

# INTERNATIONAL BULLETIN

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### INTRODUCTION

I would like to open this issue of the International Bulletin with articles dedicated to the memory of two of our readers who passed away in the past months, Ingeborg Franken and Ans Bout.

A poem written by a Dutch boy gave a lot of fuss, since it was intended to be read at the National Commemoration Ceremony, May 4. I wrote some lines on the backgrounds of the stir. We received a commentary from the USA and the translation of the poem into English.

Irene Glausiusz informed me of the War Child Memorial Day. On November 20, a small-scale ceremony will be organised near Westminster Abbey in London.

In the Dutch newsletter of Aktion Sühnezeichen Friedensdienst I read the moving story of Angelika Wendland. The editor gave me permission to translate her story into English and I publish it in this issue of the IB.

In spring 2013 a new, revised book edition of Martin Parsons study 'I 'll Take That One' (1999) will appear. In this bulletin I reproduce its foreword.

Natasha-Maria Meyerberg sent me information on some of her art projects. She also drew my attention to the website of the Forgiveness project.

You will find two announcements/ requests for participation in research studies in this bulletin.

I was impressed by the book Jan Karski wrote in 1944 which only last year was published in Dutch. In 1986 I came across his name when studying the history of World War II; reading his own lines now was a moving experience.

Welcome to a couple of new readers! A request: please inform me of any change in your (email)addresses so that we don't lose contact.

I appreciate comments and articles; the deadline for the next issue: March 1, 2013.

Best regards,  
Gonda Scheffel-Baars

## **SOME THOUGHTS ON THE DEATH OF INGE FRANKEN**

A friend of both of us sent me a message that Inge Franken quietly died when asleep in the night of the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 6<sup>th</sup> of September. These couple of words shocked me heavily and filled me with grief. Inge was one of my oldest and very best friends and she was very dear to me.

### One by one avant la lettre

I still consider the way we got acquainted with each other as very special. Not only because we belonged to very different, opposite worlds, but also because our friendship was based on trust and confidence. Very special indeed, because we did not know each other and nevertheless immediately started to tell the story of our lives and that of our families. In a way we were pioneers, because such sudden and deep contacts were later on characteristic of the One by One meetings. (OnebyOne, Dialogueamongdescendants of Survivors, Perpetrators, Bystanders and Resisters, <http://www.one-by-one.org> and <http://www.one-by-one-de.org>)

### Facts

In 1988, I visited Berlin with an old friend of mine. We stayed in the home of a mutual friend who had a job in the Heimatmuseum Neukölln. She recommended that we visit the small exhibition organised by the senior pupils of one of the primary schools in the neighbourhood. This exhibition was the result of a history project focusing on the questions: where in this neighbourhood did Jews live until World War II? What happened to them? Who live in their houses at present? Do the people living in their homes know that before the war Jews lived in them? If they know, how do they deal with this knowledge?

We spent hours watching the pictures those children had made and reading the texts they had written and we were very moved. This was the first time ever that I had come across such an educational project and I felt an immediate admiration for the teacher, Inge Franken. Through this project she introduced this special part of German history, German Jews and the Shoah to her pupils and she helped them in this way to integrate it in their lives.

The museum submitted this exhibition to a contest organised by the Jewish community in Berlin. No small wonder that this project won the first prize: a week's stay in Amsterdam. Before they could travel to Amsterdam, however, Inge Franken had fallen ill and she was ill for a long time. That was a pity, of course, and even more so because her pupils had left primary school and had gone to a number of different secondary schools. Fortunately, two years later, Inge Franken managed to find eight of her pupils and with them she was going to come to Amsterdam. We had made arrangements that the children would stay with young people of their own age, pupils of one of the well-known secondary schools in Amsterdam. Inge would be the guest of our old friend who had met her in Berlin when she received the prize in the contest.

### Becoming acquainted

Unfortunately something very dramatic happened just before the group was coming to Amsterdam. A person we had known very well died unexpectedly and in grim circumstances. My friend was so upset that she could not welcome Inge in her small apartment and it was better that Inge should be my guest. I am a Jewish war orphan, I was in hiding during World War II and I have grown up in a non-Jewish family. On the basis of what I had seen in the Berlin exhibition I had confidence in Inge Franken, a German woman whom I had never met before and I welcomed her without any hesitation. However, the unexpected gruesome death of our friend had unbalanced me as well, since the war had played a certain, even decisive role in it. So my unstable mood led me up to explain to Inge in detail why she was welcomed by me and not by the woman she had met in Berlin. Maybe I would not have outlined the circumstances so sharply if nothing had occurred, .

Inge listened to me, breathless, speechless. I was the first Jew she had ever met and she was overwhelmed by the fact that I trusted her and spoke openly, despite her being the

daughter of a German military officer who moreover had been a true supporter of the Nazi ideology until he had fallen in the siege of Leningrad. When I had finished my words, she told me her family's story. It was the first time she shared her story with someone. It was like an explosion, intense and heavy. In our spare time during this week, we spoke about our lives and our families. We discovered that despite our very different lives we had many things in common, there were so many similarities in our emotional development.

