

PRODUCER

Sidney Bernstein

PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR

Sergei Nolbandov

TREATMENT ADVISER

Alfred Hitchcock

TREATMENT AND COMMENTARY

Richard Crossman

Colin Wills

EDITORS

Marcel Cohen

Stewart McAllister

Peter Tanner

COMPLETED AND RESTORED BY



DISTRIBUTED BY



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MOVIE SYNOPSIS

Ordered in April 1945 by the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* is an official documentary about the atrocities committed at concentration camps under Nazi leadership. Producer Sidney Bernstein assembled a team at the Ministry of Information that included editors Stewart McAllister and Peter Tanner, writers Colin Wills and Richard Crossman; and Alfred Hitchcock who gave directorial advice. A compilation of footage shot by combat and newsreel cameramen accompanying troops as they liberated occupied Europe, the film was to be screened in Germany after the fall of the Third Reich – shown to German prisoners of war wherever they were held – but was ultimately shelved before completion due to a shift in the priorities of the British government.

German Concentration Camps Factual Survey is distributed in the United States by 3 Generations.

STATEMENT FROM JANE WELLS, FOUNDER OF 3 GENERATIONS AND DAUGHTER OF PRODUCER SIDNEY BERNSTEIN

In 1985, Granada Television produced the documentary, *A Painful Reminder*. It included previously unseen footage shot and assembled by Allied army film units working under the direction of my father, Sidney Bernstein, during the liberation of Germany in 1945. Until that time, at age 86, my father had never spoken of his time at Bergen-Belsen, nor of his subsequent work assembling irrefutable evidence of Nazi atrocities. He told me that his failure to finish and release *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* was the greatest regret of his life.

So, it is with a great sense of purpose and family pride that I am able to help with the fulfillment of his wish. I am honored that the Imperial War Museum has allowed me to shepherd this film to audiences in North America. It is a powerful testament to the value of *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* and its continued importance, that there are audiences ready and willing to watch a black and white film that is 71 years old.

The restoration of my father's film by the Imperial War Museum is masterful, accurate and brilliantly conceived. It is also timely, for this material remains a vital part of 20th century history. I am immensely grateful to all the people who have made this possible. I know my father would be too.

STATEMENT FROM THE IMPERIAL WAR MUSEUM (IWM)

Described by one critic as ‘an impressive and important piece of filmmaking, restored with intelligence and care by the museum’, *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* has been digitally restored and, with the assembly of the sixth and final reel, IWM has completed the film to the instructions laid down by the original production team, which included producer Sidney Bernstein, editors Stewart McAllister and Peter Tanner, and writers Colin Wills and Richard Crossman.

A need for restoration of the copies of *Memory of the Camps* had become apparent after the film had been shown widely as a popular loan item. IWM believed that the project to restore the film could also encompass work to complete it, using the filmmakers’ original directions (the rough-cut, shot list and script for the commentary) and all reels of source material that had been assembled back in 1945 to make the film.

The work to restore and complete the film began for IWM in December 2008, when the IWM team –including Dr. Toby Haggith, George Smith, Andrew Bullas and David Walsh – investigated whether the sequences for reel six, as described in the original shot list, could be found among the 100 component reels of unedited footage deposited with the rough-cut in 1952.

IWM discovered all the scenes listed for the sixth reel, except for two maps, one of which has now been especially created. As well as completing the film, IWM revisited the original masters and component reels used in the first five reels, digitally scanning these and assembling the whole film from scratch. This work, which IWM describes as both a restoration and a completion, was carried out in collaboration with Dragon DI – a digital post production company in Wales, UK.

The film now has the title *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* – as originally listed in the Ministry of Information Catalogue of Films for Liberated Territories, published in September 1945. The original commentary has been re-recorded with the voice of actor Jasper Britton and an effects track created, blending the existing synch sound recordings made at Belsen with authentic Army Film and Photographic Unit recordings made on the battlefields of NW Europe (1944-45), which are held in IWM’s collection.

German Concentration Camps Factual Survey received its world premiere at the 64th Berlin Film Festival in February 2014 and its UK premiere at the 58th BFI London Film Festival in October 2014. The film has also been shown at festivals in Jerusalem, Amsterdam, Melbourne, Sydney and at the Los Angeles Museum of Tolerance.

Diane Lees, IWM’s Director-General

“*German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* is of great historical importance – as a record of the atrocities, the concentration camps and of Allied policy on how this subject might be used as a powerful weapon of propaganda in Germany after the fall of the Third Reich.”

IWM Restoration and completion of *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*, 2010-2014

David Walsh, Restoration Producer

Dr. Toby Haggith, Restoration Director

George Smith, Restoration Editor
Andrew Bullas, Off-line Editor
Damon Cleary, Graphics
Jane Fish, Commercial Liaison
Corinna Reicher, Translator
Suzanne Bardgett, Historical Adviser
Kay Gladstone, Historical Adviser
Roger Smither, Historical Adviser
Jasper Britton, Narrator
Vincenzo Canatella, Dubbing Mixer

The picture was scanned, restored and digitally assembled at Dragon DI.

