

Chapter 16

WORLD WAR II STATISTICS

THIS CHAPTER IS UNLIKE ANY OF THE PREVIOUS ONES. IT IS WORLD WAR II AS SEEN FROM AN EVALUATIVE, STATISTICAL, AND SPREAD-SHEET-LIKE POINT OF VIEW, WITHOUT A LOT OF MOANING AND GROANING. IT IS A STRAIGHTFORWARD LIST OF WHAT ANY ORDINARY ACCOUNTANT WOULD WRITE DOWN IF HE WERE GIVEN THE TASK OF ITEMIZING THE CONDITIONS THAT MY EARLY LIFE EVOLVED IN. THERE ARE NO DESCRIPTIONS OF MISERY, LOSS, TERRORS, SUFFERING, OR EMOTIONAL IMPACTS (EXCEPT BY INFERENCE). IT'S JUST THE STRAIGHT FACTS AND A LIST OF THE COSTS.

YOU ARE FREE TO IGNORE THIS CHAPTER IF YOU AREN'T INTERESTED IN SUCH COGNITIVELY DEPRESSING AND IMPERSONALLY PRESENTED STATISTICAL MATERIAL. I CAN'T IN GOOD CONSCIENCE SAY THAT THIS MATERIAL IS ANY FUN TO READ. BUT I ALSO THINK THAT MY STORY IS NOT COMPLETE WITHOUT IT -- BECAUSE BESIDES TELLING YOU THE NUMBERS IT ALSO SILENTLY TELLS YOU SOMETHING ABOUT WHAT THOSE NUMBERS MEAN.

-----◇-----

1. I'm not the first person to have commented on "the insanity of war". But . . . those are just words, really. And clichéd ones at that. That phrase does not communicate sufficient information for it to have any mentionable impact . . . and certainly not after its endless repetition after every war. So while I'm certainly not the first person to have made such a clichéd comment I might be the first to itemize a lot of its insanities. As far as World War II goes, the agreed-on number of men, women, and children killed over the five years of it -- not counting the almost certainly larger number of ruined, maimed, wounded, traumatized, starved, crippled, and otherwise badly damaged -- is 85,000,000. It's a big number. For purposes of taking a closer look at what 85 million means -- other than that in dollar terms it's a fraction of the wealth that any of the richest people in the world have. [NOTE: *as I write these words in 2006, the U.S. is waging a war against one of the Near-East countries. The cost of deploying our navy, air force, army, and equipment for this is reported as being \$900,000,000 (almost one billion) dollars a day.*] The "people at the top" are, in fact, the only ones to have made, and always make, gains in any war. But eighty-five million deaths over five years is this:

17 million deaths per year . . .

= 1,416,666 deaths per month . . .

= 354,157 deaths per week . . .

= 50,595 deaths per day . . .

= 2,108 deaths per hour, every hour, 24 hours a day . . .

= 35 deaths per minute, 60 minutes each hour . . .

. . . for each and every minute . . .

. . . for an entire year . . .

. . . and for a second entire year . . .

. . . and for a third entire year . . .

. . . and for a fourth entire year . . .

. . . and for a fifth entire year . . .

All in all, so many human deaths per minute, for 2,628,000 minutes. Wow. This is today's publicly accepted assessment for estimating the losses/cost incurred in World War II. As far as the 6-million-plus Jews massacred in the Holocaust goes, that works out to about 3,472 Jews killed every day, or 144 Jews killed . . . every hour . . . day and night . . . over a span of five years . . . regardless of rain or shine or snow.

85,000,000, or 6,000,000+, are numbers that are bare of any greater significance than of being numerical soundbytes. They are exactly the kind of thing you'd read in any book or hear on any network news program, delivered in the same always earnest tone of voice that is used when delivering statistical data. Well, such delivered and dire facts are incomplete, biased, and without meaning – and are barely facts at that. And given that they are spoken in the same tone/level of voice regardless of whether the news concerns war or sports scores . . . they are usually received knee-jerkedly and forgotten about within a few days.

However, as delivered without mention of either causes or implications, it leaves you at least a bit worried and upset . . . without providing any relief . . . which makes you want to focus on things like baseball scores. Our minds are unable to deal with any modern complexities; they're like trying to stuff an elephant into a Safeway shopping bag. And how does one do that? Well, you take the 'S' away from 'safe' and take away the 'F' from 'way'.

That's right. There is no 'F' in way.

