The industry behind the Nazi regime
Author: Julia Mioduska

Frederick Flick was found guilty of supporting a systematized attack directed toward a civilian population. The verdict was founded on his passive acceptance of the abuse occurring within his factories despite his ability to improve living conditions and thereby decrease fatality rates. In cooperation with the government of the Third Reich the industrialist promoted slavery in order to maintain high rates of both production and profit. Frederick Flick was sentenced to five years of imprisonment as well as a 400 million euro fine.

In the discussion preceding the verdict both the defense and the prosecution acknowledged the existence of a forced labor network with was characterized by the dehumanization of its workers. However, the defense emphasized the oppressive nature of the Nazi regime as well as the devolution of power and thereby accountability within Flick’s network of factories. The defense strived to portray Frederick Flick as a small clog in a grand and repressive machine. It was pointed out that the supply of the labor force was orchestrated by the government and in particular by Albert Speer. Additionally, the declining standards within the factories were justified by the fact that the government did not provide the resources necessary for the maintainability of the workforce. Malnutrition and poverty was also considered to be a product of the time as the average citizen was also effected by shortages. Statistics for the average meet and bread consumption were quoted in order to support this claim: on a weekly basis the forced labor workers were supplied with 2740 grams of bread and 300 grams of meat. The civilian population was faced with a similar situation receiving 400 grams of meet and 2630 grams of bread. Moreover, the defense referred to modern day structures of large businesses in order to support the possibility the Frederick Flick was not aware of the gravity of the situation. Often in large organizations power is devolved to subordinates thereby not requiring the owners to inquire into the everyday operations of the production. Under such circumstances Flick would not be able to intervene in the process due to his ignorance.

However, due to the limited evidence concerning the chain of command the prosecution was able to make the following claim: the economic success of Flick even in the pre-war years suggests developed management skills and expertise within his field. It is also considered to be a customary practice that subordinates report back to their employees and consequently it is not plausible that Flick was completely unaware of the conditions. Moreover, the prosecution argued that the industrialist was personally involved with the regime as he participated in a close circle of Himmler’s Friends.

I believe that the verdict accurately emphasized the need to promote accountability for all participants in a crime against humanity. It is only with the financial and ideological support of accomplices and by-standers that such systems can be implemented. During the war years, Frederick Flick’s company compromised 1/3 of the German industry giving him the power and responsibility to pursue reform. Although some factors were beyond his influence it was Flick’s moral responsibility to oppose the physical punishment and harassment of the workforce. However, it is still important to acknowledge that obeying the orders of the existing government does not fall outside the framework of legality and that malnutrition was a general characteristic of the war years.

Erdemovic found not guilty
Author: Alexia Rouzaud

Drazen Erdemovic, a soldier who killed 70 civilians, was found “not guilty” by the Model International Criminal Court on November 25th, 2016. His trial was pertaining to the massacre that happened in Pilica in Yugoslavia on July 16th, 1995. The former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was a republic between the years 1945 and 1991. It was composed of six other republics: Montenegro, Croatia, Serbia, Slovenia, Macedonia, and Bosnia-Herzegovina. During World War II, Yugoslavia came under Nazi occupation, which separated the country. The case that the MICC students tried pertaining to Yugoslavia was about Drazen Erdemovic and the Srebrenica Massacre. The town had a large population of Bosnian Muslims because it was a U.N. safe space away from ethnic cleansing by the Republika Srpska. This safe space was oversaw by 600 Dutch Peacekeepers.

On July of 1995, Srebrenica was attacked by the Bosnian Serb Army, forcing the Muslim population to flee to the main U.N. base. Thousands of Muslim men resisted by marching towards Tuzla, a town that
was being held by the Bosnian Muslim Government. They were fired at by heavy artillery and survivors were forced into buses and executed. The estimated civilian casualties were between 7,000 and 8,000.

Erdemovic served in the Army of Bosnia and Herzegovina and also in the Bosnian Croat Army (HVO). After attempting to flee the HVO to Switzerland but failing, he went back to Republika Srpska and joined the 10th Sabotage Detachment of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Initially, Erdemovic was a cooperative soldier that got along well with his commander. He became less compliant when another commander was put in charge of him and his unit. Erdemovic failed to carry out harsh orders that asked for the killing of civilian Bosnian Muslims. This caused Erdemovic to be demoted from his ranking to a simple soldier, which was seen as disappointing. On July 16th in 1995, Erdemovic and seven members were taken to the town of Pilica. There were around 20 buses with 60 Bosnian Muslim men. They were told to kill them and the executions lasted between five and six hours. Erdemovic claimed to recall shooting between ten and 100 men.

