

David
Irving

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FILE

David Irving

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For other persons of the same name, see David Irving (footballer) and David Irving (politician).

David John Cawdell Irving (born March 24, 1938) is a British writer specializing in the military history of World War II. He is the author of 30 books, including *The Destruction of Dresden* (1963), *Hitler's War* (1977), *Uprising!* (1981), *Churchill's War* (1987), and *Goebbels — Mastermind of the Third Reich* (1996).

Irving's credentials as a historian have been discredited as a result of controversy surrounding his Holocaust denial and misrepresentation of historical evidence. During an unsuccessful libel case Irving brought against American historian Deborah Lipstadt and Penguin Books in 1998, an English court found that he is "an active Holocaust denier; that he is anti-Semitic and racist and that he associates with right-wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism." The judge also ruled that Irving had "for his own ideological reasons

persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence."^{[1][2]} He served a prison sentence in Austria from February to December 2006 for Holocaust denial.^[3]



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Early life

Irving was born in Hutton, near Brentwood, Essex, England. His father, John James Cawdell Irving, was a commander in the Royal Navy, his mother Beryl an illustrator. During the Second World War, his father was an officer aboard the light cruiser HMS *Edinburgh*. On 2 May 1942, while escorting Convoy QP-11 in the Barents Sea, the ship was sunk by the German U-456. Irving's father survived, but after the tragedy severed all links with his wife and their children.

Student years

After completing A-levels at Brentwood School, Irving briefly studied physics (though never graduated) at Imperial College London. He gained notoriety by writing for the student newspaper *Phoenix* and in 1959 served as editor of the London University Carnival Committee's journal, *Carnival Times*. His time as editor was controversial, though Irving deflected criticism by characterizing the *Carnival Times* as "satirical". In one editorial, he suggested that the media were owned by Jews, and referred to Adolf Hitler as "Herr Hitler".. He also stated he was against the formation of what is now the European Union.

According to the Anti-Defamation League, Irving also supported apartheid in South Africa, racist cartoons, and wrote appreciatively of Nazi Germany.^[4] Covering the controversy, the 1 May 1959 edition of the *Daily Mail* quoted Irving as saying, "You can call me a mild fascist if you like." He has denounced that article as libellous and the "handiwork of an imaginative *Daily Mail* journalist."^[5]

The Destruction of Dresden

Irving next left for West Germany, where he worked as a steelworker in a Thyssen steel works in the Ruhr area and learned German. He then moved to Spain, where he worked as a clerk at an airbase. During his time in Spain, Irving married his first wife, a Spanish woman by whom he had five children. In 1962, he wrote a series of 37 articles on the Allied bombing campaign, *Wie Deutschlands Städte starben* (*How Germany's Cities Died*), for the right-wing German journal *Neue Illustrierte*. These were the basis of his first book, *The Destruction of Dresden* (1963), in which he examined the Allied bombing of Dresden in February 1945. By the 1960s, a debate about the morality of the carpet bombing of German cities and civilian population had already begun, especially in the United Kingdom. There was consequently considerable interest in Irving's book, which was illustrated with graphic pictures, and it became an international bestseller.

In the first edition, Irving's estimates for deaths in Dresden were between 100,000 and 250,000 — notably higher than most previously published figures.^[6] These figures became authoritative and widely accepted in many standard reference works. In later editions of the book over the next three decades, he

gradually adjusted the figure downwards to 50,000-100,000.^[7] According to the evidence introduced by Richard J. Evans at the libel trial of Deborah Lipstadt in 2000, Irving based his estimates of the dead of Dresden on the word of one individual who provided no supporting documentation, used forged documents, and described one witness who was an urologist as Dresden's Deputy Chief Medical Officer, despite the complaints of the man that he been misidentified by Irving, and was only reporting rumours that he heard about the death toll.^[8] Today, casualties at Dresden are estimated as most likely 25,000-35,000 dead, and probably towards the lower end of that range.^[9]

Early attacks on Irving - the involvement of Gerry Gable

In November 1963 Irving called the police because he suspected that three men who had gained access to his Mayfair apartment by claiming to be General Post Office (GPO) engineers were not genuine. Gerry Gable was arrested and held at Hornsey police station, and on 14 January 1964, along with Manny Carpel and another, Gable admitted breaking in with intent to steal private papers, and was convicted. At the trial, counsel for the defence claimed that this was no ordinary crime, telling the court, "they hoped to find material they could take to Special Branch." The case was reported in the *Daily Telegraph*, January 17, 1964 and other newspapers.^[10] Irving considered this incident important, and in his video 'Ich komme wieder' he describes this as the first indication he had that he was under attack for some reason.^[11] Gable was a former member of the British Communist Party, and would later run *Searchlight* magazine devoted to anti-Fascist activities. In the notorious 'Gable Memorandum', a letter from Gable to London Weekend Television in May 1977, he would later boast of his "top level security service sources."^[12]

Historian

After the success of the Dresden book, Irving continued writing, including some works of revisionist history. In 1964, he wrote *The Mare's Nest*, an account of the German secret weapons projects and the Allied intelligence countermeasures against it, translated the Memoirs of Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel in 1965, and in 1967 published *Accident: The Death of General Sikorski*, in which he suggests Churchill had a hand in the death of Polish government in exile leader General Władysław Sikorski. Irving claimed that the plane crash which killed General Sikorski in 1943, was really an "assassination" ordered by Churchill, so as to enable Churchill to "betray" Poland to the Soviet Union. Irving's book inspired the highly controversial 1967 play *Soldiers* by his friend, the German playwright Rolf Hochhuth, which depicts Churchill ordering the "assassination" of General Sikorski. Also in 1967, he published two more works: *The Virus House*, an account of the German nuclear energy project, and *The Destruction of Convoy PQ-17*, in which he blamed the British escort group commander, Commander Jack Broome for the catastrophic losses of the Convoy PQ-17. Amid much publicity, Broome sued Irving for libel in October 1968, and in February 1970, after 17 days of deliberation before London's High Court, Broome won. Irving was forced to pay £40,000 in damages, and the book was withdrawn from circulation.

After *PQ-17*, Irving shifted to writing biographies. As a result of Irving's success with *Dresden*, but prior to the conclusion of the Broome trial, members of Germany's extreme right-wing assisted him in contacting surviving members of Hitler's inner circle. In an interview with the American journalist Ron Rosenbaum, Irving, referring to the surviving members of Hitler's circle (which Irving referred to as "the Magic Circle") claimed to have developed sympathies towards them. Many aging former mid- and high-

ranked Nazis saw a potential friend in Irving and donated diaries and other material. In 1972, he translated the memoirs of General Reinhard Gehlen, and in 1973 published *The Rise and Fall of the Luftwaffe*, a biography of Air Marshall Erhard Milch. He spent the remainder of the 1970s working on *Hitler's War* and the *War Path*, his two-part biography of Adolf Hitler, *The Trail of the Fox*, a biography of Field Marshall Erwin Rommel, and a series in the *Sunday Express* describing the Royal Air Force's famous Dam Busters raid.



Irving (right) with Hitler's armaments minister Albert Speer in 1979

Description of Irving as a historian, rather than a historical author, is controversial, with some publications continuing to refer to him as a "historian"^[13] or "disgraced historian",^[14] while others have adopted alternatives such as "author" or "historic writer".^{[15][16][17]} Although Irving's works were generally ignored by academics, and sometimes criticised as inaccurate when reviewed by specialists, his command of language and a wealth of anecdotes led generalists to write favourable reviews in the popular press, and many of his works sold well. He was particularly noted for his mastery of the voluminous and scattered German war records.

Revisionism

In 1977 Irving published *Hitler's War*, the first of his two-part biography on Adolf Hitler. In it, Irving tried to describe the war from "Hitler's point of view". He portrayed Hitler as a rational, intelligent politician, whose only goal was to increase Germany's prosperity and influence on the continent. For instance, Irving's book faulted the Allied leaders, most notably Winston Churchill, for the eventual escalation of war, and claimed that the German invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 was a "preventative war" forced on Hitler to avert an impending Soviet attack (supported by some, notably Soviet GRU defector Victor Suvorov, and others, see *Icebreaker*). He also claimed that Hitler had no knowledge of the Holocaust; while not denying its occurrence, Irving claimed that Heinrich Himmler and his deputy Reinhard Heydrich were its originators and architects. Irving made much of the lack of any written order from Hitler ordering the Holocaust, and for decades afterward as a publicity stunt offered to pay £1000 to anyone who could find such an order. In addition, citing the work of such historians as Harry Elmer Barnes, David Hoggan, and Frederick J.P. Veale, Irving argued that it was primarily Britain that was responsible for the outbreak of war in 1939.

Reaction to *Hitler's War* was polarized. While some historians like John Keegan and Hugh Trevor-Roper—though disputing Irving's claim that Hitler had no knowledge of the Holocaust—praised the book as well-written and well-researched, other historians were more hostile. John Lukacs in a very unfavourable book review in the 19 August 1977 edition of *National Review* called *Hitler's War* a worthless book while Walter Laqueur when reviewing *Hitler's War* in the *The New York Times Book Review* of 3 April 1977 accused Irving of selective use of the historical record in Hitler's favour. Various historians such as Gitta Sereny, Martin Broszat, Lucy Dawidowicz, Gerard Fleming, Charles W. Sydnor and Eberhard Jäckel wrote either articles or books rebutting what they considered to be erroneous information in *Hitler's War*. Because of the controversy *Hitler's War* generated, it was a best-seller in 1977.

Just months after the initial release of *Hitler's War*, Irving published *The Trail of the Fox*, a biography of

Field Marshal Erwin Rommel. In it, Irving attacked the members of the July 20 Plot to assassinate Hitler, branding them "traitors", "cowards", and "manipulators", and uncritically presented Hitler and his government's subsequent revenge against the plotters, of which Rommel was also a victim. Irving painted the men and women involved in the July 20 Plot in the blackest of colours, and argued that their fate after July 20 was fully deserved. Irving challenged the popular notion that Rommel was one of the leaders of the rebellion: Rommel stayed loyal to Hitler until the end, Irving claimed, and the real blame for his forced suicide lay with his associates, who schemed against him so they could save their own lives and because they were jealous of Rommel's medals. In particular, Irving accused Rommel's friend and Chief of Staff General Hans Speidel of framing Rommel in the attempted coup. The British historian David Pryce-Jones in a book review of *The Trail of the Fox* in the 12 November 1977 edition of *The New York Times Book Review* accused Irving of mindlessly taking everything Hitler had to say at face value.

In 1978, Irving released *The War Path*, the companion volume to *Hitler's War* which covered events leading up to the war and which was written from a similar point of view. Again, professional historians such as D.C. Watt noted numerous inaccuracies and misrepresentations. Despite the criticism, the book sold well, as did all of Irving's books to that date. The financial success of his books enabled Irving to buy a home in the prestigious Mayfair district of London, own an Rolls-Royce automobile, and to enjoy a very affluent lifestyle.^[18] In addition, Irving, despite being married, became increasingly open with his affairs with other women, all of which were detailed in his self-published diary.^[19]

In the 1980s Irving started researching and writing about topics other than Nazi Germany, but with less success. He began his research on his three-part biography of Winston Churchill. In 1981, he published two books. The first was *The War Between the Generals*, in which Irving offered an account of the Allied High Command, detailing the heated conflicts Irving alleges occurred between the various generals of the various countries and presenting rumours about their private lives. The second book was *Uprising!*, about the 1956 revolt in Hungary, which Irving characterized as "primarily an anti-Jewish uprising", supposedly because the Communist regime was itself controlled by Jews. Irving's depiction of Hungary's Communist regime as a Jewish dictatorship oppressing Gentiles sparked charges of anti-Semitism.^[20] In addition, there were complaints that Irving had grossly exaggerated the number of people of Jewish origin in the Communist regime and had ignored the fact that Hungarian Communists who did have a Jewish background like Mátyás Rákosi and Ernő Gerő had totally repudiated Judaism and sometimes expressed anti-Semitic attitudes themselves.



By the early 1980s Lipstadt and others were starting to see Irving as a Nazi sympathizer.

In 1983, Irving played a major role in the Hitler Diaries controversy. Irving was an early proponent of the argument that the diaries were a forgery, and went so far as to crash the press conference held by Hugh Trevor-Roper at the Hamburg offices of *Der Stern* magazine on 25 April 1983 to denounce the diaries as a forgery and Trevor-Roper for endorsing the diaries as genuine (Trevor-Roper had called the press conference to announce his withdrawal of his endorsement, arguably rendering Irving's attack on Trevor-Roper irrelevant).^[21] Irving's performance at the *Der Stern* press conference where he violently harangued Trevor-Roper until ejected by security led him to be featured prominently on the news and the next day Irving appeared on *Today* television show as a featured guest.^[22] However, a week later on

May 2, Irving reversed himself and claimed the diaries were genuine; at the same press conference, Irving took the opportunity to promote his translation of the memoirs of Hitler's physician Dr. Theodor Morell. Robert Harris in his book *Selling Hitler* suggested that an additional reason for Irving's change of mind over the authenticity of the alleged Hitler diaries was that the alleged diaries contain no reference to the Holocaust, thereby buttressing Irving's claim in *Hitler's War* that Hitler had no knowledge of the Holocaust.^[23] Subsequently Irving reversed himself again when the diaries were revealed as a forgery. At a press conference held to withdraw his endorsement of the diaries, Irving proudly claimed that he was the first to call the diaries a forgery, to which a reporter replied that he was also the last to call the diaries genuine. In his later accounts of his role in the Hitler Diaries matter, Irving has always mentioned his role as proponent of the theory that the diaries were fake while ignoring his change of opinion about their authenticity. Many historians have criticized Irving as a crass, self-promoting individual who merely used the Hitler Diaries controversy as a chance to enhance his profile with the public.

By the mid-1980s, Irving had not had a successful book in years, and was behind schedule in writing the first volume of his Churchill series, the research for which had strained his finances. By the time he finished the manuscript in 1985, his reputation was greatly diminished, so it was not until 1987 that the book was published as *Churchill's War, Volume I*. In it, Irving writes a revisionist portrayal of Churchill — a debauched alcoholic, a coward, an unabashed racist, and a corrupt warmonger servile to the interests of "international Jewry". Irving also accused Churchill of "selling out the British Empire" and "turning Britain against its natural ally, Germany."

In 1986, Irving was one of the few English language authors to endorse the controversial thesis of the German philosopher Ernst Nolte who, in a 1986 article named *Die Vergangenheit, die nicht vergehen will* ("The Past That Does Not Want To Go Away"), claimed that because the President of the World Zionist Organization Chaim Weizmann wrote a letter to the British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain pledging the full support of his organization to the British war effort on 3 September 1939, that this constituted a "Jewish declaration of war" against Germany, and thus the German government was fully justified in "interning" the Jews of Europe in concentration camps. Many other historians attacked Nolte's argument (and those, like Irving, who supported Nolte's views) as highly factually incorrect and as coming very close to justifying the Holocaust. Nolte in his turn has been a great admirer of Irving and has often cited Irving's work in his writings.

In 1989, Irving published his biography of Hermann Göring, in which he highlighted, though did not endorse, the more "positive" features of the Nazi Reichsmarschall. Irving avoided discussion of Göring's role in the Holocaust, describing instead Göring's jovial personality and offering a wealth of lesser-known facts about his life. Irving also recounts various incidents and produces documents as evidence that Göring disapproved of the persecution of Jews and other Nazi crimes.

In 1992, Irving signed an contract with the Macmillan Press for an biography of Joseph Goebbels entitled *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich*. Following charges that Irving had selectively "edited" an recently discovered complete edition of Goebbels's diaries in Moscow, Macmillan cancelled the book deal.^[24] In 1995, the St. Martin's Press of New York City argeed to publish the Goebbels biography.^[25] By this time, Irving's financial state was such that he very much needed this book deal to be completed in order to pay down the massive arrears on his mortgage.^[26] In March 1996, following widespread protests over allegations of anti-Semitism in *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich*, St. Martin's Press cancelled the contact, and left Irving in an situation, where he was desperate for both publicity and the need to re-establish his reputation as an historian.^[27]

Accusations of Holocaust denial

Over the years Irving's stance on the Holocaust has changed significantly. Until 1988 Irving never sought to deny the reality of the Holocaust and for this reason many Holocaust deniers were ambivalent about him. Holocaust deniers admired Irving for the pro-Nazi slant in his work and the fact that he possessed a degree of mainstream credibility that they lacked, but were annoyed that he did not openly deny the Holocaust. Typical of the ambiguity felt by Holocaust deniers towards Irving before 1988, when Irving started to espouse Holocaust denial openly, was a letter written in 1984 by the French Holocaust denier Robert Faurisson in the *Journal of Historical Review* (the official journal of the Institute for Historical Review (I.H.R.)). In an open letter entitled "A Challenge to David Irving" Faurisson praised Irving as an historian, but criticized him for maintaining that the Holocaust had taken place, and challenged him to take up the cause of Holocaust denial. It has been alleged that the original draft of Faurisson's open letter was more critical of Irving, but Willis Carto persuaded Faurisson to tone down the criticism, lest it alienate Irving (who had spoken at a conference sponsored by the I.H.R. in September 1983) from the I.H.R.. It is not known what Irving's response to Faurisson's letter was.