This was the beginning of a dialogue and a friendship that never stopped. Moreover, it was the beginning of a development for the two of us in the direction of people empathic to 'others', assuming responsibility for ourselves and our well-deliberated actions. Now and then we visited each other and we became acquainted with each other's worlds. In 1996, our dialogue prompted Inge to become a member of One by One, and I became a member one year later. Since then I have travelled almost every year to Berlin to visit schools where Inge and I presented our stories. We called our lessons: *Trotzdem ist Freundschaft möglich; Geschichte aus einem Koffer*. (Friendship is possible after all; stories from one suitcase). Inge, the former teacher, had concocted the format and together we developed it further throughout the years. The stories from the suitcase enabled us to present historical events from opposite sides and this method captured the pupils' attention. We learned from the many letters we received that the children considered to be the most important element of our lessons that we radiated our friendship which inspired them a lot. Of course, this was what we aimed at in these lessons, the awareness that one can stop thinking of other people as enemies. In their lives our families chose the way of enmity on the basis of a stupid ideology or saw themselves subjected to rejection and persecution. Education may be very well organised, however, the responsible and dedicated attitude and living example of the teacher or guest speaker is the best lesson.

Despite her weak health Inge was one of the most committed members of One by One. She helped to establish contacts between a big number of schools and people who were willing to tell their stories. She visited many, many schools herself. Moreover, she supported young people doing research studies which led to nice presentations and papers. Very often it led that Stolpersteine were laid down in the pavement in front of the houses where Jews had lived who perished in the Holocaust.

In 2007, after having discovered that the monthly meetings of One by One take place in a former Jewish Orphanage Inge started a research study on the children living in this Jewish Children's Home, Fehrbelliner Strasse 92, in Prenzlauerberg, Berlin. The results of this study appeared in her book 'Gegen das Vergessen ('Against Oblivion') and this book earned her the Obermayer Jewish History Award. This is an eminent prize awarded to Germans who promote the history of the German Jews on a voluntary basis and who save from oblivion tangible remains of the Jewish past in Germany.

You may find more information on Inge's study on: <http://www.amazon.de/Gegen-das-Vergessen-Erinnerungen-Berlin-Prenzlauer/dp/3938414421> or on: <http://www.inge-franken.de/> (where you may find translations into English of many new data found after the publication of the book, that were helpful to some people in completing their biographies and that even helped to find other survivors).

I cannot yet comprehend that Inge left this world that abruptly. The friendship between us is one of the best things I experienced in my life. I miss her deeply, but I am sure she will be part of my life and my world until my own death.

Rozette Kats, Amsterdam

## **IN MEMORY OF ANS BOUT**

Ans belonged to the very first group of readers of this International Bulletin when, November 1995, we started this project, intended to become an international platform for children of war.

Ans had been active in our self-helpgroup Herkenning from the start in 1981, but succeeded rather soon in coping with her problems and followed our ups and downs from the side-line. As a teacher of English language and literature she was immediately interested in our attempts to set up an international network. With a view to new contacts, she translated into English the brochure describing our social and psychological problems.

Ans loved singing and was an enthusiastic member of a choir. She had a beautiful voice and if the war and its aftermath had not hampered her education, she could have become a professional singer. In the 80's, she participated with her choir in a song contest in Jerusalem. She felt excited in this context and loved the atmosphere of togetherness. One day all participants joined in a mass-singing workshop. They sang among others Jewish and Jiddish songs. When singing 'Jehudah le'olam tesjev, viJerusjalaim ledor va dor' (Judah will live/be settled for ever and Jerusalem from generation to generation) she started to cry. The whole burden of her father's wrong choice that had led him to become a Nazi, in particular his part in chasing the Jews, weighted on her and she almost succumbed. She was aware, in every of fibre of her body, of what the Nazis had aimed at: the destruction of a people with its culture, its music, its belief. After the workshop people asked her why she had cried and in full openness she could tell what was on her mind. The group supported her in a wonderfully friendly and understanding way and there she learned that relatives of perpetrators can feel free of their guilt and should be proud when choosing the way of bridging gaps.

In the 90's Ans' voice was affected by the side-effects of an illness and she had to face a future without any singing. That was hard, but she managed to cope with it. Although her relationship with her mother was not that good, in admirable fidelity she visited her regularly and helped her to keep her hair-style, face and hands in good shape, knowing how important a fine presence was to her.

With courage she faced the end of her life, full of gratitude for all the nice experiences life had had in stock for her despite its difficult start.

May her memory be a blessing to all who have known her.

Gonda Scheffel-Baars

### **The Forgiveness Project on the Internet**

One of our new readers drew my attention to an interesting site, the Forgiveness Project. She told me that she was particularly impressed by the story of the son of Pablo Escobar. He is absolutely innocent, but feels the burden of his father's decisions. She thought his story mirrors in some way that of the collaborators' children in Europe, who very often feel guilty because of their fathers' support of the Nazi regime.

The story can be found on:

<http://theforgivenessproject.com/uncategorized/sebastian-marroquain-argentina>.

Although I know that in the Jewish tradition – and maybe in others as well – guilt and forgiveness are a matter between the victim and the perpetrator and that no one can replace either the victim, or the perpetrator in giving forgiveness or confessing guilt and asking for forgiveness, in other traditions this substitution is an accepted idea. Moreover, I know from my own experience that feelings of guilt can bother people who are not guilty at all but who have internalized someone else's guilt. These feelings lack any foundation, but are all the same very real.

The site contains several moving stories.

### **FUSS ROUND COMMEMORATION CEREMONIES**

In April this year, there was a lot of fuss in the Netherlands because of a poem written by a fifteen-year-old boy, 'the Wrong Choice' (see hereafter). Its author, Auke de Leeuw, was the winner of a poem contest for young people and the poem was meant to be read at the National Commemoration Ceremony in the evening of May 4. Auke wrote lines about the difficult position of his grandmother, loving her sons, four of them choosing the resistance movement and one the side of the Nazis. He was clear in his judgment: his uncle whose names were bestowed on him, made the wrong choice. But it was as much as clear to him that the name of this man who made the wrong choice should be remembered as well.

