

## **Video Casette**

**Original title: "Magukért nem felel senki"**

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### **„Nobody cares about you”**

**About a massacre, 50 years after**

The first frames of the film present the south-east Slovakian town of Dobsina and the origins of the German speaking population living in and around it. The majority of the Germans arrived in the Middle Ages, but the population of Dobsina considers itself the descendants of germanic tribes, already present in the region in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century a. d. These people are the so called Buliners. The language they speak, originating in the German, can not be understood by the Germans of the mother country. The Buliners are to be thanked for the blooming mining and industrial activity of the area and they are also accounted for the foundation of several towns in the region. These people were living peacefully together with Hungarians as well as Slovaks for centuries.

This situation was turned upside down in World War II without recall. The persons acting in the film, based on personal accounts, describe how the trust between the different peoples deteriorated during this time. With the approach of the front line the Germans of Dobsina were expelled to the Sudeten area in the western part of Czechoslovakia. Not only the Germans (Buliners and Zipsers) were forced to leave, but also many Hungarians and even Slovaks, familiar ties being more complex than political ideologies.

The end of the war was perceived by these people as liberation, and although some left the Sudeten area for Germany, the majority considered the native country as their home and did everything in their power to return. Their decision turned into disaster.

On the way home again, on the 18<sup>th</sup> of June 1945, the trains were stopped at the Moravian town of Prerov by a unit of the Czech intelligence. The leader of the force was Karol Pazur (former Kohn), an officer from Dobsina. Following his orders, 71 men, 120 women and 74 children were gunned down. The bodies were robbed and thrown into mass graves. There were

probably survivors, because for three days the ground above was moving. Later on, the soldiers who were taking part in the massacre, distributed the personal items left in the wagons between themselves.

The witnesses and the survivors as well as the researchers of the subject know what has happened. The film goes on with, as narrative texts, short sequences of the documents of the investigation following the massacre as well as contemporary testimonies. These conclude without doubt, that the victims were killed only because they were Hungarian and German. The youngest „war criminal” was three months old.

Light is shed on the fact that the number of victims didn't rise just because the soldiers run out of ammunition and that the execution of the remaining ones was due to be done later at Bratislava, which also occurred a couple of days later. About this case we are informed by a Viennese historian (of Slovak origin) and a Slovakian- Hungarian researcher of the subject. Actions like the above mentioned were done in utter secret and kept successfully silent. There were not only two massacres following World War II - under protection of a specific Czechoslovakian law, which linked the end of the war to the lifting of the radio alert of the Czechoslovakian Army (the 30<sup>th</sup> September 1945 !!!) but also considers the justification and extent of the military retaliation according to this. Murders committed out of patriotism were not looked upon as crimes.

The KAPU film studio started to reveal the circumstances of the massacre by Prerov. The investigations were lasting three years because of fear, which lives on even today. Following our pattern, other investigations took part, leading to the discovering of other massacres, where civilians because of their Hungarian and German ethnicity were killed. According to some historians several tens of thousands. Experts can't account for 1,5 million persons of German nationality. Where are they? The Czech and Slovak states protest also, because they are not willing to pay any restitution and that is why they won't apologize.

In what follows our film concentrates on the destiny of the survivors. One of these manages to escape to Hungary, another, arriving home finds his/her house robbed. The s. c. Governmental Program of Kosice (The Benes Decrees) is mentioned, which codified into the post-war legislation of Czechoslovakia the collective deprivations of rights of Hungarians and Germans, and which enabled an aggressive attempt to expel the two nations from their home country – in the case of the Germans with almost total success. They were driven out very brutally of Czechoslovakia to Germany mostly following this event. The orders of the Governmental Program of Kosice were not annulled to this very day.

We inquired how the Czechoslovak authorities acted while investigating the Prerov case. The prosecutor of the Pazur case is asked. He relates, that due to his connections the murderer was only imprisoned for two years. Not only that he was granted amnesty, but later on he emerges as an esteemed veteran of the Czechoslovak Association of Partizans. This is a common example of that time.

Pazur is dead today, but in Dobsina lives one of the five soldiers of the military unit which came from town and is considered by the citizens to this day a murderer.

