

HOLOCAUST REVISIONISM IN 60 SECONDS

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On the traditional view, the Holocaust was the deliberate murder of some 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime during World War II. Hitler's intention all along was to kill the Jews, and many died in specially-constructed gas chambers. The corpses were burned in crematoriums, and the ashes scattered. Some of the most infamous extermination camps—Treblinka, Sobibor, Belzec—were completely dismantled and have all but vanished, as have the remains of the victims.

“Holocaust revisionists” challenge this view. They believe that there was never an intention to kill the Jews; rather, the Nazis simply wanted them out of Germany. They believe that there were no homicidal gas chambers, and that the number of Jews who died during the war, from all causes, comes to far less than 1 million—and perhaps only 500,000 or so.

Traditionalists call revisionists “Holocaust deniers,” because, they say, the revisionists deny that the Holocaust happened. But this is obviously a misleading claim. Revisionists accept that Hitler wanted a Germany free of Jews, and that he forcibly removed many of them, seized their property, and sent many others to labor camps. They also accept that Hitler knew that many Jews would die in the process. Depending on your definition, this could certainly count as a “holocaust.” Revisionists do deny, however, that 6 million died, and they do deny that the Nazis constructed homicidal gas chambers. They do not deny that a tragedy happened to the Jews, nor do they deny that many thousands of them died. No serious revisionist claims that “the Holocaust never happened.”

Some troubling facts

So, how can the average person begin to check these claims, to see where the truth lies? Start with the “6 million” figure. How plausible, in general, is this number? The war in Europe ran for roughly 2,000 days (or 5½ years: September 1939 to April 1945). If the Germans killed 6 million Jews, then they must have averaged 3,000 per day—every day, 365 days a year, for five and a half straight years. And of course, they also must have burned, buried, or otherwise disposed of those same 3,000 bodies per day. This fact, in itself, is highly implausible, especially given all the other urgencies of a world war.

But isn't the “6 million” figure documented in hundreds of history books? The number itself is, but not the details. Given all we supposedly know about this event, one would expect that there would be a clear and concise breakdown of the number, showing roughly where, and how, 6 million died. Experts like Raul Hilberg claim that there are three main categories of deaths: death camps, shootings, and ghettos. So, the experts should be able to show us how many died in camps, how many by shooting, and how many in the ghettos—such that the numbers add up to 6 million. But they cannot do this. The reader is invited to look at any mainstream published source for this information; it does not exist. One can find numbers individually for each camp, or each ghetto, but virtually never any total to 6 million. This strongly implies that there are serious problems with the overall picture.

Furthermore, the “6 million” number has a history that long precedes WW2. One can find various accounts of “6 million suffering Jews” as far back as the 1860s. In major newspapers like the *New York Times* and the *Times of London* we find about two dozen occurrences of that number in the six decades before Hitler even came to power in 1933. And it shows up another two dozen times before the end of the war. All this strongly suggests that the number was more symbolic than factual. It would be a miracle if the actual death toll were 6 million.

The context

The situation in Germany prior to 1933, back to at least the 1850s, was of a powerful Jewish minority, vastly disproportionate to their size of 1% to 2% of the population. This is very well documented, for the German media, entertainment, academia, and several sectors of business. Further, German Jews played an active role in causing Germany to lose WWI, and they were the first to attempt to seize power after its defeat. Given the tragedy of WWI and the crushing war debt that followed, it is understandable that Hitler and others wanted to completely remove the Jews from German society. And in fact, this is all they ever wanted—ethnic cleansing. Hitler's first letter on the topic, from 1919, speaks directly to this need to remove them. The same holds with all his speeches through the 1930s, even into the war years.

Hitler, Goebbels, and others used words like *vernichtung* and *ausrottung*, which are flamboyant terms for removal or elimination. But they do not entail murder. The Western press always translated these terms in English as ‘extermination’ or ‘annihilation,’ in a literal or physical sense. But the press was doing that for decades before Hitler. *NY Times* articles dating back to the 1870s decry the “extermination,” “annihilation,” and even “holocaust” against the Jews in various countries—it really is striking how common this theme is. Again, one sees how any action against Jews is portrayed in the harshest possible terms.