The poem led to a discussion that divided the nation. Opponents of the reading of this poem argued that perpetrators should not be a part of a commemoration ceremony, that the feelings of the survivors and their children should be respected and spared, that the poem was OK for other meetings but not for the National Ceremony. People supporting the reading of the poem argued that the young boy had an important message to his generation and other generations as well: making a choice can prove to be disastrous, so consider the pros and the cons before making a decision. People appreciated the deep concern of the young man with true responsibility and with the difficulty of making the right choice. They praised his clear view of the weaknesses of human beings, of all of us. For those reasons they found the poem precisely very much in place at the National Ceremony.

The problem is, that there is no consensus about what should be the subject of commemoration ceremonies. Is it remembrance, mourning, reconciliation with a former enemy, is it looking forward to a shared future in which democracy and real freedom will reign on earth?

The young historian Maud van de Reijt wrote a book on this topic: 'Zestig jaar herrie om twee minuten stilte' ('Sixty years of stir round two minutes of silence in memory of the victims'). She shows in her study that from the very beginning, immediately after the war, there was a diversity in views and aims with regard to the commemoration ceremonies. Despite that, in the first years attention was paid only to the soldiers and the resistance fighters who died fighting the enemy. Very soon people proposed to include other soldiers who had defended their country or the western world: those who were killed in the Korean War. But what about

the soldiers who died in Indonesia fighting against the Indonesians who had proclaimed independence without consent of the Dutch government? Did they do the right thing or were they waging a colonial war?

Some years later people drew attention to other groups of victims: the civil population that had become victims of bombs or shootings or had lost their properties because of an evacuation. People ordered to join the Arbeitseinsatz and forced to slave-labour, they were seen at first as semi-collaborators, but gradually people began to see them as genuine victims of the Nazi-regime. Only in the sixties was attention drawn to the Jews and their fate – and soon thereafter, people started to consider ‘war’ and ‘Holocaust’ as almost synonyms.

There were more groups to be commemorated, e.g. all those who spent 2 – 3 years in the Japanese camps in the former colony of the Dutch East-Indies and who lost so many relatives. After an intense campaign that lasted several years, the survivors of the Japanese camps received recognition and their own commemoration date: August 15.

Still there were other groups: the Sinti and Roma, the homosexuals and lesbians.

This latter group fought for inclusion in the National Commemoration Ceremony and at the moment they succeeded, a study showed that none of this special group perished from torture or imprisonment by the Germans in the Netherlands...Another study that appeared some years later showed that when ordering the data in an other way, one could maintain that some tens of homosexuals had become victims of the Nazi regime. This case illustrates that striving for a place in the National Commemoration was in fact a stage in the obtaining of recognition and had less to do with mourning or remembrance.

Van der Reijt shows in her study that in the course of time more and more groups have become part of the commemoration, often after a hard fight.

Year after year one of the hottest items was the question whether one should invite Germans to the ceremonies, as a gesture of reaching out, of reconciliation and cooperation for the future. Whereas local and regional commemoration ceremonies welcomed Germans, first as simple guests, later as special invitees or even speakers, Germans were not and still are not welcome at the National Commemoration Ceremony.

The fuss is a constant companion of commemoration, how shall we value it? We could consider this stir as the democratic process in which different views and ideas compete for acceptance. My question, however, is: could we do this with fewer emotions and less shouting, with less offending of other people and more respect for other opinions? Could we open a genuine discussion without waiting for the moment that some affair mobilises our emotions and pushes us into the arena?

As to Auke's poem: it might have made a difference if to the last sentence he had added: because he was a human being, like we are. On the other hand: I guess that this idea is very present in his last line, although it is not expressed. And I fear that the notion, that perpetrators are not demons or human beings of another kind and that all of us could make the wrong choice, is precisely a truth and reality that those who protested the reading of the poem don't want to become aware of.

Gonda Scheffel-Baars

## **THE WRONG CHOICE**

by Auke de Leeuw

My name is Auke Siebe Dirk.  
I was named after my uncle Dirk Siebe,  
A boy who made the wrong choice,  
Chose the wrong army  
With the wrong ideals,  
Escaped poverty,  
Hoped for a better life,  
No way back.  
If a choice is made,  
Only a way forward,  
Which he cannot avoid,  
Fighting against the Russians,  
Afraid to die,  
Thinking of home,  
Where Dirk's future has yet to begin.  
His mother torn apart by war,  
Mother of eleven children,  
With four in the resistance,  
And one fighting on the eastern front.  
She loved all eleven of them –  
Dirk Siebe never came home.  
My name is Auke Siebe Dirk-  
I am named after Dirk Siebe,  
Because neither should Dirk Siebe be forgotten.

## **LETTERS FROM THE EDITOR**

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, the Dutch celebrate Dodenherdenking, Remembrance of the Dead, a holiday like Remembrance Day in Commonwealth countries and Veterans Day in the United States. Both of those evolved from Armistice Day, the holiday commemorating the end of WWI, but the Dutch holiday honors the Dutch who have died, civilian and military, in fighting or peacekeeping efforts in WWII and after.

This year, the celebration was marred by a controversy centered on a fifteen-year old boy's poem. Auke de Leeuw won the annual contest commissioned to select a poem to be read publicly at a ceremony in Amsterdam [actually, the national commemoration ceremonyGSB], but the poem was disallowed because, well, the man it honors fought on the wrong side of WWII. The organizing committee eventually agreed with protesting groups, stating that the poem honors a man who "was not a victim" of the war but "a perpetrator".

