatically.

That was the first clue I had that there had been something terribly wrong in the French prison camps for Germans after the war. The next clue came when I interviewed M'sieur Laporterie to ask him for help in investigating the camp where Goertz had been held. He made the phone calls to various friends he had in the region who had been guards in the camp, at Buglose nearby and one Sunday noon we went to a farmhouse where six local people who had been guards had agreed by phone to meet us. Thirteen people crowded into that French farmhouse kitchen, and they all wanted to talk. The fatal conditions in that camp had been paining them for forty years, and now they saw the chance to tell the story they had feared might die with them. Some of them were in tears, as they told me that when the German prisoners arrived by train, they were so weak they could not stand up. They literally fell off the train. Several farmers kept saying, "*Oh les pauvres.*" But from that terrible moment when the prisoners had fallen off the train and begun to die in the main street of their village, they had all been publicly silent, like their government.

That same public silence prevails in Germany today, where there are millions of people who hate their parents and grandparents without having known them. The offspring do not know that their ancestors were probably innocent and they are not allowed to know that they were tortured and robbed. And there are millions more who suspect that they

are not being told the truth, and who fear to ask. A few know the truth, and say so, but they are attacked, perhaps beaten up, fired from their jobs, hauled into court and sentenced by judges indifferent to the *Grundgesetz* of Germany, and the UN Charter of Human Rights.

The reason is that the truth is so horrible that it makes everyone in the west who committed these crimes feel bad. And people can't stand that. No, in order for us not to feel bad, ie responsible ie guilty, the truth must be denied, at all costs, including the continuing pain of the German survivors, who not only have suffered the loss of their land, and of their relatives and their ancestors, but suffer the denial of their history. So far has this gone in Germany that the Fascists who call themselves Anti-Fascists routinely threaten people with baseball bats and destruction of property if they so much as dare to hold a meeting to discuss the subject of how Germans suffered and died by the millions after 1945. In Germany today what is true is not known, and what is known is not true.

The genocide we discuss has not been forgotten. We are proof of that. It has been hidden, and so it is in danger of being forgotten. It has been hidden because it shames those who perpetrated it. It has been hidden by the German-haters who say that the Germans got what they deserved, and yet it is obvious that they do not believe that the Germans deserved what they got, because otherwise, why hide it? The dreadful punishments meted out by the judges at Nuremberg were deserved according to the judges, jailers and executioners, and no-one hid them. They got tremendous world-wide publicity. But what is not just--Stalin's murder of twenty nine thousand Poles at Katyn and the killing of Jews -- remains hidden until someone tears the shroud away from it.

There were three groups who suffered the most in this genocide. The *Vertriebene*, some fifteen or sixteen million people, mostly farmers, dispossessed in the most brutal manner, robbed, raped, assaulted, driven onto the roads with almost nothing between them and death while their bewildered cows walked the fields beside them.

Soon the next group, eleven million prisoners of

war, began to starve and die in barbed wire cages with no shelter. By General Eisenhower's orders millions of them were cut off from food that was available and stored right next to the barbed wire. Eisenhower also ordered that civilians might be shot if they so much as planned to bring food to the camps. These *Kriegsgefangene* began to die in their holes in the ground, or they drowned in the latrine ditches or they were crushed under the blades of American bulldozers. Around a million and a half died in the allied camps. The third group--all the rest of the Germans in the world--was penned inside the little Germany that remained after huge sections had been confiscated by the Poles, Russians and French. Germany became in the words of one writer, One Great Prison. One great and starving prison.

Many were forced into it, none was allowed to emigrate for years as millions starved. A US naval officer, stationed in Germany, Albert Behnke wrote, "From 1945 to the middle of 1948, one saw the probable collapse, disintegration and destruction of a whole nation. German is being subjected to physical and psychic trauma unparalleled in history."

Under the Morgenthau Plan for the postwar treatment of Germany, industry was reduced to a weak shambles, because the country was cut up into four zones of occupation and no mail or phone calls were allowed across the borders between the zones. Oil production was reduced almost to zero, domestic coal production was cut back, factories were stolen, steel could not be produced, the Quakers and the Red Cross were forbidden to help, most fertilizer production was banned, immense reparations were imposed, millions of young men were enslaved or held moribund in allied death camps. According to my studies conducted in German, American, English, Canadian, French and Soviet archives, somewhere between nine million and fourteen million people were exterminated before their time by the allies. No vengeance on this scale had ever been seen before.

All of this was done, and all of this was hidden, by men who were admired by their people. Stalin. De Gaulle. Eisenhower. Churchill. Stars of infinite brightness in the dark skies of twentieth century

history. War criminals. Whom we are taught to admire by historians who have not read the archives where traces of the truth may be found, historians who will not listen to the words of the many people who saw and survived. Some of those people are here today in this room, they are with us in spirit, and they will in the future hear us through recordings on film, paper, and digital discs.