Afterwards, they were told to shoot another 500 Muslim men in a school. Erdemovic refused to and after the incident he went home. He went to a bar and was shot in the stomach and his lungs by a former member of military detachment. He was rushed into surgery in Belgrade and survived the wound. He then went on to contact the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. His testimony was essential to cover up evidence of the Srebrenica massacre and helped the prosecution team find the mass graves of those executed in Pilica.

During this case, the arguments were a power struggle between legality and emotions. On one hand, prosecution argued that Erdemovic had intent and knowledge of the killing and knew the consequences of his actions. Although he was threatened by his commander, there was no explicit threats to his life and therefore he had the option to refuse to act out the orders of killing civilians. On the other hand, defense argued from an emotional standpoint. They stated that Erdemovic was under duress and mentally stressed. Because of fear for his life from his commander, Erdemovic was forced to act out orders.

This case was morally conflicting to most because of the mindset Erdemovic displayed. One could say that he was innocent and his actions came from duress; that he acted under fear. It was very clear from his actions, his demoting of rank, and his willingness to step forward to the International Criminal Tribunal that he did not want to participate in the killing of the civilians. But prosecution could argue that he still went through with the ruthless killing of humans, thus violating basic humanity, human rights, and Article 7 1A of the Rome Statute.

In conclusion, the judges ruled in favour of defense, with a ruling of “not guilty”. They stated that although he committed a crime against humanity with mass murder, he didn’t legally violate the Geneva Conventions. The explanation given was that he was under duress and was acting in defense of his life. The judges also released a statement saying, “Although we are uncomfortable with this final ruling, we feel that he did not violate any laws and was only serving to protect his life.”

The background to the Trial is an ethnic conflict between two Rwandan populations called Tutsi and Hutu. The conflict started in the late 1950’s during the decolonization from Germany and Belgium tensions were starting to arise in Rwanda. The Hutu political movement, which stood to gain from majority rule, was gaining power and after a violent incident in November 1959 in which hundreds of Tutsi were killed marked the end of Tutsi domination and the mass killings of the ethnic minority. By 1962, when Rwanda gained independence, 120,000 people, primarily Tutsis, had taken refuge in neighboring states to escape the violence which had accompanied the gradual coming into power of the Hutu community represented by the Mouvement Revolutionnaire National pour le Developpement (MRND). They called for the fulfillment of their international legal right to return to Rwanda, however, Juvenal Habyarimana, then president of Rwanda and Founder of MRND rejected their accommodation. The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) mainly founded by Tutsi exiles in Uganda, launched a major attack on Rwanda on 1 October 1999 taking the conflict to another level. Consequently, extremist parts of the Hutu majority started planning a campaign to exterminate Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

Omission to Prison

Author: Benjamin Fritz

Yesterday, the 24th of November Simon Bikindi was sentenced by the MICC in Kryzowa for 10 years of imprisonment with the possibility to be released after 7 years when the Accused will show remorse’s. In addition he will give all the financial profit made through the songs that were played during the genocide. Their justification was not based on the content of the songs but more on Bikini’s omission to prohibit the use of his songs as incitement for the atrocities during the genocide.

The prosecution accused Simon Bikini to have aided and abetted the Rwandan genocide by the affronting elements of his song lyrics towards the Tutsi population. Based on Art. 6 (a) and (b) and 25 (c) of the Rome Statute the prosecution argued him to be guilty. They claimed an imprisonment of 12 years as well as the return of all his profits made through his songs. The defense demanded his acquittal of all counts of indictments for the reason of not being responsible for the mass killing.

On 6 April 1994, the deaths of the Presidents of Burundi and Rwanda in a plane crash caused by a rocket attack, evoke several weeks of intense and systematic massacres. The killings - around 1 million people are estimated to have been killed - shocked the international community and were clearly acts of genocide. In the following days Tutsi were assassinated all around the country but also Hutus who could not identify themselves or who revealed Tutsi characteristics. The MRND used media to spread hatred towards the Tutsi. A frequently used medium was the radio station Radio Television Libre des Milles Collines (RTLM). As Bikindi was a well-known musician but also member of the MRND his songs were often played on the radio station accompanying the killings of the Tutsi. During the time of the genocide Bikindi did not interfere with the broadcasting of his songs that spread hatred and abetted the genocide. For this reason Simon Bikindi was sentenced to be guilty by the MICC in Kryzowa.
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN GERMANY

Author: Benjamin Fritz

When I hear about human rights violations, the first examples I would think about are torture, imprisonment, abuse or murder. Countries that are affected by war, crime and poverty would come to my mind. Living in a rather safe region, in a house with water and heating, I must admit that I have never witnessed such problems and that it is even hard for me to imagine experiencing an incidence that is comparable to what happens in many unsafe regions more or less far away from where I live, in Germany.