The soundtrack was mixed and recorded at Prime Focus World.

***German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* was restored and completed with the support of:**

The Maurice Marks Charitable Trust
The Eric Anker-Petersen Charity

BIOGRAPHIES

Sidney Bernstein

Producer



Sidney Bernstein was born in Ilford, Essex, UK in 1899. At 23, after the death of his father, he took command of the family chain of cinemas and, in 1925, he helped found the London-based Film Society with the object of bringing audiences a range of 'films of intrinsic merit' from abroad, which they would otherwise not have the chance to see. The Film Society was the first to show the films of Eisenstein, Pudovkin and René Clair in the UK, and drew the support of respected artists such as H.G. Wells and George Bernard Shaw.

However, the cinema chain was the real business, and in 1928, the Bernsteins (Sidney and his younger brother Cecil) merged with Gaumont-British. Bernstein's brand name of 'Granada' came from a fondly remembered tour of Spain, especially its architecture, and he opened his first purpose-built Granada cinema in Dover, Kent, in 1929 with the advent of 'talkies.' As Granada became a major British cinema force – by 1935 a new

Granada was being opened every three months – Bernstein earned a reputation for originality. In the pre-World War II years, he developed strong links with the American film industry. On visits to

Hollywood, he established long-surviving friendships with Charles Chaplin, Alfred Hitchcock, John Huston, William Wyler, Joseph Cotten and many others.

During the Second World War, Bernstein served as film adviser to the Ministry of Information, supporting a number of patriotic films – including Noël Coward's salute to the Royal Navy, *In Which We Serve* (co-d. David Lean, 1942). In 1944, he served under Eisenhower as Chief of the Film Section at the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Forces (SHAEP) where he brought his friend Alfred Hitchcock over from Hollywood to make two French-language shorts as a tribute to the French Resistance (*Bon Voyage* and *Aventure Malgache*, 1944). In 1945, he decided to produce a film based on footage taken by Allied cameramen of the German concentration camps, and he invited Hitchcock to supervise it. The film (with the working title *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*) was intended to be a permanent reminder of Nazi atrocities for German and world audiences, but it was housed at the Imperial War Museum and screened for the first time on British television in 1985 as a part of the making of the documentary *A Painful Reminder*.

After the war, he returned to Hollywood to work in partnership with Hitchcock (they formed the production company Transatlantic Pictures) on the production of *Rope* (US, 1948), *Under Capricorn* (1949) and *I Confess* (1953).

When the Television Bill was passed by Parliament in 1954, creating the Independent Television Authority, Granada applied for and was granted the contract for providing programs for the North of England. Granada rapidly became the most adventurous and respected of the early ITV companies, the longest surviving and, after a shaky start, the most consistently profitable.

In its early days, Granada Television gained an unparalleled reputation for investigative journalism in programs such as *Searchlight* (ITV, 1959-60) and *World in Action* (ITV, 1963-98). The vast possibilities of television drama and social documentary programs were clear to Bernstein from the start, and the idiosyncratic style of Granada TV's output in these fields during the early years came largely from the authority he exerted and the guidance he supplied. Keen that Granada Television should reflect the culture and talent of the region, he made a point of encouraging northern writers and artists. He succeeded well beyond his expectations with *Coronation Street* (ITV, 1960-present), which transcended its working-class Lancashire setting to become the nation's favorite TV series and the longest-running soap-drama.

In 1969, Sidney Bernstein became Baron Bernstein of Leigh. A man of immense vitality and a forceful personality which he stamped on Granada Television, Bernstein was awarded the BFI Fellowship for outstanding achievements in film and television in 1984. He died at the age of 94 in London on February 5, 1993.

Jane Wells

Founder of 3 Generations, Daughter of Producer Sidney Bernstein



Jane Wells is an Emmy-award-nominated documentary filmmaker and activist. She is the founder of 3 Generations, a non-profit organization that uses film to share stories of survivors of human rights abuses from around the world. Her father Sidney Bernstein's work on *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*, and his lifelong regret of never seeing the film's public release, inspired Jane to become a filmmaker and motivated the creation of 3 Generations.

Jane's 2014 feature length directorial debut, *TRICKED*, exposed the realities of the U.S. sex trade. The film follows pimps, johns, girls, parents and law enforcement agents fighting trafficking, providing unprecedented access into their worlds and creating

a comprehensive portrait of the American sex industry today. Since its theatrical release, *TRICKED* has been available on Netflix for on-demand viewing in the United States and internationally and has been translated into 13 languages.

Jane is best known for producing *The Devil Came on Horseback*, the landmark documentary about the ongoing genocide in Darfur, which premiered at Sundance in 2007. The film won the Seeds of War Award and the Working Film Award (Full Frame Documentary Film Festival), the Witness Award (Silverdocs Film Festival), the Women in Cinema Lena Sharpe Award (Seattle International Film Festival) and the Adrienne Shelly Excellence in Filmmaking Award (Nantucket Film Festival).