Auke de Leeuw is named after his uncle, who was one of some 20,000 Dutch who for a variety of reasons fought on the German side against the Russians. As in all wars, the issues were not clear to everyone at the outset. These men and boys fought out of hatred for Communism, their own Fascist ideology, a naïve belief that they were better serving Holland, or for mere survival. Some, no doubt, believed in Germany's cause. Auke's uncle, Dirk, was one of five brothers (of 11 siblings) who fought in the war, the other four on the side of the Resistance.

Auke's poem illustrates the difficulty of the choices conflict forces upon people and is called *The Wrong Choice*. It seems from the words of the poem that Dirk Siebe felt compelled to his choice by poverty and hope for a better life.

In pausing to consider Auke's poem, we do no disrespect to the Dutch remembrance of those Holland has lost to conflict, but rather we allow ourselves to ponder an important question we might otherwise miss. "How can we learn from our mistakes if we are not allowed to name them?" asked Auke in an interview, adding: "I was born in peacetime. It is hard enough for me to make the right choices, so how must it have been for people during the war?"

The poetry contest asked Dutch youngsters to consider the effects of the war on those who experienced it in all its dimensions. Auke wanted to show that "everyone loses during a war". His poem does that, though not in the way poems traditionally read at such national ceremonies do. In telling his story, Auke bears his uncle's burden through remembrance and publicly confesses his own weakness in bearing the burden of choosing. He reminds us that remembering should be a work of building. Sharing the burden of choice helps us preempt future cycles of suffering and remembrance. It is a peacemaking work that strenghtens community and builds bridges of compassion and understanding to others.

Pieter Dykhorst, in: In Communion, Spring 2012  
The Journal of the Orthodox Peace Fellowship (of the East-orthodox Churces in the USA)

### **THE WAR CHILD MEMORIAL DAY**

Mrs Irene Glausiusz, Martin Parsons and other people, have worked on pushing the project on approval to and celebration of a day on which all children of war may be remembered. November 20 is the date that is picked to be dedicated to these children, because on November 20, 1948 the Declaration of children's rights have been accepted in the meeting of the United Nations.

During the last monts Irene has sent me the updates of important and interesting items connected with the theme. In July Irene wrote me: 'I have been writing to My Member of UK Parliament Barry Gardener asking him for the support for the Children of War Memorial Day Project and after some time, he suggested tabling an Early Day Motion in support of this idea. He has now done this after consultation with professor Martin Parsons and the text can be read at the following link:

<http://www.parliament.uk/edm/2012-13/294>.

This seems quite an exciting development and at some stage Martin hopes to be able to address the European Parliament if possible.

I hope that this idea will be debated in the House of Commons by all members of parliament, depending on whatever else is taking priority.'

Ten days later Irene mailed me that so far 23 Members of Parliament had signed the Early Day Motion – which was quite nice-, but that she hoped to get more signatures. Meanwhile, she said, she was writing to the "high-ups" within the Church of England, Catholics, and Jewish communities, in the hope of enlisting their support. These members of the hierarchy have seats in the House of Lords, so could be influential.

A month later Irene wrote me: 'We have obtained permission to have a gathering at the Memorial to the Innocents on 20<sup>th</sup> November 2012 at 11.00 a.m. We shall be laying a wreath to remember all children in war. The memorial is in a grassy area near the West Door of Westminster Abbey and is quite near the railings to the street. We ought to be able to attract press coverage.'

The most recent information on the issue can be found on:  
<http://childreninwarmemorial.wordpress.com>



## THE COURAGE OF ANGELIKA

Angelika Wendland, born in 1950, did not speak with her schoolmates about the summer camps she participated in. These summer camps, organised by Aktion Sühnezeichen, were not much appreciated in the former DDR.

In the Dutch ASF Newsletter of June 2012 Angelika relates:

'My first introduction to ASF was in Karl-Marx-Stadt, at present Chemnitz, during a church service for youngsters. I had participated in that service together with one of my friends. We had travelled by public transport from the south and it had been far from easy to get there, and it proved even more difficult to get back home in safety, but we managed to do this. In that service someone had told about these summercamps and the next summer I volunteered for one of them. I was fifteen years old. The summercamps focused on different subjects: one could help in a camp for disabled people or help in the reconstruction of buildings. We pulled down the old ceilings of churches for instance. The volunteer work was always in the context of the church and you know, that was in fact incompatible with the socialist ideology.'

All the same, the summercamps were tolerated in the DDR. But DDR youngsters were not allowed to travel abroad and volunteer for ASF camps in other countries. But Angelika felt the need to consider the past in an other way than was usual in East-Germany, where people saw themselves as the victors in the war and did not reflect on Germany's responsibility. Her contacts with ASF had opened her eyes for this aspect. And she planned to volunteer for a camp outside the DDR. She travelled secretly to Auschwitz, together with a friend.

'We packed a bag and took the train to Poland. Then we took the bus and arrived in Auschwitz where we reported for volunteer work at the reception. The people were immensely surprised. At first they did not accept us, but the vicedirector gave us permission to stay there. He was a commendable personality. He found us a place to sleep and assigned us to a building where we could work. He was so discreet to give us work inside the building, so that we could not be recognised. In the room we found suitcases of the former prisoners full of sewing-threads the guards had taken from them. It was our task to sort the bobbins according to the language on them. In this way we could make visible from what different countries the prisoners had come.

I will never forget the first day. We had not the courage to touch one of the suitcases, being thoroughly aware of the fact that they had belonged to people who had perished here. But, finally we did overcome our fear and scruples and we started our work. We made a survey of the countries the former prisoners had come from. Sometimes the bobbins concealed leaflets and we could read them when we unrolled them. It was very moving to know that I was the first one, after 1942 or 1943, to read these texts.'