Those who have great power to control our minds nevertheless fear what we have to say here. They are afraid of the public opinion that they seek to control, and they are afraid of it because they know that they are telling lies and that those who know the truth might tell it to their shame. Once in a while a book by an Alexander Solzhenitsyn, or a film by a Michael Moore somehow gets through the tangled webs of deception, and reaches the public, and shakes the edifice of lies where truth like a shivering child hides these days. And that is enough to scare them.

Here is how and why they suppress the opposition, not with arguments or information but by lies, evasions and slander. While my book *Other Losses* was in manuscript, I interviewed the star columnist of the New York Times, Drew Middleton in his office at the *Times*. I told him that I had discovered evidence that the US army had maintained death camps for German prisoners where hundreds of thousands had been deliberately starved and exposed to death. Middleton had written stories for the *Times* saying that he had visited the camps and the rumours of atrocities there were untrue, so my book was going to show that he had been irresponsibly wrong, and more likely that he had written lies. And do you know what he said? He said, "I'm not surprised that you found something bad from those times." I offered to let him read the manuscript, and he said no thanks.

I was calling him and his paper liars in a book soon to be published in four countries, and he didn't care.

I was astonished. He didn't even threaten me with a libel suit. He just didn't care. He could afford that because he knew that the *Times* and the myths it propagates are so powerful that even the truth could not affect them. Think of what that means.

The media, the army and the government own the American mind. Nothing can loosen their hold. Or at least nothing in the short term, such as the lifetime of a newspaper or the party in power.

And do you know, Middleton was right. When this book came out in the US the *New York Times* review by Stephen E Ambrose warned everyone in the country against it. Ambrose admitted in his review that he had not done the necessary research to prove my book wrong, and in fact he never did. Just his opinion was enough for the *Times*' editors. Scarcely another paper in the country reviewed it, and then only to warn readers against it. Libraries refused to order it. Bookstores refused to handle it. And that little bit of truth lay dead, besmirched. The only way that Americans who wanted this book could get it was to write to me, or buy it in England or Canada. And since then, my name has been anathema to publishers all over the USA and Canada. My computer was confiscated by British Airways in London and a bug planted in it. I was followed around France by security agents, who also tried to intimidate my witnesses. Journals that used to phone me up and ask for my work, never called again. My manuscripts were refused by publishers who had published my best-sellers. A US army soldier in Texas threatened to shoot me. My mail was opened and the contents stolen. Government security agents threatened my witnesses. A KGB agent came into my house under false pretenses, stole documents and then threatened my publishers with lawsuits if they published me. The publishers then turned down my books.

The true revisionists of history in the world today are the criminals and their cohorts who hide their crimes. This is not a forgotten genocide, but a hidden genocide of the Germans. There was no public arraignment for the murderers of these millions upon millions of Germans, although at Nuremberg, a criminal court was convened for the Nazi Germans. No court ever convened to try these criminal revisionists, because their victims were after all, Germans. No records were kept for these crimes although for the victims at Nuremberg, they filled dozens of volumes. And if records of the genocide happened to be made and happened to

survive, they were hidden by the revisionists. Authors who wrote about these victims had a hard time getting an agent, and if they did, they had a hard time getting a publisher, and if they did, their book could scarcely find an unprejudiced reviewer among all the professors, teachers, journalists, TV producers who make up the revisionist literati.

But there are many people on the allied side who witnessed these events and who have helped me and the many others, chiefly German, in their writings and research to reveal what happened. I want to honour a few of them--

Colonel Ernest F. Fisher of the 101st Airborne who wrote, "The French and American armies casually annihilated about one million men, most of them in American camps."

General Richard Steinbach on the staff of Patton's Third army, who wrote, "Conditions were terrible [at Heilbronn]...some of the men were losing their minds...I was amazed and disgusted at the same time..."

His friend and colleague on the same staff **General Withers Burress** said, "this is beyond my comprehension..."

And a US.army officer is saying the same sort of thing today.

Major Merrit P. Drucker who was stationed near Rheinberg Germany in 1987-1990 said in a written apology to the people of Rheinberg "I am submitting to you an apology for the actions of my Government and for the actions of the United States army that caused these deaths. These were needless, unjustified, avoidable and carried out with calculated viciousness."

Major Drucker is now leading a campaign to, as he puts it, "make this thing right." He plans to meet two retired German army officers, Alfred Zips and Ernst von Heydebrand and present to them an apology for the American prison camps, and has informed the State Department that he has done this. It is hard to see how the State department can wriggle out of this one, for after all, the United States and Germany are allies now.

If this was genocide, and the allies had such extreme power over the helpless Germans, how come there are still over 80 million Germans today?