The gas chambers

The standard gassing story is rife with problems. Allegedly, the Nazis crammed up to two thousand people into enclosed rooms—some partly underground—and dumped cyanide pellets on them from above. But this is senseless, because (a) the rooms generally had neither windows or ventilation, to later vent the poisonous gas, (b) the pellets would keep emitting poison for hours, killing anyone who went inside, and (c) there is no plausible way to remove the bodies in a timely manner. The Germans would never have designed such a preposterous scheme.

And for all that, cyanide gas killed only about 1 million Jews, we are told—all at Auschwitz. By contrast, more than 2 million were allegedly gassed in other camps with “exhaust gas from diesel engines.” This, unfortunately, is even more ridiculous than the Auschwitz scheme. Diesel engines, it turns out, produce very little carbon monoxide gas—far too little to kill people in any reasonable time. Even if the Nazis used regular gasoline engines, it would have been hugely impractical and inefficient to try to use exhaust gas to kill millions of people.

Body disposal

Killing thousands per day is one major problem; even more difficult is disposing of the bodies. How do you completely eliminate a corpse? The usual line is: burned in a crematorium. But the crematoria were all designed with individual person ovens, and each took about an hour to burn one body. All of Auschwitz had a total of about 50 ovens, and thus could dispose of perhaps 1,000 bodies per day. But at its peak, the camp was allegedly gassing 6,000 or 7,000 Jews per day. What happened to the bodies?

And that’s at the largest of the death camps. Smaller camps like Treblinka, Sobibor, and Belzec had no ovens at all. Hence all the bodies, we are told, were burned in the open air, over big log fires. But this would have been technically impossible, at the rate claimed—again, up to 7,000 or more per day. The Germans would have needed a mountain of chopped wood for fuel each day, and would have had to dispose of another mountain of ash at the end of each day. Large bones and teeth, furthermore, cannot be burned to ash. Where are these remains today?

Additionally, crematoria and open-air fires create a lot of smoke—smoke that would be visible from both ground and air. As it happens, we have ten reconnaissance air photos of Auschwitz from 1944. Of all these, only one photo shows even a single smoking crematorium chimney. Four photos show small fires burning, but only from one very small corner of the camp. Evidence of mass burning is strikingly absent. Again, what happened to the bodies?

Survivors?

But what about all the Holocaust witnesses? Hundreds survived the camps, and lived to tell their stories. Well—what, after all, did the victims witness? Enforced evacuation and confinement (true), people dying *en route* (true), people catching typhus and dying in the camps (true), dead bodies stacked in and around the crematoria (true), corpses being burned (true), people separated from family members and disappearing (true). And all this amidst a major war. Such true facts get mixed with rumor and wild speculation, and suddenly we get crazy stories: 2,000 Jews being gassed in a crematorium cellar, “5 million dead at Auschwitz” (*NY Times*), “6 million exterminated,” etc.

Given all these issues, and many more, revisionists conclude that no mass gassings ever occurred, and that the total number of Jews killed comes to perhaps 500,000—a tragic figure, but far less than 6 million. Jews thus constitute about 1 percent of the 50 million people killed globally during the war. Their “holocaust” was perhaps not so special after all.

Evidence, logic, and common sense all suggest that the revisionists are right. If so, this has huge implications for the present world. It would mean that people everywhere have been given a false story of human suffering. It would fundamentally discredit the powerful Jewish interests in media and academia that promote the conventional story. And it would mean an end to the many privileges given to Jews and to Israel, based on the standard account. These are the kinds of issues that true Holocaust researchers should be investigating.

Further Reading:

The Holocaust: An Introduction, by Thomas Dalton (2016).

Debating the Holocaust (4th ed.), by Thomas Dalton (2020).

Lectures on the Holocaust, by Gernar Rudolf (2011).

Breaking the Spell, by Nicholas Kollerstrom (2019).