

OPERATION ANTHROPOID

THE CZECH PLOT TO KILL THE HOLOCAUST'S ARCHITECT- NAZI GENERAL REINHARD HEYDRICH WITH DEVASTATING CONSEQUENCES

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THE COMPLETE OBLITERATION OF THE SMALL TOWN OF LIDICE, CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND IT'S PEOPLE



OPERATION ANTHROPOID

A SECRET PLAN TO KILL NAZI GENERAL REINHARD HEYDRICH. IT WAS THE ONLY SUCCESSFUL ASSASSINATION OF A TOP NAZI OFFICER DURING WW2. THE NAZI CRY FOR VENGEANCE WAS HEARD ALL OVER THE WORLD AND WAS VERY COSTLY TO THE PEOPLE OF THE SMALL TOWN OF LIDICE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

all that's interesting

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Reinhard Heydrich. The Butcher of Prague

In 1941, Reinhard Heydrich was one of the most powerful and dangerous men in Nazi Germany. The Allies, the exiled Czech government, and much of Europe wanted him dead. But there was a reason his assassination, codenamed Operation Anthropoid, was the only attempt of its kind made during World War II.

In September 1941, Nazi leader Reinhard Heydrich replaced the man who had been in charge of governing Bohemia and Moravia, two Nazi-occupied provinces of Czechoslovakia.

His predecessor was one Konstantin von Neurath, a high-ranking Nazi who, in the two years of his tenure, had overseen the implementation of the Nuremberg Laws, the dismantling of the free press, and the abolition of political parties and trade unions. He had also sent some 1,200 student protestors to concentration camps and executed nine of them.

But Neurath, a man sentenced at the Nuremberg trials to 15 years in prison for war crimes, was too lenient for Adolf Hitler and the other Nazi leaders, which was why they were sending in Heydrich.

They hoped that Heydrich would crush the Czech resistance to German occupation and get Czech motor and arms production for the German war effort back on track. Heydrich had their full confidence — he had already been responsible for some of the greatest atrocities of World War II.

He had organized Kristallnacht, the 1938 pogrom that destroyed the lives and livelihoods of thousands of Jewish citizens in Nazi Germany. He founded the SD, the security organization designed to crush resistance to Nazi rule. Hitler called him "the man with the iron heart."



Reinhard Heydrich

The Czech people had different names for him. They called him "the Hangman" and "The Butcher of Prague" — epithets that still seem mild in comparison to what he did.

Within a week of taking power in Bohemia and Moravia, Heydrich declared martial law and ordered nearly 150 Czech resistance fighters executed.

In five months, somewhere between 4,000 and 5,000 citizens had been arrested; ten percent of them were executed before Heydrich had been in power for six months.

Most of those not sent to the firing squad were put on trains to concentration camps, where conditions were so poor that only four percent of prisoners would live to see the Allies declare victory.



Many Czech prisoners were sent to the Mauthausen-Gusen death camp in Austria. Prisoners in the quarry (Stairs of Death) were forced to carry giant granite boulders in pointless forced labor. Any effort at rebellion was met with harsh reprisals, and it wasn't long before the Czech resistance had come to a grinding halt. But worse was still to come.

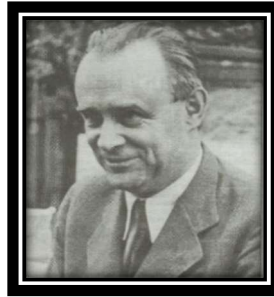
Heydrich's ultimate goal was not to simply co-opt the Czech citizenry for use in German factories; the Nazi leaders had no interest in integrating the Czech people into the German Reich.

When the war was over, the vast majority of the populace was to be exiled to Russia or murdered to clear the land for the growing German population.

When Heydrich was charged with the implementation of Hitler's Final Solution, the murder of the entire Jewish population, it was clear to both the Allies and the exiled Czechoslovak government in Britain that Heydrich must be stopped at all costs.