Jane is the executive producer of *Right There* (2012) and has produced and directed over 40 short films for 3 Generations, including *I'm a Victim, Not a Criminal* (2010) and the award-winning shorts *Lost Hope* (2012), *Native Silence* (2013) and *A System of Justice* (2016) about death row exoneree Glenn Ford. Her recent films include the feature-length documentary *A Different American Dream* (2016) about the injustices thrust upon the Native Americans in the Fort Berthold Indian Reservation in North Dakota by the oil industry, *Lost in Lebanon* (2017) and *Three* (2014) about the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon and Syria.

**ORIGINAL PRODUCTION TEAM FOR
GERMAN CONCENTRATION CAMPS FACTUAL SURVEY (1945)**

British Ministry of Information

Sidney L. Bernstein - Producer
Sergei Nolbandov - Production Supervisor
Stewart McAllister - Editor
Peter Tanner - Editor
Marcel Cohen - Editor
Ray Riley - Assistant Editor
Donald Bowden - Assistant Editor
Colin Wills - Treatment and Commentary
Richard Crossman - Treatment and Commentary
Alfred Hitchcock - Treatment Adviser
Gordon R. R. Taylor - Research
Solly Zuckerman - Scientific Adviser
WM Larkins Studio - Maps

Cameramen - Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, Germany 1945

No. 5 Section, Army Film and Photographic Unit
Major Hugh Stewart MBE
Lieutenant Martyn Wilson MBE
Sergeant Harold Haywood
Sergeant Slim Hewitt MBE
Sergeant William Lawrie
Sergeant Michael Lewis
Sergeant Roy Parkinson

Filming at Belsen with the sound recorded synchronously, 23 and 24 April 1945

British Movietone News
Camera: Paul Wyand
Sound Recordist: Martin Gray

Sound effects recorded in north-west Europe by the Army Film and Photographic Unit, 1944-1945

Sound Recordist: Lieutenant Peter Handford
Sound Recordist: Sergeant John Aldred

Cameramen at other camps and sites of atrocity in Austria and Germany, 1945

US Army Signal Corps
Technical Sergeant Harry A. Downard
Technical Sergeant Lambert
Technical Sergeant A. Statt
Staff Sergeant
Gordon C. Bush
Staff Sergeant Raymond Graham

Technician 3 Harold Bloom
Technician 3 Henry F. Gerzen
Technician 3 Theodore W. Sizer
Sergeant Phillip Drell
Sergeant Edward J. Guthals
Sergeant Fred R. Owens
Sergeant Harold R. Thompson
Technician 4 Thomas J. Henry
Technician 4 Forest Weller
Technician 5 Vernace C. Bowen
Technician 5 Anthony S. Brooke
Technician 5 Russell E. Day
Technician 5 Gideon F. Ebers
Technician 5 Harold L. Hershey
Technician 5 Richard B. Hoar
Technician 5 Kenneth C. Marthey
Technician 5 Andrew J. McCarthy
Technician 5 Pinckney Ridgell
Technician 5 Edward L. Urban

Metrotone News

Gaston Madru

Movietone News

Georges Méjat

Pathé News

François Delalande

Universal News

Thomas A. Priestley

Cameramen at concentration and extermination camps in Poland, 1944-1945

Auschwitz:

Mikhail Oshurkov
Nikolai Bykov
Kenian Kutub-Zade
Anatolii Pavlov
Aleksandr Vorontsov

Majdanek:

Avenir Sof´in
Roman Karmen
Viktor Shtatland

REVIEWS & TESTIMONIALS

The New York Times

“This restoration of *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* is an extraordinary act of cinematic reclamation and historiography.”

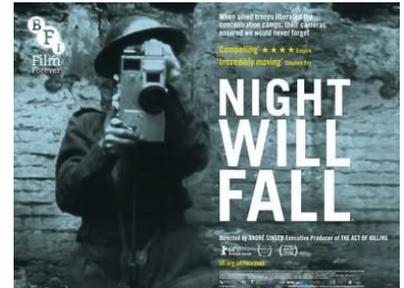
– Manohla Dargis, Chief Film Critic, *The New York Times*

“... a measured but unflinching account...”

– Mike Hale, Television and Film Critic, *The New York Times*

“This was not only an extraordinarily gripping story but was potentially important in bringing a different perspective to the story of the Holocaust.”

– André Singer, Director, *Night Will Fall*



Los Angeles Times

–

“... ghastly clips from *Factual Survey* ... irrevocably hammer home the still unthinkable treatment of so many innocent human beings.”

Gary Goldstein, Film Reviewer and Feature Writer, *Los Angeles Times*

“Bernstein succeeded in his mission to chronicle some of the vilest crime scenes in history and invalidate the deniers. The footage is an indisputable record of what happened in the camps...”

– Matthew Gilbert, Reporter, *The Boston Globe*

The Boston Globe

“The never-before-publicly-seen footage is so graphic, so stunning, so disturbing — even seven decades later — that it almost makes you ashamed to be a member of the same species as those responsible for it.”