We were able to speak with him. Naturally he denies the charge of taking part in the massacre, but admits, that on that very day he passed Prerov. The film doesn't take position, whether this person was present indeed when the killings occurred, but in a straight way confronts his statements with the knowledge of those accusing him.

Finally we can witness the lasting consequences of the tragic events. We visit the grave in Prerov, where today the men victims rest. (The bodies of the women and children were burned shortly after the massacre by the Czechoslovak authorities, to give the matter the appearance as if the men victims were former SS-soldiers!)

The survivors tell us, how they tried to cope with the trauma they and their nearest ones were personally exposed to. One person e. g. burned all the family pictures (all her/his family was wiped out) in order to erase any track of the tragedy, to escape the (!) accusations of being at the place of the murder. We also learn, that in Dobsina, once a prospering, German-founded town, there remained actually none who dared to claim German ancestry, while the ore mines, which accounted for the welfare of Dobsina, were closed. The Germans were thus expelled, the Hungarians moved out or were assimilated into the Slovaks. The largest nationality in the town today are the Gypsies. Nowadays we see a certain amount of activity among the remainder of the Germans, in order to at least maintain what is left of the culture, customs and language.

The protestans minister of Dobsina urges for the necessity of forgiveness. The local historian remarks, that one can forgive, when those who regret their sins ask for forgiveness. From the citizens of Dobsina though, nobody apologized yet, nobody has ever received any compensation. Both the historians from Vienna and Prerov underline: only objectivity and the knowledge of history can bring reconciliation.

The documentary is 86 minutes long, is made by BETACAM technology, and is provided with international sound. The Hungarian text of the film can be separately obtained in typed form.

**Nobody cares about you** - the list of the persons appearing:

Living in 1995 in Dobsina (Dobsina, Slovakia):

Margarita Hutniková – survivor (family killed)

Ján Neubauer – victims in the family

Ondrej Smelko – probably one of the murderers

Sťefan Sťempel – victims in the family, then the president of the Carpathian Germans' Association in Dobsina

Anna Sťempelova – survivor (family killed)

Living in 1995 in Rozsnyó (Rozňava, Slovakia):

Batta István – historian

Living in 1995 in Bočcs (Hungary, Borsod-Abaúj-Zemplén county):

Lindák Jánosné – survivor (husband killed)

Living in 1995 in Prácheň (Czech Republic):

Jörg Šternberg – local historian

Dr. František Hybl – historian, museum director

Living in 1995 in Vágkirályfalva (....., Slovakia):

Dr. Janics Kálmán – historian

In 1995 in Vienna we discussed with:

Dr. Emilia Hrabovec – historian, the subject's researcher; she mentioned the death march of Brno, also being investigated by her. According to her after the end of WW II approximately 30.000 Germans were forced to march out of the Moravian capital towards the German border, only 10.000 arrived.

Living in 1995 in Bratislava:

Dr. Anton Rasla – retired military chief-prosecutor, the prosecutor in charge of the proceedings

At the beginning of the 1990's two historians of Prague wrote in the journal *Historié a Vojenství* an essay on the subject:

Lubor Vaclavu and Tomas Stanek

Postscript:

The completed film (the text was translated into German) was offered for broadcasting to German TV Stations. In their reply they underlined the importance and quality of the film, we were congratulated – but didn't assume the responsibility to show it. Former chancellor Kohl also received a copy, which he thanked in a warm-hearted letter and announced, that he wasn't able to put the TV stations under pressure in order to broadcast the documentary. Thus we gave the film as a present to a German foundation, where it will be available for researchers (SÜDOST-INSTITUT München). They will have enough subjects to contemplate on, since according to some scholars more than 1.5 million civilians perished in those years in Czechoslovakia. Throughout Slovakia, in almost every larger settlement people are aware of, that after the war persons belonging to the s.c. „guilty” nationalities were murdered, mainly women and children. As an example stands Rozňava, where 20-25 persons were cast into a mine shaft, still alive. But it is also well known the existence of a mass grave at Pozsony-Ligetfalu outside Bratislava where 90 young Hungarian boys (aged 17-20) were buried after being shot in the back of the head.

Our film was on several occasions broadcast by the Hungarian TV stations M1 and Duna TV.

Budapest, the 18 October 2002