Until 1988 Irving seemed torn between a desire to be taken seriously as an historian and a desire to associate with those he seemed to share an ideological affinity with. In the first edition of *Hitler's War*, Irving footnotes, "I cannot accept the view... [that] there exists no document signed by Hitler, Himmler or Heydrich speaking of the extermination of the Jews." By the mid-1980s, however, Irving associated himself with the Holocaust-denying Institute for Historical Review, began giving lectures to groups such as the far-right German Deutsche Volksumion, and publicly denied that the Nazis systematically exterminated Jews in gas chambers during World War II. He also alleged that parts of *The Diary of Anne Frank* might have been forged by her surviving father, and in 1988 testified for the defence at Canadian-based Holocaust denier Ernst Zündel's trial. Irving was later to claim that Zündel had convinced him that the Holocaust had not occurred.^[28]

In the 1988 Zündel trial Irving repeated and defended his claim from *Hitler's War* that until October 1943 Hitler knew nothing about the actual implementation of the Final Solution. He also expressed his evolving belief that the Final Solution involved "atrocities", not systematic murder.

“ I don't think there was any overall Reich policy to kill the Jews. If there was, they would have been killed and there would not be now so many millions of survivors. And believe me, I am glad for every survivor that there was.”^[29] ”

As to what evidence further led Irving to believe that the Holocaust never occurred, he cited a report by self-styled execution expert Fred A. Leuchter, which claimed there was no evidence for the existence of homicidal gas chambers at the Auschwitz concentration camp. After the trial Irving published Leuchter's report in the United Kingdom and wrote its foreword. In Errol Morris' 1999 documentary about Leuchter, *Mr. Death: The Rise and Fall of Fred A. Leuchter, Jr.*, Irving said, "The big point [of the Leuchter report]: there is no significant residue of cyanide in the brickwork. That's what converted me. When I read that in the report in the courtroom in Toronto, I became a hard-core disbeliever."^[30] In his 1991 revised edition of *Hitler's War* he had removed all references to death camps and the Holocaust.

Many have considered Irving's historical arguments to be very convoluted. An example occurred in the above-mentioned interview with Ron Rosenbaum, when Rosenbaum questioned Irving about a memoir that had come into Irving's possession that was alleged to have been written by Adolf Eichmann in the

1950s (the precise authenticity of the *Eichmann Memoirs* is in doubt, but parts of the book, according to the German Federal Archives, appeared to be genuine). Irving had received the alleged memoir during a visit to Argentina in 1991 and was quite proud of his find. In *The Eichmann Memoirs*, Eichmann claimed to have heard from Himmler that Hitler had given a verbal order authorizing the Holocaust, thereby contradicting Irving's claim in *Hitler's War* that Hitler was unaware of the Holocaust. Irving's response to the claim that Hitler ordered the Holocaust in *The Eichmann Memoirs* was to claim that Eichmann wrote his memoirs in 1956 at the time of the Suez War, and was fearful that Cairo, Egypt might fall to Israel. Irving's reasoning is that if Cairo was taken by the Israeli Defence Forces, then the Israelis might discover the "rat-line", as undercover smuggling networks for Nazis were known, that had allowed Eichmann to escape to Argentina, and that therefore Eichmann had written his memoirs as a potential defense in the event of being captured by the Israelis. In this way Irving argued that *The Eichmann Memoirs* were genuine but the claim that Hitler ordered the Holocaust was false — only made to reduce Eichmann's responsibility for the Holocaust. Also in the same interview, Irving claimed to want to be accepted as a scholar by other historians and bemoaned having to associate with what he called the lunatic anti-Semitic fringe groups; he claimed he would disassociate himself from these as soon as he was accepted by the historians' community.

Racism

Irving has expressed, both publicly and privately, racist sentiments. Several of these were cited by the judge's decision in Irving's lawsuit against Penguin Books and Deborah Lipstadt.^[31] For instance, in his diary entry for September 17, 1994, Irving wrote about a ditty he composed for his young daughter "when halfbreed children are wheeled past":

I am a Baby Aryan
Not Jewish or Sectarian
I have no plans to marry an
Ape or Rastafarian.

Christopher Hitchens once wrote that after having dinner in his New York apartment, Irving sang the rhyme to his daughter once they were alone in the building's elevator.

And from a speech in 1992 (Sir Trevor McDonald, referenced in the quote, was the first black newsreader in the United Kingdom), with ITN:

“ I am not anti-coloured, take it from me; nothing pleases me more than when I arrive at an airport, or a station, or a seaport, and I see a coloured family there — the black father, the black wife and the black children... When I see these families arriving at the airport I am happy, and when I see them leaving at London airport I am happy.^[32]

But if there is one thing that gets up my nose, I must admit, it is this — the way... the thing is when I am down in Torquay and I switch on my television and I see one of them reading our news to us. It is our news and they're reading it to me. If I was a chauvinist I would say I object even to seeing women reading our news to us.

But now we have women reading out news to us. If they could perhaps have their own news which they were reading to us, I suppose *[laughter]*, it would be very interesting.

For the time being, for a transitional period I'd be prepared to accept that the BBC should have a dinner-jacketed gentleman reading the important news to us, following by a lady reading all the less important news, followed by Trevor McDonald giving us all the latest news about the muggings and the drug busts..."

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Libel suit

In September 1996, Irving filed a libel suit against Deborah Lipstadt and her British publisher Penguin Books for publishing an British edition of Lipstadt's book, *Denying the Holocaust*, which had first been published in the United States in 1993. At the same time, Irving also sued Gitta Sereny for libel for an article she had written about him in *The Guardian* newspaper. Sereny's trial took place in 2001, an year after Lipstadt's trial in 2000, and perhaps for this reason, the 2001 libel trial attracted virtually no media attention—a marked contrast to the 2000 trial, where received very extensive media coverage in Britain. In 1997, Irving threatened to sue John Lukacs for libel if he published an British edition of his book, *The Hitler of History*, but perhaps because Irving already had two libel suits going at that time, he did not follow through with this threat.

In her book, *Denying the Holocaust*, Lipstadt called him a Holocaust denier, falsifier, and bigot, and said that he manipulated and distorted real documents. Irving claimed to have been libelled under the grounds that Lipstadt had called him an Holocaust denier when in his opinion there was no Holocaust to deny. Though the author was American, Irving filed his suit in the English High Court, where the burden of proof in libel cases is on the defendant, unlike the U.S. where the burden is on the plaintiff. As explained by the trial judge, Sir Charles Gray:

4.7 ... the burden of proving the defence of justification rests upon the publishers. Defamatory words are presumed under English law to be untrue. It is not incumbent on defendants to prove the truth of every detail of the defamatory words published: what has to be proved is the substantial truth of the defamatory imputations published about the claimant. As it is sometimes expressed, what must be proved is the truth of the sting of the defamatory charges made.

”

Defence

Lipstadt and Penguin hired the British solicitor Anthony Julius to present her case and he in turn briefed the libel barrister, Richard Rampton QC. They also retained Professor Richard J. Evans, historian and Professor of Modern History at Cambridge University, as an expert witness. Also working as an assistant expert witness was the American Holocaust historian Christopher Browning. Evans and his two assistants spent more than two years examining Irving's work, while gathering evidence to support the claim that Irving had misrepresented evidence to support his prejudice. Evans suggested that in his view, Irving had knowingly used forged documents as sources, and that for this reason, Irving could not be regarded as a historian. Evans' report was the most comprehensive, in-depth examination of Irving's work:

“ Not one of [Irving's] books, speeches or articles, not one paragraph, not one sentence in any of them, can be taken on trust as an accurate representation of its historical subject. All of them are completely worthless as history, because Irving cannot be trusted

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anywhere, in any of them, to give a reliable account of what he is talking or writing about. ... if we mean by historian someone who is concerned to discover the truth about the past, and to give as accurate a representation of it as possible, then Irving is not a historian.^[33] ”

Plaintiff

In the trial, Irving represented himself. He called the American Kevin B. MacDonald, an evolutionary psychologist, to testify on his behalf. Irving also subpoenaed the diplomatic historian D.C. Watt and the military historian John Keegan to testify in his prosecution of Lipstadt; both men had refused an earlier offer to testify for Irving on their own and appeared to be very reluctant on the stand. Rather than focus on the defence's evidence against him, or on whether or not Lipstadt had defamed him, Irving seemed to focus mainly on his "right to free speech." In his closing statement, Irving claimed to have been a victim of an international, mostly Jewish, conspiracy for more than three decades. At one point on 15 March 2000, during the course of Irving's closing argument, he appeared to refer to the Judge as 'Mein Führer' (page 193 of the transcript).

Ruling

In presenting his ruling, Justice Gray concluded (Paragraph 13.167) that he found the following claims against Irving to be 'substantially true':

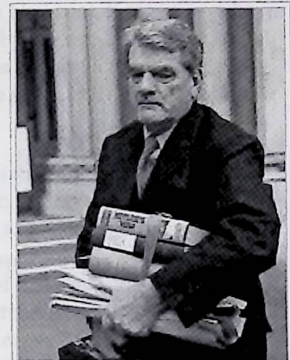
“ Irving has for his own ideological reasons persistently and deliberately misrepresented and manipulated historical evidence; that for the same reasons he has portrayed Hitler in an unwarrantedly favourable light, principally in relation to his attitude towards and responsibility for the treatment of the Jews; that he is an active Holocaust denier; that he is anti-Semitic and racist, and that he associates with right-wing extremists who promote neo-Nazism. ”

Irving lost subsequent attempts at appeal, the appeal finally being rejected by Lord Justice Sedley.

A 2001 episode of PBS's *NOVA* (titled "Holocaust on Trial") focused on the case, and showed re-enactments of events in the courtroom. Irving was played by British actor John Castle.

Aftermath

Not only did Irving lose the case, but in light of the evidence presented at the trial a number of his works that had previously escaped serious scrutiny were brought to public attention. He was also liable to pay all of the substantial costs of the trial, which ruined him financially and subsequently forced him into bankruptcy in 2002.



Irving unsuccessfully represented himself and his work during the trial. The Court found that Lipstadt did not libel Irving when she called him a Holocaust denier in her book.

Criticism by historians

Irving has been highly regarded for his expert knowledge of German military archival resources, even as much of his scholarship was long disputed by professional historians to the point that his standing as a historian was subject to argument from his earliest publications.^[15] Contentious in large part for advancing interpretations of the war considered favourable to the German side and for association with far-right groups that advanced these views, by 1988 he began advocating the view that the Holocaust did not take place as a systematic and deliberate genocide, and quickly grew to be one of the most prominent advocates of Holocaust denial, costing him what scholarly reputation he had outside those circles.

In a review of Irving's 1988 book *Churchill's War*, David Cannadine, the director of the Institute of Historical Research, University of London, criticised Irving's "double standard on evidence", accusing Irving of "demanding absolute documentary proof to convict the Germans (as when he sought to show that Hitler was not responsible for the Holocaust), while relying on circumstantial evidence to condemn the British (as in his account of the Allied bombing of Dresden)."^[34]

Prominent British historian Sir John Keegan wrote in 1996 in his book *The Battle for History*, "Some controversies are entirely bogus, like David Irving's contention that Hitler's subordinates kept from him the facts of the Final Solution, the extermination of the Jews..." During the libel trial, Keegan — who had been subpoenaed by Irving to appear as a witness — lambasted Irving by saying: "I continue to think it perverse of you to propose that Hitler could not have known until as late as October 1943 what was going on with the Jewish people" and, when asked if it was perverse to say that Hitler did not know about the Final Solution, answered "that it defies common sense".^[35]

In an April 20, 1996 review in *The Daily Telegraph* of *Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich*, Keegan wrote that Irving "knows more than anyone alive about the German side of the Second World War", and claimed that *Hitler's War* was "indispensable to anyone seeking to understand the war in the round."^[34] In an article in *The Daily Telegraph* of 12 April 2000, Keegan spoke of his experience of the trial, writing that Irving had an "all-consuming knowledge of a vast body of material" and exhibited "many of the qualities of the most creative historians", that his skill as an archivist could not be contested, and that he was "certainly never dull." However, according to Keegan "Like many who seek to shock, he may not really believe what he says and probably feels astounded when taken seriously."^[36]

In the 1990s, Irving featured on his web-site a translation of a letter by the prominent German historian Hans Mommsen, praising Irving's skill as a researcher. Mommsen, who had written the letter in 1977, attempted to have it removed, but was unsuccessful. However, Mommsen did succeed in forcing Irving to feature a second letter from Mommsen written in 1998 in which Mommsen completely disavowed his first letter of 1977.

In a six-page essay in *The New York Review of Books*, Gordon A. Craig, a leading scholar of German history at Stanford University, noted Irving's claims that the Holocaust never took place and that Auschwitz was merely "a labor camp with an unfortunately high death rate".^[37] Though "such obtuse and quickly discredited views" may be "offensive to large numbers of people", Craig argued that Irving's work is "the best study we have of the German side of the Second World War" and that "we dare not" disregard his views. Craig called Irving an "useful irritant"; a Devil's Advocate historian who promoted

Persona non grata

By the late 1980s, Irving was barred from entering Austria. In the early 1990s, a German court found him guilty of Holocaust denial under the Auschwitzlüge section of the law against Volksverhetzung (a failed appeal by Irving would see the fine rise from 7000 DM to 30000 DM), and he was subsequently barred from entering Germany. Other governments followed suit. In 1992, he was barred from South Africa and Canada, where he was arrested in November 1992 and deported back to the United Kingdom. In an administrative hearing surrounding those events he was found by the hearing office to have engaged in a "total fabrication" in telling a story of an exit from and return to Canada which would have, for technical reasons, made the original deportation order invalid. He was also barred from entering Australia in 1992, a ban he made four unsuccessful legal attempts to overturn.



Irving as he was deported from Canada in 1992

On April 27, 1993 Irving was ordered to attend court to be examined on charges relating to the Loi Gayssot in France. The law, however, does not permit extradition and Irving simply refused to travel to France.

Then, in February 1994, Irving spent ten days of a three month sentence in London's Pentonville prison for alleged contempt of court following a legal wrangling over publishing rights. Irving's legal troubles continued as a Mannheim court indicted him for defaming the dead; as a result of this action, he would be fined 20000 DM in mid-1997.

Early in September 2004, Michael Cullen, the deputy prime minister of New Zealand, announced that Irving would not be permitted to visit the country, where he had been invited by the National Press Club to give a series of lectures under the heading "The Problems of Writing about World War II in a Free Society". The National Press Club defended its invitation of Irving, saying that it amounted not to an endorsement of his views, but rather an opportunity to question him. The intended visit provoked an outcry among Jewish groups, who were not appeased by Irving's promise not to speak about the Holocaust.

Irving had visited New Zealand twice before in the 1980s. His intended 2004 visit was refused on the grounds that he had been convicted of offences by a German court, and that at various times had been deported from, and/or refused entry to, Canada, the United States, Italy, and South Africa. "Mr. Irving is not permitted to enter New Zealand under the Immigration Act because people who have been deported from another country are refused entry", government spokeswoman Katherine O'Sullivan had told *The Press* earlier. Irving rejected the ban and attempted to board a Qantas flight for New Zealand from Los Angeles on 17 September 2004. He was not allowed on board. "As far as I'm concerned, the legal battle now begins", he was quoted as saying. His New Zealand-based lawyer is still waiting on instructions on how to proceed.

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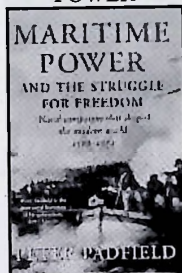
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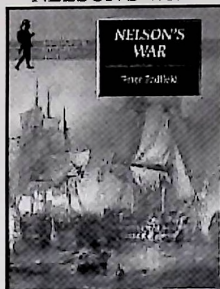
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Revelations from Goebbels' Diary:
Bringing to Light Secret Propaganda Minister
Remarks Halted at the Reichstag, September 1934
[See: D. Irving, "The Suppressed Excesses and Goebbels Papers," *Monthly Appeal* 1991 Journal, pp. 14-17.]

I can't tell you just who typed me off about this, as it would breach confidentiality. But there are certain German historians who are friendly to me, and one of them tipped me that the material was just waiting to be typed by someone. I went to Moscow and got this material - in the unimpaired state of rival historians around the world, who couldn't believe that I, the "disruptive," "neo-Nazi," "Trotskyist" historian, had got the stuff for which they had been looking for 50 years.

If you're a historian dealing with the Third Reich, you know that Goebbels' Diary must contain all the dirt from that era. And yet, all the vital episodes of Third Reich history, the events we're really curious about - such as the June 1934 "Night of the Long Knives," when Hitler ditched SA Brown Shirts leader Ernst Röhm, or the "Crystal Night" in November 1938, or the Reichstag fire mystery, or the inside story of the rise of the Nazi Party - are missing. Not the published Goebbels diary, the version that has been in the public domain for the last 40 years or so.

One way and another, portions have trickled out. First of all there was the original typed Goebbels diary for parts of the years 1942 and 1943, which is now in the Hoover Institution library in Stanford, California. (Edited by Louis Lohmeier, it was published in 1943.) The National Archives in Washington acquired a sheet of diary notes from August 1941. The French somehow got April 1943, and the Hoover library obtained six diary pages from July 1943.