Ten days later, Angelika and her friend had to go home. The evening before their departure, the vice director invited them to dinner. He told them that he himself had been a prisoner.

Thereupon Angelika asked him why he had been so friendly and so hospitable.

'He said that he was so happy with our decision to do volunteerwork right here, because it is the young generation that will build the future'.

Back home in the DDR, Angelika and her friend could not talk openly about their experiences. But at the meeting in January this year, organised for the present ASF volunteers in the Netherlands, she was one of the speakers. Most of her audience belonged to the young generation, ready to be inspired by her story and message.

GSB

***A connective discourse between war-time and present-day children....  
For Doreen, Grace, Hope and Jacob.....with love.***

**FOREWORD**

It has been 14 years since I'll Take That One was first published. Considered at the time to be a groundbreaking examination of 'Operation Pied Piper' and the parallel private and CORB evacuations overseas, it remained for some time the main treatise on the topic of civilian evacuation.

Since then, more evidence has become available, more ex-evacuees have been willing to share their stories, and more research has been carried out into the long term effects of the evacuation of children and the extended separation from their families and home environments.

This aim of this new edition is to examine the fresh evidence in order to provide a definitive account of what actually took place, both in the planning stages and the implementation of the scheme in the United Kingdom. Even today, romantic notions of evacuation abound and the image of working class urchin-like evacuees being taken in by kind middle-class hosts, are difficult to dispel. As will be demonstrated, it was not as simple as merely removing children *et al* from areas of danger to those that were safer....in reality it was more an act of taking children from areas of *perceived* danger to areas considered to be *safer*, and there are many instances of evacuees arriving in locations which were in fact more dangerous than the ones they had left.

Operation Pied Piper was interwoven with complex sociological and psychological issues, many of which were not recognised at the time, and if they were, then they were often ignored or lost within the bigger picture.

This account draws upon recently released documents and includes some material only the author has been given access to. Gleaning information from documents not available in 1998, and others which are still officially closed, there is a complete new section on the complex issues surrounding the evacuation, or non-evacuation, of Belfast, which examines why, although part of the UK scheme, the planning and implementation within the province was too often affected by intransigence and prevarication.

The book will also cover related issues, such as the BBC Schools Broadcasts and Children's Hour which, within the bigger picture of wartime Britain, may not seem to be that important, but which nonetheless provided an essential link to normality for many evacuees.

Operation Pied Piper was not the only example of its kind and reference will be made to schemes organised in Germany, where children were evacuated to the 'Greater Reich', and in Finland where 78,000 children were sent to Sweden, 11% of whom never returned home. In addition, mention will be made of how the research into the children of World War II can have positive impact on children whose fathers are deployed to present-day conflict areas.

The British evacuation schemes remain a contentious episode in British Social History which, although carried out with all the best intentions, has left a legacy of emotional and social fragility on the part of some ex-war children. It is too easy to use statistics to blur the issues.....1.5 million evacuees are too often treated as a whole, whereas they should be seen as 1.5 million individuals with all their attendant emotional and domestic problems; experiences which would have had an influence on how they reacted to the evacuation situation, their return home in 1945 and their lives post-war.

I am greatly indebted to a number of individuals and organisations who have helped me in my quest to seek out the truth; the ex-war children/evacuees in the UK, Finland and Germany who have shared their memories and concerns with me; the children of collaborators in the Netherlands, particularly Dr Gonda Scheffel-Baars, who, thanks to the support and understanding of family, friends and international colleagues, managed to overcome her initial post-war hardship and subsequently committed herself to create opportunities where 'children' of similar backgrounds can find relief; Dr Pertti Kaven who introduced me to many Finnish and Swedish war-children and, when required, acted as my interpreter; the archivists at the Public Record Office in Northern Ireland for allowing me access to closed files, and staff in other repositories too numerous to mention. Also I would like to thank my colleagues in the departments of history at the Universities of Reading and Lodz who have supported my research; Jennifer Glanville who runs the Evacuee Archive at the University of Reading; Prof. Sidney Brown PhD who gave me unrestricted access to his research material on the Tottenham County School; and fellow researchers around the world who have kept encouraging me to write again.

I would like to extend a special word of thanks to Dr Peter Heini who does outstanding work in alleviating the mental anguish of many ex-war children, and who has patiently guided me through the psychological complexities of war related trauma in children.

Finally, none of this would have been possible without the support of my family and close friends; particularly my wife Jo, the Rev Hugh Ellis who has always been my impartial 'sounding board', Stephen Haley and Jan Hamblin who had the unenviable task of proof reading the manuscript, and Paul Holness who has done so much to bring the topic of past and present war children into the public domain.

I am very grateful.

Martin Parsons, 2013

## **ART CONNECTS PEOPLE**

The organisation Kiel Creativ e.v. promotes activities focusing on social responsibility and durability based on the model of the Latin-American network "Art For Social Transformation" (AFST) (1) Dialogue and commitment are the core concepts: 'We see art as producer of sense and meaning and as a driving force of social life. Every project has as its main characteristic the meeting of different cultures, social classes, generations, contrary groups. Art is regarded as a neutral platform for a rapprochement, an intensive exchange of ideas, to create a "side-by side" and to learn from one another.' (2)

Kiel CREArtiv's project 'Horizons: Art For New Energy' brings together young people and professional artists in photography workshops and dance performances. At eye level they create "high-visibility events with impact on national, regional and international public spaces" (3) in the spirit of AFST.

Young people from contrary groups around the globe are invited to participate. The leading artistic theme "energy" connects them across all borders.