THE INTRODUCTION OF OPERATION ANTHROPOID

THE ASSASSINATION OF REINHARD HEYDRICH



František Moravec

František Moravec was the officer of Czechoslovak Military Intelligence who proposed Operation Anthropoid.

In October 1941, František Moravec, the exiled head of Czech intelligence, went to British Special Operations Executive, Winston Churchill's famous "Ministry of Ungentlemanly Warfare," to propose an assassination.

They agreed, and the project was given the codename Operation Anthropoid. The exiled Czech government wanted the assassins to be Czech or Slovak; they wanted to show their people that they hadn't given up the fight, though they knew reprisals would be terrible.

Twenty-four Czech soldiers — part of a force of 2,000 exiled in Britain — were chosen for the mission and sent to train in Scotland.

The two most successful soldiers were selected and *the mission's date was set for October 28 — but from that point on, almost nothing went right.*

One of the men selected for the mission was injured in training, and a replacement had to be named, which entailed new training and further delays.



Jozef Gabčík Jan Kubiš

Finally, Jozef Gabčík and Jan Kubiš boarded a plane bound for Pilsen, an area west of Prague — but a navigation error sent them to Nehvizdy.

Czech President Edvard Beneš allegedly encouraged Operation Anthropoid, even as locals on the ground warned him about the danger to his people.

They then made their way overland to Prague, where they met up with their contacts and explained the plan. Their connections were horrified and did their best to explain the situation on the ground: any attempt on the life of a Nazi leader would have unthinkable consequences.



Czech President Edvard Beneš

But Edvard Beneš, the exiled Czech president, was desperate to relight the dying fire of Czech resistance and felt only a dramatic blow would do. He urged his men to continue with the plan despite the danger of reprisals.

It was lucky for Gabčík and Kubiš that Heydrich, always aware of his importance and the figure he cut on the streets of Prague, rode to work in an open-topped car.

On May 27, at 10:30 a.m., he began his commute, and Operation Anthropoid went into effect. Aided by a lookout, the assassins waited for him just behind a sharp curve in the road, where they anticipated that his car would have to slow.

There, they were right — but it was the last accurate prediction they would make that day. As the car approached, Gabčík stepped into the road and opened fire. But nothing happened — his gun had jammed.



A Sten submachine gun like the one that jammed on Gabčík. These weapons were notorious among Czech soldiers for misfiring.

NOTE: (Information provided by a present-day tourist) While touring the church where the shootout took place, the guide informed us that Józef's gun was not jammed, but instead, he chose not to shoot because other people were driving behind Heydrich's car and would have subsequently been

wounded. Instead of shooting, he threw a bomb under the car. Heydrich died a few days later from an infection after a piece of metal punctured his lung.

The assassins thought Heydrich, having witnessed the attempt on his life, would hit the gas and make a run for it. But he instead pulled out his gun and ordered his driver to slam on the breaks.

Kubiš, seeing that his companion was in mortal danger, threw a grenade into the back of the car and was himself caught in the explosion. Neither managed to see what happened, but the next thing they knew, Heydrich was outside of the car with a pistol leveled at Kubiš.

The firefight that ensued was chaotic. Kubiš fled on a bicycle with Heydrich in pursuit. The driver chased after Gabčík, who managed to duck into a butcher shop, wound the driver with a well-placed shot, and escape on a tram. Kubiš got away when Heydrich, flagging quickly from a thigh wound, fell behind.

They were both certain they had lost their chance to kill Heydrich. Particularly devastating was the knowledge that the consequences of a failed assassination attempt would be as terrible for the Czech people as a successful one — but now they would have to contend with the wrath of the Butcher of Prague himself.

But luck was on the Allies' side in the following weeks. Gabčík and Kubiš knew they hadn't landed a shot — but what they didn't realize was that the explosion had.

The force of the blast had driven shrapnel into Heydrich with devastating force. By the time the Nazi leader reached the hospital, he had a collapsed lung, a fractured rib, a torn diaphragm, and a ruptured spleen.