Most importantly, the Institut für Contemporary History in Munich managed to get hold of further portions of the diary through negotiations with the East German Communist authorities. [See, for example, *Final Edition 1945: The Diaries of Joseph*

Revelations from Goebbels' Diary:

Bringing to Light Secrets of Hitler's Propaganda Minister

By David Irving

Remarks Delivered at the Twelfth IHR Conference, September 1994

At the last IHR Conference, in October 1992, I spoke about my visit to the secret Soviet state archives in Moscow, where I found the private diary of Dr. Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Propaganda Minister, microfilmed on eighteen hundred glass plates. [See: D. Irving, "The Suppressed Eichmann and Goebbels Papers," March-April 1993 Journal, pp. 14-25.]

I can't tell you just who tipped me off about this, as it would breach confidentiality, but there are certain German historians who are friendly to me, and one of them tipped me that the material was just waiting to be found by someone. I went to Moscow and got this material -- to the unbounded rage of rival historians around the world, who couldn't believe that I, the "incorrigible," "neo-Nazi," "Fascist-scum" historian, had got the stuff for which they had been looking for 50 years.

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Goebbels. New York: 1978.]

But vital passages were missing even from these, among them the year 1944 -- the year of D-Day, the Stauffenberg bomb plot, and the Battle of the Bulge. And there were years for which only a couple of notebooks have hitherto been available. One begins to suspect that somebody knew they were sitting on a real treasure, and they weren't going to release it. By holding back the good stuff, they were acting in an almost capitalistic manner.

In the end, I didn't pay one bent nickel for this material. Visiting Moscow in June 1992, I simply reminded the head of the Soviet state archives that over the years three or four of my books had been published in the former Soviet Union, and he just let me have the material, assuming, I suppose, that I was therefore kosher.

It was a different situation when I returned for the second time in July 1992 to complete the work. As the week progressed, I found it getting stickier and stickier. They suddenly weren't able to find the boxes and files I'd seen the time before. I had to fight and plead and holler, and they still weren't turning up the stuff I really wanted. On the last day, the secretary of the director came out to me and said: "Mr. Irving, I've got a very embarrassing question to ask of you. Have you been stealing any material from our archives?"

Now, this is something that a historian just doesn't do. When you work in the archives, you're working on trust. You've an obligation to posterity. You do not permanently remove stuff. I did, however, have an arrangement with the director, who permitted me to remove certain glass plates from the archives for copying because they didn't have the requisite facilities there. They didn't even have a microfiche reader. He allowed me to remove these glass plates on my honor, and bring them back after having made the necessary photographic prints.

In an effort to stop me from gaining access, it turned out that somebody had told the archives that I was stealing material. To resolve the situation I signed a declaration stating that everything I had seen in the archives was still there, and that nothing was missing. That was, in fact, the truth.

The archives director was very pleased to have this declaration, and the secretary added the pregnant words: "The information came from Munich." Once again my traditional enemies around the world were trying to trip me up. It didn't work because by that time I'd obtained 99 percent of the material I had on my "shopping list": diary portions dealing with the Kristallnacht, the "Night of the Long Knives," the Reichstag fire, Pearl Harbor, all of 1944, the whole of the months leading up to the outbreak of World War Two -- everything. I'd gotten the lot.

It was difficult, because, as I said, the Russians didn't have a microfiche reader. I suspected in advance that I might need one, because in preparation for my trip to Moscow in the 1970s I had brought with me toilet paper and a bath plug because I knew I wouldn't find them in my Moscow hotel. On this occasion I had thought to

myself, "Suppose -- it's incredible, I mean this is a state archives -- but just suppose they don't have a microfiche reader. I'd better take something with me." So I went to Selfridge's and asked for the most powerful magnifying glass they had. What I didn't know was that the more powerful the magnification, the smaller the lens is. I wound up buying a 12x magnifier that was about as big as my little fingernail. So during the first week I was there, I had to hold it up like this to read those glass plates. But if you don't mind straining your eyesight, it works.

It's quite an unusual feeling looking at the original Nazi microfiche glass plates in the original Agfa boxes -- there are eighteen hundred plates, each with 25 or 40 images on them -- a total of 70 or 80 thousand pages of paper. And you know you are the first person to read them since Goebbels, in 1944 and 1945, ordered the stuff to be preserved in case of damage to the originals. No one knows now where his original notebooks are, or what happened to them. They're probably gone forever. But fortunately they were preserved on glass plates, and I was the first person to study them.

The Reichstag Fire

For example, I read for the first time Goebbels' hand-written entry about the Reichstag fire. As he described it, he was at his home with Hitler on that evening of February 27, 1933, when the phone rang at nine o'clock. It was the prankster "Putzi" Hanfstaengl, saying: "The Reichstag's on fire." Goebbels remembered that he'd been had twice by Hanfstaengl already that week, and he thought this was another prank, so he just put the phone down. Hanfstaengl phoned again and said, "You'd better listen to what I'm saying, The Reichstag's on fire." Goebbels realized this could be serious after all, so he made a phone call to the police station at the Brandenburg Gate, which confirmed that the Reichstag was on fire. Thereupon he and Hitler jumped into a car and drove straight to the Reichstag where they found their worst fears confirmed. This is in the hand-written diary, it is obviously genuine, and it confirms what we know from other sources.

Early Entries

Goebbels' diary didn't start in 1933 when the Nazis come to power; it started when he was a student at Heidelberg University, and carries on all the way until a few days before he commits suicide in 1945 with his family in Hitler's bunker. Never has there been such a contiguous source of information for historians to use, but never has there been a source more fraught with danger. Nobody's diary is genuine, because everybody lies to his diary. Okay, "lie" is a bit sharp. Everyone is a hero in his own diary. So what do you believe? That's the way it is with diaries. You've got to know how to evaluate them. What Goebbels writes in his diary about Goebbels, you treat with suspicion. What Goebbels writes in his diary about a fight between Rosenberg and Koch is probably more accurate, although he's got his sympathies there, too. You have to learn to be very careful.

I'm saying this for a reason, because when we come to look at what the diary says

about the Crystal Night, it's not what you expect it to say, and you can only really straighten things out when you accept that Goebbels has his reasons for writing things in a certain way. I'm something of an expert with diaries, because I've been looking at people's diaries as an historian for the last 30 or 40 years, and I know the things to look for.

It always amuses me the way people write in their diaries certain euphemisms for relations with the opposite sex. I won't describe to you which words I use in my diary, but -- okay, I will. I might write, "Lucy came 'round, and was amiable." It seems pretty harmless, but it's code. This becomes obvious if you slip up and write, "Lucy came round and was amiable twice."

I had the private diary of Luftwaffe Field Marshal Erhard Milch, who had the habit of putting a little X on the line between two days in his diary. Some days, however, there were two Xs, and on one occasion, during the battle of Stalingrad when he was in Berlin, there were three Xs followed by the initials "E.H.," all done into a kind of monogram or logo: "XXX E.H." I happened to know that "E.H." was Edith Hesselbarth, his private secretary. When I tracked her down at her home on Lake Constance, she was most indignant about this imputation, until I told her that Milch had written it in his diary, whereupon she confessed.

In the case of Dr. Goebbels, everybody knows that he has gone into history as the arch-Casanova of the Third Reich. He was the one with the string of amours, and no film starlet could make headway in the German film industry, so legend has it, without using the Minister's casting couch. And yet, it turns out, unless I'm grievously wrong, he was age 33 when he first had a sexual experience with a woman. If you read his diary you could be misled. Very early on in his diary, he's talking about how Else came 'round, and she was all his: "She was all over me." It's an imprecise phrase, but you're willing to believe, given his reputation, that this could only mean one thing.

In another passage, Anka Stalherm, the great heroine of his life, comes to see him and there's an episode on the meadow in Freiburg: "the first kiss." It's only when you start reading through the diary, and the letters that pass between her and Goebbels over the next ten years, that you realize that that first kiss was, in fact, a kiss on the cheek. That's as far as he got with her.

I subsequently found Anka Stalherm's daughter. Because I thought it would be a bit embarrassing to ask her how far her mother had gone with the Nazi Propaganda Minister, I planned on making this my last question before I beat a retreat. As I walked in through the door, though, she said: "Mr. Irving, before you even begin this interview, I want you to know what my mother told me about Goebbels, which is that she never, ever, did it with him. She found him intellectually fascinating, a man of enormous presence, but physically repulsive." Goebbels was 5'4", just over 100 pounds, a club foot with one leg two inches shorter than the other -- a bit of a freak, in other words. He never got anywhere with Anka Stalherm, although if you read his diary you would imagine that she was the great love of his life.

How do we know he was 33 when it first happened? The answer is that he started going out with Olga, the girlfriend of Mr. Arnolt Bronner. (He had a predilection for dating other men's girlfriends; a dangerous habit if you're only 5'4".) He went out with this woman, and she comes 'round, so to speak. Obviously something happened because that night he writes in his diary all the words of euphoria followed with the figures in parenthesis: "(1, 2)." This might, by itself, mean nothing at all, were it not for an entry a few days later, with Olga coming 'round again, and new figures in brackets: "(3, 4, 5)." Well this is rather like being "twice amiable," isn't it? It's a bit of a give-away, and given what we know about the kiss on the cheek, which was all he'd gotten in previous years, you can be pretty certain what this denotes. This happened in December 1930, and he was born in October 1897.

She is only one step ahead, so to speak, of Magda Quandt, who later became Magda Goebbels -- the divorced, blonde, well-to-do wife of a German industrialist, who fell for him. In mid-February 1931 -- after many, many weeks of working for him in the archives and so on -- she comes 'round to his apartment, and you get the same brackets treatment. It's "(1)", and then "(2)", "(3)", and then, on March 1931, "(4)" and "(5)". Five episodes spread over six weeks. There again, you've got a certain amount of support for the belief that he wasn't as active as he made out in later years. If there was anything he was good at, it was propaganda. So we're demolishing a bit of a propaganda legend in connection with Dr. Goebbels here. Amusing as this is, it helps to teach us to be very cautious when dealing with someone's diary as a source of information.

Growing Anti-Semitism

I've gone through the diary with a special interest in the Jewish issue, and particularly the "final solution." There's no question that whatever tragedy befell the Jews in Germany during the Third Reich, Dr. Goebbels himself was the prime moving force behind it. He wasn't just the person who created the atmosphere of hatred, he was also the one who pulled the levers and started the trains in motion. What happened at the other end is still a matter of debate, and this issue is one of the moving causes of revisionism at this moment.

Goebbels didn't start out anti-Semitic. His very early diary pages, back in 1923, contain no references to the Jews, or any anti-Semitism at all, in fact. We do know that in his home town of Rheydt, a close neighbor with whom his parents maintained very close relations was Dr. Josef Joseph, a Jewish lawyer. There was a long-standing friendship between him and Goebbels' parents, who often sent their son 'round to spend the day with Dr. Joseph. (Goebbels' father, Fritz Goebbels, was bookkeeper at a local textile factory.) I'm inclined to believe that the fact that Dr. Joseph was such a close friend of Mr. and Mrs. Goebbels, and not just the boy's Catholic upbringing and the fact that his godfather was also called Joseph, may have been the reason for Goebbels' second name: Paul Joseph Goebbels.

Goebbels met Anka Stalherm at Heidelberg University, where she was one of the

few women students. She was fabulously rich, had shoulder-length blonde hair, and was a typically care-free, affluent female student. Goebbels could hardly believe his luck when, of all the young men at the university, she picked him. There was undoubtedly a very close friendship between them, and all their letters have survived. (I was able to read them in the German archives until the German government, in an act of incredible spitefulness, on July 1, 1993, ordered me banned from the archives, "to protect the interests of the German people".)

In one letter to him, Anka made a mildly anti-Semitic remark, typical of those that were common in the social circles in which she moved. Indignantly he wrote back to his new girlfriend, putting her in her place. In this letter, dated February 17, 1919, Goebbels responded: "As you know, I can't stand this exaggerated anti-Semitism. My view is you don't get rid of them by huffing and puffing, let alone by pogroms, and even if you could do so, that would be both highly ignoble and unworthy."

Furthermore, Goebbels' favorite professor at Heidelberg was Friedrich Gundolf, who was Jewish. This didn't matter to Goebbels at all. When Gundolf said that he wouldn't have time to work with Goebbels on his doctoral dissertation, he passed him on to another professor of literature, Max von Waldberg, who was also Jewish. To the end of his life, Goebbels spoke very highly of these two professors. It was typical of Goebbels that he was able to put Jews into two categories, regarding individual Jews with respect and admiration, while at the same time holding the Jewish people in contempt. A-O

Just a few years later, though, on October 30, 1922, he delivered a lecture in Rheydt in which he commented approvingly on Oswald Spengler's criticism of the Jewish people. So you can see that a certain trend had begun to set in. I often wonder: Was this due to something innate or was it his surroundings? We are not able to pin down just what caused Goebbels to become anti-Semitic around 1922. Certainly by the time he arrived in Berlin, in 1926, as Gauleiter (district party leader), his anti-Semitism was in full flood, and, as we shall see, what he saw there completed the picture for him.

His formative experiences came in the aftermath of World War One, I think. Because of his club foot, the army had refused to accept him as a soldier, which was humiliating. In 1923 he worked in a bank in Cologne, where he was shocked by Jewish banking methods. He saw Jews ruining ordinary Germans, he saw speculation, and he saw inflation wiping out people's savings. His colleagues at the bank undoubtedly drew his attention to the Jewish role in all of it, as the private banks in Germany were almost entirely in Jewish hands.

Another factor played a role. When he left the university Goebbels was an aspiring writer of poetry, plays and newspaper articles. He wanted to write for the great national newspapers and magazines, which were largely controlled by the Ullstein and Mosse families, both of which were Jewish. His approaches to these two publishing companies, with articles submitted for publication, and subsequently seeking employment, were rudely rebuffed. The Berliner Tageblatt alone returned to

him nearly 50 articles he had submitted.

No surprise, if you look at the private papers of Theodor Wolff, chief editor of the Berliner Tageblatt, which was published by the Mosse company. In these papers, which are filed in the German Federal archives, you can see that Wolff was corresponding almost entirely only with Jews.

It's what today we would call networking; if you're outside the loop, you can't break in. One knows this when one is mature, but when you are a young student fresh out of university, full of great idealism and belief in your own superior talents, the first realization that you can't break into the loop -- that the network is there to keep people like you out -- makes a great impression, as it probably did on the young Dr. Goebbels. And this undoubtedly had an effect on his anti-Semitism, even though he still wasn't hostile toward individual Jews.

After Anka Stalherm left and married another young man, Goebbels started a long affair with a young woman named Else Janke. One day, while he's commenting to her on his physical debilities, telling her he realizes he must be quite unattractive because of his club foot and all the rest of it, she says, "You think you've got problems? I'm half Jewish." This was a great shock to Goebbels at that time. Her half-Jewishness, which he described as her mixed blood, grew more and more important in the relationship until it finally led to their break-up. He was actually happy when he was named Gauleiter of Berlin, where the Nazi Party was in disarray, because this gave him a chance to leave Else Janke gracefully. In Berlin he had his eyes on another girl by the name of Josephine von Behr.

At this time he also makes friends with Julius Streicher, Gauleiter of Nuremberg and publisher of the notorious anti-Semitic weekly, Der Stürmer. His views on Streicher vary widely throughout his diary. Sometimes he's full of praise for him, rather the way we grudgingly admire a person who is a bit bullheaded and plows ahead regardless of the damage he does. He liked Streicher as a human being, he liked him for his courage. But then again, he strongly deprecated his brand of anti-Semitism, regarding it as needlessly vulgar. This comes out again and again in the diary. It's a dichotomy that is never satisfactorily resolved until we come to one of the last items in the archives: a February 1945 letter from Goebbels to Streicher, congratulating him on his birthday and sending him a valuable oil painting. Goebbels stayed in touch with Streicher even after he fell out of favor with Hitler.

'Isidor' Weiss

When Goebbels arrived in Berlin as Gauleiter in 1926, he was confronted by a city with 179,000 Jews, one third of all Jews in Germany, and he made use of this fact. The Berlin population already was seething because of the presence of these Jews. In the coming years, Goebbels repeatedly explained to foreign diplomats that the ~~problem there was the usual one, in which the Jewish population disproportionately controlled all the lucrative professions.~~ This rankled with Berlin's non-Jewish population, of course, and Goebbels, whether deliberately or by instinct, zeroed in on

this as a wound that he could work on to promote the Nazi cause.

He was aided in this endeavor by the fact that his chief opponent there, Berlin's Deputy Police Chief (who acted as though he was Police Chief; even the real Police Chief referred to him as being the Chief) was Dr. Bernhard Weiss, a Jew. Weiss looked so much like a Jewish caricature that his photographs didn't need to be re-touched by the Nazis. He was stereotypically Semitic in feature: short, with rounded ears and hook nose, and wearing spectacles.

In London I located Weiss' daughter, Hilda Baban-Weiss, and I pleaded with her for a more attractive photograph of her father, pointing out that the ones I have are not very flattering. I got total silence from the daughter, so I abandoned my quest. Unfortunately, when my biography of Dr. Goebbels comes out we're going to have to use these rather unattractive pictures.

Dr. Goebbels promptly dubbed Weiss "Isidor," to such a degree of success that within two or three years there was hardly a Berliner who didn't believe that "Isidor" was his real first name.