DAILY NEWS

– Denis Hamil, *New York Daily News*

REVIEWS & TESTIMONIALS



"While Holocaust atrocities have been documented in hundreds of films... *Factual Survey's* contribution was to offer razor-sharp clarity."

– Vern Gaye, Television Critic, *Newsday*

"... a powerful Holocaust documentary that spent decades in limbo for politically dubious reasons."

– Stephen Dalton, Film and TV Critic, *The Hollywood Reporter*



"... brings the reality of the Holocaust into terrifying, unblinking focus and it will leave you shaken."

– Kevin Jagernauth, Managing Editor, *IndieWire*

"It is, perhaps, the greatest documentary never made."

– Marlow Stern, Senior Entertainment Reporter, *The Daily Beast*



"... a vital artifact of a time when Dachau and Auschwitz were not synonymous with 'genocide.'"

– Simon Abrams, Film and TV Critic, *The Village Voice*

"... beyond heart-breaking and utterly compelling: looking away from the screen feels disrespectful to the victims..."

– Anna Smith, Film Reviewer, *The Telegraph*



g3nerations

Founded by Jane Wells in 2007, 3 Generations is a 501c3 non-profit organization that documents stories of human rights abuses through film. Survivors of crimes against humanity are able to record their experiences as an act of healing, a call to action and to create historical evidence. Standing at the intersection of filmmaking and social justice activism, 3 Generations is committed to ethical, survivor-led curation and exploration of under-reported issues. They produce feature and short documentary films, web-based videos, multi-use educational materials and robust, award-winning engagement campaigns. Their work amplifies the voice of each witness by creating broad audiences: film festivals, educational outreach, theatrical and community screenings, social media, partnerships, web-channels and more. Their goal is to influence the national dialogue and build momentum for social change.

3 GENERATIONS FILMOGRAPHY

Lost in Lebanon (2017)

Official Selection, New York Human Rights Watch Film Festival 2017

Official Selection, One World Film Festival 2017

Official Selection, London Human Rights Watch Film Festival 2017

A Different American Dream (2016)

Official Selection, American Indian Film Festival 2016

Official Selection, Margaret Mead Film Festival 2016

Winner, Best Documentary, Red Nation Film Festival 2016

Official Selection, Reykjavik International Film Festival 2016

Official Selection, Thessaloniki Documentary Festival 2016

A System of Justice (2016)

Winner, Best Documentary, West Chester Film Festival 2017

Official Selection, Manchester Film Festival 2016

Official Selection, New York International Short Film Festival 2016

Winner, Best Documentary Short, New York International Short Film Festival 2016

German Concentration Camp Factual Survey (2014)

Official Selection, Jerusalem Film Festival 2014

Official Selection, Berlin International Film Festival 2014

Official Selection, San Francisco Jewish Film Festival 2015

Official Selection, Melbourne International Film Festival 2014

Official Selection, Jewish International Film Festival 2014

Three (2015)



Official Selection, Socially Relevant Film Festival 2016

In the Shadow of War (2014)

Official Selection, Movies That Matter 2015
Official Selection, One World 2015
Nominated for First Appearance Award, IDFA 2014
Nominated for Oxfam Global Justice Award, IDFA 2014
Nominated for Special Jury Award, Sheffield Doc Fest 2014
Nominated for Best UK Film Award, Open City Doc Fest 2014



TRICKED (2013)

Official Selection, Montclair Film Festival 2014
Winner, Silver Lei Award, Honolulu Film Awards 2013



Native Silence (2013)

Winner, Award of Merit, Best Shorts Competition 2013
Official Selection, American Indian Film Festival 2013
Official Selection, Red Nation Film Festival 2013
Official Selection, Aspen Shortsfest 2014
Finalist, USA Film Festival 2014



Lost Hope (2012)

Winner, Metropolitan Film Festival Honorary Mention 2012



The Devil Came On Horseback (2007)

Winner, Seeds of War Award, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival 2007
Winner, Full Frame/Working Films Award, Full Frame Documentary Film Festival 2007
Winner, Docudrama Award, Amnesty International Media Awards 2008
Winner, Witness Award, Silverdocs 2007
Winner, Women In Cinema Lena Sharpe Award, Seattle International Film Festival 2007
Winner, Adrienne Shelley Excellence in Filmmaking Award, Nantucket Film Festival 2007
Official Selection, Sundance Film Festival 2007
Official Selection, Cinevegas 2007
Official Selection, Tribeca Film Festival 2011
Official Selection, Human Rights Watch Film Festival 2007
Nominated, Best Documentary, News and Documentary, Emmy Awards 2009
Nominated, Gotham Independent Film Award, Gotham Awards 2007



In 1945, the British producer Sidney Bernstein contacted his good friend Alfred Hitchcock for help on a horrific project. Mr. Bernstein, the chief of the film section of the Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force, had been present at the Nazi extermination camp Bergen-Belsen in April that year, soon after its liberation. The film he was preparing would serve as irrefutable evidence of Nazi atrocities and be shown to Germans and to the world. Mr. Bernstein wanted it to “be in the form of a prosecuting counsel stating his case.” Hitchcock’s contribution seems to have been advisory; he suggested, for instance, that the film use long takes to affirm the material’s authenticity.