2. THE MORE COMPLETE STORY

The above bald number of (human) deaths over a span of five years does not count the *100-billion-plus* young and old horses, pigeons, sheep, sparrows, cows, bulls, mice, shrews, codfishes, moths, dogs, cats, mules, crows, turkeys, butterflies, goats, sardines, otters, flies, ibexes, red squirrels, frogs, groundhogs, worms, puppies, chickadees, pelicans, plants, hedges, evergreen trees, pigs, forests, foxes, hummingbirds, rabbits, ducks, ants, rats, oxen, catfishes, chamois, lizards, shrubs, donkeys, marine bottom feeders of all kinds, lizards, Eurasian beavers, skunks, partridges, owls, marmots, elk, Atlantic tuna, toads, kittens, chickens, peccaries, ocelots, hawks, parrots, porcupines, weasels and least weasels, adders, salamanders, possums, clams, jays, vines, bobcats, pine martens, seagulls, eels, grey wolves, octopi, lynxes, weevils, beetles, crabs, wasps, storks, doves, porpoises, chipmunks, roe, swans, bats, shade trees, wild pigs, grouse, seals, dragonflies, snakes, asses, woodpeckers, capercaillies, snails, mantises, pike, whales, trout, badgers, voles, hogs, sparrow hawks, ermines, minks, forests harvested for lumber, deer, bees, turtles, eagles, hares, centipedes, grasshoppers, spiders, glow-worms, blue tits, gophers, badgers, red squirrels, red foxes, newts, bugs, European bison, sharks, adders, boars, swallowtails, millepedes, hedgehogs, mountain goats, blackbirds, castors, bee-eaters, seals, European brown bears, brown trout, canaries, chrysalises, mountain goats, ferrets, polecats, wolverines, animals in zoos . . . and the many other species of birds, insects, fishes, trees, grasses, vines, and other land, air, and marine life forms that I haven't listed . . . that were killed . . . without a second's thought given to any of them. Ditto millions and millions of roses, zinnias, tulips, carnations, daffodils, magnolias, daisies, irises, elm trees, snapdragons, grasses, wheat, sunflowers, yarrow, vines, wildflowers, fruit trees, nut trees, willow trees, olive trees, fir trees, pines, walnut trees, oaks, spruces, birches, junipers, beeches, ashes, maples, hemlocks, hollies, alders, poplars, citruses, and so many more plant species . . . down to the very fungal, mold, and microbe life. Entire ecosystems were killed off, and the earth sterilized.

"What's with all the dead fishes, octopi, whales, and other marine animals? You might ask. The war was mostly on land! Well, yes. But just as explosions on land kill and damage by concussion (sudden compression of air that is so severe that it can kill), so can explosions in water kill by concussion. Water is a lot denser than air, and compression of it can certainly kill any life form near enough to any unexpected great compression, by suddenly squeezing them to death, much like being run over by a car does. Which is what happens to sailors who are swimming in the ocean when their ship has been hit and when more bombs are being dropped all around. They're crushed to death in the water. Which brings me to mention the uncounted numbers of bombs, torpedoes, depth charges, mines, cannonades, rockets, and just plain explosions of ships and watercraft that compressed and killed any marine life near enough to

them, in war. The compressions travel in exactly the same way that sound travels, and the nearer you are to either one of these the greater the impact.

3. There's also the fact that *entire towns and villages – and even cities* -- were destroyed . . . by which I mean their structures, homes, houses, farms, the crops on those farms, airports, trucks, water towers, walls, tools, paddocks, radios, lawns, offices, farm equipment, springs, wells, mail services, repair shops, money, pets, shoes, first aid equipment, medicines, piers, buildings, businesses, sports stadiums, theatres, docks, churches, aquifers, road signs, cargo ships, flowers, trees, bushes, shrubs, grasses, vineyards, forests, recreation facilities, stores, markets, fences, wells, streets, fruits and vegetables, hospitals, medical facilities, automobiles, pianos, post offices, gasoline stations, roads, clothing, electrical services, business centers, movie houses, cemeteries, telephone services, bridges, auditoriums, meeting halls, drainage and irrigation systems, parks, refectories, violins, gardens, play and recreation areas, seaports, water pipes, food supplies, streams, bakeries, fountains, stores of fuels and oil, stores of wines and beers, office materials and supplies of every kind, stores of foods and wines, trails, regular gardens, vegetable gardens, sewer systems, furniture, walls, trains, paths, shoes, seaside docks, playgrounds, lighting, jails, workshops, stamps and toy collections, streetcars, streets, courtyards, lumber yards, central plazas, apartments, guitars, grasses, schools of all types, basements, railroad tracks, kitchens, street signs, electrical power grids, palm trees, theaters, homes, sidewalks, fir trees, oak trees, spruces, statuary of heroes and worthies, warehouses, barber shops, courthouses, whore houses, city halls, cranes, yards, household furniture of all kinds, stores of family records and photographs, photographic equipment of every kind, trains and train stations, earthworks, meeting houses, graveyards, wells, beauty salons, stoves, containers of all kinds, nurseries, drums, chimneys, florist shops, histories, milk and meats and cheeses, building and construction equipment, firefighting equipment, fences, graveyards, dams, archives of documents/ photographs/ films/ records, markets and marketplaces, museums, pleasure craft, factories, libraries, music, personal possessions of every kind . . . and mines and tunnels dug into the earth . . . as well as pets, neighbors, friends, teachers, policemen, tailors, postmen, farm hands, wives and children, store employees, musicians, office workers, students, market workers, drivers, kids, old people, families, drunkards, etc. etc. etc..