The fight between Dr. Bernhard Weiss and Dr. Joseph Goebbels, is, I think, one of the most hilarious, improbable stories to come out of this era. Twenty-eight times Weiss sued Goebbels for calling him a Jew. Twenty-eight times the judges pointed out to Weiss that he was in fact Jewish, and therefore it was no libel. On one occasion, Dr. Goebbels' newspaper *Der Angriff* published a cartoon showing a donkey with the head of Dr. Weiss, with all of its legs splayed on an ice pond, and a caption reading: "Isidor on thin ice." Isidor Weiss (you see, even I'm calling him Isidor now), immediately sued for libel. Goebbels pointed out it was just a cartoon, but the judge said it was quite obvious that the donkey had the face of Dr. Weiss. Whereupon a headline in the next issue of *Der Angriff* declared: "Judge Confirms Donkey Has Face of Dr. Weiss."

A German scholar recently published a 600-page book purely devoted to the fight between Dr. Goebbels and Dr. Weiss. It would be worth having this book in English, except that the problems between the two men are almost untranslatable.

As Goebbels orchestrated the rise of the Nazi party in Berlin, part of the problem for the democrats there was that much of what he said was true. The Jewish community not only dominated the legal and medical professions in Berlin, they also dominated the crime scene. In my biography I've quoted Interpol figures of the percentage of Jews among those arrested for drug dealing and narcotics. Moreover, three-quarters of the pickpockets in Berlin were Jewish. It was quite easy for Goebbels to draw attention to such facts, and to embellish them in a propaganda campaign. This came to him as second nature. In every new scandal in Berlin, it seemed, Jews were at the base of it -- ripping off the banks, ripping off the taxpayers, and ripping off the government. And again and again, they seemed to be getting off scot-free.

At Syracuse University I found the private papers of Heinrich Brüning, who was Hitler's predecessor as Chancellor (1930-1932). In this collection is a manuscript in which he describes his problems as Chancellor. Brüning recounts that at one time, he ordered an investigation of Jewish banks in Berlin and their methods, and in his manuscript he writes: "The results were so horrifying that I ordered this document to be kept secret, because if it had been allowed to become public knowledge, it would have resulted in anti-Jewish riots." Of course, even though much of what Goebbels said was true, this just doesn't justify what he did later on. We must, in all fairness, keep emphasizing this point.

During the 1920s Goebbels wrote a play called Michael, and it's interesting to compare the various drafts of it, which are available. When he first wrote it back in 1923 or 1924, it was a straightforward kind of morality play. But Goebbels would change things. After Anka Stalherm annoyed him, he changed the leading female character. And as he became more and more annoyed with the Jews, he wrote more anti-Semitism into the play. In the drafts you can see him becoming progressively more anti-Jewish.

After seeing his first Hollywood movie, he wrote in his diary (on Dec. 3, 1928): "Sheer hell. Jewish kitsch. Virtually all you saw were Hebrews." A few months later, on February 15, 1929, he wrote: "The Jewish question is the questions of all questions."

There is a curious passage in his private diary that shows how increasingly obsessed he had become. It was after three years in Berlin as Gauleiter, fighting this increasingly desperate battle, almost with one hand tied behind his back, being repeatedly banned on orders of Dr. Weiss, having repeatedly nearly been sent to prison himself. One night he has a dream, which he then records in his diary (December 17, 1929). In this dream he's back at school, running madly through the corridors with pillars flashing past him, and he's being chased by Jews screaming at him, "Hate, hate, hate." He's always able to keep a few limping strides ahead of his pursuers, occasionally turning round and flinging back at them the same taunt: "Hate, hate, hate!" What an odd thing for a man to write in his own diary. One doesn't often write down one's own dreams in a diary. The mere fact that he had dreams like that shows that he was becoming obsessed with these Jews, the enemy.

More and more episodes occurred to give him reasons to dislike Jews. After Horst Wessel, a young Nazi stormtrooper who composed the hymn that subsequently became the second national anthem of Nazi Germany, was murdered in early 1930 by a communist in Berlin, it was a Jew who gave refuge to the murderers when they fled. This kind of thing will have undoubtedly had an effect of Goebbels. He would have chalked it up on his list of grudges.

Even worse, after he began going out with Magda Quandt (whose stepfather, Friedländer, he knew had been Jewish), it happened that for days at a time she didn't come to see him. After a while, she doesn't answer the phone or keep dates, and eventually Goebbels finds out he has a rival: a Jew named Victor Arlosoroff, who is

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also enraged to find out that she's two-timing him with the Nazi Gauleiter of Berlin. Arlosoroff is so enraged, in fact, that during one meeting he pulls out a revolver, and in a jealous, dramatic scene, fires at her, deliberately missing. The bullet buries itself in the wall near her. She gets him out of her life, although he keeps returning and pleading to be taken back.

This man is none other than Victor Chaim Arlosoroff, who subsequently became an important Zionist figure. After Hitler came to power, he was the Zionist representative in the negotiations with the new Nazi government that resulted in the Ha'avara ("Transfer") agreement, whereby German Jews could emigrate to Palestine with their property. In June 1933 Arlosoroff was murdered in Tel Aviv, Palestine, by members of the Jabotinsky faction of the Zionist movement. The fact that the love of his life was two-timing him with an ardent Zionist may also have contributed to Goebbels' growing dislike of Jews.

Goebbels was besotted with Magda, there's no question, and once again he couldn't believe his own luck. They were married in December 1931. In fact, though, she was rather ambivalent about him, and it appears that the only reason she started dating him was, as they say, to be near the fascinating Mr. Hitler. There was even a rumor that her son, Helmut, was fathered by Hitler. When you look at photographs of little Helmut, though, you can be pretty certain that this is not true, because he looks just like Dr. Goebbels.

Boycotts

A month after the Nazis came to power in January 1933, Goebbels was really able to flex his muscles. He wasn't appointed Propaganda Minister immediately because Hitler needed Goebbels to direct his party's propaganda campaign in one final election battle, and, as Hitler pointed out to him, it wouldn't be right for the Reich Propaganda Minister, a government official, simultaneously to direct the Nazi party's propaganda election campaign.

We must not overlook the fact that the world's Jewish community lost no time in striking at Nazi Germany. We all too readily talk about the book-burning and about the Nazi boycott against the Jews as if those things happened in vacuum. They didn't. The Nazi boycott against the Jews on April 1, 1933, was a foolish reprisal by the Nazis in retaliation for the Jewish boycott against Germany.

As soon as the Nazis came to power the world Jewish community announced an international boycott campaign against Germany. Jews would not buy any German products. They would not accept any more German films, for example, and would see that others would not accept them. Jewish restaurateurs in England announced they would no longer serve German customers. If you read the newspapers of the day, such as the London Daily Express, you'll find all the details of this anti-German Jewish boycott, which is now all too readily forgotten. Today all we hear about is the Nazi boycott against the Jews, which lasted for a single day -- Saturday, April 1, 1933. Brown shirt SA men stood outside Jewish businesses and shops, and

admonished customers against entering.

As a warning to Jews abroad to go easy on Nazi Germany, the boycott failed, of course. It just enraged the international Jewish community even more. At the time, and ever since, the Nazis were effectively rapped on the knuckles for that boycott. It was Goebbels who organized that boycott, even though, if you read his diary, you can get the impression that Hitler authorized it, sanctioned it, and possibly even suggested it. But there's no doubt at all in my mind that this is another case of Goebbels having an idea, of putting it into effect, and then playing a trick by writing in his diary that he'd gotten Hitler's approval in advance. He had already done something like this in 1932, when he railroaded Hitler into an unsuccessful election campaign for Reich President against Paul von Hindenburg. In his diary he rather implies that Hitler asked him to go ahead with it and sanctioned it in advance. We see exactly the same phenomenon in November 1938: the "Night of Broken Glass."

Yet even in 1932-1933, he was still somewhat ambivalent in his feelings about the Jews. He could still split his sides with laughter, as he writes in his diary on May 16, 1933, at a nightclub listening to Jewish comedian Otto Wallburg. This same Otto Wallburg later died in Auschwitz. So there you have the whole of the tragedy of Jews and the Third Reich encapsulated in one man's fate. (You notice I used the word "died." I didn't say he was gassed or was killed or murdered at Auschwitz. He died. We don't know how he died -- it's tragic enough that he did.)

The Nazi campaign against the Jews included Goebbels' systematic campaign to remove them from the theater, art and music. He argued that the Jews tried to dominate, and that this was not for the general good of the community. There was an outcry from the artists themselves, of course. For example, the internationally renowned conductor of the Berlin Philharmonic, Wilhelm Furtwängler, bravely defended fellow conductor Otto Klemperer and other Jewish artists. In a letter to Furtwängler (which was published in The New York Times, April 16, 1933), Goebbels wrote: "Those of Jewish blood who have real ability should be free to exercise their art, but they must not rule."

Jews began a campaign of assassination against Nazis in February 1936, when David Frankfurter shot Wilhelm Gustloff, leader of the Nazi party in Switzerland. Then, in November 1938, another Jew, Herschel Grynszpan, assassinated Ernst vom Rath, a young diplomat at the German embassy in Paris. These incidents further contributed to Goebbels' perception of the international Jewish community, namely, that Jews would stop at nothing to get back at the Nazis. All his previous Jewish enemies, such as Dr. Weiss, expecting short shrift from the Nazis, had emigrated from Germany. Some went to Prague, some to Paris, some to London, and others to the United States -- from where they campaigned against Nazi Germany.

Hitler's 'Final Solution'

On April 11, 1938, the diary records a very interesting conversation in which Hitler reveals to him for the first time that his "Final Solution" of the Jewish problem is to

deport the world's Jews, particularly those in Germany and in Europe, to some faraway country, possibly Madagascar. Hitler swore by the Madagascar solution. Even in July 1942, two months after the island country had been occupied by the British, Hitler is still saying that Madagascar is the ideal solution.

In June 1938, two months later, Goebbels begins an anti-Jewish campaign of his own. Six months before "Crystal Night," Goebbels and Berlin's police chief, Count von Helldorff, decided between them to start a campaign of systematic harassment of the city's Jews. Even after the Nazis came to power, the number of Jews continued to increase in Berlin, which didn't please Goebbels at all. Berlin was his city, and yet the Jews still had considerable presence and economic clout. The only way to reverse the trend, he told the police chief, is to start hounding and harassing them.

In the University of Princeton library there's a file called the Adolf Hitler papers, which consists of documents relieved in 1945 by an American soldier from Hitler's apartment in Munich. It contains a June 1938 letter from Goebbels to Hitler, reporting on this campaign of harassment. All the Jews in Berlin had their motor cars called in for inspection: most of them were found to be unroadworthy, and they were ordered off the roads. They also had their telephones cut off. Berlin's Jews were subjected to all sorts of petty police harassment such as this. It's very similar to what is happening now in Germany to revisionists -- harassing people within the law, rather the way your [United States] government suddenly inflicts a tax audit on someone who is politically incorrect.

'Crystal Night'

The key event in this whole story was, of course, the "Crystal Night" ("Kristallnacht"), or "Night of Broken Glass" in 1938. Here the Goebbels diary must be treated with the utmost caution. It began on November 7, 1938, with the assassination of a German diplomat in Paris by a Polish Jew, Herschel Grynszpan. News of the shooting triggered a number of small scale anti-Jewish outbreaks all over Germany, which Goebbels noted in his diary without at first paying any special attention to them. However, when news reached him of the young diplomat's death, two days later, it truly outraged him. It came while he was with Hitler at a meeting in Munich, commemorating the annual Nazi party anniversary of the failed "Beer Hall Putsch" of November 9, 1923.

After Hitler had left the meeting, Goebbels came to the podium to announce the death of the German diplomat. He also reported to the assembled Gauleiters on the anti-Jewish incidents that had already broken out, describing them as manifestations of a "spontaneous" public outrage. Goebbels said, in effect: "A Jew has fired a shot. A German has died. Obviously our people will be outraged about this. This is not the time to rein in that outrage." We have two or three independent sources for what he said that evening, including the report by the British consul in Munich, who very quickly learned of the speech and reported it to London. This report is now in the British archives.

Describing the evening's events, Goebbels writes in his diary that, after his brief speech: "Everyone makes a beeline for the telephones." He adds: "Now the public will take action." An interesting turn of phrase, he creates an image of men in brown uniforms and swastika arm bands reaching out to telephones to relay orders all over Germany.

The orders were that the Aktion (operation) was to be carried out by SA men in plain clothes, and the police were not to intervene. There was to be no bloodshed and no harm done to anyone unless, of course, Jews offered armed resistance, in which case they should expect short shrift. "There is to be no looting," stormtroopers in Kiel were told. "Nobody is to be roughed up. Foreign Jews are not to be touched. Meet any resistance with firearms. The Aktion is to be carried out in plain clothes and must be finished by five a.m."

The result was the Night of Broken Glass, one of Germany's darkest nights. Hundreds if not thousands of Jewish shops were destroyed. About 150 synagogues were burned to the ground, including six or seven in Berlin. The following morning the news was that 38 Jews had been murdered. On Hitler's orders, 20,000 Jews were rounded up and temporarily held in concentration camps.

After the overnight reports had come in, Goebbels sums up the object of the exercise in a heartless, unrepentant diary entry: "As was to be expected, the entire nation is in uproar. This is one dead man who is costing the Jews dear. Our darling Jews will think twice in future before simply gunning down German diplomats."

In the archives I found a document dated the next day, November 10, which shows quite clearly that some kind of order had actually been issued. That morning Goebbels sent the following message to all 42 Nazi party propaganda officials (Gaupropagandaleiter) at the provincial level: "The anti-Jewish Aktionen [operations] must now be called off with the same rapidity with which they were launched. They have served their desired and anticipated purpose." These are the key lines in this document, I think, because they do imply that an order had been issued the day before. We don't have that earlier document, but references to it were made during the postwar interrogation of one or two of the Gauleiters, and there's also a hint in his diary that he had given certain orders the previous day.

Goebbels had to issue this second order calling off the Aktionen because, as we now know (a member of Hitler's private staff confirmed it to me), Hitler was furious when he heard, during the night, about the anti-Jewish outbreaks. Throughout the night, telephone calls came in reporting synagogues blazing across Germany. Hitler sent for Himmler and asked: "What the hell is going on here, Reichsführer?" Himmler replied: "Send for Goebbels, he knows." Hitler summoned Goebbels and raked him over the coals. The following morning Goebbels wrote in his diary: "I went to see the Führer at 11 o'clock, and we discussed what to do next." You can just imagine what kind of conversation took place between Hitler and Goebbels. Of course, Goebbels isn't going to write in his diary "the Führer called me a bloody idiot for having started what I did last night" -- that's not the kind of diary he kept. Instead,

he wrote a one-line entry to remind himself that he did have to go to see the Führer. What he did next was to issue the November 10 order calling for an immediate stop to all the anti-Jewish Aktionen.

Here, I'm afraid, I have to disagree with our colleague Ingrid Weckert; but if a revisionist can't revise another revisionist, I don't know what a revisionist is. Weckert rather exonerates Dr. Goebbels from any blame for the "Crystal Night." [See Weckert's book, *Flashpoint*, published by the IHR, and her article, "'Crystal Night' 1938," in the Summer 1985 Journal.]

However, there is no doubt in my mind that on that night, having gotten the news that the German diplomat died, Goebbels -- incautiously, imprudently, and out of a sheer sense of mischief -- ordered the Gauleiters to go out and start raising hell against the Jews. And, of course, it got out of hand.

Even then, Goebbels didn't realize the extent to which the world's press would seize on this incident. Few of the top Nazis had ever travelled outside of Germany. They didn't realize what the foreign press was like. They didn't realize that outside Germany, then as now, there are societies that look on German actions with a certain degree of wonderment and bafflement. The foreign press seized on this extraordinary incident, which in the over-heated political climate of 1938 Germany might have seemed little more than an extension of a street fight. But in peaceful democracies this kind of thing just didn't go on. From Berlin, reporters sent back horrific accounts to England, to the United States and to the other free countries.

Ribbentrop, the German Foreign Minister, was one of those most scandalized by what Goebbels had done. Himmler was furious. Göring went to Hitler and demanded that Goebbels be dismissed for this outrage. Goebbels had an appalling time trying to repair the damage that he had done. It is baffling why Hitler tolerated what Goebbels had done. Hitler told Ribbentrop, "I need this man because I have other things in mind, and I am going to need a propaganda minister of the caliber of Dr. Goebbels." This can be the only explanation why he turned a blind eye to Goebbels' blooper, and it doesn't speak very highly of Hitler.

Years later, in July 1944, when he was pleading to be put in charge of Germany's "total war" mobilization effort, Goebbels wrote this mea culpa to Hitler: "I know that I've caused you many a private worry in the 20 years I've been with you, particularly in 1938 and 1939." Although Hitler does appoint him commissioner of total war, this is a very important admission. Obviously between Hitler and Goebbels at that time there was colossal personal strain. It wasn't just because of his affair in 1936-1938 with Lida Baarova, the Czech actress. (She is now 80 years old, still a lady of great beauty, and living in Salzburg. I went to interview her a few months ago.) Rather, it was undoubtedly the grief that Goebbels had caused Hitler by *Kristallnacht*.