More than half a century after Mr. Bernstein began work on this documentary, it has been at last completed and restored, and is now receiving a commercial release under the exacting, straightforward title “German Concentration Camps Factual Survey.” The title’s blandness is appropriate given the bluntness of the prosecutorial narration (read by an actor, Jasper Britton) and the unsparingly graphic evidentiary visuals. Most of the film consists of material shot inside and near several extermination camps, including Dachau and Auschwitz; much of the imagery is heart-crushing and extremely tough to watch, consisting of newly freed skeletal men, women and children and thousands of corpses.

At once a document and a denunciation, the film builds its case rapidly and unblinkingly. It looks back at 1933 and the rise of National Socialism — using images of Hitler among the masses from the propaganda film “Triumph of the Will” — then skips forward to a number of recently liberated extermination camps. Some of this imagery will likely be familiar and not just to those who have watched other Holocaust documentaries. One of the eerie truths of this film is that, however difficult it is to watch, it can seem shocking, but not surprising, simply because such imagery has been so thoroughly incorporated into pop culture, either through direct citation or by inference.

This troubling sense of familiarity soon dissipates, though, because this is not like most films. In contrast to many movies about atrocities, including some documentaries, there is nothing reassuring about “German Concentration Camps Factual Survey.” There are no hollow claims about the “triumph” of the human spirit, no third-act heroics or narrative balms. The few smiles here are desperate. Mostly, there are starving survivors milling about the camps and staring into the camera with hollow eyes. Some lie on the floor, too frail to move; others drift about on stick legs. In most camps, the survivors appear

outnumbered by the dead, with corpses scattered like refuse or in piles and in pits.

“German Concentration Camps Factual Survey” was finally finished and restored in 2014 by the Imperial War Museums, in Britain, where the original elements had been kept. Its history is long and tangled. It began as an Allied endeavor and, according to the historian Toby Haggith, the director of the restoration, was meant to include concluding statements from President Harry S. Truman, Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin. (Dr. Haggith has written a useful, concise history of the documentary that is available on the British Film Institute’s website.) The Americans, however, opted to produce their own film, “Death Mills” (1946), directed by Billy Wilder. Mr. Bernstein continued working on the original project; Hitchcock, Mr. Haggith writes, may have contributed to the script.

An unfinished version of “German Concentration Camps Factual Survey” was screened in September 1945, but then the film was abandoned, an apparent casualty of changing political priorities and a shift from renunciation to reconstruction. Simply put, the Allies needed Germans to rebuild their country. (According to one scholarly account, Mr. Bernstein was informed that “policy at the moment in Germany is entirely in the direction of encouraging, stimulating and interesting the Germans out of their apathy.”) An incomplete version of the film, titled “Memory of the Camps,” was released in 1984; some of the material was used in another documentary, “A Painful Reminder” (1985).

This restoration of “German Concentration Camps Factual Survey” is an extraordinary act of cinematic reclamation and historiography. The documentary proper runs about 75 minutes and is book-ended by two new sequences, including a brief introduction that offers critical viewing context. Just as crucial, though, is a longer postscript that includes interviews with some of the principals involved in the Imperial War Museums’ restoration. They contribute more on the film’s complex history, but they also talk about how hard this material is to watch, offering a much-needed humanizing coda. One man suggests that you may at times need to close your eyes; mostly, though, you need to watch.

**The
New York
Times**

A Father’s Legacy: Grim Footage of Concentration Camps

By MIKE HALE, JAN. 6, 2017

The toughest movie opening this weekend is a 72-year-old black-and-white documentary that was hidden away for decades, “German Concentration Camps Factual Survey.” The film, or pieces of it, have been seen over the years at festivals and museums, and it has been the subject of several documentaries itself. But its run at Cinema Village in Manhattan is its first theatrical release of the complete film in North America.

Shot by British, American and Russian cameramen who accompanied Allied troops as they first came

upon the Nazi concentration camps in 1945, the film is difficult to watch. Long sequences unblinkingly show the grotesquely emaciated, naked bodies of dead inmates being dragged about, piled up and thrown into mass graves. Less graphic but no less powerful are shots of surreally large mounds of the personal effects taken away from arriving prisoners — mountains of eyeglasses, suitcases, children’s toys.

The British producer Sidney Bernstein was put in charge of assembling the footage into a film that would serve as proof of the camps’ existence and of the horrors that took place. But changes in the Allies’ postwar priorities resulted in the materials — including five mostly completed reels, an outline and a finished script — being put on the shelf and officially suppressed. A team at the Imperial War Museums in Britain began restoring the film in 2008, including the assembly of the never-completed sixth reel. In her review, Manohla Dargis of *The New York Times* calls the restoration “an extraordinary act of cinematic reclamation and historiography.”