Since it was my task to find out about human rights violations in my home country, I did some research about cases of harder violations like the examples I mentioned in my first sentence, but most of my findings referred to historical events during eras that finished long time before I was born. Soon I was starting to think that it would be hard to find information about cases of human rights that are completely abused by the Governments or by the society. What I found quite conspicuous was when I compared the German constitution with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The content of some articles had great similarities what led me to the conclusion that the German policy is mainly based on human rights and their conservation.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was created by the UN and contains 30 articles about different human rights. As I expected the declaration included rights to the protection from torture, imprisonment, abuse and murder. However it also implied basic rights like the freedom of opinion, the prohibition of discrimination or the equality of every human being. This made me realize the fact that also in Germany human rights are violated every day.

That people are discriminated because of their opinions, gender, age, character and even their look is nothing new to me. I remember how I went out with a couple of friends one night and after a few hours we wanted to finish the evening in a bar. The whole group had no problems to get inside, but for some reason the security guard always barred one of our friends to enter the bar. When we asked him for a reason why he would not let him in, he seriously said: “Because of his skin color. I was told to keep Arabsians out.” This really shocked me, also because he said it in such an earnest. I cannot believe that some parts of our society are so fixed on unjustified prejudices. Another example of discrimination is the reputation of the female gender that has not really improved as politicians promised. Many jobs are still not accessible to women and some face daily discrimination at their workplace.

I think the causes for these violations of the human rights have different sources. The refugee crisis, that affects Germany more than ever, produced a new wave of racism and discrimination. I can imagine that many people fear the loss the national identity and also their own safety. In difference to that, the equalization of genders is a challenge many nations are struggling with, since centuries. This shows that the violations of human rights can be pushed forward by recent developments but that they can also be caused by values and views that are embedded in the society.

All in all, I admit that human rights violations are no rarity in my home country Germany. Discrimination and violence occur on a daily basis. Nevertheless it is important to take the dimension of different violations into account and that the more developed countries are mostly spared from the really hard violations. I think that the human rights deserve more attention as they guarantee a better cohabitation in the society. In my opinion every human being should at least try to respect them and be aware about the consequences of disregarding them.

DAKOTA PIPELINE

Author: Alexia Rouzaud

A controversial and sadly not very televised human rights conflict that is happening in this country of the United States of America is the issue with the Dakota Pipeline. The pipeline, being built by Dakota Access, LLC, is a $3.7 million project and the supposed silver lining is that it is supposed to make thousands of jobs. Except what they don’t tell you is about the prioritization of profit over humanity. This pipeline endangers the well-being of many by being built to run upstream of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe’s drinking water. There’s fears that a spill could contaminate their drinking supply. These fears aren’t unfounded at all. In 2010, an oil pipeline spilled, contaminating the Kalamazoo River with thousands of gallons of oil. It was a messy and costly cleanup. If the pipeline spilled, it would also contaminate crops and sacred burial grounds. Oil spills happen all the time and the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe have much evidence to not want this Dakota Pipeline anywhere near them. So why hasn’t the construction stopped? Easy, money. President Obama and his administration have temporarily stopped construction and have cancelled the oil and gas lease on native land. But in America, corporations are renowned for not abiding by federal law. The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe know this and have gone out of their way to make sure this ceases once and for all. There have been countless protests and this controversy has actually brought many of the tribes together. Even celebrities such as Shailene Woodley and Leonardo DiCaprio and politicians like Bernie Sanders and Jill Stein have shown their support for the tribe. Even with the strong willpower to protest, the corporation has been fighting back in a way that not only dehumanizes the protestors but physically harms them. Attack dogs have been set loose on protestors including pregnant woman, the elderly, and children. Law enforcement, who should be protecting these protestors and their right to protest, have used military vehicles and equipment to “round up” those who are protesting. Also, by trespassing on the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe’s land, they are breaking the Fort Laramie Treaty. This treaty, made in 1868, granted the Sioux complete, total, and undisturbed access of the land. Undisturbed being the key word. In other words, this treaty is not being honoured at all.