4. And there were also the incalculable disruptions of the lives of families, and the lives of millions and millions of civilians, and the accompanying shortages of foods and supplies, shoe repairmen, and employees and helpers of all sorts . . . and of course losses of family members . . . and of people in general.

NOTE: I mean, just think of what would happen if a major earthquake hit your city. Helping services might take a week to arrive and get set up. In the meantime there would be

interruptions of food deliveries, water, electricity, restaurant services, businesses, pharmacies, and the medical people would be overwhelmed by caring for wounded people. Roads and streets would be impassable. What streets remained would be clogged by vehicles (plus ambulances, fire engines, etc.) driving around trying to find any food, medicines, relatives, help, or gasoline. The police wouldn't be able to contain the chaos of the various disruptions. The National Guard might take a week or ten days to get there. Depending on weather conditions there might be floods, fires, sinkages, downed bridges, and mudslides. In the case of a big earthquake it might take months to return to "normal"; in case of war any kind of help could be delayed and stretched out for years. Disruptions? Hell yes! Keep in mind how in 2005, after Hurricane Katrina hit Louisiana, the government and FEMA **this segment redacted for reasons of foul language** took a week to just show up to help out.

5. . . . and the wartime-only investment of *millions and millions and millions of tons of woods, fuels, glass, fabrics, clay and ceramic things, and metals . . . and supplies and savings of every imaginable kind . . .* all of which were used up, burned up, damaged, destroyed, worn out, sunk, broken, bent beyond use, wasted, suddenly torn and useless . . . and, when the war ended, all of the metal things that survived became useless and purposeless and were left to sit, rust, decompose, sink, decay, and become obsolete. One aircraft carrier alone weighs more than 100,000 tons; you can look that tonnage up if you doubt it. All of that metal – and the time and effort it took to extract it from the earth, and to shape it into useful things – was wasted. It all might have been put to much better uses

6. . . . and the expenditure for which, on both sides, of some 20,000,000,000 (twenty billion) hours over a span of five years. That is, twenty billion hours that were not spent in making of anything productive or offering services, or in enjoyments of life, but rather in providing stuff whose only purpose is to damage other things and that would have no purpose at all as soon as the war ended . . . and would be decommissioned, exploded, sold off as scrap, and/or left to rust, as I mentioned above. Anything you can think of -- such as military assault vehicles, hand grenades, tanks, military mortuary services, trucks, cannons, land mines, battleships, machineguns, bombs, helmets, spare parts for battleships and cruisers and aircraft carriers [I'm guessing that each of these are composed of some 90,000+ parts; I'm guessing that you can't imagine what goes into the designing, making, sorting, and assembling of all of these parts], land and marine mines, cargo ships, submarines, tankers, wire products for anything electronic, training of troops, codebreakers, more guns, engineers, diesel engines, claymore mines, boots, office desks and furniture, aircraft carriers, radar installations, armoring of all types, bazookas, hospitals and medical care, submarines, battle cruisers, and more big and small guns. And also bunkers, people to scurry around to deal with this or that, pistols, helmets, submarines, the development of synthetic rubber (supplies from South-East Asia, which normally provided rubber, were interrupted) for the making of wheels and tires for a