Mr. Bernstein’s daughter Jane Wells, a filmmaker (she was a producer of “*The Devil Came on Horseback*,” about the genocide in Darfur, which featured the *New York Times* columnist Nicholas D. Kristof), is one of the distributors of the film and she recently spoke about her father’s long-lost project. These are edited excerpts from that conversation.

How did you first become aware of the film?

I was not aware of this film or of this entire episode in my father’s life until 1984, when he was 85 or 86 and I was in my 20s. [He [died](#) in 1993.] I called my mother and said, “Did you know anything about this?” and she had no idea. It was a complete and utter revelation. Granada Television made a documentary about it called “*A Painful Reminder*” and I actually ended up being responsible for selling that documentary into distribution in the United States in 1985. That was the first time I saw the footage, and that was the time he told me that the biggest regret of his life was that he had never been able to finish the film.

Why hadn’t he said anything about it all those years?

The reason he gave at the time was that he was under military command when he made it, that it was shut down while he was an officer and it was not to be spoken about. It wasn’t until the information and footage came to light through the releasing of public records that he was comfortable talking about it.

It’s a very hard film to watch. How do you think audiences will respond?

The first time I saw the complete restored film, I flew over from New York to London on the night flight and I went straight to the British Film Institute. And I was dreading it — “I wish I hadn’t come, I don’t want to watch it.” What struck me then was that as gruesome as many of the images are, there’s so much humanity in the film. It’s hard to say there’s something positive about it, but I think it isn’t just an atrocity film. I think you come away with a sense of incredible cameramen doing wonderful work. You

really get a sense of a whole team of Allies really working to get at something restorative.

Do you worry whether viewers might find the images of naked bodies being dragged and thrown about depersonalizing or exploitative?

Look, I hope that people don't react to it that way. I'm sure there are some who will. I think that it's important as historical evidence, that's why a lot of it was filmed that way. And there's still a lot of Holocaust denial, and I think they were anticipating that. I think we have to have those images as a reminder that these atrocities really, really, really did happen.

The restoration sticks with the original script, even though there are things in it, such as the equating of Protestant, Catholic and Jewish victims, that would be framed differently now.

I think that although Holocaust historians have taken issue with a lot of the assertions in it, it's almost like watching newsreel footage. It's of its moment. I think that if we watch any documentary from another era, we only see what was known or understood at the time. What I love about the narration is how much came from the crib sheets of the cameramen, almost verbatim in some cases, and I find their words to be very powerful and beautiful.

Have you thought about the timing of this release, with concerns about the rise internationally of right-wing and possibly totalitarian movements?

Absolutely. My first hope was it would get released for the 70th anniversary [in 2015], and I was disappointed that didn't happen, but it seems to be even more topical now. The rise in Holocaust denial and in fascistic movements across the world make it more relevant than ever.



Remembering the Holocaust in the Time of Trump, When Jews Fleeing Horror Were Denied Asylum in America

By MARLOW STERN, JAN. 28, 2017

A long-buried documentary, co-directed by Alfred Hitchcock and produced by Sidney Bernstein, provides unequivocal proof of the Holocaust's horrors. Bernstein's daughter, Jane Wells, opens up about the film—and why Donald Trump and Jared Kushner should see it.

This Friday marked Holocaust Remembrance Day, the 72nd anniversary of the Soviet liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau—a network of Nazi concentration and extermination camps that claimed the lives of an estimated 1.5 million people, most of them Jews. President Donald Trump chose to commemorate the occasion by releasing a public statement omitting any mention of Jews or the scourge of

anti-Semitism (breaking with past GOP and Democratic tradition), and signing an executive order barring refugees and citizens of seven Muslim-majority countries from entering the United States, including Syria, Iraq, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Yemen, and Sudan.

“It’s repulsive,” Mark Hetfield, president and CEO of the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, told CNN. “I mean, the timing is incredibly offensive. It was during the Holocaust that the world shamefully refused to give asylum to Jews and to others who were being murdered or about to be murdered in Nazi Germany.”

Indeed, during the Holocaust, as millions of Jews were being slaughtered by the Nazis, the United States enforced strict immigration quotas against Jews from Germany and Eastern Europe.

In June 1939, the ocean liner St. Louis sailed into the Port of Miami with 937 refugees onboard—nearly all Jewish and seeking asylum in the United States. They’d already been turned away from Cuba and Canada, and when they were denied entry into America, the ship was forced to return to Europe where many of its passengers were killed in the Holocaust. Even Anne Frank’s family made several desperate attempts to emigrate from Europe to America, only to be denied visas.

This closed-door policy was an extension of the Immigration Act of 1924, which sought to, in the words of dissenting Jewish-American politician Emmanuel Celler, create “a distinct American identity by favoring native-born Americans over Southern and Eastern Europeans in order to ‘maintain the racial preponderance of the basic strain on our people and thereby to stabilize the ethnic composition of the population.’” Both Congress and the public believed that these Southern and Eastern European immigrants, many of whom were Jewish, would take away jobs from Americans plagued by the Depression, and were racially inferior. Asians and Arabs were banned entirely.

