



# Institute for Historical Review

## Journal of Historical Review

### The 'False News' Trial of Ernst Zündel -- 1988

#### Joseph G. Burg

- Joseph G. Burg was the twelfth witness called by the defense. He testified on Tuesday, March 29 and Wednesday, March 30, 1988.

For an eight or nine year period prior to 1981, Zündel had been in communication by letter and in visits with Joseph G. Burg, a Jewish author who had written several books on the Second World War. These books included Guilt and Fate, Scapegoats, Zionist Nazi Censorship in the Federal Republic of Germany, National Socialist Crimes of Bad Conscience by Germans Against Germans under Zionist Direction and Major Attacks of Zionists against Pope Pius XII and the German Governments. Burg had discussed these books with Zündel and believed the latter had received them. (25-6824, 6825, 6835, 26-6896, 6897)

In his books, Burg dealt with the subject of the alleged Nazi extermination camps. Burg had spoken to hundreds of people who had been in Auschwitz and had visited the camp in the fall of 1945. Burg had wanted to see the crematoria, the hospitals, and in particular, a large new bakery. He also wanted to find the gas chambers although at that time gassings were not yet in fashion. He did not find any gas chambers. Burg formed the opinion that there were no "extermination" camps at all, that gas chambers had never existed and that there had been no plan to exterminate the Jews of Europe. These opinions were published in his books and in his correspondence with Zündel. (25-6825 to 6838)

Burg also visited Majdanek three times. He did find gas chambers in Majdanek, but testified that they were disinfection gas chambers for liquidating lice and fleas: bugs which caused epidemics. The chambers were standard in each camp and had the German words "Attention! Poisonous Gas!" under a death skull. Zyklon B was the new formula used to disinfect the clothing. It destroyed the bugs but not the fabric. (25-6839)

After the war, Burg heard a lot about the allegations that people were gassed at Auschwitz and Majdanek. He proved that it was either out of stupidity or propaganda. Up to now, he pointed out, no document had been found showing who gave the order for gassings, who built them and where they were built. The German authorities especially had been called the "super-bureaucraticism." It therefore couldn't be that after all these years not a document could be found. (25 6840)

Burg testified that he spoke to hundreds of people who serviced and operated the crematoria but the people who operated gas chambers were impossible to find. Nobody had published anything in which it was claimed that he worked in a gassing institution for human beings. There was literature about gassing that was completely contradictory. Why? Because it was all made up. These opinions were published in his books. (25-6840)

In every camp there were crematoria. It was a practical issue. People died. When the Germans occupied the eastern territories, the huge camps were established and there were larger and more crematoria as the war progressed. Epidemics broke out causing an increased number of deaths. The question of crematoria was one of hygiene: the process was more hygienic than burial and took less space. (26-6897, 6898)

Like all other activities in the camp, the inmates looked after the crematoria. It was the most difficult work because of the heat and the lifting of corpses into the ovens. The inmates worked very often in three shifts around the clock. (26-6998) These workers did it voluntarily. They were asked by the Jewish council or the Jewish police. It was important to ask how the Jewish council or police co-operated with the German SS. (26-6900)

When they were in full operation, the chimneys had an increased amount of smoke. So, logically, depending on the weather or the time of day, the colour of the flames was different. People invented stories that inside devilish things were going on. They said living human beings were being burned. They invented the story that every crematorium was a gas chamber. It had even gotten to the point that the authors had such large imaginations that when they saw the blue colour of the smoke, they knew that Jews were being burned. (26-6898, 6899)

Others invented the story that living Jews were being pushed in to be burned. Burg testified that he would like to see a Jew who had given such statements during a trial. He said such a Jew should be forced to take an oath under the rabbi rites with the skull cap, without pictures of Christ, with the Hebrew Bible, in the presence of a rabbi or a pious religious Jew. Then he should swear an oath that he had seen something like that. Then these false statements, these sick statements, would go down by 99.5 percent because the superficial oath was not morally binding for these Jews. (26-6900)

At the time he was in a displaced persons camp, Burg spoke to thirty or forty people about gas chambers and to about five to ten people about the crematoria. He had a special permit allowing him to visit the different areas where Jewish displaced persons were. He tried to get interviews from various ghettos and camps because at that time he had already checked various false statements. (26-6901)

