

# The Round Table

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## Welcome to the November meeting of the Dr. Harold C. Deutsch World War II History Round Table.

Tonight's speaker, Michael Bazyler, law professor and co-author of *Forgotten Trials of the Holocaust*, is presenting the annual Dr. Harold C. Deutsch Lecture. This year, 2015, marks the seventieth anniversary of the International Military Tribunal (IMT) at Nuremberg. In honor of this remembrance, he will discuss the overlooked trials to prosecute the perpetrators of the genocide during World War II.

For those of you who are unfamiliar with this annual event, we offer a word of explanation. It was Dr. Deutsch's custom to speak on a topic of his choosing at the November meeting. These lectures were always well attended due to his renowned scholarly reputation. His knowledge on virtually any World War II topic was second to none. Many of his former students from the University of Minnesota came to this lecture. With his death, it was decided to remember him through not only this Round Table but also by a lecture series named after him.

In May 1945, the guns fell silent over the second destruction of Europe in a generation. Among the wrecked cities, infrastructure, and monuments were the human victims of the Third Reich. Spread out across Europe, these victims were not just the "collateral damage" of the conflict; too often they were the focus of the fanatic Nazi racial ideology, particularly the six million Jews. The Allied powers faced the daunting task of not only re-building Europe's cities and caring for the people, but also of finding some justice for the millions killed.

The best-known effort to justice is the International Military Tribunal (IMT) held at Nuremberg, Germany, from November 1945 to October 1946. The defendants were the the Third Reich's remaining major leaders, including General Alfred Jodl, Field Marshal Wilhelm Keitel, SS-General Ernst Kaltenbrunner, and Reichsmarschall Hermann Göring. Judges from Great Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union presided over their trials. Even though evidence of the Nazi's racial extermination

against the Jews and others was presented, the focus of the IMT was not the Holocaust, which was not even a word used then, but "crimes against peace." This was defined in the Nuremberg charter as "the planning, preparation, initiation, or waging of wars of aggression, or a war in violation of international treaties, agreements or assurances, or participation in a common plan or conspiracy for the accomplishment of any of the foregoing." In addition, at the time the IMT was being put together, the Allies were only beginning to realize the enormity of the Nazi crimes. The Allied invasion forces had found the individual camps and survivors but there had not been, for lack of a better word, a census taken of all the camps and numbers of victims. Finally, while Göring and Kaltenbrunner gave the orders to implement the Final Solution; those lower in the hierarchy had to carry them out, men like SS-Lieutenant Colonel Adolf Eichmann, SS-General Henrich Müller and others. These underlings had to be brought to some kind of justice.

The IMT provided a framework for future trials and brought a reckoning to the remaining leaders of the Third Reich. Over the next seventy years there were trials for the lesser known perpetrators of the Holocaust in many different countries and under widely varying legal systems. The most famous trial was that of SS-Lieutenant Colonel Adolf Eichmann in Israel in 1961-1962. There would be trials for the camp commandants like Amon Göth (made famous in the movie *Schindler's List*) in Poland, and camp personnel at Dachau by the United States Forces Europe, Germans trying German personnel from Auschwitz, collaborators like Pierre Laval in France, female Nazi camp personnel of *Ravensbruck* under British jurisdiction, and Jewish *kapos* (Concentration Camp Jews who worked for the Nazis) in the newly formed state of Israel. Each country had to wrestle not only with how to mete out a paltry justice for the victims but its with own conscience.

There are, like their rescuers – World War II veterans, fewer and fewer Holocaust survivors to serve as a direct link to the "industrial genocide" of the Nazi regime. This transitional time, and the rise of social media, has fed and sped the development of a cancerous growth on the pages of history – the Holocaust deniers. These ahistorical sycophants (like most conspiracy theorists) come in two varieties: the

**If you are a veteran, or know a veteran, of one of these campaigns** – contact Don Patton at cell 612-867-5144 or [coldpatton@yahoo.com](mailto:coldpatton@yahoo.com)

## The Round Tablette

hardcore who claim “there were no gas chambers at Auschwitz” or that “six million Jews did not die;” and the soft-core who claim, “there was no *plan* to annihilate the Jews” or “Jewish deaths were due to the nature of war itself.” These charlatans are impaled on the reality that *no defendant in any of the trials denied* the underlying facts of the Holocaust. While many defendants claimed to be only “following orders” or offered any number of other excuses, they *did not deny* the Holocaust’s existence even as they faced the death penalty. Perhaps this is what future generations can learn from both the survivors and the perpetrators alike: their allegiance to historical truth.