Despite his wounds, doctors initially thought the stout Heydrich might recover — until he collapsed several days later over lunch and went into a coma. He never woke, and the autopsy blamed sepsis — a malfunction in the body's response to infection.



Heydrich's car after the attack. 1942



This structure stands today in Prague at the exact spot of the attack on Heydrich.

They found Kubiš and his accomplices in the loft of a church and killed them in a firefight. Gabčík and his team hid in a crypt, which the Germans flooded with tear gas and water. **The assassin and his accomplices committed suicide.**



Published report of the attack and announcement of a 10 million Crown reward dated May 28, 1942



Report just before Heydrich's death



The assassins were cornered at the Church of Saints Cyril and Methodius in Prague. This wall still shows the bullet holes.

The church's leaders were tortured and executed by firing squad, and the assassins' heads were mounted on spikes.

The outraged world watched, and the Allies dissolved the Munich Agreement, the contract that had given the Germans Czechoslovakia — when the war was over, if the Allies won, the Czechs would be their masters once again.



THE OLD CRYPT CRYPT TODAY WITH MONUMENTS OF THOSE KILLED

The crypt of the church where the assassins took their lives is today a memorial. Many come to leave flowers.

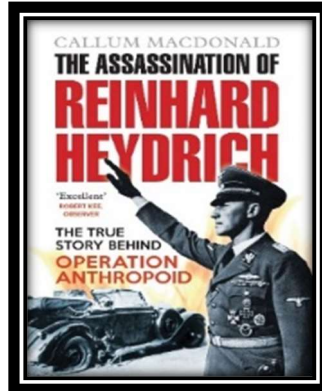
Though Heydrich's replacements continued his work, some believe that if Heydrich had lived, the losses suffered would have been much greater than they were.

But the Allies never attempted an assassination like Operation Anthropoid again during the war — the cost was simply too great.

WATCH THE MOVIE TRAILER

COPY AND PASTE THE BELOW LINK INTO YOUR BROWSER

<https://www.amazon.com/Anthropoid-Cillian-Murphy/dp/B01JR2BT5G>



THE HORRIFYING CONSEQUENCES OF OPERATION ANTHROPOID



Adolph Hitler did not take the news of Operation Anthropoid well.

Hitler was infuriated by Heydrich's death and immediately demanded the death of 30,000 Czechs.

Some believe that Hitler was grooming Heydrich to succeed him and the Fuehrer said that "he has a heart of iron". Energetic and efficient, *Heydrich brought a reign of terror to Czechoslovakia and his death enraged Hitler.*



Heydrich & his successor, Karl Frank

The man appointed to take over from Heydrich, Karl Frank, *(After the war, Frank was tried, convicted, and executed by hanging for his role in organizing the massacres of the people of the Czech villages of Lidice and Ležáky.)* pointed out that the loss of 30,000 would have a severe impact on the Czech labor force. Hitler took this on board and changed the figure to the arrest of 10,000.

On the night of May 27, Heinrich Himmler, head of the SS, ordered Frank to shoot 100 "intellectuals" that night. Over the next few days, 3,188 Czechs were arrested of whom 1,357 were executed, while 657 died in police custody. However, none of this satisfied Hitler, though he had recognized the fact that 30,000 executions would hurt the labor force in Czechoslovakia.

Instead, reprisals focused on the town of Lidice and another small Czech village, Ležáky.

Early intelligence suspected the villagers of both towns of sheltering resistance members.

However, in the end, there was no evidence that the townspeople had aided Heydrich's assassins.

THE FATE OF LIDICE



Lidice before destruction

On June 8, a state funeral was held for Heydrich. On the next day, Frank received an order from Hitler that stated that a small community near an industrial center was to be selected and wiped out as punishment. Therefore, there would be no impact on the Czech labor force, but Hitler would have gained his desire for revenge.

But why was Lidice chosen? One of the men who assassinated Heydrich had links to Lidice (the assassins were all killed). Also, the Gestapo had intercepted what they deemed to be a "suspicious" note that contained the name Lidice. It was another Lidice in Czechoslovakia – but this only came to light afterward, once the arrangements had been made to wipe out Frank's chosen target – Lidice near Prague.