In 1946 Burg attended the Nuremberg trials at times when matters involving Jews were being raised. During one of these attendances he met Ilya Ehrenburg and a Jewish publisher who had been in Auschwitz for several years. Burg asked the publisher whether he had seen any gassing institutions for human beings and he said no. Ehrenburg, who had been the head of propaganda for the Red Army during the war, told Burg he had been to Auschwitz but he too had not seen anything of gassings. Burg had discussed this information with Zündel in general. (25-6857, 6858) Burg could not understand the emphasis on gassings. (26-6904)

Burg himself was the son of Jewish parents and spent the war years in Transnystria, an area set aside by the Germans for banned people such as Jews. The Jews were banned because they had greeted the Red Army. The people in this area lived in small villages and towns but had to fend for themselves and were therefore worse off than those who were in the concentration camps. In the camps the German authorities looked after the inmates because, on average, they were used for work. There were attacks on the Jews in this area by foreign ethnic groups, but no attacks organized by the Germans. (25-6837, 6838, 26-6874, 6875)

In 1946 and 1947, Burg lived in Freising, a camp for Jewish displaced persons near Munich in the American Zone. The director was a Jewish-American officer. Burg served as a factotum: he organized the police, the prison, the newspaper, cultural affairs. He organized groups and drove them around Bavaria to show them the sights, the museums and castles. His experiences in the camp were included in the book Guilt and Fate. (25-6841)

Burg was read a passage from Did Six Million Really Die?:

€ The first Nazi proposals for a Madagascar solution were made in association with the Schacht Plan of 1938.

Burg testified that the emigration of Jews from Nazi Germany who did not go to Palestine was hindered by the Zionists. The Zionists prevented the Jews from going to other countries because their interest was in making the Jews go to Palestine. Furthermore, most countries blocked entrance to Jewish emigration. (25-6842)

The German Reich wanted to get the Jews out: how and where were secondary questions. The people under Göring dealing with the Jewish question picked up a plan which came from the founder of the Zionist movement, Theodor Herzl, which involved moving the Jews to Uganda or Madagascar. Both of these colonies belonged to France. The plan did not work out, but the existence of the plan alone proved logically that a liquidation of the Jews did not exist. Their labour was needed as well. Burg emphasized there was no liquidation of the Jews by the Germans. (25-6842, 6843, 6844)

The Transfer (Haavara) Agreement of 1944 was one of the most important incidents in the Holocaust framework. Under this agreement some 2.5 million Jews were to be traded for trucks. The agreement never came to fruition because the Zionists could not take that number of Jews to Palestine. (25-6853, 6854)

Burg had discovered that the German Zionist leaders requested as early as 1933 that the Jews be required to wear the yellow star. The Zionists saw it not as an insult but as a heroic gesture, just like the SS wore the swastika. In 1938 the director of the Zionist movement in the Third Reich brought about the wearing of the yellow star by the Jews against the wishes of both Göring and Goebbels. (25-6850)

Burg wrote in his books about the co-operation which existed between the Zionist leadership, including David Ben-Gurion, with the Nazi regime prior to the war. (26 6877) Several days after Hitler had been named Chancellor, Rabbi Leo Baeck, a leader of the Zionist organizations in Germany, announced publicly that the interests of Jewry were identical with the interests of National Socialism. Burg testified that Baeck meant "Zionism," not "Jewry." The Zionists at that time in Germany constituted one and a half percent of the Jewish population. A few days later another Zionist leader made a similar declaration. The sense of these declarations, testified Burg, was as follows: 'We nationalist Jews, meaning Zionists, are in agreement with this regime. We are not ashamed of our nationalist thoughts.' The Germans who had to deal with the Jewish question co-operated immediately with this minority of Jews in order to prove to the whole world that they were not anti-Jewish but were co-operating with the Jews. (26-6878, 6879)

In the early 1930s, as result of this co-operation between the Nazis and Zionists, some 120,000 Jews emigrated from Germany to Palestine. Difficulties began, however, when Britain, which administered Palestine, refused to issue any more immigration permits because of Arab unrest. (26-6879, 6880)