There was also widespread paranoia concerning a “fifth column,” or the theory that, should Germany or Japan invade the U.S., embedded spies from those countries would help destroy America from the inside. This led to the cruel internment of Japanese-Americans, and the curbing of U.S. visas to those from Axis countries.

At a June 5, 1940, press conference, President Franklin D. Roosevelt stated: “Now, of course, the refugee has got to be checked because, unfortunately, among the refugees there are some spies, as has been found in other countries. And not all of them are voluntary spies—it is rather a horrible story but in some of the other countries that refugees out of Germany have gone to, especially Jewish refugees, they found a number of definitely proven spies.”

This fear of immigrant spies was mostly just that. With the exception of a few highly publicized cases, including that of 28-year-old German Herbert Karl Friedrich Bahr, there’s been no evidence of a mass influx of immigrant spies during this time. In fact, there exist striking parallels to the GOP and President

Trump's Muslim immigrant panic of today, given that, of the 784,000 refugees settled in America between September 11, 2001, and October 2015, only three have been arrested for plotting terrorist acts. "And it is worth noting two were not planning an attack in the United States and the plans of the third were barely credible," wrote Kathleen Newland of the Migration Policy Institute. The terrorists behind the San Bernardino shooting, Pulse nightclub massacre, and Boston Marathon bombing were all U.S. citizens.

Earlier this month, the film *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* was quietly released into select North American theaters. Produced by Sidney Bernstein, advisor to the British Ministry of Information, and co-directed by his pal Alfred Hitchcock, the documentary is comprised of footage shot by Allied American, British, Soviet, and Canadian combat cameramen as they liberated ten concentration camps, including Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen, Buchenwald, Dachau, and Majdanek. The images are unforgettable, from Nazi physician Fritz Klein being interviewed on top of a pile of bodies at Bergen-Belsen to long, uninterrupted pans capturing stacks of eyeglasses, wedding rings, toothbrushes, human teeth, and bags of hair collected by the Nazis. There are even collections of lampshades made of human skin.

"The panning shots were Hitchcock's idea," says Jane Wells, the daughter of Bernstein whose non-profit, 3 Generations, put out *Factual Survey*. Hitchcock advised Bernstein and his crew of soldier-documentarians by phone, and suggested the continuous takes because "he felt that people wouldn't believe what they were seeing otherwise."

Unfortunately, the film was never completed for a variety of reasons. It wasn't until 2008 that the Imperial War Museum, using the original filmmakers' rough cut, script, and shot list, finalized the editing process. The 75-minute finished film premiered 69 years after it was shot, at the 2014 Berlin International Film Festival.

"I tried to enumerate the different explanations," Wells tells me, before taking out a notepad and reading from it. "One was the fear it would alienate Germans when they were trying to rebuild Germany after the war. The second one is the British government didn't want to build support for a Zionist state. The third is they didn't want to create undue sympathy for Jews in particular, or to single Jews out for poor treatment. And the fourth one, which is the Imperial War Museum's theory, is that its time had come and it had missed its moment."

Its shelving was devastating to Bernstein, who refused to speak publicly about what Wells calls his "great secret" until he was interviewed for the 1985 documentary *A Painful Reminder*, which contained footage from his film. Parts of *Factual Survey* were also used in Billy Wilder's 22-minute concentration camp documentary *Death Mills* (*Die Todesmühlen*), released in January 1946.

"Unless the world learns the lesson these pictures teach, night will fall," *Factual Survey*'s narrator says. And according to Wells, "it's hard not to see the parallel to today," given the rise of white nationalism in

the U.S. and abroad corresponding with the rise of Trump, candidate Trump dog-whistling to white nationalists during his campaign by sharing anti-Semitic memes that originated on neo-Nazi online message boards, and the ascendance of Steve Bannon, former overlord of the “alt-right” publication Breitbart turned Trump right-hand man, who’s been accused of serial anti-Semitism.

“To me, it’s horrific. I’d love to invite the President and Jared Kushner to come see this film, and love to encourage any Jews who supported Trump to come see this film. I know Jews who voted for Trump, and if you ask them about the rise of white nationalism or the ‘alt-right’ in the wake of Trump, they’ll say, ‘Oh, well his son-in-law is a Jew! His daughter keeps a kosher kitchen, how bad can it be?’” say Wells. “The rise of the ‘alt-right’ is completely awful. The way Jews have been called out on Twitter is horrible and disgraceful. I’d like some of these ‘alt-right’ people to also come see this film and try and explain to me why they think this didn’t happen or didn’t matter.”

“If you see this footage, “ she adds, “there is no way on God’s earth that you can argue this didn’t happen.”

