

EVACUEES

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Part 1

Good morning. As John just told you I deal a lot with war children. Primarily with children in this country who were evacuated during the Second World War. But I now do a lot of work in Finland working with children who were evacuated from Finland to Sweden, in the Second World War. I also work with German *Kriegs Kinder*, who were the German children who were evacuated within Germany, and this has nothing to do with the Jewish children being forcibly evacuated, these are actual German children who were really quite young at the time. I run courses here in the History Department on the study of war children, both at Bachelor's level and Master's level and because of that I have some students who are now researching into war children right up to date, so we are now looking at the child soldiers in Africa.....some of the students have been looking at Bosnia and Croatia, Iran, Iraq etc.

One of the interesting things about children in wartime is that they are the invisible victims. Very few people look at the children. In fact, I do an experiment which I won't do today because I don't have time but I show my students a series of 10 pictures which are all up on the screen together. I ask them what the common denominator is within those pictures. They are all war zones and they all contain children. But when I did it very recently with a group of 18 students only 2 of them said the common denominator was children. Because we don't see them. When we look at the news broadcasts on the television from Iran, or Iraq or any of the war zones in the world at the moment and you may not believe this but there are 30, more than 30 wars going on in the world as we speak. And all those war zones contain children. Next time you look at the news bulletins don't look at the people at the front of the news look behind them and you will see children, usually boys mimicking their brothers and their fathers and that is the next generation. And unfortunately it is very, very difficult to stop that cycle.

Now one of the things I am going to talk about today is really just British evacuation because I don't have time to do much more and to be honest I don't have time to do the British evacuation any justice. But I am going to explain it as much as I possibly can, and I will give you the opportunity for you to ask me some questions at the end. Basically what happened was that the children in this country were moved from areas of perceived danger, to areas of relative safety. It was not the first time that this had happened, the first evacuation took place in this country in 1804 when there was a threat from Napoleon. People thought Napoleon was going to invade Britain and so they moved people, mostly children and mothers, from some areas of the south coast and some areas of the north east coast. I have no idea why the north east but of course the south east, and the south was closest to France and that's why they moved people. There was also an evacuation in 1938. 30,000 children were moved out of south London during the

Munich crisis. This was if you have not heard about it, - this was when Chamberlain who was Prime Minister at the time, went across and had a meeting with Hitler, came back waving a piece of paper saying 'there will be peace in our time' because he had negotiated peace with Hitler, and then both Britain and Germany started re-arming. But 30,000 people had been moved just in case the negotiations would fall down.

The code word for evacuation is 'Operation Pied Piper' for obvious reasons. Anybody like to suggest why it's called Operation Pied Piper? Anybody heard the story of the Pied Piper? No? The Pied Piper of Hamelin is a fairy tale. Basically Hamelin had a lot of rats, they got this Piper to come in and he played his pipes and all the rats followed him into the mountain, but then the town wouldn't pay. And so he went back to the town, played his pipe again, but this time all the children followed him and went into the mountain and they never saw the children again. And so that's why it's called Operation Pied Piper basically, because they were moving children.

Part 2

Now this picture has been hidden for over 60 years until I found it. Would anybody like to tell me what that picture is showing, and why it might have been hidden? Someone like to tell me - what do you think it is? What do you think the picture is, to begin with, what does it look like? Yes, very good. There are two women crying, one here and one there. So why do you think that picture was hidden for 60 years? And the reason why this happened was purely and simply because they are crying. They are showing an emotion that the government did not want them to show. The whole point of evacuation was that it was going to be great fun. All these children were taken away, and they were all going to enjoy it, and they were all going to the countryside. But as soon as people started getting upset about it they stopped these photographs being put into the newspapers. Because they didn't want to show that people were upset by the whole thing. So that's why it was hidden.

This really sums up what evacuation is about. I now do a lot of work with people who are in their 60's and 70's who were evacuees. And I am working with the University of Helsinki and the University of Munich to look at the long-term effects that evacuation had on children.

This really sums it up. All the time I was evacuated I used to tell myself that one day the war would be over and I could go back home. After the war we were living in a different part of London and I made my way back to where I used to live. The whole area had been completely obliterated during the first few days of the Blitz and I was quite unable to find the spot where my house once stood. This happened more than 50 years ago. I have lived in many other places. I have a grown up family of my own and I am a grandfather. I now have a lovely house, but somehow I am still waiting to go home. And Jim Bartley who was a former evacuee has often said to me that he is waiting to go home. I hear that a lot. Either people are still searching for their home, they are still searching for a childhood, or they are still searching for an education because these children were literally uprooted and moved and it was a pretty traumatic experience for them.