vast array of equipment, radio/ radar and morse code personnel, rails and railroad equipment, sonar equipment, rescue equipment, barracks, spy planes, specialty hardware, messenger services, landing craft, parachutes, motors, radio equipment, training personnel, cartridges, cannons and cannon shells, fighter planes, chemicals, military buses, secretaries and other office personnel, walkie-talkies, sandbags, tank ammunition, anti-aircraft guns, electronics, a wide variety of transport services, boots, all manner of construction materials, ammunition belts, electrical cables and wiring, bandages, cots, compasses, protective armor, flame throwers, tents and backpacks, telescopes, MPs, spare parts for tanks and amphibious craft, fortifications, ammunition, engines, binoculars, Military Police forces, bomb shelters, nuts and bolts and fasteners, more guns, spies, more rifles, jeeps, rockets, bivouac and cooking equipment, office workers, paymasters, bayonets, fuels, parachutes, uniforms, wheels for scores of kinds of vehicles, Bangalore torpedoes, accountants, arms factories, blankets, propagandists, ack-ack guns, time and equipment required for the training of troops, alloys, oil and grease, rubber for tires and rubber tires for dozens of kinds of vehicles, ammo belts, repair crews, prisoner-holding facilities, warehouse staff, coastal defense installations, paperwork, maps, spare parts for all kinds of weaponry, job foremen, torpedoes, bridges, tunnels, planners and strategists, drivers, tents, warehouse personnel, ceramic parts and equipment, ball bearings for *everything*, general equipment, spare parts for *all land vehicles*, spare parts for *aircraft*, spare parts for *naval craft* of all kinds, sleeping bags, and food, drink, and MREs. And then, guards for *everything*. Office and logistics staff. Barbed wire. Radio equipment. Sergeants. Recruiters. WACs. And then one could add codebreakers, kitchen staffs, spare parts for submarines, fighter planes, ropes, more bombers, typists, more guns, uniforms, reconnaissance planes and equipment, blimps, bullets, repair facilities for everything that could be repaired, recruiting personnel, nurses . . . and (in addition to the ones listed above) radar equipment and stations, cooks and kitchen staffs, and communications services of all kinds . . . and *more fuels for everything* . . . and I've left out the efforts and making of the machinery for the design, efficient production, and distribution of all of these things. All of it was done with the wholesale acting out of mostly blind hatreds, fantasies, prejudices, hurt patriotism, rage for losses incurred, xenophobia, resentments, informational lies, convenient hypocrisies, power plays, greed, lust for opportunities for using the war to advance one's self politically, and most especially out of ego and stupidity in not thinking ahead, and losses . . . all justified by citing "Patriotism", "Self-Defense", "Punishing the Aggressors", and "National Honor and Necessity". Do you think I might be overstating this? Maybe I am. I don't think I am, though. But we might have a different discussion if you spend ten minutes every day for a month re-reading this list. And no, I have no idea of how to de-escalate conflicts between nations . . . except that it seems to me that having an idea of what losses that warring factions are letting themselves in for might be something to make would-be combatants pause in their sword rattling. Oops. Sorry. I forgot to not say things like that.

7. Along with that were the uncounted losses of human skills learned over decades -- you know, what and how humans had learned to do in the service of living out their lives. The losses of so many skills crippled the economies, and lengthened the recovery-from-war-time of all the nations involved in the war. Oh, and before I forget: there was the waste of five years (plus whatever time it took to “heal” and “recover”) of the lives of everyone who lived. And I’m not making any of this up. I’m just sayin’, you know.

8. And the raping of the earth and the interruption of life itself on a massive, global, scale. Hundreds of billions of dollars, and undoubtedly hundreds of trillions (in today’s currency) were lost in disruptions of all kinds of trade, and education, and rebuilding towns and villages and cities -- and all their disappeared economic, political, societal, and infrastructural networks . . . such as buildings, roads, installations, facilities of all kinds, sewer systems, water delivery systems, transportation networks, farmlands, communication networks, etc. *at the cost of more years of effort and shortages and billions of more hours spent* in order to get back to where they had all left off five years before. I’m not disparaging the courage and fortitude of our (and their) soldiers. I’m just listing the costs of the war. The waste of effort, materials, pollution of air and water, and depletion of resources involved . . . and just the sheer perversity of the wanton destruction . . . are past my ability to calculate, or even imagine, beyond making such lists. Entire populations, ecologies and economies were killed off. Wiped out. The words “*What the Fuck . . . ?*” don’t really don’t do a good job of addressing this kind of thing. Nor do swear words. I’m describing to you humans’ prostrations in front of the Gods of Destruction and Waste. If you’ve read J.R.R. Tolkien’s Ring Trilogy then you’ll remember the toxically desolate wasteland that the evil region of Mordor is described as being. Tolkien had fought in World War I, and Mordor was his description of war-devastated wastelands that he had seen then (figs. 22 & 23).

Fig. 22: World War I battlefield, after battle: those kinds of horizons were the inspiration for J.R.R. Tolkien’s land of Mordor.