Changes After the Outbreak of War

When war broke out in 1939, Jewish leader Chaim Weizmann, president of both

the World Zionist Organization and the "Jewish Agency," made the tactical mistake of declaring war on Germany in the name of the entire Jewish people around the world. This was a crucial error because -- as Professor Ernst Nolte and some other historians have argued -- it somewhat justified what the Nazis then did to the Jews: the Jews declared war on Germany and Germany declared war on the Jews. [The text of Weizmann's declaration, along with an interview with Prof. Nolte, and a review of his recent book, are in the Jan.-Feb. 1994 Journal, pp. 15-22, 37-41.]

During a visit to Poland in June 1934, Goebbels had visited the Jewish ghetto in Warsaw. He recorded his impression in his diary: "Stinking and filthy. The Ostjuden. There they are." Five years later, after the defeat of Poland in 1939, he visited another Jewish ghetto in that country, this time the one in Lodz. He was just as shocked by what he saw, writing in his diary: "Our task isn't a humanitarian one, but a surgical one. Otherwise one day Europe will succumb to the Jewish pestilence."

After once again setting eyes on these Jewish "specimens," the idea came to him to begin making anti-Jewish films. The result was the three infamous anti-Jewish films made by the Nazis. Interesting, isn't it? Of the approximately one thousand motion pictures made by the Nazis during their entire twelve years in power, just three were anti-Jewish: "The Rothschilds," "The Eternal Jew" and "Jud Süß" ("The Jew Süss"). These three films -- the last two going down in propaganda history -- were very much part of Goebbels' broad-front attack on the Jews. And yet, how many anti-German films has Hollywood made in revenge? It doesn't bear counting.

"Jud Süß," which starred some of the Third Reich's best movie actors, told the story of Joseph Süß-Oppenhaimer, an 18th century "Court Jew" financier who was able to rob the Duchy of Württemberg on a Robert Maxwellian scale, and who ends up being publicly hanged -- to the general plaudits of the citizens.

To my mind, "The Eternal Jew" is the most insidious of the three because, as a documentary, it purported to show Jews as they were. On Goebbels' orders Jews were filmed in the ghettos of Poland, at their most profane and their most contemptible. He wanted yards and yards of footage showing Jews as caricatures. With this he mingled footage of rats invading bags of wheat and grain. Concluding the film, in one of its two versions, was an appalling, stomach-churning scene, filmed in close-up, of Jewish ritual slaughter of cattle. This was appended to the end of the film in what I think was a rather crude and vulgar tactic. So two versions of "The Eternal Jew" were made -- one, with the ritual slaughter scene, for adults, and a second, cleaned up version, for children and others with weaker stomachs. But even the knowledge that there was a stronger version had a propaganda effect on people.

Germany Must Perish

In March 1941, Goebbels visited the "Warthegau," a portion of Poland that was incorporated into the German Reich. After a meeting there with the local Gauleiter, Arthur Greiser, Goebbels recorded in his diary: "There has been all manner of liquidating going on here, particularly of the Jewish garbage. That's got to be."

A crucial episode in the "Final Solution," as far as Goebbels is concerned -- and this has been very little highlighted -- came in 1941 with the publication in the United States of a strange little book, *Germany Must Perish*, by an American named Theodore N. Kaufman. In it, Kaufman -- who was, presumably, a Jew -- recommends the castration of the entire German people, so that the Germans would literally perish within one generation. "Germany must perish forever!," wrote Kaufman. "In fact -- not in fancy." Published at a time when the United States was still officially not at war against Germany, this book was given respectful, even laudatory attention by *Time* magazine, *The Washington Post*, and other periodicals.

Goebbels seized with delight on this nasty propaganda diatribe against the German people, with all its Freudian undertones. "This Jew [Kaufman] has done a disservice to the enemy," Goebbels commented. "If he had composed the book at my behest he couldn't have done a better job."

Goebbels looked into the feasibility of having a million copies of a German translation printed up and distributed to German soldiers. He shelved the project because his lawyers pointed out that the project would violate US copyrights. You may laugh but, as he wrote in his diary, the reasoning was that if Germany violated American copyrights, America might feel justified in violating Germany's very valuable copyrights. He had to wait another few months until certain historical events in Hawaii resulted in American copyrights not being so valuable after all.

Kaufman's book figures in Goebbels' diary as being the turning point that justified, in his mind, adopting a much more radical solution to the Jewish problem.

In August 1941, he went to show Hitler *Germany Must Perish* in translation, and persuaded him to agree to a plan by which every German Jew would be fitted out with a yellow Star of David badge with the word *Jude*. Goebbels argued that the Jews had to be tagged, and Hitler agreed. It's interesting to note -- and this can't be emphasized enough -- that again and again it's Goebbels who goes to Hitler with radical plans, and Hitler agrees. It's never Hitler initiating these plans. This is true even when the diary appears to indicate otherwise, as in the case of *Kristallnacht* and other episodes when, for reasons of politics and posterity, Goebbels felt it necessary to write: "The Führer fully endorsed what I had done."

I have to point out that we are reading the diary of a Propaganda Minister, a master dissembler whose diary has frequently been found to be untrustworthy on earlier occasions. And when dealing with what he writes about a man such as Hitler, who is dead and can't defend himself, you have to be extra careful. It may stick in the craw of other historians when I say this, but it doesn't matter if the man is Hitler or Roosevelt or Stalin: If he's not here to defend himself you have to be ten times more careful when trying to write the truth. That's why I've been additionally careful in evaluating the diary of Dr. Goebbels.

During a visit to the Eastern front in November 1941, Goebbels toured the German-

occupied Baltic states -- Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. On this occasion as well, he viewed the ghettos. In Lithuania he spent a whole afternoon touring the Jewish ghetto in Kaunas (Kovno), and wrote disapproving passages in his diary about what he found there. As he records, Goebbels was also told that the Jews in the Baltic states had been massacred on a colossal scale, not by the Germans but by the Lithuanians and Latvians themselves, even as the German troops arrived, in revenge for what the Jews had done to them during the year of Bolshevik terror following the Soviet Russian takeover in June 1940.

When German troops arrived in the Baltic states, they found that the local Jews had largely fled or been evacuated. The Germans then decided to evacuate the German Jews to these Baltic territories. I don't know why they hit on this mad solution, because if the Baltic peoples themselves didn't like their own Jews, these territories certainly weren't going to be very safe for foreign Jews. But the Germans didn't really care.

Goebbels and Speer

It may surprise you to learn that the prime mover behind the evacuation of Berlin's Jews was less Dr. Goebbels than that great hero of the postwar media, Albert Speer. If you read Speer's genuine diary, not the sanitized one he gave to the German Federal Archives, but his genuine diary, you'll find that from early 1941, when he was chief of construction for Berlin, he makes repeated references to the "Main Resettlement Department" ("Hauptabteilung Umsiedlung"), which he controlled.

You see, Speer -- who was a close friend of Goebbels and his wife -- had been given the task of rebuilding Berlin -- a fine and appropriate task for an ambitious young architect with great vision, and, it has to be said, also great ability. In order to rebuild Berlin, though, he had first to clear slums, and this required that he house the slum-dwellers elsewhere. So, wanting to clear the Jewish areas of west Berlin, he persuaded Goebbels to start a campaign to drive the Jews out of the city, and thus empty their apartments. Speer had his eye on something like 24,000 Jewish houses and apartments in Berlin.

In early 1941, Speer and Goebbels, each for reasons of his own, together started this campaign to drive the Jews from the city. Goebbels, who was Gauleiter of Berlin, wanted to have his city "free of Jews," and Speer wanted to clear out those 24,000 apartments so that he could rebuild Berlin.

So, trainload by trainload, Jews were shipped out of Berlin to anywhere -- nobody really cared. The chiefs of police, Kurt Daluge and Helldorff joined in because they were pals of Goebbels. Only occasionally did Goebbels have to get approval from Hitler, in broad general terms, for yet another operation against the Jews. We know how many Jews were in those trains -- there were about 130 trainloads altogether -- because in almost every case we know exactly how many Jews were loaded onto each train.

We know the exact route and destination of those trains because, by some quirk of

1500 train in 3 years 10 trainloads week = 20,000 a week
2,000 = 500 trainloads = 130 trainloads
130 | 78,000
600
786

historical fate, the actual rail records have survived. They show that there were around a thousand Jews per trainload -- sometimes as few as about 650 passengers, sometimes as many as 1030. The first of these trainloads left Berlin on October 18, 1941 -- to the plaudits of Speer and Goebbels. These rail deportations were irregular because this was a low priority program. At a time when German troops were fighting a desperate battle outside Moscow, rail rolling stock and rail networks were needed, above all, for munitions, supplies, troop reinforcements, wounded soldiers, hospital trains, and all the rest. But whenever they could, Goebbels and Speer would deport another trainload of Jews.

Single Jews with no families were the first to be rounded up and deported. If the family had a "privileged" member -- for example, a Jew who had married a non-Jew, or a Jewish man who was working in a munitions factory -- that one member saved the entire family. Jews who weren't privileged in some way were liable to be picked up without warning, allowed only 40 kilograms of baggage, put on a train and shipped out.

In one particular case, we know that a trainload of 1030 Jews left Berlin on November 27, 1941, destined for Riga, Latvia. It's recorded in the Speer diary and in the Goebbels diary. It arrived at a place called Skiatowa, eight kilometers outside Riga, on the morning of November 30, 1941, in the midst of a mass extermination. So these newly-arrived Jews were taken along with local Riga Jews, lined up along pits, and shot.

That very day, Heinrich Himmler went to see Hitler at his headquarters. In my book *Hitler's War* [in the 1991 Focal Point edition, between pages 506-507], you'll find a facsimile of Himmler's own handwritten notes of his telephone conversations on that day, when he made a couple of phone calls from Hitler's headquarters. One note records a call at 1:30 p.m., Nov. 30, 1941, to Gestapo chief Reinhard Heydrich. It reads: "Jew transport from Berlin. No liquidation."

Until I found these bundles of telephone notes, not one historian in the world had bothered to read them or quote them. They were written in old-fashioned handwriting, you see, and the German historians rather like to have the documents they consult printed, especially in the Nuremberg bound volumes, and even better, with illustrations. They don't like reading old German handwriting.

What's the explanation for Himmler's words here? My theory is that he may have said to Hitler: "Mein Führer, I've got a bit of a problem housing these Jews we're shipping out of Berlin. Why don't we just bump them off?," and Hitler probably answered: "Out of the question." So Himmler sends a frantic message to Heydrich, saying they're not to be liquidated. But it's too late, they're already dead -- the whole trainload. We know this because we have the timetable of what happened that day.

On March 5, 1942, Goebbels received a report from Heydrich about guerilla warfare in the occupied east. Blaming the Jews for this as well, he comments:

It is therefore understandable that many of them must pay with their lives for this. Anyway, in my view the more Jews who are liquidated the more consolidated the situation in Europe will be after the war. Let there be no phony sentimentalism about it. The Jews are Europe's misfortune. They must somehow be eliminated otherwise we are in danger of being eliminated by them.

Here I want to mention something that I'm always very adamant about. Although we revisionists say that gas chambers didn't exist, and that the "factories of death" didn't exist, there is no doubt in my mind that on the Eastern front large numbers of Jews were massacred, by criminals with guns -- SS men, Ukrainians, Lithuanians, whatever -- to get rid of them. They were made to line up next to pits or ditches, and then shot. The eyewitness accounts I've seen of this are genuine and reliable.

Wannsee Conference

In late 1941 Heydrich sent a message to all the relevant ministers and state secretaries calling them to a high-level conference on the Jewish question. This is the famous Wannsee Conference, which took place on January 20, 1942, at a villa in suburban Berlin. There the officials discussed how to deal with all the administrative problems of large-scale transportations of Jews. There's no reference to killing Jews, not even an indication, anywhere in the Conference record.

Goebbels was not present at that meeting because the invitation that was sent to the Propaganda Ministry was addressed to Leopold Gutterer, the Ministry State Secretary and Goebbels' number two man. Gutterer is still alive, age 92. I went to interview him two or three times before I was banned from Germany (on November 9, 1993). He told me he never got the Wannsee meeting invitation, that it was probably intercepted by Werner Naumann, who was his rival on Goebbels staff.

Although Goebbels did not hear in advance of the meeting, you'll find in Goebbels' diary -- in his entry of March 7, 1942 -- that a copy of the well-known Wannsee Conference protocol was sent to him. Nobody else has spotted this.

There were still eleven million Jews in Europe, Goebbels dictated on that day, accurately summarizing the document. "For the time being they are to be concentrated in the east [until] later; possibly an island like Madagascar can be assigned to them after the war." It all raised a host of "delicate questions," he added. "Undoubtedly there will be a multitude of personal tragedies," he wrote airily, "But this is unavoidable. The situation now is ripe for a final settlement of the Jewish question."

More chilling is another diary entry a few weeks later. On March 27, 1942, Goebbels dictates a lengthy passage about another SS document that had been submitted to him, and which appears to have been much uglier in its content. "Beginning with Lublin," he states, "the Jews are now being deported eastward from the General Government [occupied Poland]. The procedure is pretty barbaric and one that beggars description, and there's not much left of the Jews. Broadly speaking one

can probably say that 60 percent of them will have to be liquidated, while only 40 percent can be put to work."

It's a very ugly passage, and it's easy to link this diary passage with everything we've seen in the movies and on television since then. He's describing "Schindler's List" here -- or is he? I don't know. All he's actually saying here is that the Jews are having a pretty rigorous time. They're being deported, it's happening in a systematic way, and not many of them are going to survive it.

When I visited the Hoover Institution library in Stanford, California, to see the portion of the original Goebbels diary that they have there, this was the first page I asked to see. And when I was in the Moscow archives to examine the glass plate copy of the diary, this was also the first plate I searched for. I knew that if the diary had actually been copied by the Nazis in Berlin, and the glass plate version in Moscow matches the text in the Hoover library, there's no way anyone could have faked it. And there it is on the glass plate in Moscow, identical. As a final clincher, this portion was also microfilmed in 1947 in New York from the text that is held by the Hoover library. So there are three different indications that this is a genuine quotation from a genuine Goebbels document.

The conclusion I draw therefore is that, between them, Speer and Goebbels started a ruthless campaign in 1941 to drive out and deport the Jews from Berlin -- Goebbels for political reasons, and out of sheer visceral hatred of the Jews, and Speer for the more mundane reasons of real estate and ambition. They didn't really care what happened to the Jews.

Even so, we must put all this in the context of the brutal war being fought on the Eastern front at the time, in which neither side was giving the other any quarter. By this time (March 1942) we British had just begun bombing German towns on a ruthless scale. The devastating aerial bombardment of Lübeck, for example, came just two days after this diary entry. It's not difficult to imagine Dr. Goebbels' attitude: "So what if Jews are being machine-gunned into pits? They had it coming to them. They declared war on us, and this is no time for sympathy and sentiment." That's the way he may well have looked at it.

By this time, ugly rumors were already circulating abroad, fuelled by British propaganda. The London Daily Telegraph quoted Polish claims that seven thousand of Warsaw's Jews were being killed each day, often in what it called "gas chambers." One of Goebbels' worried civil servants responded by telexing a request for information to Hans Frank's press office in Krakow and to the propaganda field office in Warsaw. The reassuring reply spoke of the Jews being used to construct defences and roads. Be that as it may, in Goebbels' files the original press report, which had merely summarized the British newspaper item, was rubber-stamped Geheime Reichssache, "Secret Reich Matter."

How much did Goebbels know? Among his surviving files are papers suggesting a broad general knowledge of atrocities. One is from a large collection of original

Goebbels' papers on file at the Jewish Yivo institute in New York.

Reporting to Goebbels on November 11, 1942, his legal expert, Dr Hans Schmidt-Leonhardt, whom he had sent to inspect conditions in Hans Frank's Polish dominions, noted that the Warsaw police had deemed it too dangerous to visit the ghetto there; in the Krakow ghetto he had found all the Jews put to work; in Lublin the ghetto had already been cleared away, and there were now bloody disturbances. "As a Geheime Reichssache," reported the legal specialist, "Frank related to us the following characteristic recent instance: ..." But whatever this was we cannot know, because a shocked member of Goebbels' staff cut off the rest of the page.

This is something that you have to look for, this "top secret" endorsement. By contrast, the Auschwitz documents found in the Moscow archives by French researcher Jean-Claude Pressac have no "secret" classification whatsoever. But this document, with its missing half page, tells me that Goebbels knew damn well that something ugly was probably happening on the Eastern front, and that he didn't want members of his staff asking awkward questions, so he had part of the page torn off and locked away in his safe.

I sometimes wonder what his stenographer, Richard Otte, must have thought about the man whose words he transcribed day by day for this diary.

So there are the facts about Dr. Goebbels and the "final solution." If we're looking for a culprit, if we're looking for a criminal behind the "final solution" or the "Holocaust," whatever it was, for the man who started it in motion, then it was undoubtedly Dr. Goebbels first and foremost. Not Julius Streicher, not Adolf Hitler, nor any of the other Nazis. Goebbels was the moving force, and the brain behind it in every sense of the word. We still don't know if he knew what exactly happened at the other end, but then this isn't surprising, because we ourselves don't know either.

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Arrest and imprisonment in Austria

Irving was arrested and jailed in Austria in November 2005 and released upon appeal in December 2006. On November 11, 2005, the Austrian police in the southern state of Styria, acting under a 1989 warrant, arrested Irving. Four days later, he was charged by state prosecutors with the speech crime of trivialising the Holocaust. His application for bail was denied on grounds he would flee or repeat the offence. He remained in jail awaiting trial. On 20 February 2006 Irving pled guilty to the charge of trivialising, grossly playing down and denying the Holocaust.