Lidice was about 10 miles from Prague. The village was off any main road so the sighting of any German troops in masse was rare. With 100,000 German troops in Czechoslovakia, German troops had been seen in Lidice but only in small numbers. On June 4, the day of Heydrich's death, German troops entered Lidice, the Gestapo questioned people, and houses were ransacked. Then they suddenly left leaving the villagers confused as to why they had done this.

On June 9, they returned in the evening. Most of the villagers had gone to bed. They were woken and made to gather in the village square. Women and children were put on one side and men and boys over 15 were put on the other side of the square. The men and boys were put in farm buildings while the women and children were locked in the local school.

After the villagers had been locked away, military police ransacked the homes once again and took anything of value. All farming tools were taken and cattle were herded up. Anything of the remotest value was taken.



At 05:00 the next day, the 198 women and 98 children were put onto lorries and driven away. They were transferred to Ravensbruck concentration camp.

Those children who were considered suitable for 'Germanisation' were picked out and given to SS families. Those who were not considered suitable were scheduled to be sent to the camps. The men were brought out of the farmhouses and lined up in front of mattresses laid against a wall to prevent bullets from ricocheting. – *see the photograph above.* The execution squad brought them out in batches of ten. 173 were shot. Those men who lived in Lidice but who were on shift work at the local factories when the arrests were made, were rounded up later – a further 19 were shot. *Those men who were in Lidice at the time visiting relatives and friends, but who were not from Lidice, were also shot.*

Officials offered mercy to local priest Josef Stembarka in exchange for calming his congregation, but he refused. "I have lived with my flock," he said, "and now I will die with it."



The village was then destroyed –wiped off of the map. Houses were destroyed, orchards dug up and the graveyard desecrated. Even pet dogs were shot.

When this was done, pioneer troops were sent in to plow the land flat. Seemingly nothing was left of the village, not even the outline. The whole episode was filmed by the SS.

Of the women, only 143 are known to have somehow survived Ravensbruck, the Nazi concentration camp for women. Of the 98 children (who, owing to "transport difficulties", were separated from their mothers on June 12), 17 are known to have survived by being selected for 'Germanisation'. They returned to Czechoslovakia after the war. *Those children not considered suitable were gassed at Chemnitz on the orders of Adolf Eichmann.*



A similar fate awaited the obscure village of Ležáky: there most of its citizens, both men and women were murdered, and the little town razed to its foundations. Such reprisal actions broke many existing rules of war, including those to which Germany was a signatory.



Ravensbrück Women's concentration camp, where many Czech women prisoners were sent.

Nazi propagandists filmed the operation, intending to document the results of resistance to German rule. Propaganda minister Josef Goebbels believed that the Lidice massacre "will not fail in its cooling effect on the remnants of the underground movement in the Protectorate." He was wrong. The mass killing had a tremendous effect on Allied countries, not least because of the way it was publicized. The British War Office proclaimed that "each time it is remembered, mankind becomes a little more determined that the thing which tried to kill Lidice shall itself be killed, shall be driven from the earth so that no Lidice will ever die again."

THE DESTRUCTION OF LIDICE

TO VIEW – COPY AND PASTE THE BELOW LINK INTO YOUR BROWSER,

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZqgepSjbb2M>

7minutes

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7E_Jd2c61E8

54 minutes



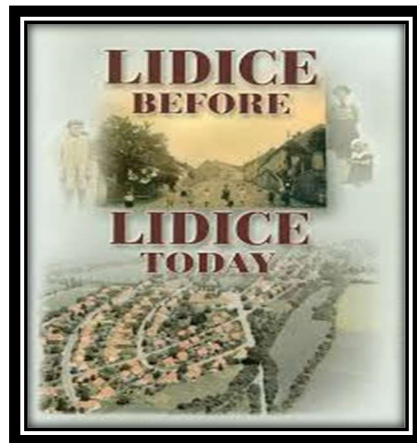
A Czech postage stamp was issued in 1957, commemorating the fifteenth anniversary of the destruction of Lidice.

