

Holocaust Denial: Why it makes no sense

By Gary Fouse

There have been [polls](#) recently that indicate that a growing percentage of the younger generation of Americans believes that the Holocaust was a myth or was greatly exaggerated. Given the state of education in America and the resurgence of anti-Semitism, largely inspired by the pro-Palestinian movement, this might not seem surprising.

Even though it makes no sense whatsoever.

Aside from the photographic and film evidence gathered at concentration camp sites and the obvious question of where those 6 million people disappeared to, there are other points, which, all too often, are forgotten.

First of all, Germany has acknowledged it.

In the aftermath of the war, it is true that Germany was late in coming to terms with the Holocaust. In West Germany, the standard response was: "I was never a Nazi", or "We knew nothing about it". In the former East Germany, the standard position was that only West Germans were Nazis, which was ridiculous on its face. In the late 1960s, however, with youthful unrest that was sweeping the W young Germans started asking hard questions to their parents' generation as to the Holocaust and other atrocities committed in the war. Added to the evidence that had previously been presented in the numerous war crimes trials, there was no option but for Germany to face it head-on. Since then, several generations of German youth have been fully taught in schools about what happened during the Nazi period. In addition, there was the much-publicized 1970 visit of then-Chancellor Willy Brandt to Warsaw, where he knelt before the Warsaw Ghetto monument.

So, if the Holocaust was a myth or greatly exaggerated, why would Germany fully acknowledge its guilt? Why would Germany pay reparations to Jewish survivors?

Secondly, and more specifically, there were many major perpetrators who confessed to their participation in the mass murders of Jews.

None other than Rudolph Hoess, who was the commandant of Auschwitz during a period of its maximum activity, confessed after being captured. He was brought to Nuremberg, where he testified in the first (and most famous - there



were 13 in all) war crimes trial against the major defendants (Hermann Goering, etc). He fully described the process of gassing arriving Jews at the Birkenau extermination camp. In addition, during his captivity, Hoess put his confession into writing, which has become a book. The English edition is entitled: "Death dealer-The Memoirs of the SS Kommandant of Auschwitz, by Rudolph Hoess, Da Capo Press, 1996. Hoess was eventually transferred to Poland, where he stood trial, was convicted, and hanged at Auschwitz itself.

He was not the only one.

Paul Blobel was the commander of a unit that was part of Einsatzgruppe C, one of 4 such units that followed the Wehrmacht into the Soviet Union during Operation Barbarossa in

1941. Their task was to round up civilians, Jews, and partisans in occupied areas and murder them. Einsatzgruppe C was active in Ukraine, and it was in Kiev that Blobel oversaw the infamous Babi Yar massacre of some 33,000 Jews in September 1941. Blobel was also active in disinterring murdered civilians and burning their bodies to erase all evidence of the mass massacres as the Wehrmacht was retreating before advancing Soviet forces.

In 1947-48, Blobel and others stood trial in Nuremberg as part of the Einsatzgruppen trial. Without remorse, he described his actions, but only admitted to 10-15,000 deaths. The court found he was guilty of many more, possibly 60,000. In 1951, he was hanged at Landsberg Prison in Bavaria. [Here](#) is a post-war deposition by Blobel from the Yad Vashem Holocaust Memorial in Israel.

Another defendant in that trial was Otto Ohlendorf, the commander of Einsatzgruppen D, which was mostly active in southern Ukraine, Romania, and Moldavia (Moldova). Prior to his own trial, Ohlendorf testified at the Nuremberg trial of the major war criminals on January 3, 1946. He described the orders his unit was operating under and his own role in the murder of 90,000 Jews and other civilians. His testimony can be read [here](#). He was later convicted in the Einsatzgruppen trial and was hanged at Landsberg Prison in 1951.

Then there was Adolf Eichmann, who stood trial in Israel for his crimes in 1961, was convicted, and hanged the following year. He did not deny the Holocaust or his role. He was merely following orders. [Here](#) is his final plea to the court.

The Einsatzgruppen, like other units and death camps, were required to send detailed reports to their superiors in Berlin as to the numbers of Jews and other civilians killed. Many of these documents were recovered and used as evidence in the trials.

Aside from the names above, there were others who admitted to their roles in the Holocaust, and there were other trials aside from the Nuremberg trials. Trials were held against war criminals in Dachau, and the British conducted their own trials in their zone of occupation, including the trial of female guards in various death camps (several of whom were hanged). However, I think the point has been made. In their book, *Forgotten Trials of the Holocaust*, Michael J. Bazylar and Frank M. Tuerkheimer (New York University Press 2014), make the point that in virtually all of the above trials conducted against Nazi war criminals after World War 2, virtually none of the defendants denied the Holocaust. Their various defenses were that they were following orders, were innocent, or had no knowledge of the events, let alone participation. But none of them tried to make the case that the Holocaust was a lie or did not happen.

Yet today, there are people who deny the Holocaust. How can they be so ignorant? There are several reasons; hatred of Jews, Israel, or both, being indoctrinated, and the lamentable fact that this history is no longer receiving the attention it deserves in our schools and universities, especially at a time when it is more relevant than ever. With the passage of time and the passing of the people who were either victims, perpetrators, or witnesses, the first-hand accounts are silenced. The field is increasingly left open to the propagandists, the conspiracy theorists, and the simple lunatics and idiots.

The documentation is still there, however. It is incontrovertible and must be used to counter the lies. It is incomprehensible that what people from Hermann Goering to Rudolph Hoess to Adolf Eichmann did not deny, what the nation of Germany does not deny, is denied by people today, either out of sheer ignorance or sheer malice.