Sentencing

Before Irving's sentencing hearing, he stated through his lawyer that he had changed his views and his ways. At the trial, Judge Liebtreu quoted numerous statements of Irving's, including that "There were no gas chambers at Auschwitz" and "It makes no sense to transport people from Amsterdam, Vienna and Brussels 500 kilometres to Auschwitz simply to liquidate them when it can be more easily done 8 km from the city where they live". Irving informed Judge Liebtreu that he "regretted the formulation".

Towards the end of the hearing, Irving again publicly recanted, saying that "I've changed my views. I spoke then about Auschwitz and gas chambers based on my knowledge at the time, but by 1991 when I came across the Eichmann papers, I wasn't saying that any more and I wouldn't say that now. The Nazis did murder millions of Jews...I made a mistake by saying there were no gas chambers, I am absolutely without doubt that the Holocaust took place. I apologise to those few I might have offended though I remain very proud of the 30 books I have written." However, Irving continued to insist that Hitler knew nothing of the death camps, and that "The figure of six million killed Jews is just a symbolic number".

In an uncompromising summary, Michael Klackl, the prosecuting attorney, stated:

“ David Irving only uses words, but these words are used by right-wing extremists to give them an ideological position. Mr Irving might have said he has changed his views, but that has all been a show for you. Theatrical exhibition to save himself from the maximum sentence. He has played a role for you today. The thread of anti-Semitism runs through him.^[38] ”

The judge, Peter Liebtreu, summarized:

“ He showed no signs that he attempted to change his views after the arrest warrant was issued 16 years ago in Austria.... He served as an example for the right wing for decades. He is comparable to a prostitute who hasn't changed her ways.... Irving is a falsifier of history and anything but a proper historian. In the world of David Irving there were no gas chambers and no plan to murder the Jews. He's continued to deny the fact that the Holocaust was genocide orchestrated from the highest ranks of the Nazi state.^[39] ”

At the end of the one-day hearing, Irving was sentenced to three years' imprisonment in accordance with the Austrian Federal Law on the prohibition of National Socialist activities (officially *Verbotsgesetz*, "Prohibition Statute") for having denied the existence of gas chambers in National Socialist concentration camps in several lectures held in Austria in 1989. Irving sat motionless as Liebtreu asked Irving if he had understood the sentence, to which Irving replied "I'm not sure I do" before being

bundled out of the court by Austrian police. Later, Irving declared himself shocked by the severity of the sentence. He reportedly had already purchased a plane ticket home to London, believing the court would "not be stupid enough" to lock him up.^[40]

After the sentencing, Liebtreu told the audience that "The court did not consider the defendant to have genuinely changed his mind. The regret he showed was considered to be mere lip service to the law."

On 28 February, Irving once again questioned the Holocaust, asking "Given the ruthless efficiency of the Germans, if there was an extermination programme to kill all the Jews, how come so many survived?" He claimed that the number of people gassed in Auschwitz was relatively small, and that his earlier claims that there had been no gassing at all had been a "methodological error." According to Irving, "You could say that millions died, but not at Auschwitz".^[41] Within hours, the Austrian government reacted by barring Irving from further communication with the media.

Time in prison

Irving stated that he would use time spent in prison to write his memoirs, entitled *Irving's War*.

Nemesis Debora Lipstadt, upon hearing of Irving's sentence to three years' imprisonment, said, "I am not happy when censorship wins, and I don't believe in winning battles via censorship... The way of fighting Holocaust deniers is with history and with truth."^[42]

Indeed, many feared that Irving could become a martyr for far-right activists, and the issue also raised a debate on what grounds freedom of speech could be denied in democratic countries.

Concerning the Austrian 'Prohibition Statute', the Austrian Federal Ministry for Foreign Affairs insisted that it conforms with international law and international human rights standards, and that it is not contrary to Article 10 of the European Convention on Human Rights 1950, that being a statute "...necessary in a democratic society (inter alia)... for the prevention of disorder or crime,... [and]... for the protection of the rights of others". Should Irving have wished to determine whether the Austrian authorities were correct on this point and not an excessive and illegal intrusion on the right of freedom of expression, he would have had to appeal to the European Court of Human Rights.

Release

Both Irving, hoping to have the verdict overturned, and the Austrian prosecutor, calling for a longer sentence, served appeals on April 22, 2006. From September 1 to September 4, the Austrian Supreme Court considered Irving's appeal but ultimately ruled against him.^[43] The appeal over the length of sentence was heard and concluded on December 20. The court replaced two-thirds of Irving's jail sentence with probation. Since he had already served the balance of his sentence in jail, he was released from prison, and was deported to the United Kingdom.^{[44][45][46][47]} Upon Irving's arrival in the UK he reaffirmed his position, stating that he felt "no need any longer to show remorse" for his Holocaust views.^[48] On 21 December 2006, Irving was technically "expelled" from Austria; he was banned from ever setting foot in that country again.^[49]

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Note: Most of Irving's books are available in PDF as free downloads at his web site.

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See also

- List of Adolf Hitler books
- Historical revisionism
- Freedom of speech
- Holocaust denial

- Faurisson affair

External links

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DAVID IRVING

The Suppressed Eichmann and Goebbels Papers

By David Irving

David Irving, acknowledged by The Times of London as "one of Britain's foremost historians," is the author of more than two dozen published works on 20th-century history, including Hess: The Missing Years, Uprising: Hungary 1956, Hitler's War, Churchill's War and Göring: A Biography (all available from the IHR). Irving has addressed four IHR conferences.

(Presented at the Eleventh IHR Conference, October 1992)

Twice this year I've come under the scrutiny of journalists, entirely through no doing of my own. The first occasion was my acquisition of the Eichmann papers, about which I'll be speaking shortly. The second occasion was in regard to the papers of Dr. Joseph Goebbels. I'll show you the Goebbels papers first because these have aroused enormous interest. It came about like this:

The Goebbels Diaries

On May 6th, 1992, while I was researching at the archives of the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich -- once again, "illegally" on German soil -- a good friend whom I've known for thirty years lunched with me and said, "David, I've been working in the Moscow state secret archives, and I've found the glass plates on which are microfilmed the entire diaries of Dr. Joseph Goebbels."

At this, of course, my ears pricked up because any historian worth his salt will tell you that the published Goebbels diaries are complete except for everything that matters. Few of the most important portions have been published so far: the November 1938 Kristallnacht ("Night of broken glass"), the 1934 Röhm purge ("Night of the long knives"), the outbreak of the war in 1939, the Pearl Harbor attack, you name it -- it is not in the published volumes that came out in the 1950s, the 1970s or the 1980s. They hadn't got everything that mattered. We thought this

was because the Soviets were holding onto the good stuff, to sell it for really top dollar later on. But that was not the case. It was just the typical Communist, Marxist-Leninist chaos. They didn't know themselves what they had.

The diaries were recorded on Agfa glass plates stored in boxes: here are my color photographs of one of the original boxes. You can see the handwriting on it of Dr. Richard Otte, Goebbels' own secretary, which my source immediately recognized. Historians of the period all knew that during the final weeks of the war, Goebbels feared that his priceless diaries might be burned to a frizzle in some thoughtless British air raid. So he took the precaution of having them microfilmed on these glass plates, which at that time was a totally new system. We knew that these glass plates existed somewhere, and we've been looking for them. Actually, we couldn't just look for them because no one knew where to look. But if you stumbled across them, you'd know what they are, rather like the diaries of Admiral Canaris.

So in March 1992 my source stumbled across these boxes in the Moscow archives, and recognized them for what they were. (You'll notice that I don't mention this person's name, because I don't want to get him or her into any trouble.)

My source's own institute, the Institute of Contemporary History (Institut für Zeitgeschichte) in Munich -- my deadliest enemies now -- refused to finance a further expedition for my source to go back to Moscow to purchase these 1,600 glass plates.

There are 92 boxes of these glass plates. Ninety-two boxes, just loosely bundled up with string. The glass plates are not in very good condition. They've got fragments of glass splinters between them and they're often badly scratched. But they are entirely legible.

My source suggested that I raise the money to visit Moscow to get hold of these glass plates. I contacted my American publisher, Avon Books, and for ten days they acted very enthusiastic. I estimated that I'd need about \$20,000 in order to buy the glass plates outright from the Russian archivists. They need money so badly just to keep the archives running, they have to sell off the family silver bit by bit, so to speak. I thought that \$20,000 was a very reasonable price.

Suddenly, though, the bubble popped. Word came down from the upper levels at Avon books that they wouldn't finance my trip to Moscow to get these plates. They feared that it involved "bribing" Russian officials, or something unethical. So next I approached my British publishers, Macmillan London, Ltd., and within two hours received the same answer. Perhaps it was decided that they wouldn't help provide David Irving with this scoop.

So I approached the Sunday Times, which is Britain's biggest, most serious, and most respected newspaper. They immediately agreed to finance an initial expedition to Moscow for me to have a look at these glass plates. A week later, I returned to London having not only looked at the plates, but having copied hundreds of pages

from them -- everything that mattered except for a few gaps.

When I then reached an agreement with the Sunday Times, they insisted that I not breathe a word to anyone about this arrangement. As Sunday Times editor Andrew Neil told me, "Irving, my staff are not happy that we are doing this deal with you." I replied, "Well, you've got no choice, have you? Because it's my project."

If you read the newspaper accounts afterwards, you get the impression that this was the Sunday Times' project, and that they had picked me for it because I'm the only person who can read Goebbels' handwriting. Well, later, when the big fight started, they were hoist by their own petard because the fight in Britain became horrendous and hairy. [See the IHR Newsletter, Oct. 1992, p. 5.]

The Controversy Begins

If, perversely, you wanted to upset the Jewish community in Britain, what would you do? The first thing I would do is go out to all the Jewish ghettos in London, like Stamford Hill or Golders Green, and I would put up 60-foot-long posters in the Nazi colors with 15-foot swastikas, a photograph of Dr. Goebbels, and the slogan running right across in gothic script: WHEN WE DEPART, LET THE EARTH TREMBLE. This is precisely what the Sunday Times did to advertise their David Irving series!

The Jewish community frantically organized ten-man-strong gangs to go out and deface these posters. But as fast as they desecrated, the Sunday Times went 'round renewing them. This went on for a week until finally the community concerned, our traditional enemies, brought their traditional pressures to bear on the Sunday Times. As Mark Weber mentioned, they themselves admitted this pressure, not only from the English community, but the American Jewish community as well, because the Sunday Times is particularly vulnerable. Much of their finance comes from their American banking system, and much of the advertising in Britain is dependent on this particular community. The community left Andrew Neil, the editor, with no doubt at all of their displeasure. He told me at the height of this crisis that he had never been through such a nightmare in his life.

In consequence of this pressure the Sunday Times had to turn the entire campaign around against me, their own contributor, and try to pretend that it was their material, and that they were obliged to call me in because I was the only person who could read the handwriting. Let me just show you what the glass pages produce. Dr. Goebbels' diaries were recorded in miniature on glass plates; this is the contact print of one of the glass plates. As you see, it's fifty pages of the diaries in handwriting, very, very small. The first week I was there I had no easy means of reading them because there was no microfilm reader in Moscow. But by chance I had a tiny little 12x magnifying glass with me, as large as my fingernail, and with that I could read those glass plates for the first week.

Some of them we borrowed, with the permission of the archivist, and had them blown up to produce these photographs. You can see later on, those of you who read

German, that Dr. Goebbels' handwriting is truly illegible. It took me two years to learn to read it. When the Sunday Times said, "Irving is one of the three people in the world who can read Goebbels' handwriting," our rivals scoffed and said, "That's utter baloney, any German of that generation can read his handwriting." So I sent pages of the diary to these rival journalists, and I said, "I'll pay you a thousand pounds if, within two weeks, you can supply me with a transcript of one page with fewer than 50 percent errors." Not one of them took me up on it. The Daily Mail, a rival of the Sunday Times, thought they'd scooped us by paying 20,000 pounds to purchase a few pages of the diary from the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, who were determined to spite me. The Daily Mail took their precious pages and hurried off back to London to get to work on them, only to find to their horror that their people could not read the pages they'd paid 20,000 pounds for! I had some happy moments during that July of 1992, as you can believe.

Joseph Goebbels (right) with armaments minister Albert Speer (left) and labor leader Robert Ley at a mass meeting in Berlin in 1943 to honor outstanding workers.

Mark [Weber] mentioned the publicity that surrounded this affair, and it's true: during those two weeks alone, I collected two thousand press clippings from around the world. It was exactly the same back in January when the Eichmann papers scandal broke. You see, when I was in Argentina in October [1991] delivering lectures in English and Spanish to audiences down there, one of those odd strokes of luck happened. When you're an internationally known historian, or when you're notorious, people come up to you and ask, "Are you interested in this?"

Thus, an American autograph collector wrote to me a few weeks ago saying, "I've got Heinrich Himmler's 1939 diary. Would you like to have a look at it?" This kind of thing happens.

The Eichmann Memoirs

If you go to London at present, around the West End where I live you'll find every parking meter, every lamppost, every traffic standard, every traffic light have got stickers on them saying "Smash David Irving," "Stop Irving," or "Irving Speaks, Rostock Burns." Behind this is a group that calls itself CAFE, the Committee Against Fascism in Europe, which the Daily Express tells me is in fact a front for the Mossad. They've gone round putting up these stickers all over the West End of London advertising mass-meetings outside my home, and very kindly giving my address.

I'm grateful to them because recently I got a letter from a Greek publisher saying, "Mr. Irving, I've been trying for a year to contact you through your publishers so that I can make an offer for the rights to your Adolf Hitler biography, and your publishers were unwilling to let us have your address. As I was in London shopping a few days ago, I happened to notice a sticker on which your opponents put your address, so I am happy now to make an offer for your book." This is what happens.

So, being notorious has its advantages. When I was in Argentina, in October [1991], a man who had written me vaguely a couple of years before, mentioning papers that he thought I ought to see, came up to me at the end of one meeting. The next day he came back and gave me two bulky brown-paper parcels which turned out to contain the writings of Adolf Eichmann when he was in hiding in Argentina in the late 1950s. Adolf Eichmann, of course, is now the man with whom the public most associates what they call the "Holocaust."

I hate that word. It's a word I don't like using. People say to me, "Mr. Irving, do you believe in the Holocaust? Do you deny the Holocaust?" I say that I mistrust words with a capital letter. They look like a trademark, don't they? Like Tylenol or something. We don't trust them; no matter how much advertising they put into Tylenol. And so it is with that word "Holocaust." You get the impression that it is a neatly packaged, highly promoted operation, and you don't trust it.

Eichmann was born on the 19th of March, 1906. As an SS Lieutenant Colonel (Obersturmbannführer), he was a specialist of the Jewish question. He looked upon the Jews with that same mixture of admiration and fear shared by most of the non-Jewish population around the world.

He went to Palestine in 1937 after he was made an officer in the SS, and he actually (we have his own record of this) entered into negotiations with leading Zionist underground fighters in Palestine, some of whom went on after the war to become members of the cabinet of Israeli leader David Ben-Gurion. None of this was admitted by them at the time, but of course the records are there in the files of the SS in the National Archives in Washington.

Eichmann was head of department IV B 4 of the Reich Security Main Office (Reichssicherheitshauptamt or RSHA). This was the desk of the Gestapo assigned to deal with Jewish matters. Eichmann came under Heinrich Müller (head of the Gestapo), who came under Reinhard Heydrich (the chief of the RSHA) [and after January 1943, Ernst Kaltenbrunner], who came under Heinrich Himmler (the Reichsführer SS), who came under Hitler.

Actually, Himmler was much farther under Hitler than you would imagine from subsequent historical propaganda. Relations between Himmler and Hitler were not close. They seldom saw each other; Himmler was a bit of a loose cannon who operated very much at arm's length from Hitler. He took his own decisions and acted as he wanted. Hitler couldn't be bothered with much that Himmler was up to. I think there was a certain lack of affinity between the two, and this became increasingly evident as the war went on. This is also indicated by Eichmann's own writings.

To the governments of the foreign countries from where Jews were being deported, Eichmann denied that the Jews were being killed. But from his papers we can surmise that he knew or suspected different.

These Eichmann papers -- the 600 pages which were handed to me in Argentina -- are all typescript on very, very, flimsy paper -- what you Americans call onion skin paper -- legal size. I am guessing that many, many carbon copies had been made. We know that they originated with the collaboration of a Flemish journalist named Willem Sassens von Hildewor who was also in hiding in Argentina. Sassens was a very dubious character. I think he's still alive in Argentina, but he's gone into hiding because he fears for his life, and probably with some justification because there's good reason to suspect that he turned over the bulk of these papers -- which he dressed up for the purpose -- to Life magazine, in 1959 or 1960, and when Life magazine published them they were the direct cause of Eichmann's capture and kidnapping by the Israelis in the following year.

So Sassens is a very dubious character. As we know from von Woltersdorf, an eyewitness who lives in Germany now and wrote me a very long letter after the scandal broke (he was present during a lot of these taping sessions with Eichmann), Sassens persuaded Eichmann to talk at very great length on tape recordings. Altogether there were either 67 or 72 tape recordings. Because they were recorded in the 1950s, the tape recorder was a primitive reel-to-reel model. The tapes, once used, would then be erased and reused, so unfortunately, very few of the original tapes survive.