In 1947, Lidice was reborn after an outpouring of global support. Builders laid the foundation stone of the new village 300 meters from its original location, which now holds a memorial to the murdered townspeople.

A garden filled with more than 24,000 donated rose bushes connects new and old. The village of Ležáky has never been rebuilt and still lies in ruins.



The rose garden built between the new and old Lidice



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. In 1947, eight-year-old Václav Zelenka returned to the Czech village of Lidice as the last of the town's lost children. Five years earlier, he and the rest of Lidice's 503 residents had been viciously attacked by the Nazis, but the young Zelenka had few recollections of the event. He had spent the remainder of World War II living with an adoptive family in Germany, never realizing that he was stolen from his community in Czechoslovakia.

In hindsight, Zelenka was lucky: He was one of only 17 child survivors of the Nazis' June 10, 1942, massacre, an arbitrary act of violence that ultimately claimed the lives of 340 Lidice residents. Despite his initial reluctance to leave Germany, Zelenka readjusted to his former life—and later became the mayor of the rebuilt town of Lidice.

2. Women who refused to leave their husbands were also shot, and men who happened to be away from the village were later found and killed.

3. Determined to obliterate Lidice, the Nazis destroyed every building in sight and even dug up the town's cemetery. They dumped massacre victims into a mass grave dug by prisoners from Terezin, a nearby concentration camp, and gleefully filmed the aftermath of the annihilation. This footage would soon become Nazi propaganda designed to quell further resistance.



The lost children of Lidice

4. Today, Lidice—a small town of about 540 residents, rebuilt alongside a memorial and museum commemorating the tragedy—stands in defiance of the Nazis’ attempted extermination: 82 larger-than-life bronze statues, each representing a lost child of Lidice, greet visitors. It took two decades to build this memorial.

5. Martina Lehmannová, director of the Lidice Memorial, says that the Nazis embraced Lidice as a symbol of power. In comparison to many of their crimes, which were largely hidden from the rest of the world, the Nazis publicized the town’s destruction through radio broadcasts and propaganda footage. “They were proud of it,”

6. Although the Nazis failed to erase Lidice from history, the attack fulfilled at least one intended purpose: “Within Czechoslovakia, [the massacre] did lead to the breaking of the resistance.” The Nazis’ harsh reprisal may have succeeded in deterring underground activity, but the Czech people did not forget the terrors inflicted on Lidice.



7. Just outside of the new village, a wooden cross marked the mass grave of Lidice’s murdered residents. Here, at least, survivors found a hauntingly tangible explanation for their return.



Where the Original village stood

8. The world first learned about Lidice via a brutally detached Nazi radio announcement broadcast the day after the attack: “All male inhabitants have been shot.

The women have been transferred to a concentration camp. The children have been taken to educational centers. All houses of Lidice have been leveled to the ground, and the name of this community has been obliterated."

9. *When news of the Lidice massacre broke, the international community responded with outrage and a promise to keep the town's memory alive.*

10. A small neighborhood in [*Joliet, Illinois*](#), adopted Lidice's name, and President Franklin D. Roosevelt released a statement praising the gesture: "The name of Lidice was to be erased from time," he said. "Instead of being killed as the Nazis would have it, Lidice has been given new life." In the English district of Stoke-on-Trent, Member of Parliament Barnett Stross led a "Lidice Shall Live" campaign and raised money for rebuilding efforts. Artists further immortalized the tragedy in works including poet Edna St. Vincent Millay's [*The Massacre of Lidice*](#)



The Lidice Memorial is located at the site where the old village of Lidice was located until 1942 when the village was destroyed by the German SS as retaliation for the killing of the German Deputy Reich-Protector Reinhard Heydrich.