The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe have taken legal action against the construction of the Dakota Pipeline, filing their first action on July 27th, 2016. They have also pressed charges against Dakota Access. Sadly, nothing affirmative has happened on the legal side to end this. Protests still continue, and dehumanization of the nation’s Native Americans continue as well.
Complicity and Human Rights Abuses in Poland

Author: Julia Mioduska

According to the White House database the relationship between Poland and the US is founded on the pursuit of liberty and freedom — values that unite us as we strive together to create a Europe whole, free, and at peace. However, when faced with issues of national security some of these values are sacrificed and actions are justified with the hope that the end will justify the means. In the wake of the 9/11 attack the USA declared its war on terror. Wary of the implications of its constitution the USA government implemented most of its policy abroad and ultimately decided to include Poland in its strategy. By establishing a secret prison in Stare Kiejkuty, which operated between 2002 and 2005, Poland has played a role in the CIA’s detention and torture of alleged terrorists. One of the prisoners, Abd al-Rahim al-Nashiri, a Saudi Arabian national alleged to have masterminded the bombing of the USS Cole off the coast of Yemen in 2000, has claimed that he was subjected to “enhanced interrogation techniques” and “mock executions” with a gun and threats of sexual assault against his family members.

After denying his involvement for years, former Polish president Aleksander Kwasniewski admitted in 2014 that Poland had granted the CIA permission to run the secret prison. However, he insisted his officials had not authorized illegal treatment or torture of its inmate. The U.S. Senate Committee’s torture report also stated that Poland initially objected to the creation of a secret prison within its borders but became more lenient after being offered a large sum of money for its cooperation.

Ten years after the termination of the prison, the issue had still not been resolved, emphasizing the need for greater transparency in order to prevent human rights’ violations in the future. In March 2008, the Polish authorities opened a criminal investigation concerning the detention center. However, it was repeatedly delayed due to changes in prosecution personnel, a shift in location from Warsaw to Krakow, and claims that cooperation from the US government had not been forthcoming. The inability to resolve the case was repeatedly explained with the possible risks to national security. In 2015, Julia Hall, Amnesty International’s expert on counter-terrorism and human rights argued that: “Without European help, the USA would not have been able to secretly detain and torture people for so many years. The Senate report makes it abundantly clear that foreign governments were essential to the ‘success’ of the CIA operations — and evidence that has been mounting for nearly a decade points to key European allies.” Poland played only a small role in America’s large network of secret detention centers. Other European allies included countries such as the UK, Lithuania and Romania. However, it was the complaint bipartisanship of countries such as Poland, which allowed these abuses to continue. Countries, which are currently significant signatories of the International Criminal Court witnessed the inhumane treatment of suspects and their unlawful detention and decided to remain silent. In a time of many difficult political decisions and sacrifices organizations such as the ICC must remind their members of the values the strive to represent. They should encourage further cooperation and transparency in order to promote a safe and fairer society.

MICC SCHOOL PROJECT

Author: Cristian Garcia

The MICC School project, in our opinion, has been a complete success in accomplishing its main purpose, “to teach core principles of the ICC to high-school and university students.” Not only have the participants from various schools to learned about the importance of upholding a person’s or country’s human rights. As well as being an example of global co-existence and cooperation.

This is the only way that there could be peace in the world, in addition to significant advances in equality and attention to human rights. It has been an incredible opportunity to come to know people from different cultures and be able to hear the separate points of view.

It is interesting to see the differing attitudes and personalities from country to country. It was a little bit intimidating for the different groups from each country to break the ice and actually start talking to each other but once we started interacting it felt like we had been friends forever. It’s also interesting to see the different ideas that everyone from the different countries has. It’s a big eye opener to see the differing ideas and how Americans especially, are so isolated in their little bubble and it’s nice to be able to learn more.

Apart from that it gives insight into the work of a real politician. The way participants prepare and debate is on a high political level allowing the students to experience first hand of what criminal international law is like.

PRESS TEAM

I am Benjamin Fritz, 17 years old and I come from Bonn in the western Germany. I love all kinds of creative work including the editing and production of short movies what lead me to the decision to participate in the Press team. Also I am very active, playing football 3 times a week.

My name is Julia Mioduska, I am 17 years old and I come from Poland. Next year, I will begin my studies in the US and I am hoping to develop my interest in politics and linguistics. I believe that projects such as the MICC help countries overcome their social and culture differences and promote a set of crucial and global values.

I am Cristian Garcia and I am from Guatemala. I am part of the Israeli delegation in Poland playing a role in MICC. I love outdoor activities, big social events, exploring new places, as well as photography. Being in the press team is a way to further advance my love for capturing beauty and extending my academic possibilities.

My name is Alexia Rouzaud. I am 16 years old and from New Mexico in the United States. I was super excited to be part of Press Team in MICC because journalism is a career path that I’m very enthusiastic about, as well as music. To advance my journalism career, I would like to attend Seattle University after graduating in May of 2018.