

methods for hitting running deer, and tracking a hit white-tail. Also important is his recommendation for out of season practice. Given the expense of shells, Koller recommends .22 practice during the off-season.

The next chapter follows logically and is called “Getting Your Buck Out.” Koller describes the process of field-dressing your deer and the equipment you need for this task. Koller recommends carrying the deer across your shoulders to get it out. However, there are two problems with this advice. First, the weight of the dead deer might cause you to stumble and be injured. Second, another hunter might see the deer moving through the woods and shoot at it, not realizing it is on the hunter’s shoulders. I believe that there are many better ways to get a whitetail out than flinging it across your back. One young deer hunter I know got his first deer home using a wheelbarrow; that’s using your head rather than breaking your back. Koller also describes how to keep the carcass clean and to protect the venison when your taking it out of the woods.

In Chapter Eight, “The Deer Hunter’s Camp,” the author explains how a group of hunters would outfit their camp and gives advice on meals and teamwork. But for a new deer hunter reading *Shots at Whitetails*, Chapter Nine could be the most important. It deals with sportsmanship and safety. Nothing could spoil a deer hunt more than a hunting accident or accidental shooting.

The last chapter in Part 1 describes meat aging and preparation for the successful hunter. Koller recommends hanging venison for up to a month, which I find to be excessive. He writes: “A light coating of fuzzy mold will form on

the inside of the body cavity after a week or more, but this is of no concern.” For me, this would be a big concern. I have taken deer and butchered them the following day and found them to be tender eating. Koller also writes about eating the liver and heart, but these days that is not recommended because of cadmium levels in these organs. Koller describes how the hunter can butcher his own deer, which many hunters no longer do, but which I think is part of the hunt, and an important skill to have. People first began to hunt in order to feed themselves. This has probably not been the case in the past sixty years. However, venison is a very important part of the hunt and should be treated with care.

In Part 2, “The Mechanics of Deer Hunter,” Koller examines what he deems are suitable rifles for deer hunting. It is no harder to kill a deer in 2014 than in 1948 and these recommendations are still valid. In Chapter Fifteen Koller describes some gun work that the average hunter would be capable of doing. As this book was first published three years after World War II, Koller talks a lot about sporterizing military rifles. This is not as common today. The author also describes mounting the trophy buck. This is something the average deer hunter could try without spending a fortune on a professional taxidermist.

This is probably the most complete book on deer hunting that I have read. I recommend it to any deer hunter. Whatever his age or experience, he will probably learn something from it.

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*Steve Mason wrote from Bridgenorth, Ontario, where he and his wife Claire live with their six children. Steve is an avid outdoorsman and trapper. Ω*

## BOOK REVIEW BY DAVID BERESFORD

# GUN CONTROL IN THE THIRD REICH Disarming the Jews and "Enemies of the State"

WRITTEN BY Stephen P. Halbrook

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In *Gun Control in the Third Reich*, Stephen Halbrook presents a detailed description of Germany’s gun laws from the years immediately after World War I to the end of the Second World War. There is an inevitability to this history: the reader is taken through a documented trail consisting of minor erosions of public freedom in the interest of public safety, usually initiated by well-meaning individuals during the Weimar years.

Germany at that time suffered from political gangs, not much different than mobsters, fighting political turf wars in the streets of her major cities. These gangs were political socialists of one form or another: international socialists—the

communists, and national socialists—better known as Nazis. The problem and violence perpetrated by these street thugs was real, and the threat to the social fabric and political order was genuine as the rest of world was to find out in 1939.

The solution to the violence, however, was to target identifiable groups to act as scapegoats, to enact gun control legislation that by definition would only be obeyed by law abiding citizens. The predictable result was to disarm the entire German citizenry, a citizenry that might have prevented the drive to war in 1939. Whether having an armed population could have stopped the Nazis is a matter for debate. It must remain a theoretical

question, for the people of Germany were given no option.