Memories of the old Lidice



The foundation of the church of "the Old Village" at the Lidice Memorial



One of the large reliefs on the large memorial wall at the Lidice Memorial - shows the women and children being rounded up at Lidice in 1942.



The large memorial wall at the Lidice Memorial



Some of the few remains of "the old village" at the Lidice Memorial are the foundation for one of the houses that was destroyed by the Germans.



The statue of a crying lady with a child - overlooking the area that was once the village of Lidice - is a part of the Lidice Memorial



The Lidice Pear Tree

A "Messenger of Hope" in the form of a sapling pear tree. The Pear Tree of Lidice was overlooked by the Nazis as they murdered and looted. It stood a silent witness to the horrors befalling the village and its inhabitants. The "Messenger", which grows outside Victoria Hall today, is emblematic of the victory of Hope over despair.



"Remembering" The 75th Anniversary in 2017

Four years ago, on the 75th anniversary of the tragedy, mourners gathered everywhere from the Czech village itself to an Illinois neighborhood that has borne Lidice's name since July 1942.

THE INEVITABLE DISCUSSION – THE HOLOCAUST

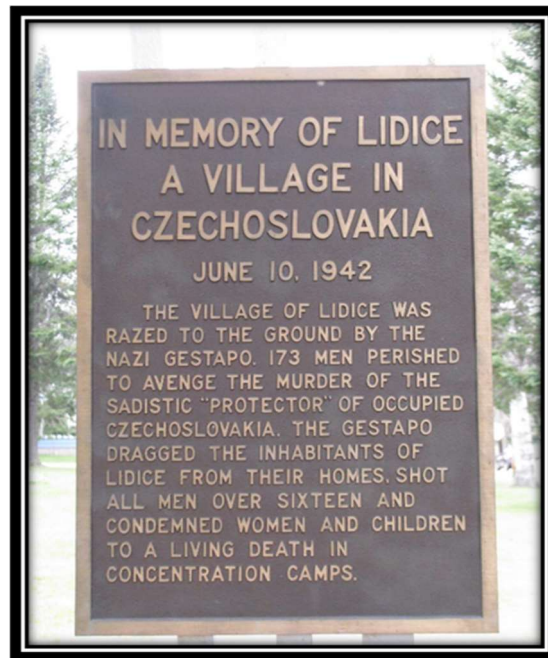
When putting this together I noticed many comments that ask this question on various Websites. The destruction of Lidice was noticed and condemned by allies and neutral countries around the world.....but, they asked why wasn't more attention given to helping save lives and attempting to stop the Holocaust.

Six million Jews (including 263,000 Czech Jews), were deliberately murdered. On December 17, 1942, the U.S., British, and other Allied governments issued a statement condemning the Nazis' annihilation of European Jews, but they were hesitant to overemphasize the Jews' plight. The people of Lidice were seen as universal victims—peaceful civilians who had the misfortune to witness the Nazis' disregard for human life firsthand. Europe's Jewish population represented a far more politically charged demographic. Amidst rising anti-Semitic sentiment and German propaganda accusing the Allies of bowing to "Jewish interests," Lidice emerged as a neutral, indisputably despicable example of Nazi immorality.

Discussion of the Holocaust, on the other hand, raised an entirely separate debate.

One writer feels that there were several reasons for the Allies' relative restraint toward the Holocaust: Nazi propaganda insinuated that the Allies were only fighting the war to protect Jewish interests, and the Allies wanted to refute this claim.

In the U.S., anti-Semitic sentiment was on the rise, and many people believed that Roosevelt was overly beholden to the Jews. The Allies also believed that widespread knowledge of the Final Solution would lead to demands for increased immigration quotas, which would aid Jewish refugees but infuriate isolationists and foster further instability.



PLEASE UNDERSTAND THAT EVEN THOUGH THIS INFORMATION
HAS BEEN TAKEN FROM WHAT APPEARS TO BE AUTHENTIC WEBSITES
I CANNOT GUARANTEE THAT ALL THE DATA IN THIS ARTICLE IS ACCURATE AND CORRECT.