### Further Readings:

Michael J. Bazylar & Frank M. Tuerkeimer *Forgotten Trials of the Holocaust* (New York: New York University Press, 2014).

Timothy Snyder, *The Holocaust as History and Warning* (New York: Tim Duggan Books/Crown Publishing, 2015).

Nikolaus Wachsmann, *KL: A History of the Nazi Concentration Camps* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2015).

Sarah Helm, *Ravensbruck: Life and Death in Hitler’s Concentration Camp for Women* (New York: Nan Talese/Doubleday, 2014).

Bradley F. Smith, *The Road to Nuremberg* (New York: Basic Books, 1981).

### Announcements:

Twin Cities Civil War Round Table -

Nov. 17, 2015 – *Fort Negley* - [www.tccwrt.com](http://www.tccwrt.com) - [info@tccwrt.com](mailto:info@tccwrt.com)

St Croix Valley Civil War Round Table - Nov. 23, 2015 – *End of the War* - 715-386-1268 – [rossandhaines@comcast.net](mailto:rossandhaines@comcast.net)

Rochester WWII History Round Table – 507-280-9970; [www.wv2roundtable-rochester.org](http://www.wv2roundtable-rochester.org)  
Minnesota Military Museum, Camp Ripley, 15000 Hwy 115, Little Falls, MN 56345, 320-616-6050, <http://www.mnmilitarymuseum.org/>

Honor Flight - Jerry Kyser - [crazyjerry45@hotmail.com](mailto:crazyjerry45@hotmail.com) - 651-338-2717

CAF - Commemorative Air Force - [www.cafmn.org](http://www.cafmn.org) 651-455-6942

Minnesota Air Guard Museum - [www.mnangmuseum.org](http://www.mnangmuseum.org) 612-713-2523

Friends of Ft. Snelling, [www.fortsnelling.org](http://www.fortsnelling.org)

Fagen Fighters WWII Museum, Granite Falls, MN, 320-564-6644, <http://www.fagenfighterswwiimuseum.org>

World Without Genocide, 651-695-7621, <http://www.worldwithoutgenocide.org/>

Airshow - Eden Prairie - July 2016  
[www.wotn.org](http://www.wotn.org) 952-746-6100

Fort Snelling Civil War Weekend, Aug. 2016

Military History Book Club, Har Mar Barnes & Noble: 2 Dec. Moore, *Pacific Payback* - [sdaubenspeck52@gmail.com](mailto:sdaubenspeck52@gmail.com)

**We need volunteers to drive our veterans to and from meetings. Please contact Don Patton at cell 612-867-5144 or [coldpatton@yahoo.com](mailto:coldpatton@yahoo.com)**

See our programs on YouTube at <http://youtube.com/ww2hrt>

## 12 November 2015 — 2

### Round Table Schedule 2015-2016

#### 2015

10 Dec. Carrier Operations in Pacific

#### 2016

14 Jan. German-Russians Operations

11 Feb. Liberation of Concentration Camps

10 Mar. Mobilization for War

24 Mar. Birth of New Age of War

14 Apr. Operation Dragoon/Anvil

12 May Start of Cold War



Adolf Eichmann on trial in Jerusalem in 1962.



Amon Göth hears his death sentence, Krakow, Poland, 1946.



Jenny-Wanda Barkman, back right, at Stutthof KZ war crimes trial, 1946, Gdansk, Poland. Wikipedia.



John Demjanjuk on trial in Israel (left) in 1988-1993, and in Germany in 2009 - convicted, died during his appeal.