The descent into oppression began with laws that required ammunition purchases be recorded—to protect the public interest (this is now the case in Canada); next all guns had to be registered to protect the public interest (this law was recently repealed in Canada) then confiscated to protect the public interest (this continues to occur in Canada). Guns that looked fierce were assigned a special classification and banned outright (so called “assault rifles” in Canada). Laws were then erected to give the police and other local authorities the right to search anyone’s house without warrant to protect the public interest (as in Canada). Less than a decade later, many gun owners or suspected gun owners, or anyone that the state did not like was taken at night to prison camps, beaten, or shot—all to protect the public interest.

The book opens with the story of Alfred Flatow, a German Jew who had won Germany a gold medal in the 1896 Olympic games. In 1932, living and working at a small bicycle shop in Berlin, he registered three obsolete souvenir handguns from World War I, in compliance with new legislation. On 4 October 1938, he was arrested for owning guns. A few weeks later on Reichskristallnacht his house, with thousands of others, was entered in the ostensible search for arms.

By 1942, this seventy-three-year-old Olympic hero was dead of starvation, one of the millions of victims of German concentration camps. The entire process, beginning with his registering his guns according to the laws, was documented, and done following the due process required by law in Germany at that time. The arguments for public safety that had justified the registration of guns to protect the peace a decade before had done their work.

The book documents a cautionary tale, especially relevant for Canadians after our recent flirtation with gun control. Even today Canada’s guns laws are archaic and dangerous, and would be recognized with approval by the Weimar legislators who paved the way for the almost unopposed takeover of government by the Nazis. For American readers this book is also relevant. In the US, short-sighted legislators funded by wealthy political meddlers such as former New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, are callously manipulating the tragedy of crime’s victims as an excuse to introduce unjust gun control laws that will only erode the ability of Americans to protect their own country.

Halbrook provides the readers of this history with some delightfully ironic gems:

“Hitler thought hunting to be a ‘dreary sport’ and said that ‘shooting is not a popular sport. Personally, I cannot see what possible pleasure can be derived from shooting.’ A vegetarian, the fuhrer was sensitive to the feeling of animals and remarked: ‘The Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals would do well to turn its attention to the sportsmen themselves.’ As the war and the Holocaust would prove, he had no sensitivity to humans.”

For Catholic readers, this history is especially poignant:

“In a 1942 harangue, Hitler explained that opponent of any

kind must be ruthlessly suppressed: ‘If the slightest attempt at a riot were to break out at this moment anywhere in the whole Reich, I’d take immediate measures against it. Here’s what I’d do: (a) on the same day, all the leaders of the opposition, including the leaders of the Catholic party, would be arrested and executed; (b) all the occupants of the concentration camps would be shot within three days; (c) all the criminals on our lists—and it would make little difference whether they were in prison or at liberty—would be shot within the same period.’”

Halbrook provides the reader with an analysis of the mindset of the times, which is important for understanding how good people in an educated country could acquiesce to such destructive and unjust laws:

“This concept of the ‘right to bear arms’ was in the Hegelian statist tradition, meaning compulsory military service rather than an individual liberty. German military leaders rejected the Swiss militia system [Editor’s Note, the one that gives us the Swiss guards at the Vatican] of a ‘people in arms’ in which the citizen soldier kept his arms at home. In post-World War I Germany, this rejection manifested itself as a standard of police and state protection of individuals.”

That is, the absolute and God Given right and duty of each individual to protect innocent life was handed over by fiat in its entirety to the state. There is a kind of madness that seems to take over the mind of some who in their desire to distance themselves from gun violence, fall into the error of removing the very tools needed to protect the innocent *from* violence. (Recent and well-intentioned statements by some US bishops declaring all diocesan property gun free zones are an example of this. Such policies will not prevent criminals from carrying guns, but will stop such innocent activities as target shooting at a range with Scouts and similar youth groups. The Canadian bishops and the CCCB are to be strongly commended for their level headedness in not reacting to media hype with poorly thought out policy decisions.)

The final word will be given to Halbrook:

“Dictators certainly do not respect constitutions any more than they respect civil or human rights.”

I fully recommend this book to any student of this period in our history. It is a history that has for too long been ignored. In presenting this analysis of the causes of the twentieth century’s greatest upheaval, World War II, Halbrook provides important lessons for us today. Ω

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