Fig. 23: World War I battlefield, after battle: those kinds of horizons were the inspiration for J.R.R. Tolkien’s land of Mordor.

9. TOKYO, AND OTHER ASPECTS OF THE STORY THAT MIGHT NOT SEEM RELEVANT TO MY OWN, BUT ARE.

Europe got trashed in World War II. The only thing to ever compare with that brutal warfare were the Allied atom-bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and the firebombings of Tokyo and 67 other Japanese cities, in early 1945. I think the Battle of Stalingrad belongs on

that list too. I'll comment on that further on; it deserves at least a comment, because of how many of the 85,000,000 deaths happened there.

10. WORLD WAR II ON THE PACIFIC OCEAN SIDE.

When Americans and Europeans think of World War II they think of the war in Europe. But not so much Japan. This is largely because after World War II this country was flooded with European survivors of that war. But not with Japanese war survivors. The United States actually yanked out every Japanese family and person to be found on or near the West Coast . . . and took away their houses and businesses and farms . . . and put them away in internment camps . . . which were not *essentially* different from the Nazi concentration camps except that there were fewer armed guards, and fewer interned people starved to death or were killed for annoying the guards in some way, or just for sport. From what I've heard, those Japanese-Americans who were interned during World War II never spoke after that war of their experiences, to their children. I was born into the European, not the Japanese, part of World War II. And my parents, like the Japanese parents, didn't talk to their children about that part of their histories. But it was still part of World War II. No one calls it World War II just because of its alliteration.

American General Curtis LeMay planned the firebombing of scores of Japanese cities during World War II. Firebombings were far more destructive than ordinary explosive bombs would have been, given that most Japanese buildings and structures were made of wood; and firebombs killed many more people than explosive ones would have. In fact, the Tokyo firebombings killed more people than *both atom bomb blasts in Hiroshima and Nagasaki combined* did. You can look up the numbers and comparative statistics if you don't believe this. The fires from the firebombings were so fierce that they burned up all the oxygen -- so that anyone who was hiding in a basement and wasn't burned to death, suffocated to death. *No one and nothing inside the bombed areas survived.*

11. Here is a list of 67 Japanese cities firebombed with napalm by American warplanes, under the command of Curtis LeMay, *both before and after the atom and uranium bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki* in 1945 . . . with percentages of those cities destroyed, and a list of American cities of similar size, for purposes of comparison. Only 11 out of 67 cities were less than 30% destroyed.

Name of Japanese	Percentage of the	Equivalent in size to the
------------------	-------------------	---------------------------

city firebombed	city destroyed	American city of:
Yokohama	58 %	Cleveland
Tokyo	51 %	New York
Toyama	99 %	Chattanooga
Nagoya	40 %	Los Angeles
Osaka	35 %	Chicago
Nishinomiya	12 %	Cambridge
Siumonoseki	38 %	San Diego
Kure	42 %	Toledo
Kobe	56 %	Baltimore
Omuta	34 %	Miami
Wakayama	50 %	Salt Lake City
Kawasaki	36 %	Portland
Okayama	69 %	Long Beach
Yawata	21 %	San Antonio
Kagoshima	63 %	Richmond
Amagasaki	19 %	Jacksonville
Sasebo	41 %	Nashville
Moh	23 %	Spokane
Miyakonoio	26 %	Greensboro
Nobeoka	25 %	Augusta
Miyazaki	26 %	Davenport
Hbe	21 %	Utica
Saga	44 %	Waterloo
Imabari	64 %	Stockton
Matsuyama	64 %	Duluth
Fukui	86 %	Evansville
Tokushima	85 %	Ft. Wayne
Sakai	48 %	Fort Worth
Hachioji	65 %	Galveston
Kumamoto	31 %	Grand Rapids

Isezaki	57 %	Sioux Falls
Takamatsu	68 %	Knoxville
Akashi	50 %	Lexington
Fukuyama	81 %	Macon
Aomori	30 %	Montgomery
Okazaki	32 %	Lincoln
Oita	28 %	Saint Joseph
Hiratsuka	48 %	Battle Creek
Tokuyama	48 %	Butte
Yokkichi	34 %	Charlotte
Uhyamada	41 %	Columbus
Ogaki	40 %	Corpus Christi
Gifu	64 %	Des Moines
Shizuoka	66 %	Oklahoma City
Himeji	49 %	Peoria
Fukuoka	24 %	Rochester
Kochi	55 %	Sacramento
Shimizu	42 %	San Jose
Omura	33 %	Sante Fe
Chiba	41 %	Savannah
Ichinomiya	56 %	Springfield
Nara	69 %	Boston
Tsu	69 %	Topeka
Kuwana	75 %	Tucson
Toyohashi	62 %	Tulsa
Numazu	42 %	Waco
Chosi	44 %	Wheeling
Kofu	79 %	South Bend
Utsunomiya	44 %	Sioux City
Mito	69 %	Pontiac
Sendai	22 %	Omaha