The special feature is a refreshing change of perspective: via photography we can see the world, a foreign culture, another way of living with their eyes.

In line with creative peacebuilding, this enhances the ability to see issues from a different perspective and promotes mutual understanding. Art is a bridge between "us" and "them". This is what the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (2001) intends: "Cultural diversity widens the range of options open to everyone; it is one of the roots of development, understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence."

Horizonte focuses on development of social responsibility, in one's own context and all over the world, on environment protection and respect of the human rights. The artistic concept was conceived by theater director Kati Lutzi Stüdemann and by the exhibition creator Natasha-Maria Meyenberg.

In 2008-2009 Meyenberg created the initial travelling exhibition titled: 'I see something you don't see.' Building a bridge between Africa and Europe with the help of digital photography in collaboration with disadvantaged youth from both continents: young people, former street children of the African Burkino Faso and German Haupt- and Förderschule (4) students in second-chance education made pictures of the surroundings they live in. Visitors of this exposition that travelled along a couple of German cities were impressed by the views expressed in the pictures. As one man says: "Mutual understanding entails togetherness. Togetherness established peace. I want more art projects of this kind."

In 2010 the choreographer Suheyli Ferwer based her dance 'We are the world' on this picture exhibition. Seventy young people from Sylt created the performance together with her and performed in a number of German cities that were highly appreciated by the audience.

2013 will see the start of "Horizons: Art for new energy" in Germany on the Northsee island Sylt, near the German-Danish border. Life on the island depends on sun, wind and water, sources of energy for the future. They will also provide young people of different social contexts the tools for a creativity project in which they can learn that their attitude and behaviour can make the difference: together with experts from art and public relations they create a media-effective awareness campaign, using the snow-ball effect of social media. Artistic productions include a photobook, an audioslideshow, a website with an on-line-exhibition and a dance performance. The next stations are France and Algeria. More will follow.

Sandra Großmann, 16, gets to the heart of it: "We have just different colors. They are brown and we are white. But we are quite the same. After all, we are all just human beings.'

More information: project manager: [info@meysystem.de](mailto:info@meysystem.de)

Artistic Director: [nm.meyenberg@iscphoto.com](mailto:nm.meyenberg@iscphoto.com)

Notes:

1. <http://www.crearvalelapena.org.ar/>
2. <http://www.kielcreativ.de/über-uns/>
3. <http://artforsocialtransformation.blogspot.de/>
4. The “Förderschule” is a German school type for students with learning difficulties

### **To all readers:**

I am trying to assist a colleague of mine, whom I recommend most highly. Her name is Myrna Goldenberg. For reference, here is something she has written: <http://www3.sympatico.ca/mighty1/essays/golden.htm>

I have known her for about 15 years. She is a brilliant, warm, accomplished and good-hearted person and professor. A major theme in her work has been women in the Holocaust -- mothers, sisters, daughters, wives, victims, perpetrators, and other roles.

She would like to embark on a new, major project: to write more about rape during the Holocaust. She would like to meet sons and daughters born of rape during the Holocaust (or immediately after), to interview them to learn about them and what they may have learned from their mothers; and, if their mothers are still live, perhaps to interview them, too.

I assure readers that she is extremely respectful and extremely responsible. If you have any contacts to such adult children born of Holocaust-era rape, who would be willing to be interviewed privately, please let me know, or you may bypass me and let her know directly: Myrna Goldenberg <[myrnagoldenberg@hotmail.com](mailto:myrnagoldenberg@hotmail.com)>

As I recommend this project and Professor Goldenberg, some readers may not know me -- may not know how to judge the recommendation. For those who do not know me, here is a link to my curriculum vitae/Lebenslauf/résumé (including both Holocaust-related and medical work): <http://www.nach.ws/cv.pdf>

Thank you! Samson Munn, M.D., Boston

A brief summary of some of my activities:

- 1) Currently a Fulbright Specialist roster approved candidate (until 2015) in Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies. My area is intensive, interpersonal, small group dialogues.
- 2) Participant from the beginning in:
  - The Austrian Encounter (1995 on)
  - To Reflect and Trust (1992 on)
  - The Goldner/Weinstein Symposium on the Holocaust and Genocide (1996 on)
- 3) Author of:
  - Munn, S. Dialogue toward agencide: encountering *the Other* in the context of genocide. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 2006;46(3):281–302.
  - The Austrian Encounter Munn, Samson in Kimenyi, Alexandre and Scott, Otis, *Anatomy of Genocide: State-Sponsored Mass-Killings in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2001, ISBN 0-7734-7600-8) 321–337.
  - The Austrian Encounter Munn, Samson in Lappin, Eleonore and Schneider, Bernhard, *Die Lebendigkeit der Geschichte. (Dis-)Kontinuitäten in Diskursen über den Nationalsozialismus [The Aliveness of History. (Dis-)Continuations in Discourses Regarding National Socialism]* (St. Ingbert: Röhrig Universitätsverlag, 2001, ISBN 3-86110-285-4) 417–437.

Three chapters by Munn, Samson, in Bar-On, Dan, Bridging the Gap: Storytelling as a Way to Work through Political and Collective Hostilities (Hamburg: edition Körber-Stiftung, 2000, ISBN 3-89684-030-4):

- To Reflect and Trust — Aims of the Project and My Personal Involvement [erroneously entitled "'To Reflect and Trust' (TRT). Commitments and aims of the project" in the published version]. Pp. 28–29.

- Choosing among Special People — The Northern Ireland Encounters. Pp. 67–70.

- A Great Deal of Pressure. Pp. 125–126.

