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The New York Times

Sunday, July 31, 2005

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U.S. Study Pinpoints Near-Misses by Allies in Fathoming the Unfolding Holocaust

A National Security Agency account says the Allies knew of exterminations in the Nazi camps but failed to react.

By Sam Roberts

WHO in Allied governments, the Vatican and the press knew what about the Holocaust and when? What could and should have been done to save Europe's Jews? Ever since World War II, those questions have been fiercely debated.

In January 1942, the Nazis convened to map their Final Solution and by the following December the Allies knew or suspected enough - mostly from escaped prisoners and other partisans - to issue a public denunciation of Germany's "bestial policy of cold-blooded extermination."



Now, a United States government analysis suggests that while the evidence was incomplete, gruesome details from coded Nazi messages that Britain intercepted beginning in 1941 could have confirmed and exposed the scope of German genocide well before 1945, when Allied troops liberated the death camps and became witnesses to the horror.

In a striking parallel to assessments of intelligence gaps before 9/11, the analysis suggests that the Allies largely failed to understand the information they had, information that might not have given advance warning of the Holocaust, but could have prompted a military response that could have interrupted the deportations or mass exterminations or, at least a propaganda campaign against Nazi atrocities.

The analysis - titled "Eavesdropping on Hell" and written by Robert J. Hanyok, a historian with the National Security Agency's Center for Cryptologic History in Maryland - was quietly released last month.

In his report and in subsequent interviews, Mr. Hanyok amplified earlier accounts that intelligence gleaned throughout the war from German military and police communication and from foreign diplomats provided lurid, though

David Irving comments:

IT is difficult to know where to begin with this belated mish-mash of disinformation about the NSA report and its statements on "the" Holocaust. We have already commented sarcastically on its content elsewhere [[Radical's Diary, June 21](#)].

We have never met (or even heard of) **Robert J. Hanyok** of the NSA Center for Cryptologic History in Maryland. But we do notice that there is no word even in his story about "gas chambers". (In fact they are not referred to anywhere in the intercepts).

The late Professor Sir **Frank Hinsley**, a reliable British historian and expert, and himself a veteran of the WW2 Bletchley Park codebreaking operation, would **write explicitly in an appendix** to volume II of the *Official History of British Intelligence in WW2* that there was no such reference. For this remark he was excoriated, disciplined, and future editions of his British official history had to be altered to omit the scandalous remark.

With the usual *New York Times* faith in the accepted version of events, **Sam Roberts**, the journalist who wrote this piece, has interviewed "experts" from

often fragmentary and episodic, accounts of massacres, deportations and even statistics on the killing in concentration camps.

But the bits of information often arrived without necessary context.

For instance, one message, declassified in 2000 and barely noticed except in scholarly journals, was intercepted on Jan. 11, 1943. It specified the number of Jews killed under "Operation Reinhard" at four death camps - Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka - through 1942: 1,274,166.

But, the report notes, "the message itself contained only the identifying letters for the death camps followed by the numerical totals."

The only clue that these were death camps would have been the reference to Operation Reinhard, a tribute to the SS general Reinhard Heydrich, who had been charged with organizing the Nazis' plan to eliminate Europe's Jews.

But that was probably "unknown at the time" to the British code breakers, the report says. Still, British analysts obviously considered the message important. It was classified as "Most Secret" and marked "To be

the Holocaust Museum in Washington and The Wiesenthal Center, etc. and even the upstart "David Wyman Institute"; but not any of those experts who challenge the accepted canon.

The wartime Allies, familiar with the wiles of the international Zionists, rightly or wrongly did not believe the stories being fed to them by that odious, knee-groping homosexual, Rabbi Wise, and his ilk; but Hanyock saw no option but to attribute their contemporary skepticism to ingrained Establishment "anti-semitism".

The Allies had a different order of strategic priorities. Unlike the Zionist zealots and guerrillas who were fighting and killing British troops in Palestine even during WW2, they had decided to win the war first and listen to these obstreperous whiners later.

What about Sam Robert's other errors? He talks of January 1942 -- presumably alluding to **the Wannsee Conference** of January 20, 1942 -- as being when the Nazis convened on their decision to kill all the Jews. This has long been discredited, even by the "Holocaust experts".

He talks clumsily of "the death camps liberated by the Allies"; in fact the Anglo-American armies did not liberate a single camp which has since then been termed a Nazi extermination camp.

Those (like **Auschwitz**) were all

kept under lock and key: Never to be removed from the office."

Further, the report said, British and American efforts to sort evidence were hampered by large case backlogs and a shortage of translators.

Efforts were further slowed by the two allies' reluctance to share information about German communications and, more generally, by more pressing military priorities for intelligence sifting.

And the report suggests that anti-Semitism may have helped create an atmosphere that affected how communications intelligence - or Comint - was handled.

"Both President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill were often hampered in their limited efforts to alleviate some of the suffering by the general anti-Semitic sentiment in both nations," the report said.

"Just how much British signals-intelligence analysts, either individually or as a group, held this attitude is unknown," the report said. "And how much it affected their reactions to the intelligence is likewise unknown. But it must be considered in any discussion about how Comint was received."

overrun by the Red Army -- and these were the only camps incidentally in which claims were later made for the existence of "gas chambers". True, there were high mortality rates in **Dachau**, **Buchenwald**, and **Bergen-Belsen** in 1945, which were captured by the Americans and British, or rather turned over by agreement between **Heinrich Himmler's** officers and the advancing Allies; but in those the death rates *increased* immediately after their liberation by the Americans and British -- so the less said about them, perhaps, the better.