Tsuruga	65 %	Middleton
Nagaoka	65 %	Madison
Hitachi	72 %	Little Rock
Kumagaya	55 %	Kenosha
Hamamatsu	60 %	Hartford
Maebashi	64 %	Wheeling

Japan is smaller than the state of California and has a greater density of population. And what the U.S. did to Japan was like what the Allies and the Nazis did to Europe.

12. General Curtis LeMay created a genuine fiery Hell on earth with his firebombings. A lot of people would say that he did the right thing. I disagree. **Figs. 24 to 30**, below, are of what Japanese cities looked like on the ground. And from up in the air. If you wonder why **fig. #25** is included . . . well . . . that's what Budapest looked like too, except for the fact that the houses weren't made of wood. You may have noticed that almost all the standard pictures of war are just of buildings, or explosions, or what used to be buildings. Photos of dead bodies are considered to be tasteless. It's mostly photographs of the German concentration camps, and images from the Battle of Stalingrad, that show piles of dead bodies. I'm just saying, you know. Otherwise it was more common to show things like piles of shoes (**fig. 30**). And if you are wondering why I've included **fig. 28**, which is of the aftermath of the Oakland Hills fire that I was wiped out by in October of 1991, it's to show the contrast between the "comparatively benign" destructiveness of that fire and the firebombing of Tokyo.

Fig. 24 *After the firebombings, the barrenness of Tokyo. Nothing made of wood remained standing, in an area of 40 square miles. While the fires raged there remained no oxygen at all in any burned area. Anyone and any animal not burned to death suffocated to death.*

Fig. 25 *Budapest was destroyed by explosives, not by fire. Budapest was made of masonry, not wood.*

Fig. 26 *Burned body of a mother and her child. Operation Meetinghouse left at least 100,000 such burned bodies everywhere.*

Fig. 27 *Panoramic view of Tokyo after the firebombings; mile after mile of nothing but vacant lots. Notice the absence of bomb craters such as all the European war zones (except Dresden and Hamburg, which were themselves firebombed) were peppered with. Here, if it had been made of wood, it became ashes.*

Fig. 28 *Panoramic view of Oakland after the great fire of 1991. Same fire (that leveled 3,500 homes) but visibly less intense than the Tokyo fires.*

Fig. 29 *Panoramic view of Tokyo after the firebombings. Nothing left but charcoal.*

Fig. 30 *Piles of shoes of concentration camp victims. The Nazis also pulled the gold teeth out of cadavers' mouths.*

13. THE BATTLE OF STALINGRAD

The Battle of Stalingrad – not exactly in Europe, and not near Tokyo either -- needs to be mentioned along with all the others, for two reasons. First, it is, to date, the single most costly and destructive battle in the history of the world. It lasted from the Fall of 1942 and continued into the late winter of 1943. It is estimated that as many as 2.2 million people were killed – both soldiers and civilians. Skeletons from that battle are still today being found in the land around that city. Burial squads must have been few and far between; and can you imagine how that city must have smelled, with hundreds of thousands of bodies lying around?

You may be asking: “Why are you mentioning a battle, no matter how gory and blood-soaked, that took place almost 1,500 miles from Budapest – where you were?”. Well, both the Russian and German armies were considerably depleted in that 6-to-8-months-long battle for Stalingrad. Had Hitler allowed his troops to withdraw, something like 150,000 German soldiers would have remained alive. As it was, they surrendered after heavy losses, and almost 100,000 remaining German soldiers became P.O.W.s. But mostly, there would have been many more both German *and* Russian combatants available later in the war, when it came to the siege of Budapest. The fighting there would have been much more murderously fierce . . . and I probably would not have survived to write this. *I mean, just how lucky can a guy get???* The World War II losses and carnage in Stalingrad were horrendous, and my description of it, above, is a tame one. Should you be interested in a more thorough and sobering account, you should look up an article written by Robert M. Kaplan, titled “Stalingrad: The Hinge of History”, that you can find on Google.

