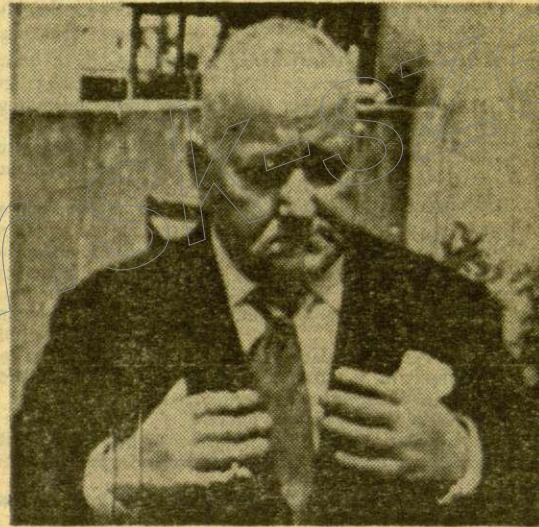


As published in The New York Daily News on Nov. 27, this photo was described as showing "José Juan Velasco," an Argentine intelligence agent, questioning a man identified as Martin Bormann at an Argentine checkpoint on the border with Chile, Oct. 5.



Rodolfo Nicolás Siri, a teacher, says it is a picture of him standing outside a Buenos Aires cafe.



Photographs for The New York Times by JOSEPH N. NOVITSKI
Juan José Velasco, who has known Mr. Siri for 12 years, in Buenos Aires last week.

Accuracy of Recent Reports on Bormann Challenged

By ERIC PACE

A number of questions have been raised in recent days about the accuracy and authenticity of the information in the recent series of articles on Martin Bormann published by The Daily Express of London and other newspapers.

Among the most vocal skeptics has been Simon Wiesenthal, the Vienna-based expert on Nazi war criminals. Mr. Wiesenthal said last week that he was assisting a bank executive in Bolivia to bring a libel suit against The Express in connection with the series.

The co-author and main researcher of the series, Ladislav Farago, has maintained, in the face of the widespread skepticism, that the documentation upon which much of the series was based is authentic. When pressed concerning individual points in the articles, which appeared in New York in The Daily News, he has conceded that they were hastily written under pressure from The Express which, he said, feared being beaten by a rival London newspaper.

'Absolute Bluff Story'

In a succession of interviews and at a news conference here Mr. Farago, a Hungarian-born writer, referred his questioners to a book, tentatively entitled "The Aftermath," that he is writing for Simon & Schuster. It is said to describe the postwar lives of Bormann, once a top aide to Hitler, and other Nazis and is to be published next year.

Mr. Farago has said he is at a loss to understand the heat with which Mr. Wiesenthal criticized the material in the Express articles. Mr. Wiesenthal, interviewed in Vienna by The New York Times, dismissed the published account as "an absolute bluff story" and "inventions from A to Z."

Bormann, Mr. Farago says, is a prosperous businessman in South America, but Mr. Wiesenthal's opinion is that there is only a 50-50 chance that he is alive and in hiding somewhere in Latin America.

The British historian Hugh Trevor-Roper concluded in a book written soon after World War II that Bormann probably died in the ruins of Berlin. A German intelligence expert, Reinhard Gehlen, reported in a book published earlier this year that Bormann was a Soviet agent and died in the Soviet Union after the war.

In scoffing at the Express report, Mr. Wiesenthal cited its reference to a man named Hans Strauss, whom Mr. Wiesenthal identified as the bank executive whom he was assisting. Hans Strauss was described by the Express as a Jewish businessman who had unwittingly provided shelter for Bormann, and then discovered his identity and asked him to leave—thereby leaving the possible implication that Mr. Strauss had failed to inform the authorities that he had harbored a fugitive war criminal. Mr. Wiesenthal reported that the banker contended that he had never met Bormann, or anyone using Bormann's reported alias, Eliezer Goldstein, in Bolivia or elsewhere.

Known Facts Recalled

Mr. Wiesenthal described Mr. Farago's account of Bormann's wanderings through South America as a mixture of known facts, retold in modified form, and fabrication.

The facts, Mr. Wiesenthal said, all relate to Bormann's life and actions before Hitler's death in 1945 as reconstructed

by several independent researchers, including Mr. Wiesenthal himself in his book "The Murderers Among Us."

According to Mr. Wiesenthal, if Mr. Farago actually possessed information that might have led to Bormann's capture, he should have given it to law-enforcement organizations and should not have made it public first.

Other skeptical opinions about the articles, which were written with the collaboration of a British journalist, Stewart Steven, have come from West Germany.

The German authorities as well as the German press and public have grown accustomed to unconfirmed reports, emanating from South America, that Bormann was living there.

Reopening of Cases Hinted

On the other hand, documentation shown by Mr. Farago

to the authorities in West Germany has led them to consider reopening war-crimes proceedings as a means of obtaining the extradition from South America of the man identified as Bormann.

Here in New York another author who has written about Bormann, Zwy Aldouby, issued a statement dismissing the press articles as half-truths.

However, another author and expert on Bormann, William Stevenson, said that he had talked with people who had convinced him that Bormann did escape and did get to South America. "I'm sure I know where he is," Mr. Stevenson added, "but it's not in the kind of splendor that's described. He's on the run."

Mr. Stevenson is writing a book about Bormann's life and times that is to be published next year.

Borman Ranked Second to Hitler

Martin Bormann was the most powerful man in Germany, under Hitler, in the closing years of World War II. He was Hitler's deputy and personal secretary, head of the Nazi party apparatus and a general of the SS (Elite Guard).

Reconstruction of Hitler's last days before his suicide with his mistress, Eva Braun, in his personal bunker in Berlin indicated that Bormann conferred with him shortly before Hitler's death,

then left. It was asserted that Bormann was killed as the Soviet Army closed in, but evidence was lacking.

The Nuremberg Tribunal, which tried the Nazi leaders for war crimes, sentenced Bormann to death in absentia in 1946 for war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was held to have been responsible for the official murder of Jews, for an important role in the slave program and for the lynching of Allied airmen.