As for that **January 1943 intercept** showing that 1,247,166 Jews had been exterminated in the Lublin, Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka camps in the "Operation Reinhardt" plans of the Nazis. We notice that Sam Roberts puts words into the document which do not exist: namely, those four names -- the document refers only to L, B, S and T, although at least one of the camps was not known to the Nazis by that name in WW2 but by another.

We have diffidently expressed our own concerns about **the authenticity of that document elsewhere**, and we shall now invite the Public Record Office to examine it with the same energy with which they recently tested the "**Himmler-murder**" documents.

Mr. Hanyok said analysts had been looking for information about internal security, impacts of bombing and prisoners or war rather than potential evidence of war crimes and probably would not have grasped the enormity of the Nazis' plan.

He also quotes a memorandum from a British cryptologic official, dated Sept. 11, 1941, that takes account of German massacres in the Soviet Union and concludes: "The fact that the police are killing all Jews that fall into their hands should now be sufficiently well appreciated. It is not therefore proposed to continue reporting these butcheries unless so requested."

Mr. Hanyok attributed the British official's response to "either his inability to appreciate the implications of the massacres, or his willingness to ignore what the Nazis were doing."

The report is haunted by what-ifs, tantalizing hints, desperate pleas, heroic rescues - belittling the Vichy government's overtures to resettle 8,000 Jewish orphans in the West - and by what in retrospect can seem like bureaucratic indifference in a number of countries.

It also offers a revealing exchange involving Pope Pius XII, who some historians say did not use his influence to halt the killing of Jews. The conversation, relayed by an Ecuadorian envoy, was between the Vatican ambassador and Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain, the French collaborationist leader. Over lunch at a Vichy hotel in July 1942, Marshal Pétain said he was consoled that the pope approved his policy of deporting Jews. The ambassador corrected him, saying, "The Holy Father does not approve."

In a subsequent meeting, the ambassador delivered the pope's personal appeal to stop the persecutions, but, the report said, Marshal Pétain agreed

And one final thing: the famous Operation was not called *Reinhard* (because of the late **Reinhard Heydrich**), but "Reinhardt," after **Fritz Reinhardt** the senior Nazi civil servant (Staatssekretär) at the Reich finance ministry who directed the programme to expropriate (i.e., rob) the deported Jews. But the other version is just another Holocaust fantasy to which Sam Roberts has willingly subscribed. ■

Website data: Robert J Hanyock is a 55-year-old historian, born Jul 2, 1950, with two addresses in Laurel, Maryland (not far from Fort Meade, the NSA headquarters).

"only to limit the ongoing deportations to foreign Jews living in the occupied zone of France."

The Germans were careful to plug their own obvious intelligence leaks. After Churchill, relying only on intercepts, delivered a radio address in 1941 denouncing the execution of Russian "patriots" - without mentioning Jews - the Germans as "a probable result" switched to a more sophisticated code and stopped transmitting radio reports on the executions, Mr. Hanyok wrote.

Could the intelligence, properly interpreted, have saved lives?

The National Security Agency report says that while Allied intelligence intercepts allowed the British to "monitor" roundups of Jews in Rome in 1943, "Allied communications intelligence, by itself, could not have provided an early warning to Allied leaders regarding the nature and scope of the Holocaust."

"There's a narrow window in which intelligence would have played any kind of role," Mr. Hanyok said, "but we didn't see what was happening."

Peter Black, a senior historian at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, said, "Even in the unlikely event that the decipherers and translators had figured out what this all meant, there was nothing the Allies could have done militarily."

Other historians say there were other options.

"If they announced it, would it have saved lives?" said Aaron Breitbart, a senior researcher at the Simon Wiesenthal Center, which is based in Los Angeles.

"I think so, because there would have been greater pressure to bomb Auschwitz in 1944, at least the rail lines on bridges. But saving Jews was not a priority. Jewish leaders were told that the best way to stop the Holocaust was to defeat Germany."

Dr. Rafael Medoff, director of the David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies at Gratz College in Pennsylvania, noted that in 1943, the year after the British and Americans denounced the mass killings, the Allies convened a conference in Bermuda and could have allowed more European Jews to emigrate.

"Here they had significant detailed confirmation of mass murder and, yet,

still their response was to come up with ways to create the impression of concern but no intention of taking any meaningful action," Dr. Medoff said. "Some Jews could still have gotten out. The logical response would have been for the British to relax their immigration restrictions in Palestine and to let more Jews into America."

Even by the last year of the war, the Germans were aware that the Allies had not been roused to react. Mr. Hanyok wrote that the extermination of Hungary's Jews was "remarkable because it happened in full view of the outside world."

Mr. Hanyok said he had planned to produce only a brief pamphlet on the historical record of communications intelligence but wound up working six years on what became a 167-page book drawn from British and American archives.

"I was surprised by the amount of material and the diversity of it," he said.

He dedicated the report to "those cursed with the memory of this horror and to those who assumed the burden of its remembrance." ■

also in [The International Herald Tribune](#)

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