14. War is thought of as being about soldiers killing other soldiers. But by far the greater number of deaths are of *massacres* (via torture, starvation, caught-in-the-crossfire, and flat-out murdering) of vulnerable non-combatants such as civilians, young and old women and children, political enemies, protesters, people of unapproved sexual orientations, members of despised religions such as Jews, etc. In other words: people who were in the wrong place at

the wrong time and whom no one ~~gave a shit~~ was concerned about. This dimension of World War II included the Holocaust's extermination of more than six million Jews; and many millions of civilians from all the major and most of the minor European cities; and millions of non-combatants in Russia and North Africa, and the firebombing deaths of millions of non-combatants in Japan, and the killings in the rest of the Pacific – all on land, in the air, and in the water. I'm probably repeating myself, but it's hard to list *everything* without having two or three of this or that.

15. THE CATHOLIC/CHRISTIAN CHURCH AND THE POLITICS OF WAR

The Catholic Church has been a competitive and anti-other religions presence in this world since the time of Jesus Christ. There wouldn't be any great amount of anti-Semitism in the world if the Catholic/ Christian Church didn't exist. There wouldn't have been the Inquisition without it, and it has a lot of responsibility for the Holocaust having happened. As such, the Catholic Church has to do with my life's story too.

SOME CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND

The word *Pogrom* designates killing-riots/sprees against Jews; and the first *Pogrom* in history was the First Crusade – a murderous campaign of Catholics/ Christians against both Islamists and Jews. People of Islamic faith were at that time called Mohammedans – because they followed the precepts of Mohammed. The Jews likewise didn't worship Jesus, who is one of the Father-Son-Holy Ghost Triad. The Catholic Church justified the Crusades because it believed (1) that Arabs should revere God, and not Mohammed, and (2) that Jews should worship Jesus. Or else. So the Crusaders tortured and killed anyone who didn't accept Jesus. And they did it brutally. The Crusades were political/military power plays labeled "Holy Crusades" -- including the fact that "Crusades" (Cross-ades) is in this case an apt pun. Look the history and etymology up if you don't believe me. But in short, the Church has functioned as a competitive and aggressive political entity intent ensuring the Church's dominance and the unquestioned power of its symbols, Jesus and the Cross. The Catholic Church even had its own army for a while. Wow! I mean, what does a *Church* needs an *army* for??? Well, what does anyone need an army for? For power and dominance.

After the Crusades, the Church sponsored the Inquisition . . . with which it caused the torture and killing of perhaps 100,000 to 200,000 people *who thought differently* about things. And the Inquisition overlaps with a lot of the European Religious wars that claimed other such numbers of people. And then things got much worse in World War II. It has also been in the news that the Catholic Church gave haven to thousands of its priests who molested children.

THE MOST RECENT CALUMNY

The Church has, in fact, been a safe haven for child molesters. And regardless of the bad press and “scandal” this has brought the Church, I am not aware of any expulsions and/or prosecutions of any great number of child molesters. Is this what they mean when they cite the separation of Church (and its Laws) and State (and its Laws)? If anyone is scratching his or her head over what conflict I have personally had with the Catholic Church, rather than with the Nazis, I refer you to the episode I mentioned earlier – the one of my mother having carried me to the Budapest railroad loading area in search of my father, who had been taken there earlier that day in order to be made to disappear . . . and that Fascist officer who approached her and in a harsh voice asked what she was doing there? She told him and she mentioned that she wasn’t Jewish. And that bigot immediately adopted an ingratiating tone of voice in which he politely said to her, *“pardon me. It’s just that Christians are not allowed to be here”*. Yep.

WORLD WAR II

Pope Pius XII was the head of the Catholic Church from 1939 to 1958. As far as the Holocaust is concerned, Pius XII made an agreement with the Nazis in the late 1930s, in which he promised that the Church would not speak out against any of the things that were done or going to be done to Jews in the coming war. Pope Pius XII was an anti-Semitic bigot. . . and the Church was going to remain “neutral”. Look that up if you don’t believe it. Pius XII could have said **NO!!!** . . . or even **NO!** . . . or even **“NO!”** . . . or even **“NO”** . . . or even **“no”** . . . or even **“no”** . . . or even **“no”** to the Nazis. But, instead, he didn’t utter a peep about the things that happened to my family and me . . . and tons of others . . . for five years . . . because of his “hands-off” agreement with the Nazis. I think that **THIS SECTION HAS BEEN REDACTED AND REPLACED WITH THE PHRASE “IS HIGHLY ANNOYING”**.