The answer is that although the allies tried their worst, they could not do the job. It sickened them. It traumatized those like Behnke, and Steinbach and millions of others who were deputed to carry it out. They could not do it because the human spirit which may at first enjoy punishing other people, cannot abide much of it. The empathy with the victim which provides the satisfying thrill of sadism, quickly begins to sicken the perpetrator. In other words, witnessing pain is painful, so finally the perpetrator stops. And there was the question of *realpolitik*---the allies needed a Germany army to help them face the Russians, and they also wanted to re-establish the trade which is much better for all concerned than the robbery entailed under the reparations programs.

So the torture ceased, but the Germans still had to be kept down. To do this, they were taught to hate not just Nazi history, but all German history, not just Nazis, but all Germans. This has been accomplished through imposing guilt, hatred, fear, self-abasement, shame, self-hatred. Young Germans were taught to fear and hate their own history and their own ancestors, and this was done so badly that it had to be forced on them, and to this day, Germans wish to talk about their history and hate to talk about it, and fear to talk about it. And it is not just history on a page or on a screen or in a lecture, but in their own homes, around the dining table, among their own families, their own father and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, their own bloodlines, so that in hating their history and their ancestors they have come to hate themselves. Some few object to this, of course, they suspect it is a pack of lies because it has to be enforced by the police and the courts and all the authority of the modern state, and these people who raise their heads and question, like the prisoner citizens of Soviet Russia, are struck down. They lose their jobs, they are charged with hate crimes by the very people who propagate hatred ceaselessly in the schools, the churches, the media and government, and they go to jail, where their voices are silenced, sometimes forever. The result of all this is that the Germans today are economically strong, numerous, and spiritually moribund. They live in a permanent state of fear and guilt about themselves. Germans

today like themselves so little that they do not reproduce themselves, in other words, the birth rate is less than the death rate. The Germans today are but servile remnants of an earlier flourishing people.

The United States, like many nations, adopts and proclaims high ideals which are supposed to guide national conduct. These rarely work, but sometimes, as in 1946, when the vengeful are sated, and the torture begins to be sickening, along come different men and women. Various people from the UK, the USA and Canada came to see what was happening in this country long feared, and sometimes admired. Victor Gollancz a publisher and writer from England came and wrote a book condemning what we were doing to the Germans. In Berlin, Robert Allen, a Canadian soldier and a writer, saw and described eloquently in a Canadian magazine the pity of a starving and beaten woman with her arms outstretched. Allen said, "but there was no-one to help her, no-one to care." And in the United States, several Senators having heard rumours of atrocities being committed against Germans by the allies, went there and they saw the truth, which was worse than the rumours. And when they came home they made vivid speeches demanding that the government change allied policy.

These speeches were scarcely reported in the American press, but the senators pressed on anyway, and gradually, the mood of government began to change. Mennonites in Canada began sending bagged wheat containing Bibles to their confreres in Germany, others in the States did too, and they forced the allies to lift the ban that they had placed on aid to starving Germans. Imagine-- they were banning aid, while at the same time the revisionists said and still say, that there was a world food shortage. President Harry Truman began to cooperate with the Canadian government led by Mackenzie King to ship food over to the starving. The greatest killing machine the world had ever known, the United States Army, under Secretary for War Robert Patterson began to mobilize the vast

food and transportation resources of the United States to send food abroad to save lives. The United States army which had the power to kill most of the people of the world with its immense weaponry, spent years and billions of dollars shipping food to help starving people, many of them among the former enemies. The Canadians maintained food rationing for years after the war so they could feed starving people abroad. When I asked one former Canadian cabinet minister, Mitchell Sharpe why the government did this he sounded surprised and said, "It's what we do." Herbert Hoover, who ran the American side of the program came to Ottawa to praise the Canadian people. He wanted the world to know that the relief had saved over five hundred million lives. Hoover was a very well informed and intelligent man, and he said they saved over five hundred million people by bridging the food gap that occurs in the northern hemisphere every year when the crop from the previous years has run down, and the new harvest has not yet come in. So five hundred million needed help across that gap for a couple of months every year, and they got it. Five hundred million lives saved. That is more than ten times the number who died in the war.

Practically nobody in Canada or the US has ever heard of this amazing campaign, the largest the world has ever known, although many have heard of the Marshall Plan, which was not nearly so effective, and which in any case was a loan largely paid back by the Germans, though not by the English and French. All of this nameless and generous plan remains almost completely unknown around the world today. We hear of the horrors of Dresden, and Stalingrad and Auschwitz and Hiroshima but not of the kindness and grace of this nameless plan. Nobody teaches it. Perhaps because it has never had a name. Let us christen it now. Let us call it The Great Mercy Plan.



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