Now basically, there were about 3 ½ million people that were evacuated during the Second World War. 1.5 million of those were children, mothers with children. The other figures are people like government offices and some workers who were considered to be non-essential. In other words they did not have to stay in the areas which were seen to be potential targets. Many of the children were taken away with their schools. So in the first evacuation scheme, and there were 4 of them, September 1st to September 4th 1939, from June 1940, from March 1944 and those children who went overseas. There were 17,000 children that went overseas - a lot of them were looked after by their teachers. In the first one 103,000 teachers.

The other people who went were mothers with babies. Now if I say the word 'babies' in this country, that simply means anybody under the age of 5, in other words those children who were not old enough to go to school, although there were children like myself, who actually went to school at 4 years old although I did say I was born after the war. I wasn't an evacuee. If I say mothers with babies in Finland that is what it means - babies. Some children were moved from Finland to Sweden as young as 2 days old and that caused all sorts of problems, because Finnish is a difficult language to learn. These children were being moved to Sweden, and learned Swedish so when they come home at the end of the war many of them could not communicate with their parents, because they didn't have a common language. They couldn't communicate with their families, with their brothers and sisters. But in Britain mothers with babies - in some cases you only had to be above the age of 5, to have the responsibility of a younger brother and sister *under* 5.

Part 3

So how many of you have got younger brothers and sisters? How many of you have got younger brothers and sisters? How much older are you than your younger brother and sister? 8 years. Well you could have been, let's say you could have been 12 and you could have had the responsibility of your 4 year old. In some cases children only had to be 6 or 7 and they were looking after their 4 and 5 year olds. That put a lot of pressure on the children to look after their siblings. The other ones were expectant mothers, 12,700 expectant mothers. Now that may not seem a problem, but it was really quite serious because before the National Health Service. The National Health Service would now mean that if you were expecting a baby you could go into hospital or you could have your baby at home and you would be well looked after and it wouldn't cost you anything. But in 1939 when these people were evacuated, there was no such thing as the National Health Service, so anybody who had to have medical attention, it had to be paid for. So who was going to pay for it and that became a very serious problem in some of the areas of the country where the evacuees were moved to.

You also get, using the terminology of the time, the infirm. People who had physical disabilities, some children who were blind, some people who were deaf, in fact I have a PhD student at the moment looking at the effect of evacuation on that particular group of people. And in fact, as I mentioned just now, the teachers and helpers, those people who went with them to look after them.

Now it wasn't what we would call a knee-jerk reaction, it just didn't happen. It was planned and over a long period of time. London had been bombed in the First World War and they had 1,500 people killed in the East End of London. They were only killed in the East End of London because the German Kaiser had given an order that the bombers were not allowed to bomb the West End of London, because his cousin lived in that big house at the end of the Mall, called Buckingham Palace. And so they were not allowed to go up to the West End so all the casualties were in the East End of London. They worked out from that raid that for every ton of bombs dropped on an English city, 50 people would be killed. And so they set aside 60 million square feet of timber. For what? Why do you think they set aside 60 million square feet of timber? Coffins - because they thought that number of people would die, and they thought 'how are we going to store these?'. So in the end they sent round flat-packed coffins.

By the time the British plans were in place we were already behind the Germans. Their scheme was called 'Kinderlandverschukten', which basically meant moving children into the countryside and the French scheme. The French had a scheme called 'Short Term' and 'Long Term' which meant basically that if you did not need to work or live in Paris you could be moved a long way away from Paris, but if you did need to work in Paris you could be evacuated at night, just a short distance away, and then come back into Paris in the following morning to work. But of course they never were able to put their scheme into practice, purely and simply because they were overrun, and surrendered in June 1940.

So what the British did was set up what is called the Anderson Committee. Now Sir John Anderson was Home Secretary at the time. And he was given the brief of looking at two particular things - what were the danger zones in London? But also what essential industries had to continue? And the idea was, that they would plan it all for London, and then they would actually replicate this to other cities around the countryside, but they had to sort out London first. So there were some concerns. First of all there was an expectation that a number of people would panic. Now I am being politically correct here, because on the original document it doesn't say a number of people, it actually says 'the working class'. Britain in the 1930's was a very class ridden society. Everybody knew their place and there was this fear that the working classes would panic. Now I have been researching this for 16 years now and I have come across no evidence at all, of anybody panicking. So evacuation was, to a certain extent, a way of controlling that panic.

Part 4

It was also important that some people could stay. There were vital industries that had to be kept going within the cities. And so they would not be moved. Those that could be moved, and were not essential were sent out into the reception areas. They would need to move between 3 and 4 million people within the first 72 hours. As it happened it was nothing like that figure, but that was the figure that was underpinning all the planning of that time. And there was a need for the government to implement the scheme as soon as tension began, not when war was declared. A lot of people have said to me 'why is it I can remember being in my billet, - in other words the reception area - , listening to Chamberlain, saying we were at war with Germany on the Sunday'. Well

quite simply, because a lot of the children were moved before war was even declared. On the basis that it was easier to bring them back, if there wasn't going to be a war, rather than have these children moving under a lot of panic, panic measures all of a sudden, and so they were already there in the countryside.