Zionists in Germany worked at organizing schools for children in the Jewish language, workshops for young people, etc., to help prepare people to emigrate at some point to Palestine. The Zionists were interested only in emigration to Palestine and did everything they could to make sure that outside of Palestine no Jews were admitted. The Nazis were interested in getting the Jews to emigrate wherever they could. Nevertheless, co-operation continued between the Zionists and the Nazis, such people as Adolf Eichmann, Golda Meir and David Ben-Gurion, until 1942 when the Zionist leaders were of the opinion they had reached their goal. Burg stated that even at that point Germany's defeat could be seen and the Zionists became like "rats leaving a sinking ship." (26-6880 to 6884)

Burg discussed the topic of Nazi and Zionist co-operation often with Zündel. Burg believed that the Zionists were the guilty party and that the Germans had been trapped. To brush everything over, the Zionists behaved like the cunning thief who runs ahead of the police screaming "Stop the thief!" It was Zündel's duty to fight against it and Burg stated he would help. Why? "Because otherwise it will never come to a reconciliation of the people. The truth is slowly coming out, and this is how, provoked by the Zionist leaders, a hatred against the Jews is growing." (26 6885)

Zündel had told Burg that thanks to his book *Guilt and Fate*, published in 1962, Zündel had become what he now was, a fighter for the truth, a fighter against the false accusations made against his people. (26-6885)

Burg testified that there was no liquidation in the concentration camps. The healthier people were used for free labour. Burg pointed out that even a golden cage was a limitation of freedom and even a crime, but the invention of gassings came from sick minds. Burg wanted to prove that even at Birkenau, where gassings allegedly occurred, Jewish men and women could get special treatment. An example was Benedikt Kautsky, a Jew who was a spiritual personality in the Socialist-Marxist world movement. Kautsky was in Birkenau during the war doing office work. His mother, aged 79, was also sent to Birkenau. When she became sick she got a separate room and a special diet ordered by the doctor. This was "special treatment," given so the woman's life could be prolonged if not cured. She died when she was 80 years of age. When he was liberated, Dr. Kautsky returned to Vienna, Austria where he continued his scientific work. (26- 6893, 6894) In 1946, immediately after the liberation, Dr. Kautsky was one of the first to publish a book. It had the German title *Teufel und Verdammte* (Devil and Damned). Burg testified that the book was the truth and had historical value. However, the whole edition was burned. One and a half years later, he published another edition in which he rewrote portions and made changes. But he didn't completely rewrite it. There was no documentation about gas chambers and Kautsky himself admitted he never saw a gas chamber himself. (26-6902)

In *Schuld und Schicksal* (*Guilt and Fate*) Burg dealt with the Warsaw and Lodz ghettos. When the German troops occupied Warsaw, they wanted to concentrate the Jewish population. Real ghettos had been there for centuries but the assimilated or emancipated Jews had lived far way from the ghettos. Now the Germans

wanted to have the Jews all together. In a practical sense, the ghetto was also organized for the protection of the Jewish population. (26-6885, 6886)

The Zionists were happy with this arrangement. An appointed Jewish Council was the governing body of the ghetto. They had their own police, jails and everything else. Naturally, there were some who were cruel. One of these was the vice president of the police, who was later executed. In Burg's eyes, this execution was evidence that Jews defended themselves against the minority of Zionists who were using the majority of Jews for their own purposes. (26-6886, 6887)

In the Lodz ghetto there was a Jewish police force, a Jewish bank, Jewish money, a Jewish post office, stamps only for Jews. There were workshops for Jews. If there was a German plan to liquidate the Jews, why were there workshops?, asked Burg. Why those expenses? Why train children for jobs? Thanks to Berlin, Burg testified, the Jews practiced a small Israel. These things could not be said today, however, because it was now said that there was a "Holocaust" and the Jews were murdered. (26-6888, 6889)

The German people, not just the Nazis, had been blamed falsely; and not just Germans living in Germany but Germans living throughout the world. Burg had an interest in this because he believed it provoked hatred against Jews. Zionist leaders even today had a interest in the origination of pogroms against the Jews and Burg was testifying to prevent this. (26-6889)

In 1982 Zündel wrote to Burg twice asking him for help against the Zionists in Toronto who were creating problems for him, and for a recommendation. Zündel had been of the opinion that this could be helpful for him. (26-6891)