Einführung in die Arbeit der Nachkommen von Opfern und Tätern [Introduction to the Work of Descendants of Survivors and of Perpetrators] Wolff, Roswitha; Munn, Samson; "Scholz, Sabine"; Kuhl, Dirk; and Goschalk, Julie in Staffa, Christian and Klinger, Katherine, Die Gegenwart der Geschichte des Holocaust [The Presence of the History of the Holocaust] (Berlin: Institut für vergleichende Geschichtswissenschaften, 1998, ISBN 3-9805206-1-7). Pp 59–70.

## **NEW UPCOMING DIALOGUE PROJECTS:**

In late 2011, the J. W. William Fulbright Foreign Scholarship Board and other U.S. agencies approved my candidacy for 5 years as a Fulbright Specialist in Peace and Conflict Resolution Studies. This means that I may receive funding from them to serve as a facilitator, planner and/or critic of small group, intensive, interpersonal dialogue projects related to peace, conflict, genocide and related settings and matters.

I have worked in such groups as facilitator and/or participant related primarily to the Nazi era, including The Austrian Encounter, To Reflect and Trust (and, to a lesser extent, in the setting of Northern Ireland, Palestine and South Africa).

I would like to learn of groups and projects that might benefit from an outside facilitator, planner or constructive critic. (No payment of any kind to me would be required.)

Please see my curriculum vitae/Lebenslauf/résumé (including dialogue and medical work) at <http://www.nach.ws/cv.pdf>. You may contact me at [02467@earthlink.net](mailto:02467@earthlink.net)

## **JAN KARSKI: STORY OF A SECRET STATE: my report to the World**

The first time I came across the name of Jan Karski was when I studied Raoul Hilberg's book 'The Destruction of the European Jews.' It had hit me that Karski as a member of the Polish Resistance Movement, had travelled to London to share the latest news about circumstances and events in his native country with Poland's government-in-exile.. He had revealed the fate of the Jews in the ghettos in Polish cities and in the concentration camps, one of which he had visited. It disconcerted me to learn that the bitter truth of the genocide was known in England's capital as early as November 1942.....and that none of the governments had undertaken any attempt to save the Jewish people. Only last year appeared the first translation into Dutch of his book, written in 1944. When reading the literal texts of what had been broadcast, I feel even more perplexed.

I quote a couple of lines Edward Racyński, the Polish Minister of Foreign Affairs, spoke before the BBC microphones in November 1942:

"I want you to know about the tragedy that is taken place, not far away from this island, on the continent of Europe – in the territory of Poland...and I emphasize it is real and true. The Polish government handed over trustworthy information about the genocide on Jews to the governments of the free world. Not only the Jewish citizens of Poland, but also the hundreds of thousands Jews deported from other countries and consigned to the ghettos the occupier has erected in my country...Reports the Polish government has received make mention of the extinction of a third of the 3.130.000 Polish Jews."

Another quote, part of the declaration written by Jan Karski, and read out by Arthur Koestler, on the BBC-radio in May 1943 is as follows: "I was a member of the Polish Underground Movement. It was my duty to keep in touch with all underground parties, including the "Bund"- the Jewish Social Democratic Organization in Poland, and I left Warsaw in October, 1942, on a mission from the Underground Front to the Polish Government in London. Among my other duties, I collected matter on the Jewish mass-extirminations carried out by the occupying power. I should perhaps explain why we paid special attention to the Jewish questions. I am not a Jew myself, and before the war, I had little contact with Jews; in fact, I knew practically nothing about them. But, at present, the extermination of the Jews has a special significance. The sufferings of my own Polish compatriots are terrible, and they are, of course, nearer to my heart; but the methods employed by the enemy against Poles and against Jews are different.

Us, the Poles, they try to reduce to a mediaeval race of serfs. They want to deprive us of our cultural standards, of our traditions, of our education, and reduce us to a nation of robots. But the policy towards the Jews is different. It is not a policy of subjugation and oppression, but of cold and systematic extermination. It is the first example in modern history that a whole nation (not 10, 20 or 30, but 100 per cent of them) is meant to disappear from this earth. The methods of this process are known to a certain extent, but the details are not. The method is, as you know, to collect the Jews from all over Europe, to despatch them to the Ghettos of Warsaw, Lwew and Soon, where they stay for a certain time. From the ghettos they are "taken east" as the official term goes, that is, to the extermination camps, of Belzec, Treblinka and Sobibor. In these camps, they are killed in bathches of 1,000 to 6,0000 by various methods, including gas, burning by steam, mass electrocutions, and finally by the method of the so-called "death train".

In the course of my investigation I succeeded in witnessing a mass-execution in the camp of Belzec. With the help of our underground organization I gained access to that camp in the disguise of a Latvian special policeman. I was, in fact, one of the executioners. I believe that my course of action was justified. I had no means of preventing the event, but by.....' [for security reasons he changed some names and circumstances GSB].

*The Daily Telegraph* published a bookreview on May 4, 2011. I copy a couple of paragraphs. 'The author was a Catholic Pole who grew up in a predominantly Jewish Warsaw quarter. He received a military education and joined Poland's diplomatic corps, travelling widely in Europe. When Germany and Russia invaded Poland in 1939, Karski barely escaped Stalin's Katyn massacre of the Polish officer corps – the beginning of his remarkable wartime career in the Polish underground. He joined the embryo Home Army, Europe's first anti-Nazi resistance movement, and was employed as a courier dodging in and out the country. Once he was captured and severely tortured by the Gestapo. Recuperating in hospital, he was smuggled out by the resistance and spirited away. The Polish government-in-exile then gave him the mission of finding out what was really going on in German-occupied Poland and reporting on it to the outside world.