The surviving original tapes are now in the custody of Dieter Eichmann, a son of Eichmann, who lives near Lake Constance [in southern Germany]. As a result of the scandal that arose over my discovery of these Eichmann papers, I tried to protect Dieter Eichmann from embarrassment by the newspapers: I told journalists I wasn't going to reveal where they could find him because I didn't feel that it was right for his family to be molested by newspapermen. Eventually, though, I did put one journalist in contact with Dieter Eichmann, a journalist with the Swiss weekly Die Weltwoche. In the space of a few days Die Weltwoche, a wealthy Swiss weekly newspaper, did a deal with Dieter Eichmann where they purchased all these surviving tape recordings and all the surviving papers, and Die Weltwoche now has all the rights. I next received a letter from Die Weltwoche's lawyers warning me not to make use of any of the material I had.

Sassens had taped the conversations with Eichmann in the 1950s. They are verbatim transcripts, which makes them very useful, and as such they differ greatly from the books that were published by Eichmann in 1985 -- Ich, Adolf Eichmann (the German edition), or Yo, Adolfo Eichmann (the Spanish-language version) -- because those books contain no transcripts of conversations. They contain just a mildly edited text of what Sassens himself put together.

The transcripts themselves are very interesting because Eichmann got very irritated with Sassens, and constantly interrupted him: "I can't see what you're getting at," and "You're very thick," and "why do you keep asking me about who was giving me the orders? How was I supposed to know?" And this kind of thing. It's the "back-chat" which was interesting in the dialogues.

In January 1992 I donated all these original papers to the Federal Archives [Bundesarchiv] in Koblenz. In fact, I turned them over even before I read them myself, because obviously they are a historical source of very substantial importance to anybody investigating the "Holocaust." Since 1965, I've made a practice of turning over my private papers and my research papers to the German Federal Archives, both because they are such a huge volume of paper, and so that other historians can use them. For a time I turned over papers to the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich, where they have a collection called "The Irving Collection." But I changed that three years ago, after a professor with the Institute, Helmuth Auerbach, decided to write a letter behind my back, on Institute letterhead, denouncing me to the German public prosecutor! I decided no longer to deposit papers in their archives, and until they apologize and retract that libelous letter, they can say goodbye to receiving any of the rest of my collection. Consequently, all my subsequent papers have gone to the German Federal Archives.

I didn't have time to open those brown packages until Christmas-time. Christmas in London is an endlessly boring, tedious, and desolate festival, so I decided to enliven my festival by reading Adolf Eichmann's papers.

I started reading on Christmas eve, and I carried on through Christmas day. I decided very rapidly that I couldn't continue reading the originals because they are so flimsy that I might damage them. So I decided to copy them, which I had to do page by page because they are so flimsy. It took me all Christmas day, but I ended up with a much better set than the originals I eventually donated to the archives.

Thus I began reading them in earnest about January 2nd or 3rd. Each evening, at the end of the rest of my day's work, I would read 30 or 40 pages of these transcripts.

'David Irving Recants'

Entirely by chance on Friday, January 10, a journalist with The Observer (one of the other serious British Sunday papers, and a great rival of the Sunday Times) telephoned me to ask me for a quotation about an event coming up the following week in London. On January 20 there was going to be a big Jewish Holocaust seminar at the Wiener Library in London. The Wiener Library had issued a press release dealing with certain casualty figures, and a statement had been issued by Yehuda Bauer of Israel's Yad Vashem institute, who was going to take part in the meeting. Had I any comments? It was just a routine journalist's call. I make this point because I'm not a publicity seeker, and I don't go out of my way to seek publicity. Publicity's a nuisance, and believe me, I long ago ceased to believe that journalists are going to do me any favors at all. They're not.

When this journalist telephoned me, I said, "I can't tell you my own impression about these figures, but what I will tell you is that Adolf Eichmann himself said that [Auschwitz commandant] Rudolf Höss' figures were grossly inflated, and that Eichmann thought that Höss was an outrageous liar."

"How do you know this?" he responded.

"Well," I said, "nobody else knows this, but as of two months ago I've gotten hold of all of Adolf Eichmann's private papers. They were donated to me by a mutual friend in Argentina who didn't know what to do with them, and he thought they were safest in my hands. I've donated the originals to the German archives, and I'm busy researching through them now." By that time I'd read three quarters of them, I think.

Well, the journalist flipped. "You mean to say that you've had Adolf Eichmann's diaries?" he asked.

"No," I replied, "not his diaries, just his memoirs and everything he dictated and his conversations, and it's all pure gold."

Then he asked, "Have you reached any new conclusions?"

I responded: "There's one sentence that has given me cause for thought." (I'll speak about this later on.) And the journalist then wrote an article that appeared the following day in The Observer, and which was picked up that same day by the Sunday Telegraph under the headline, "Historian Recants." [See the IHR Newsletter, Feb. 1992, pp. 3-4.]

Okay, that's the kind of harmless thing newspapers do, and the following morning they're wrapping fish and chips. But in this case, the following morning it was wrapping fish and chips all the way around the world. As the globe spun, as the sun rose in the east and sank in the west, so my fax machine churned out press clippings from all my agents and sources and friends, in New Zealand, in Australia, in South Africa, in Europe, then on the east coast of the United States, then across Canada, then finally to the west coast, then down in Hawaii, in China, in Hong Kong -- right around the world. That one Observer article had instantaneously been spread: "David Irving Recants."

It was interesting to see that my original statement, whatever I was supposed to have recanted, had not gone around the world with the speed of light, had not been splashed [on newspaper front pages], and yet my "recanting" was sufficiently newsworthy to have gone around the world, and been given this tremendous publicity splash.

Too late, the Jewish community realized that they had scored an immense "own goal" (what Americans call a "fumble"), because the phone then began ringing with calls from television and radio stations around the world, wanting live interviews and telephone interviews. Would I go to the studios to do a satellite interview with Sydney? And of course, every time I did I said, "Well, Eichmann says he witnessed mass shootings in Russia, but Eichmann's papers are quite plain: there's no mention at all of gas chambers." So I was able to get the message across.

At this, our traditional enemies went berserk. In a very impressive example of

damage control, they then called out the fire brigades to spread the following message: "What David Irving has published is not new. David Irving has found nothing that the accepted, academic, reliable, decent, serious professional historians haven't always known all along. The Eichmann papers are not new. We have always known about these papers. There is nothing in David Irving's find that merits serious consideration."

To which I said, "How do you know? The papers that I have donated to the federal archives in Germany are subject to an embargo by me which prevents anybody else from seeing them, and nobody has seen them, except me and the archives [officials] in Germany. So how do you know that what I have is what you lot have known all along?" An interesting point!

"Oh, well, it's quite obvious, isn't it?" they said, and then went into a kind of damage control on the damage control. But it was too late, because the point was very obvious: I had the papers, and they hadn't.

The Institute of Contemporary History of Munich also announced that what I had was nothing new, that it was well known, and that didn't David Irving realize that Adolf Eichmann's book had been published in 1985?

I said that not only did I know that Eichmann's book was published in 1985, I was the person who engineered it. After no other publisher in the world would touch Eichmann's book, I personally organized contacts between Eichmann's son, who had those manuscripts, and Druffel Verlag [a publisher in Germany], so that at least the manuscripts got some kind of airing.

So of course I knew about the book, but what I had was totally different: I had the transcripts of the conversations, which had never been published.

The line of defense of the Jewish community was that what I had was not all that serious; and, please, no further publicity. This made me begin to wonder. What was it they didn't want published? Why was it, I asked myself, that when the Eichmann memoirs came out in 1985, first of all, nobody was willing to publish them except Druffel Verlag in Germany, and Planeta in Argentina, but no mainstream publisher in Europe or the United States? Here, after all, are the memoirs of "the biggest mass-murderer of all time," apparently, and yet for some reason they're being swept under the carpet.

And why was it that our traditional enemies had gone into this frantic damage control exercise when, of all people, David Irving had got control of the original transcripts and had put them in the archives?

Martin Gilbert, my deadly rival and enemy, the Churchill biographer in Britain, said, "For many years Mr. Irving has denied these facts about the Holocaust and now he makes a virtue of finding them."

But I didn't say the first, I didn't say the second. What I do say now is: can we analyze these papers, these transcripts, which are disorganized and not indexed, and in rather an untidy mess -- can we analyze them in some way, and ask ourselves why it is that they were swept under the carpet in 1985, and why people were so anxious that the press should pay no attention to the papers that had been given to me in Argentina in 1991?

Eichmann on the Holocaust

Well, here are some of the contents. First of all, Adolf Eichmann is quite plain throughout these papers that the word *Endlösung*, or "final solution," meant only one thing to him, and that was Madagascar. When he addressed his mind to the "final solution of the Jewish problem" in the late 1930s and early 1940s, it was quite plain to him that it was only a plan to sweep all the Jews of Europe aboard boats and transport them lock, stock, and barrel down to Madagascar, where they would be on an island where they couldn't bother any of their neighbors and where none of their neighbors could bother them. I've always said and I say it here again -- even though I risk making a few enemies -- that I think that would have been an ideal solution to a perennial world tragedy.

The second interesting thing that emerges from Eichmann's own papers is that he's chewing over in his mind-- he's frightfully repetitive -- he keeps on coming back, again and again, in his manuscripts and in these conversations to who was behind it, and what was behind it. What was behind the "Holocaust" (if we can use that word loosely here now)? He keeps coming back to the appalling thought: Did they manage to use us? Did the Zionists use the Nazis to further their own ends? Was the Holocaust something that they themselves inflicted on their own body, in order to bring about their Zionist cause in the long run?

This was Eichmann's theory, at the end of his life (effectively, because a year or two later he was kidnapped and a year after that he was at the end of a rope in Israel). "Did they manage to use us?" He keeps on coming back to it, and every time he comes back to it becomes more and more plausible to him. And perhaps this is the reason why the Eichmann papers were not supposed to see the light of day.

Thirdly, when he's justifying the cruelty of what he himself has seen -- and in a minute I'll go into some of the detail about what he saw -- he says, "But compared to what they were doing to us at that time, this was nothing. Compared to what they were planning to do with us, this was nothing." He said, "I remember in Berlin an air raid... [and] afterwards going through the streets past a house that had collapsed, and hearing the screams of an elderly couple who had been trapped by falling debris, and the woman pleading to be put out of her misery by anybody with a gun." He said, "When you hear screams like that, you never forget them for the rest of your life." He describes that two or three times in his memoirs.

Now, that's not justification. One crime doesn't justify another crime, that's plain. But this is in the memoirs. He also says, "Besides, we had by this time already

learned of the Jews' plans for Germany." He mentions explicitly the book by Theodore Kaufman, *Germany Must Perish*. This is most interesting, because in the Goebbels diaries of August 1941 (which have also not yet been published), Goebbels also mentions Kaufman's book as justification.

This book, published in the United States by a deranged American Jew, presents a crazy plan for liquidating millions of Germans after the war. It was published in August 1941, and is referred to by Goebbels a few weeks before he introduced the plan for Jews to wear a yellow star. You can see a logical sequence of events, and Eichmann refers to this book as being one reason why, in his own mind, he can justify to himself the crimes that he was seeing committed.

He even mentions as mitigation the Morgenthau plan; but of course here you've got to be careful, because the Morgenthau plan wasn't initiated by Churchill and Roosevelt until mid-September 1944, only a few weeks before Himmler ordered Auschwitz closed down. So, that's an anachronism. Eichmann's mind is rather confused and muddled by the time he's writing or dictating all this in the mid-1950s. (We know it's the mid-1950s, because he mentions things like, "Why was it a crime for us to invade Poland, when it isn't a crime for them to do what they're doing now in Suez?") So it must have been around 1956 that he's dictating these passages.)

Round about 1958, he gets hold of the "memoirs" of Rudolf Höss, which were published by the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich in that year. Höss wrote these "memoirs" while he was in Krakow, in Polish captivity. They've always been a problem -- let's be frank about this -- they've been a problem to Revisionists.

Eichmann's comments on the Höss memoirs are annihilating. Reading where Rudolf Höss is saying that two and a half million Jews have been liquidated at Auschwitz, the camp where he was commandant, Eichmann comments, "Where does Höss believe that he got these two and a half million Jews? Not from me. Because to have liquidated two and a half million decrepit, elderly, unworkable Jews, I must have had to feed to him three, four, five, six or seven million Jews in that space of time, and from the transport point of view alone this would have been totally impossible."

You see, the memoirs of Eichmann are very useful in this respect. He was the transport specialist whose job it was to round up the Jews in Hungary and Slovakia, and ship them off to Germany for forced labor and for dissipation to the other labor camps. He knew that shipping off millions of Jews wasn't something you do at the snap of your fingers: you had to have conferences with the railway officials and with the road officials, and with the guards and with everybody else who was going to be involved in all this. You had to provide the food for the transports which were going to be on the rails for four or five or six days. All this had to be prepared and planned with typical German bureaucracy and method, and that took meetings and conferences. And Eichmann said, "If you're going to ship five or six million Jews across Europe to Auschwitz at that time, let me tell you how many trains that would have taken," and he worked out how many trains it would have taken, because he

knew.

"You're not only going to have trains going that way full of Jews, you're going to have empty trains coming back. And you're going to have to have a circulation time, a time where they're unloading at one end, a time where they're loading at the other end... You're going to need so many thousands of wagons" of rolling stock. He worked out exactly how much rolling stock would have been needed, in these memoirs, and he said, "This alone proves that Rudolf H_{ss} was talking through his hat. These figures are totally fantastic, and what the hell is Höss up to?" That is a brief, lurid summary of what Eichmann writes as he's sitting in what he believes to be safety in the underground in Argentina, reading these memoirs of Höss, published in 1958.

Two years later, of course, Eichmann is kidnapped, so it's during those two years that Eichmann is writing this. He mentions also in these memoirs how he received an indirect approach from Nahum Goldmann. Nahum Goldmann was one of the great Zionist leaders of the postwar era. Born in Lithuania and living for many years in Germany, he was the person who negotiated with Konrad Adenauer the billions of German marks which subsequently went to Israel. Eichmann mentions in these memoirs what purported to be an indirect approach from Goldmann, pleading with him to back up the six million figure. Anything he could do to support the six million figure, because the Zionists needed it. You are beginning to suspect, now, why these Eichmann memoirs should not be published.

Eichmann inspected Auschwitz. He went to Auschwitz several times, as he recounts in his memoirs. He describes being met by Rudolf Höss, the commandant, and he describes several grisly scenes. He describes going past an open pit where bodies were being burned, and he says it was an infernal sight, the likes of which he would never forget. He describes how the commandant, Höss, tells him that they are doing these things on Himmler's orders and that it is a sacred task that has been imposed on the SS.

Eichmann describes many things, but what he does not once mention during this vivid description of his visit to Auschwitz is "gas chambers." He doesn't mention gas chambers, he just mentions the disposal of bodies in open pits by fire, and the comments to him by Commandant Höss.

I find that a very significant omission because, let's face it, in these papers Eichmann is not exactly being modest about what he's seen. He describes how in July 1941 (if you piece together the actual months and the dates) he is summoned to Berlin to visit Reinhard Heydrich, the chief of the Reich Security Main Office (RSHA). Heydrich utters to him the fateful words, "Ich komme vom Reichsführer SS. Der Führer hat den Befehl zur physischen Vernichtung der Juden gegeben." ("I've come from the Reichsführer SS [Himmler]. The Führer has given the order for the physical destruction of the Jews.")

Did Hitler Know?

That, of course -- given in quotation marks in the manuscript -- is what gave me pause for thought. I've always said, "Hitler wasn't involved, whatever happened -- Hitler gave no orders, there's no proof of it." Here we have Eichmann writing something very specific indeed. What is the explanation?

Well, if we look just at that sentence, we can say that you've only got to change one or two words and you get a completely different meaning. If it wasn't "The Führer has ordered the physische Vernichtung [physical destruction], of the Jews," but rather "die Ausrottung des Judentums," you've only changed the words by a fraction and yet you've got a totally different meaning. You get something which is much more similar to Adolf Hitler's public utterances and speeches. Ausrottung des Judentums, the destruction of Judaism, is something totally different. You don't do that by gas chambers and the machine gun, any more than destroying Christianity or destroying usury can be done by the gas chamber and the bullet. They're different concepts.

So why should Eichmann have written this and not that? By 1958, he is well aware that since Höss' memoirs have been published and Eichmann is mentioned on 20 or 30 pages, the hue and cry are on. They're out looking for him. He knows his days may be numbered. Although I'm sure that -- given his German, scrupulous, bureaucratic mind -- he's not doing this consciously, the mind has wonderful synthetic and analytical functions; the mind has a habit of suppressing, distorting, and embellishing in a manner which the owner of that mind would wish. And I'm sure that Adolf Eichmann's mind is already lying awake at night, feverishly looking for extenuating circumstances. What more extenuating circumstances would there be for an Adolf Eichmann than that the Führer had "ordered the physical destruction of the Jews"? Eichmann may well have adapted the sentence that Reinhard Heydrich actually uttered to him.