Burg had frequently discussed the subject of German restitution with Zündel. In Burg's opinion, if the Holocaust hadn't been invented, the Germans wouldn't be paying restitution and, he pointed out, "they are paying." He dealt with the subject in his book Guilt and Fate which Zündel read in the 1960s. (25-6850, 6851) Israel was created in 1948 and in 1951 still had no diplomatic ties with the Federal Republic of Germany. In that year, Israel gave Dr. Nahum Goldmann, a representative of the World Jewish Congress, authority to negotiate with Dr. Adenauer, the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany, concerning Germany's guilt. Israel, under Ben Gurion, wanted money from the "damned Germans" but didn't want to sit down at a table together with them to negotiate. The negotiations between Goldmann and Adenauer resulted in a recognition by Germany that it had committed a holocaust against the Jews. (26-6904, 6905)

Burg testified that it was important to distinguish payments to the state of Israel. Israel did not exist during the war. It was Palestine then and belonged to the British administration. During the whole of the Second World War, not one single German soldier was in Palestine. What was there to make good again, to repair?, asked Burg. (26-6905)

Israel submitted a document to Germany stating that of four European Jews, three had been killed and for those dead people Israel demanded restitution. The document did not claim that 6 million died. Neither gassings nor murder were obvious from the document. The word used was "killed." The initial sum of 3.5 million marks had grown and not only today's Germans would pay but also the newborns. The sums were justified by inventions that 40 million Jews were gassed, then 25, then about 6 million, the level at which it had stayed. (26-6907)

Burg testified that the reason for the continuation of war crimes trials in both the Federal Republic of Germany and the United States was to prove to everybody that the Germans, even the ones born in America and Toronto, were to be blamed for the murdering and gassing of Jews. (26-6907)

Israel existed on the basis that a Holocaust happened. The German people of the Federal Republic paid money honestly earned by work to Israel, a barrel without a bottom. (26-6916)

Goldmann also negotiated for those who had been liberated from the concentration camps. These were the ones who had suffered, said Burg, who had their homes and apartments taken away from them, who had left everything behind. Special offices for restitution were set up around the world where Germany had representations. (26-6906)

Burg discussed with Zündel who was responsible for the upset in the world between Germans and Jews. He told Zündel that the First World War had brought the Zionists a homestead in Palestine but not a nation. This was much too little and everything had to be done to create a state of Israel. This was only possible by war activity. A world war had to come about. The Zionists therefore co-operated with what was known as Wall Street. Wall Street brought about the Second World War, just as they had brought about the First World War. Burg noted that the Hitler regime had also been supported because it was supposed to fight the Communists. Like the National Socialists, the Communists did not want to subordinate themselves to Wall Street. The plan of Churchill, together with the Zionists and the Americans of Wall Street, was to ensure that the National Socialists and Communists "knocked each other out." Chaim Weizmann had stated that he was willing to sacrifice German Jewry in the interest of a state of Israel. (26- 6912, 6913, 6915)

Burg agreed that Zündel had shown a sincere curiosity about the Jewish question. Zündel was a German and he was defending his country, said Burg. Zündel had told him that he saw it as his life's work to defend his people because they were being defamed. Burg himself believed the German people were being defamed. He had expressed this view in his books "again and again" and suffered personally as a result. Burg was happy that Zündel had learned a little from him, by not talking automatically of "Jews" but instead emphasizing "Zionists." (25-6848 to 6851)

If the Holocaust story went on the way it was going, said Burg, there would never be a sincere relationship between the Jews and the Germans. The Zionist leaders would see to that. Burg had told Zündel that films such as Holocaust and Shoah were fortifications of a falsification of history, made for the purpose of showing Germans why they had to pay and that the paying would go on for another few generations. (25-6851, 6852)

Burg testified that if Zündel had gone along with the current, he wouldn't have the problems he did. It would have been a much easier life for him. It was Burg's opinion that if there were another two or three Zündel's, it would be better for Jews as well. (26-6892, 6893)

The Crown chose not to cross-examine Burg.

---

[Main](#) | [Leaflets](#) | [Journal](#) | [Books](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Search](#) | [Support IHR](#) | [Subscribe](#)