For this purpose he entered the Warsaw ghetto through a tunnel to witness the city's huge Jewish population immured and slowly starving to death. When this method of extermination proved too slow, the Nazis set up the chain of death camps: Belzec, Sobibor, Majdanek, Treblinka and Auschwitz-Birkenau – where most of the Holocaust killings took place.

Amazingly, Karski disguised himself as a Ukrainian Nazi auxiliary guard and saw what was happening inside one camp – Belzec – for himself. Having collected reports from other witnesses, he had them microfilmed, hid them inside a razor handle, and set out on a perilous journey across occupied Europe to bring the dreadful news to the world.

Stowing himself on a ship, Karski reached London where he had an interview with the foreign secretary Anthony Eden [Churchill refused to meet him GSB], the first of many top officials to effectively ignore his account of the Nazi's systematic effort to exterminate European Jewry. The very enormity of Karski's report paradoxically worked against him being believed, and paralysed any action against the killings.

Logistically unable to reach Poland, preoccupied with fighting the war on many fronts, and unwilling to believe even the Nazis capable of such bestiality, the Allies put the Holocaust on the back burner.

When Karski took his tale across the Atlantic, the story was the same. President Roosevelt heard him out, then asked about the condition of horses in Poland. Another high-ranking official, Felix Frankfurter, though Jewish himself, told Karski: "I'm not calling you a liar. It's just that I have difficulty in believing you." In desperate frustration Karski wrote his book to record in searing detail what he had seen with his own eyes.

Even after the war, when the full horror of the Holocaust was finally revealed, Karski was not credited with the revelation. He was philosophical about the continued refusal to face the reality of the Holocaust, writing: "The Nazis did it because they could. The Allies denied it because they did nothing about it." His conclusion can be summed up in TS Eliot's line that "Humankind cannot bear very much reality."

Karski remained in the US and became an American citizen. He had a distinguished career as an academic at Georgetown University and died in 2000. Only towards the end of his life was his contribution of revealing the Holocaust and his own heroism belatedly recognised. He was heaped with the highest honours that post-communist Poland could bestow, and died in the knowledge that his amazing story was at long last believed.'

The book Karski wrote in 1944 was published in that same year in the U.S.A and in the UK, followed by translations in Swedish (1945), Norwegian (1946) and French (1948). By then, the world had lost its interest in this hero, who broke his silence only in 1978 when Claude Lanzmann interviewed him for his film Shoah.

In 1981 he spoke at an international conference organised by Elie Wiesel and the American Holocaust Memorial Council. In 1982 he received the Yad Vashem's award for the 'Righteous people'.

Only in 2004 his book was re-edited. In 2011, in the UK a new edition was published and only then did the book find a Dutch publisher....

GSB

#### WEBSITES

Organisation of Children of Dutch Collaborators:

**[www.werkgroepherkenning.nl](http://www.werkgroepherkenning.nl)**

Organisation of Children of War of different Backgrounds:

**[www.stichting-kombi.nl](http://www.stichting-kombi.nl)**

Organisation of Danish Children of War, Danske Krigsboern Foerening:

**[www.krigsboern.dk](http://www.krigsboern.dk)**

Norwegian Children of War Association, Norges Krigsbarnforbund:

**[www.nkbf.no](http://www.nkbf.no)**

Organization of Norwegian NS Children:

**[www.nazichildren.com](http://www.nazichildren.com)**

Krigsbarnforbundet Lebensborn, Norway:

**<http://home.no.net/lebenorg>**

Organisation of NS-children Vennetreff:

**<http://www.nsborn.no>**

Risikforbundet Finska Krigsbarn: (in swedish)

**[www.krigsbarn.se](http://www.krigsbarn.se)**

Organisation of Finnish Children of War, Seundun Sotalapset:

**[www.sotalapset.fi](http://www.sotalapset.fi)**

Organisation of children of victims and children of the perpetrators:

**[www.one-by-one.org](http://www.one-by-one.org)**

Austrian Encounter, organisation for encounters between children of the victims and children of the perpetrators in Austria:



**www.nach.ws**  
Dachau Institut Psychologie und Pädagogik:  
**www.Dachau-institut.de**  
Kriegskind Deutschland:  
**www.kriegskind.de**  
Website for the postwar-generation:  
**www.Forumkriegsenkel.com**  
Evacuees Reunion Association  
**www.evacuees.org.uk**  
Researchproject 'War and Children Identity Project', Bergen, Norway  
**www.warandchildren.org**  
Researchproject University München 'Kriegskindheit'  
**www.warchildhood.net**  
Coeurs Sans Frontières – Herzen Ohne Grenzen  
**www.coeurssansfrontières.biz**  
Organisation d'enfants de guerre  
**www.nésdelalibération.fr**  
Organisation of Us-descendants in Belgium  
**www.usad-ww2.be**  
Childsurvivors of the Holocaust in Australië  
**www.paulvalent.com**  
International organisation for educational and professional development focused on themes like racism, prejudices and antisemitism  
**www.facinghistory.org**  
Aktion Sühnezeigen Friedensdienste  
**www.asf-ev.de**  
Organisation of German Lebensbornkinder  
**www.lebensspuren-deutschland.eu**  
International Network for Interdisciplinary Research on Children born of War (INIRC)  
[www.childrenbornofwar.org](http://www.childrenbornofwar.org)  
Organisation Genocide Prevention Now  
[www.genocidepreventionnow.org](http://www.genocidepreventionnow.org)  
Basque Children of '37 Association UK  
[www.basquechildren.org](http://www.basquechildren.org)

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Next issue: April 2013  
Articles and comments till the 1<sup>st</sup> of March 2013  
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