Wells had initially planned to release *German Concentration Camps Factual Survey* theatrically on Jan. 27, 2015, in honor of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. The film didn’t make it to cinemas until January 6th of this year, but she believes that, given the Syrian refugee crisis, it “will have more of an impact today than it would have even then.”

“It is a cry for reconnecting to our humanity, and I think that is a message that is very resonant today,” offers Wells. “When I look at the atrocities that are happening in Syria today, when I look at the situation with Native Americans in North Dakota, when I look at the rise of the fascistic far-right globally, it seems like we have forgotten some of our common humanity.”

**The
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Buried Truths About Nazi Mass Murder and the Allied Victory
By ROGER COHEN, MAY 21, 2015

A very important movie about the Holocaust made its way to New York City for the first time this week at the end of a tortuous journey that began 70 years ago when Allied forces and newsreel cameramen stumbled into Nazi concentration camps. Called “*German Concentration Camps Factual Survey*,” it is as unadorned as its title, a document shot in the moment to capture forever evidence of the unimaginable.

Made under the auspices of the British Ministry of Information, produced by Sidney Bernstein, the

founder of Granada Television, assembled with advice from Alfred Hitchcock, the movie was meant to ram home to Germans what had been done in their name in the land of Goethe and Hölderlin.

Instead, after a rough cut of five of its planned six reels was shown at the Ministry on Sept. 29, 1945, it was buried for decades in the archives of Britain's Imperial War Museum. Only recently was "Factual Survey" restored, digitized and completed by the museum's staff with the incorporation of the sixth reel.

The documentary, shown at the Museum of Jewish Heritage, is therefore important not only for what it is — an overwhelming testament to Nazi depravity — but also for its strange history in which lessons lurk about shifting political priorities and shamed evasiveness.

I'll start with the film itself, which places the viewer back in 1945, first in Bergen-Belsen. The camera proceeds from leafy tranquility in the approach to the camp, past listless prisoners inside, to the horror at the heart of the place. Emaciated bodies lie in piles. Unseeing eyes stare at infinity. Corpses are tossed into pits by well-fed German guards. Death is indiscriminate, young and old intertwined, amassed atop each other. The narration pauses. Silent screams seem to issue from each inert form to assert the humanity denied them.

Local burghers are brought in; they doff their hats in foul hypocrisy. Of course they knew. A young British soldier can hardly voice his outrage. The camera probes what Hollywood has since rendered in a thousand forms. In their rawness, the images carry a weight no studio perfection can attain.

This is how it was, a "Factual Survey." Facts matter. As Bernstein intuited, the deniers were sure to come along. They multiply today, one reason the documentary is essential viewing.

The movie is also problematic. It moves from concentration camps in Germany — including Dachau and Buchenwald — to briefer glimpses of the extermination camps in Poland — Auschwitz and Majdanek — without making the connection between them: that by the end of the war large numbers of Jewish survivors of the Nazi annihilation facilities in the east had been driven in death marches to places like Buchenwald. Many of the skeletal figures we see are no doubt these.

Yet there is no mention of the Holocaust, scarcely an allusion to the Jews. Bernstein wanted a movie whose testimony to human cruelty, and call for vigilance against it, was universal; an argument can be made that by making the suffering nonspecific, this message was reinforced. It is also true, however, that the mass murder of European Jewry was an embarrassment to the Allies. In the joint "Declaration Concerning Atrocities" of October 1943, issued by Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, there was no mention of the Jews, although by then millions had been gassed or shot. Even in 1945, the fate of the Jews was an awkward matter in London.

Besides, other priorities emerged. The Cold War loomed. West Germany was needed to fight that. It had to be rebuilt. There was no point beating the Germans over the head with their guilt. Or so the thinking went. Britain also faced in 1945 the ticklish question of Palestine, where Jews were rising up to fight British rule and demand a homeland. And so a powerful movie, with its own intriguing evasions, met yet further evasions, and slipped from sight into the archives.

The film's suppression was the wrong call. Living in Germany after reunification, I came to see the generational battle to reveal what the Nazis did. "Factual Survey" might have accelerated that process. Jane Wells, the daughter of the producer, said that her father told her not completing the movie was the greatest regret of his life.

The Imperial War Museum, over-cautious about the movie's distribution, has produced a 12-minute "orientation" film to follow it. In this, David Cesarani, a professor of history at Royal Holloway College, says: "Many British officials, including in the Ministry of Information, feared that if you pointed to Jewish suffering, if you spoke exclusively about the fate of Jews, about the horrors being inflicted upon the Jews, you would be in some way endorsing the Nazi position that the Jews were a people apart, a race apart."

This looks like agonized intellectual contortion. It's unpersuasive. Cut the "orientation," distribute the movie far and wide, and let it tell every layer of its devastating, ultimately redemptive, story.



MSNBC Interview with Jane Wells Jan. 16, 2015

Producer Brett Ratner and producer Jane Wells join Morning Joe to discuss the new documentary "Night Will Fall," which tells the story of the making of a documentary about the liberation of Nazi death camps.

<http://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/night-will-fall--documentary-on-a-documentary-385258051604>

