

An Investigation into the Controversy surrounding the book by James Bacque: *Other Losses, An Investigation into the Mass Deaths of German Prisoners at the Hands of the French and Americans after World War II* (Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Company, 1989)

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Abstract

James Bacque, Canadian author of *Other Losses*, purports to have uncovered the death of up to one million German P. O. W.s at the hands of American forces after World War II. He charges that American military officials and professional historians deliberately hid the true facts of the case from the American public and the rest of the world.

Bacque's accusations, based on his research of the Allied occupation of Germany from 1945 through 1949, stirred considerable controversy among historians and the media. The Eisenhower Center, located at the University of New Orleans, challenged Bacque's historical methodology and his motives for writing this work which contradicts

officials views of the time period. Stephen A. Ambrose and Gunter Bischof, director and associate director of the Center respectively, led the research of Bacque's claims. Their conclusions were supported by a substantial number of historical and journalistic reviewers.

Bacque is very selective in the sources he chooses to use, and utilizes most of these very superficially. His book is also replete with mathematical and comprehension errors, and he has a tendency to discount any sources that disprove his conjectures. Bacque's use of oral history is tainted by his flagrant disregard of proper historical interviewing techniques.

On the whole, Bacque's *Other Losses* is clearly an example of an agenda-oriented work. He aggressively sets out to prove the Americans perpetrated an Allied version of the Holocaust, and he is particularly adamant that General Eisenhower was the main instigator of the policy. Though he does raise some valid previously unanswered questions, the work has limited value to the study of the post-war P.O. W. issue due to the author's inadequate research methods.