It's immaterial, one way or the other, because we must never overlook one basic fact: this is a postwar document, and any historian can now confirm that nowhere in all the archives of the world has yet been found one wartime document referring to a Führer's order to destroy the Jews, or for that matter, one wartime document referring to gas chambers or gassings. All the documents that refer to Führer orders and gas chambers are postwar documents; statements by people in the dock at Nuremberg, memoirs written by the commandant at Krakow in Poland, and the like. You can't overlook this basic watershed between wartime and postwar documents. If there's no wartime document that says there was a Führer order, if no wartime document talks of gas chambers, then there has to be some explanation for that. That's why I say I think I'm entitled to believe that Adolf Eichmann's mind is synthesizing here. He is looking unconsciously for extenuating circumstances which will perhaps get him off the hook, literally, when the time comes.

Eichmann and Hoffmann

He doesn't try to avoid describing what he's seen. He describes the pits in Auschwitz, he describes the crematoria, just the same as Albert Hoffmann. Four or

five years ago, while going through the records of the National Archives in Suitland, Maryland, I came across the interrogation report of Albert Hoffmann, who was the deputy Gauleiter of Silesia, the Gau where Auschwitz was situated. I thought he was an unimportant man, because I didn't realize he was in Silesia, but the British, interrogating Hoffmann, asked him if he'd ever visited a concentration camp. Hoffmann's reply was, "Yes, I've visited two concentration camps in my life, one at Dachau in 1936, which was organized, clean, decent and disciplined, and the prisoners were well fed. Then again," he said, "in 1941 (or 1942: I think, in fact, in both years), I visited Auschwitz concentration camp with my Gauleiter, Bracht, and with the Reichsführer SS, Heinrich Himmler."

Hoffmann went on, "Auschwitz was totally different from Dachau. The scenes I saw there beggar description. Brutality on the worst possible scale. I saw prisoners being beaten, I saw cadavers being cremated in the crematorium..."

You think, "Well, this is it." You read on, thinking now you've got it, but then Hoffmann adds, "...but what Allied propaganda is now claiming, that is totally untrue."

So again, rather like Eichmann, you've got somebody who is prepared to describe to a degree what he has actually seen, which, God knows, isn't exactly decent, but he will not go the final yard and say "gas chambers." Neither Adolf Eichmann nor Albert Hoffmann -- eyewitnesses -- describes having seen the gas chambers. So why does Höss describe the gas chambers? I'll come back to Höss and his papers in a minute.

Eichmann Remembers

What else is there in the Eichmann papers? Well, he describes how, after Heydrich called him to Berlin and uttered this fateful sentence about the Führer having given the order, Heydrich said that Himmler has ordered Odilo Globocnik to carry out this task, and that Himmler had actually ordered that the Russian anti-tank ditches were to be used for disposing of the bodies. Heydrich orders Eichmann to go out and check what Globocnik is doing.

Rationalizing, Eichmann says, "From this I assume that the conversation with Heydrich must have been sometime in the late summer of 1941 because that would have to be after the double battle of Minsk and Bialystok," because that's where the anti-tank ditches were. Eichmann then says, "I went out to Minsk, and I saw myself the mass shootings going on."

Now you probably know that I'm a Revisionist to a degree, but I'm not a Revisionist to the extent that I say that there were no murders of Jews. I think we have to accept that there were My Lai-type massacres where SS officers -- the Einsatzkommandos -- did machine-gun hundreds if not thousand of Jews into pits. On the Eastern Front, at Riga, at Minsk, and at other locations, this kind of thing did happen.

Eichmann himself -- and I wasn't surprised to find it in his papers -- actually witnessed this. He went to see one at Minsk, and being a proper SS officer he went right to the front to make sure that everything was being carried out. He got so close, in fact, that he saw with his very own eyes how the victims were being made to go into the pits and stand there waiting to be shot. (We've all heard these descriptions of it, and I've seen some terrible descriptions from sources that I find credible.) He says he saw that one woman was holding a little child in her arms, petrified, and she held the child out to him, and he writes in his memoirs: "I was a parent too, and I instinctively stepped forward as though to take the child. But at that very moment the salvo of shots rang out. Both were killed only a few feet away from me. The child's brains were spattered over my leather greatcoat, and my driver had to clean the mess off."

I don't know why he recounted that kind of detail in his memoirs. It's an ugly piece of circumstantial evidence. But it lends credibility and authenticity to the descriptions, what a writer calls verisimilitude. It didn't surprise me. He also describes -- and I have to say this being an honest historian -- going to another location a few weeks later and being driven around in a bus; then being told by the bus driver to look through a peep hole into the back of the bus where he saw a number of prisoners being gassed by the exhaust fumes. So I accept that this kind of experiment was made on a very limited scale, but that it was rapidly abandoned as being a totally inefficient way of killing people. But, I don't accept that the gas chambers existed, and this is well known. I've seen no evidence at all that gas chambers existed.

In these papers we see Eichmann loyally standing up for his superiors, Himmler and Heydrich. He's constantly wondering where the order came from, if there was an order. On one occasion he goes so far, and in a rather paranoid way, to say if there was such an order then it could only have come from outside Germany, and why. Which is bringing us back on that other track of "were we duped by the Zionists in some way?"

Eichmann constantly ravages the memoirs of Rudolf Höss, as I mentioned. This is again another reason "not to publish" the Eichmann memoirs, and not to grant them any credence, because for our opponents the Höss memoirs are a keystone of the Holocaust legend. Eichmann describes the refusal of the government of Slovakia, and other countries where he operated, to intercede on behalf of their Jewish people. They were glad to get clean of them. And that again is something these people wouldn't have wanted to be published.

He also describes an odd case in Theresienstadt. He describes how one of the girls on a train-load of Jews who were being shipped off to Auschwitz protested loudly and vociferously that she wasn't Jewish. Giving her the benefit of the doubt, she was unloaded at one station and taken to Theresienstadt (which was a Prominentenlager for the Jews in Czechoslovakia). But here the Jewish leader of the camp protested noisily about having a non-Jew foisted on them. This again is a rather ugly depiction

of the way that man behaves unto man.

Jews for Trucks

But most lethal of all, and I suppose taking up more than 50 percent of the volume of the Eichmann papers, is the description by Eichmann of his negotiations with the Zionists in 1944. After the German invasion of Hungary, Eichmann was sent there to round up the Jews and ship them off. Two Zionist leaders came forward, Joel Brand and Reszö Kasztner [Köstner], and offered to deal with him -- to trade with him -- to rescue the Jews of Hungary and Slovakia, whereby the Germans could keep the Jewish "mob" (and in fact, they offered, the Jewish community in Hungary would be glad to help round them up) if in return Eichmann would guarantee to spare 20,000 of the fittest, the best, the Jewish elite, the toughest ones who were needed in the new Zionist state of Israel.

Eichmann describes these conferences in great detail. He has almost total recall. His descriptions reveal all the cunning and cynicism of the Zionist leaders at that time, at that stage of the war [1944] in a manner which, I think, the Jewish community today would find deeply distressing. This, I think, is why the Eichmann memoirs had to be suppressed, because of the detail. Kasztner was subsequently assassinated in Israel, years later.

There is no doubt about what happened because, working in the archives, I've come across records relating to the British end of these negotiations, which eventually became the famous "Jews-for-trucks" deal. In this, Brand was sent out to negotiate with the British in Turkey, in Palestine, and Egypt; and the deal being that in return for thousands of Jews the world community was to provide the Germans with trucks and motor equipment for fighting on the Russian front. (Not on the western front, of course: the deal had to be the trucks would only be used on the Russian front.) In return, the SS agreed to release a number of Jews. Eichmann was the person handling this deal in Hungary for Germany, and Brand and Kasztner were handling the deal for the Zionists.

It's a fascinating story; perhaps one day I'll write a book about it. In the British archives I've now located all the records relating to the British end of these deals, as well as all the letters between Brand and Kasztner and the Jewish agency and the Zionist leaders in Palestine, which were intercepted by British postal censorship. It's a fascinating, but deeply ugly, story. It certainly wouldn't win any friends if I do it.

In the introduction to his papers, Eichmann writes that he is not a murderer: He does regard himself, however, rather ruefully, as being an accomplice to murder, because he helped round up the Jews who were then shipped off to a fate that he could only surmise. You would have to accept, of course, that what he is writing in his memoirs by the mid-1950s is no longer just the pure product of his recollection but also, to a certain extent, a symbiosis of his memories with what he has read in Rudolf Höss' memoirs, and in *The Final Solution* by Gerald Reitlinger, which he has also read.

Eichmann on Höss

Eichmann's memoirs are an important element of the refutation of the Holocaust story. I have saved this for the end: Because I'm notorious, and because my name is on stickers around London, ("Irving speaks and Rostock burns"), purely by chance another man came and visited me in London only a few weeks ago, and he unwrapped an envelope, and inside the envelope was a book. I recognized it because it's a well-known book that we all have consulted. It was a copy of the original German edition of the memoirs of Rudolf Höss, *Kommandant in Auschwitz*, published in 1958 by the Institute of Contemporary History in Munich.

He said, "I bought this book in a German flea market only a few months ago and I want to ask you how much is it worth."

I said, "How much did you pay for it?"

He said, "No, no, no, look. It's got handwriting all over it."

Here are some pages of it, and you can see the handwriting -- it's got hand-written marginal notes all over it. Says one note here, "That is a lying distortion of the facts." The handwriting is Eichmann's. The book is Adolf Eichmann's own copy of the Rudolf Höss memoirs! I don't know how much money this man wanted for it. I'm not a rich man, but I've got his address; one day, perhaps, I'll make him an offer for it.

Everywhere in that book Eichmann has written his own comments. Rudolf Höss writes, "I had a private meeting alone with Adolf Eichmann, and we discussed the Eichmann program." Eichmann crosses this out: "A shameless lie. I was never alone with Höss." So those of us who always doubted the integrity of the Höss memoirs -- we wondered why Höss should have written these things -- here in Eichmann's own handwriting we've got yet one more piece of proof that the Höss memoirs are untrustworthy as a source.

The truth gets out

I wrote a letter last week to [the weekly] *Die Zeit* in Germany, which has devoted two pages to, first of all, the Auschwitz controversy [September 18] and, a week later [September 25], *The Leuchter Report*. I wrote in that letter, "A swine [ein Hundsfoß] is the historian who relies only on the Höss memoirs now!" We knew we couldn't rely on them. Bit by bit, you see, the truth does come out.

You can ban historians. You can have them arrested, you can fine them \$10,000, you can make life hell for them. But one thing is quite plain: you can't declare the truth to be a prohibited person. The truth gets out.

Thank you very much.

Questions

Q: What do we know about the people who are responsible for the massacres of Jews by firing squad in Minsk and other areas? How high did the responsibility go?

A: First of all, let me say a little about the source which convinced me on that, and I know that Professor Faurisson disagrees with me on this: A number of German prisoners were held in British captivity in rooms that were bugged; there were hidden microphones in each room. And there are transcripts of those conversations. In one particular case, General Walter Bruns described to his pals in most appalling detail a massacre he himself saw near Riga on November 30, 1941. I'm not going to read that one out here. I'm going to read one out to show you how unreliable these people sometimes are. Here's a prisoner of war in a conversation on December 20, 1944, a man called Obergefreiter Till, who was captured in August 1944. He claimed to have been guarding the railway at Auschwitz in July 1943 when a trainload of Greek Jews arrived.

Till said, "The SS man kicked a Jewish woman who was highly pregnant. He kicked her right in the stomach and knocked her down. And the unborn baby came almost out. He took hold of it and pulled it out, threw it down on the ground, and told the woman to get up. He put that child on the truck that was standing there to take away the dead people to be burned."

The British officer asked, "The child was dead, of course?"

Till said, "Yes, and the woman could not get up. She was hardly dressed, and he grabbed her by her breast -- he wanted to pull her up -- and he just ripped her skin and everything out of her breasts. There was a captain there from the army, I think his name was Captain Klug. He went after that SS guy, he took him by the shoulder, turned him around, and said, 'Are you crazy to do something like that? Aren't you ashamed of yourself?' " -- and so on.

This is the kind of rubbish that these diseased minds invented sometimes. So you've got to be very careful when you use these eyewitnesses. Obviously that's a totally phony account: The man invented the whole story. But disordered, diseased minds invent stories like that, particularly when they are being interrogated.

But other reports, unfortunately, have the ring of authenticity. Most of these SS officers -- the gangsters that carried out the mass shootings -- were, I think, acting from the meanest of motives. There was a particular SS officer in Riga who was described in the report by Bruns, in which Bruns said, "The difficulty for us was how to decide to draw what we had seen to the Führer's attention." And eventually they sent a lieutenant down the road, and got him to write what he saw, and they sent this report (signed by the lieutenant) up to the Führer's headquarters through Canaris. And two days later the order comes back from Hitler, "These mass shootings have got to stop at once." So Hitler intervened to stop it. Which again fits in with my theory that Hitler was in the dark that this kind of mass crime was going on. I suspect that the SS officer concerned [Altemeyer] was only 23 or 24. That was the age of the gangs that were carrying out these kinds of crimes. Rather like [US Army] Lt. Calley

in My Lai. I don't know why those people do that kind of thing.

Q: Some years ago in Germany I read an article about Adolf Eichmann, that he was born Adolf Eich, a Jew.

A: Well, I think that this is a pretty far-fetched story, but he certainly had sympathies for the Jews. He was a great admirer of the Jews and in his own memoirs he describes himself as being more of a Zionist than an SS officer, for what it is worth.

Q: [Professor Robert Faurisson] About Eichmann, may I ask you if you read the transcripts of Avner Less, the instructing magistrate [in fact, 3,564 pages]?

A: No, I haven't.

Q: [Faurisson] And did you read the transcript of the Jerusalem trial [of Adolf Eichmann]?

A: No, I didn't.

Q: [Faurisson] Maybe we have answers to your questions. You said that the Jews didn't want the memoirs to be too well known. Perhaps it is because all you have told us supports what Eichmann said in those transcripts. The memoirs are in fact a confirmation of what Eichmann thought was true.

I have something to add about the personality of Eichmann: he was extremely naive. For example, when Eichmann is asked a question about the gas chambers he doesn't say "gas chambers," he says, "Oh yeah, Höss told me about the murder installations," things like that. And then he says, "Now, wait a minute. I don't remember the circumstances. Maybe I read that, or maybe somebody told me that... this is possible." He was very impressionable, the poor man, even before being taken to Jerusalem. He was impressed by Poliakov and all those stupid people.

A: You're right; the character of Eichmann is very important. He was pliable, he was easily impressed, he was complacent, and anxious to please.

Q: [Faurisson] Absolutely. I agree totally with this. It's very important to understand Eichmann. Now, for Höss we have so many proofs that Höss didn't say those things, didn't write those things. When he said, for example, three million people died in Auschwitz -- two million and a half in gas chambers, and 500,000 for other reasons - - we know from Moritz von Schirmeister that in the car taking Höss from Minden to Nuremberg, Höss said, "Certainly I signed a statement that I killed two and a half million Jews. But I could just as well have said that it was five million Jews. There are certain methods by which any confession can be obtained, whether it is true or not." [See The Journal of Historical Review, Winter 1986-87, p. 399.] To set the record straight, I don't know any Revisionist who says that there were no massacres, because there is no war without massacres, especially on the Russian front where you had Jews, and partisans, women, and children all mixed together.

A: It's important to say this because we are called Holocaust deniers, and the television screens show you the mass graves and all the rest of it, which we don't deny.

Q: [Faurisson] We certainly don't deny it. Right at the beginning of the Toronto trial [of Ernst Zündel] we said, "This is what we assume, and this is what we contest." And we assume that there were massacres and hostages and reprisals and so on.

Now, on to another subject. Do you remember the conversation we had at your home, when I said I realize that General Bruns said that there were massacres and things like that, but at first he doesn't say that he has seen them himself?

Second, you see that two or three pages later in the transcript there is a very interesting document from the British interrogators saying who Bruns was. First he had been punished, in December 1944 or January 1945, by the Germans themselves. Then he said that he was very willing to collaborate with the British. Finally, didn't you say to me that, yes, in fact Bruns at a trial had said that he had not seen these massacres?

A: Yes, but I still stand by the validity of these eavesdropping reports. They are, I think, primary sources of the most fundamental quality. Two years after this conversation, which was in April 1945, Bruns went into the dock in Nuremberg and swore on a stack of Bibles that he had seen nothing, he had only heard reports and rumors. But if you read the conversation in which he describes what he has seen, there is one particular passage where he says "I can never forget the appallingly disgusting remarks the men with the guns were making as they were shooting the people -- calling out things: 'Look at that Jewish beauty.' I can see her now in my mind's eye, a beautiful girl about 20 with a flame-red dress." When you read things like that you know the man's not making it up.

Q: [Faurisson] Now, Mr. Irving, I have so trained myself in reading testimonies that I can tell you that, in my personal estimation, this story of the dress and so on is quite typical of inventions. Maybe I'm wrong, but don't you think that if you tell us that Bruns said in April 1945, "I attended [witnessed] this," (and he doesn't even say "I attended this"), that you should add that two years later he said that he had not attended? I think we should note both sides of the story.

A: Oh, yes, I think it's important. But this is just proof of how people lie when they get in the witness box.

Q: [Faurisson] It could be that, but we don't know: We need both. Now about the text. It's not a conversation taken on the microphone. As Ernst Zündel said so well, do you know what the microphones were like in 1945, in Germany? They were huge and you had to shout into them. Do you think that the British had microphones in the bushes everywhere?

A: Yes, that's why we won the war. We had the better equipment.

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