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BILL O'REILLY

& MARTIN DUGARD



Killing the **SS**

The Hunt for the Worst War Criminals in History

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and

Martin Dugard

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LSC/H

*This book is dedicated to my son, Spencer,
who likes history as much as his dad.*

—BILL O'REILLY

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DECEMBER 7, 1972
BERLIN, GERMANY
MORNING

It has been twenty-eight years since aerial bombing by the British and Americans, as well as artillery fire from the Soviet army, destroyed the main hall of the Lehr railway station in Berlin and rendered its tracks useless. Construction workers now pick through the rubble, selecting bricks and other items that can be utilized in the ongoing rebuilding of Berlin. It was here, just north of the river Spree, where Adolf Hitler's chief aid, Martin Bormann, was last seen alive in 1945. Time and again, investigators searched for his remains. No stone or track was left unturned. Yet the Bormann mystery remains unsolved.

Berlin has changed dramatically since the Reichsleiter disappeared. A stone wall twelve feet high now divides the city into east and west—Communist and capitalist. More than three hundred East German sentry towers line the wall. Those trying to escape from the austerity of East Berlin to the sex, drugs, and rock-and-roll lifestyle of West Berlin are shot on sight. This division is a visible scar reminding the Germans that they are a conquered people. It

seems unlikely the Berlin Wall will ever come down, but the emotional resolution of solving the Bormann mystery might mitigate some of the frustration the people of Berlin feel about this division of their city.*

Yet on December 13, 1971, the West German government declared the hunt for Martin Bormann over. Chancellor Willy Brandt was tired of reliving the Nazi past. Jewish groups, led by Simon Wiesenthal, were outraged, declaring that the search would not end until Bormann was found, dead or alive. At the same time, neo-Nazi radicals inside Germany used the announcement to push propaganda that Bormann was indeed alive, preparing to launch a Fourth Reich.

The chaos surrounding the announcement shook the West German government in Bonn, causing the hunt for Bormann to be reopened.

Which is why, despite the mundane nature of sifting through rocks and dirt, the Berlin workmen press their shovels into the earth with a glimmer of hope. This rail yard is famous for being the site of Bormann's disappearance. In July 1965, West German officials had authorized yet another hunt for his remains on this very spot. Once again, nothing was found, despite two days of digging. So the odds of finding Bormann's body are slight. The ground is hard, thanks to the autumn frost. Progress is slow.

Suddenly, one worker is shocked to unearth a human skull. Then another. All work stops as the crew wipes away the soil from their discoveries. The skulls are exhumed first, followed by the remainder of the skeletons. Curiously, though the Berlin dirt is known for being a unique pale yellow color, the corpses are encased in clay of a deep red hue. Both skulls also contain glass shards embedded in the jaw, a possible sign of the use of cyanide capsules.

* There is no accurate count of how many were shot and killed trying to cross the wall into West Berlin, but the figure is thought to be somewhere between 180 and 200. On the other hand, the number of individuals shot trying to escape into East Berlin is well known: zero.

Then, another extraordinary find: a military pass is discovered near the taller of the two skeletons, identifying it as the remains of Dr. Ludwig Stumpfegger, Hitler's personal physician—the same man who had fled the bunker with Martin Bormann that May night in 1945. Somehow this document remains intact and legible after more than a quarter century in the dirt—but there is little trace of the clothing or shoes the men must have worn. Those garments have disappeared.

Also suspicious is that the skeletons are discovered just yards from the site of the very thorough 1965 excavation. Nevertheless, at a press conference in Frankfurt two weeks after the find, West German authorities are quick to proclaim that the smaller of the two skeletons does indeed belong to Martin Bormann. In the future, police throughout Germany are informed, "If anyone is arrested on suspicion that he is Bormann we will be dealing with an innocent man."

But there is doubt. Simon Wiesenthal attends the official press conference and states that the skull does not look like that of Bormann. American reporter Paul Manning, who has been tracking the Bormann case for years, writes that the bodies are not that of the dead Nazi and Hitler's doctor but of two hapless inmates from the Sachsenhausen concentration camp. Manning opines that the men were killed because the shapes of their skulls were a perfect match for Bormann and Stumpfegger. He further claims that the bodies were disguised in Nazi uniforms, then buried in secret by a special SS team on April 30, 1945, anticipating that the remains would be located at some future date.*

* Manning utilized captured Third Reich documents, files from the OSS and FBI, British intelligence, and the United States Treasury Department while tracking Bormann and looted Nazi wealth, which Manning referred to as "the Nazi flight-capital program." Manning was very specific about the details of Bormann's location, yet provided scant evidence to back up his theories. Given his four decades in the business and wartime work with CBS News, Manning was taken seriously as a journalist, so this breach of protocol is unusual. However, publications such as the *New York Times* gave enough credence to his work that on March 3, 1973, shortly after the finding of the alleged Bormann skull in Berlin, the paper ran a Manning op-ed piece about Bormann's ongoing role in the revival of postwar Germany.

Another question lingers. In the mid-1960s, a retired German mailman named Albert Krumnow emerged from anonymity to make the startling claim that upon the fall of Berlin, he was forced by the Soviets to bury the corpses of two high-ranking Germans. This confession is what led to the fruitless July 1965 excavation. The veracity of Krumnow's story has never been disproved. But his reasons for emerging to tell it almost twenty years later are unclear, leading some to believe that it is fiction as part of an ongoing Nazi conspiracy.



On April 4, 1973, the Frankfurt State Prosecution Office releases their final report on Martin Bormann.

“Although nature has placed limits on human powers of recognition, it is proved with certainty that the two skeletons found on the Ulap fairgrounds in Berlin on December 7 and 8, 1972, are identical with the accused Martin Bormann and Dr. Ludwig Stumpfegger.

“The search for Martin Bormann is officially terminated.”

But instead of handing the bones over to Bormann's remaining relatives, including his namesake son who serves as a Jesuit priest, the skeleton of Martin Bormann is locked in a cabinet, and there it will remain for more than a quarter century.

Unguarded.



Even as the skeleton and skull molder over the years, there is one detail that West German officials cannot explain: the dental work. In May 1945 Dr. Hugo Blaschke, Adolf Hitler's personal dentist, dictated the contents of Bormann's dental history by memory to Allied interrogators who were trying to locate Bormann.

Blaschke's recollections prove to be exact. The skull thought to be Bormann's is an almost perfect match with the dental records. However, there is one significant problem: extensive dental work had been performed on the skull since 1945, including the addition of

several crowns and fillings, using dental techniques that were not available in 1945.

This stunning revelation is not publicized until 1976—three years after West Germany declared Bormann dead.*

So it is that Simon Wiesenthal and others are certain that the Martin Bormann “discovery” in Berlin is a fraud. Wiesenthal is sure the heinous Nazi is alive and prospering with the help of ODESSA.

But Simon Wiesenthal must prove it.

He believes that Argentina is the place to do that.

* The dental investigation was performed by Dr. Reidar F. Soggnaes, founding dean of the UCLA School of Dentistry. Results were published in the *Legal Medicine Annual, 1976*. Another of the examining pathologists, Dr. W. H. Thomas of Wales, noted of the discovery: “The dental records, while proving the identity of Bormann, displayed worrying anomalies which suggested that much dental work had been carried out after 1945 . . . there is, therefore, considerable proof that Bormann’s remains were taken back to Berlin for discovery.” Dr. Thomas puts forth his belief that Bormann had actually died in Paraguay, date unknown. The Welsh doctor based that opinion on soil found on Bormann’s skeleton.