There’s no doubt more to this than I’ve mentioned. Albert Einstein, after the war, thanked the Catholic Church for its anti-Nazi help during the war. I don’t know what that gratitude was for. I know that priests and individual Christians helped Jews survive, but they did it at their own risk, and not the Church’s permission. I’ve read in Wikipedia’s report that Catholic resistance to mistreatment of Jews in Germany was generally limited to fragmented and largely individual efforts. And in every country under German occupation priests, showing great personal courage, did play an important part in rescuing Jews.

And one last thing: life gets complicated. I can rail on about the Catholic Church’s calumnies. But one should also consider that the Catholic Church – the followers of Jesus Christ – arose in and out of the Roman Empire, which was the most rapacious political/military entity the world had ever known, outside of the Nazis. The Romans mostly just killed

off their opponents; the Nazis of course killed their opponents, but also their own fellow citizens. What opponent of Rome would not pick up some hints about how to run the world, when they were in conflict with it? It's calculated that the Crusades resulted in the killing of perhaps 100,000 to 200,000 non-Christians -- because they believed in some other God than Christ. And it has been calculated that in the 8 years of the military campaigns of Julius Caesar, his soldiers killed up to 1,000,000 tribesmen and women and children who didn't want to be ruled by Rome. What other mental environment would the Christian Church have grown up in?

16. FROM THE NEW YORK TIMES, MARCH 3, 2013, BY ERIC LICHTBLAU: In 2000 researchers at the United States Holocaust Museum began the grim task of documenting all the ghettos, slave labor sites, concentration camps, and killing factories that the Nazis had set up throughout Europe. They had expected to find perhaps 7,000 Nazi camps and ghettos. But what they found so far has shocked even the scholars steeped in the history of the Holocaust. The researchers have catalogued almost 43,000 Nazi ghettos and camps throughout German-controlled Europe from France to Russia, and Germany itself, as well as some of the North African countries! The documented camps include not only Killing Centers but also thousands of forced-labor camps, prisoner-of-war camps, sites euphemistically named "care centers" where pregnant women were forced to have abortions; or their babies were killed after birth; and also brothels where captive women were forced to have sex with German military personnel.

Researchers have no doubt that many German citizens, despite their frequent claims of ignorance after the war, must have known about the widespread existence of the Nazi camps at the time, because you literally could not go anywhere without running into forced labor camps, concentration camps, P.O.W. camps, etc. They were everywhere.

17. HOW? and WHY? and W.T.F. ?

There are political, academic, sociological, economic, and historical accounts of and explanations for the Holocaust. And there's a folkloric one also, that I only recently learned about, from U.C. Berkeley professor Alan Dundes' book titled **Life is Like a Chicken-Coop Ladder**. This book is an analysis of the German national psyche's fascination with shit -- as revealed through German cultural habits, folklore, literature, quotes from historical correspondence, songs and poetry, humor, and the shit-associated colloquial names of common everyday objects. Dundes' book describes how such a psyche/ mindset (that Sigmund Freud first identified as *the Anal-Retentive Personality*) is an until-now-unrecognized factor in the creation of the Holocaust.

Namely, for too many Germans, their feelings about shit were the same as their feelings about Jews. In a way, Jews were indistinguishable from shit. Jews *were* shit. It's not all that different from how some Americans react to seeing a Latino person walking around and thinking that here is a no-good son-of-a-thief and rapist who is here to take someone's job . . . and who is someone who will make me dirty me if I interact with him, and who is entirely worthy of my fear but unworthy of my respect, and whom I'd be happy to be rid of. Or, it's how pathologically suspicious Californian Caucasians felt about the Japanese citizens among them, after Pearl Harbor, and how they kicked them out of their communities. Or how Southerners thought that Blacks (as they were called then) were too filthy to share hotel rooms, swimming pools, water fountains and bathrooms with. As a case in point, early black entertainer Nat King Cole performed at a Las Vegas casino, and the next morning put on his swimming trunks and went swimming in the casino pool; white guests/customers persuaded management to drain the pool and refill it with "clean" water. Really. And there are people who think like that about vulnerable minorities, today.

And in Germany – which has had a strong Folklore of Shit to begin with – it was imperative to get rid of the Jews for *those* [kinds of] reasons. America has, instead, a folklore that's rich not in constructs of Shit but in constructs of Enemies and Disgusting Others. Read Dundes' book if you don't believe me. It is written in everyday language instead of technical jargon. And it is based in disciplined research and observations of colloquial speech. I found parts of it to be jawdropping. If you have any wish to understand the Holocaust better, I think you'll get something out of reading this book. The Jews were the *spiks* of their age.

I'm also going to recommend that you read Neill, Neill, Orange Peel, which is the autobiography of A.S. Neill, who was and is one of the forgotten geniuses of the modern age.