The countryside was divided into three areas. The evacuation areas were those places considered to be at risk, in other words those places which were highly industrialized, they were the main communication arteries - London, Manchester, Birmingham, Liverpool, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Aberdeen etc etc. The big major target areas.

The reception areas were those areas which were considered to be safer. They were not necessarily safer, but they were considered to be safer. And those tended to be in the West Country, Dorset, Somerset, Devon, Cornwall, all of Wales, the Lake District up in the north-west, and some of the Highlands of Scotland, were mainly reception areas. And to begin with, so too was the South Coast. A lot of children were moved to the coast, along the south and around the east coast, until Germany invaded France, and those areas were in danger, so those children were moved again in 1940.

Now we have this strange place, areas that were called the neutral zones. Now neutral zones were technically areas to where you could not be evacuated 'out of', nor could you be evacuated 'in to'. But they made some big mistakes because Plymouth, which was the naval headquarters in this country, and Bristol which was the 5th largest port in this country, were both declared neutral zones. So if you were a child in Plymouth you could not be moved out, and you could not be moved in. Until someone said 'hang on this has got to be wrong because all these children are in danger'. And so Plymouth was then renamed as an evacuation area, and so children could move from Plymouth. But Bristol didn't, Bristol remained a neutral zone until 1942, by which time Bristol had suffered the Blitz.

What they did in 1939 in January, they had to do a survey, of how many spaces there were in the reception areas. So they called these people 'Visitors', really original name. They were called *Visitors* and they were told to go round these areas with a clipboard and a questionnaire asking how many people they could take. In some areas they did not use women as visitors because they were considered to be too 'nosy', and they would spend too much time gossiping. So they were told that they were not allowed to use women visitors so most of these visitors were men.

Now, you live in a 4 bedroom semidetached house. You have two adults and two children. You don't count the kitchen or the bathroom - how many children could you take, extra? Have a guess - if you had that house how many would you take? - 4, 10 you reckon, have a guess, 10 as well. Well, anybody else? 3 yes, 3 or 4 I would have said, however you are absolutely right because originally they did reckon that you could take 10 or 12 evacuees. How did they work out that figure? Well quite simply they gave each house a code number, and all you had to do was work out how many people fitted the number. If you were aged under 5, you counted as 0. So technically you could fill a house with loads and loads of kids under the age of 5. If you were between the ages of 6 and 11, you counted as a half. If you were over the age of 11, bearing in mind the school leaving age was 14, you counted as 1. So you could either have three 11 to 13 year olds, or 6x6 to 11 years olds. Or hoards and hoards and hoards of children under the age of 5 and

that's how they worked it out. Basically most people took in 3 or 4 evacuees, or even less than that.

They never made any checks at all on the suitability of people to take in children.

Part 5

Now, with the work that I have been doing, and that a colleague of mine has been doing at Cambridge we reckon between 15-18% of evacuees were abused. That also means of course that between 82-85% of evacuees were not, and they had a reasonably good time. And the other thing we have to remember is that some of these children were leaving houses, homes, where they were being abused and they were living now with people who were looking after them really well, which made it a problem at the end of the war when some of these children wanted to go back home., because they knew what they were going back to. So some of these children had a really bad time. But it is a case that some of the children who went were severely abused at that time, but not that many.

Some people tried to play the system, if they didn't want to have an evacuee - this is a letter I found with reference to Lady Davey - 'on medical grounds it is not good for her to have 10 evacuees in a house with only 5 bedrooms and two living rooms. Because of her public duties Lady Davey requires more than just her bedroom'. This was one lady living in a 5- bedroom house not wanting to take any evacuees at all. And she was trying to play the System purely and simply because she thought that with a title she could actually get away with it. I never did find a reply to that, I would have loved to find a reply.

Children were then issued with a luggage label .On their luggage label were name, school and local authority - in other words the authority that the school was in. In some cases you will see a number, and the number is simply the number of the school on the evacuation register. They literally were paper luggage labels. I was just checking my jacket, because I usually wear my little metal one. As Chairman of the Evacuee Association I am an Honorary Evacuee so I have a little metal luggage label.

Ok. So in 1938 the Anderson committee having met and called in lots and lots of people, so called experts, came up with the following guidelines. That first of all evacuation was not to be compulsory. You did not have to be evacuated, but as we shall see, that caused all sorts of problems. However, billeting was compulsory. If you did not have an evacuee, or if you refused to have an evacuee, you could actually be fined. 15 shillings, 75 pence which doesn't sound a lot now, because it was about two Mars bars. But in those days, 15 shillings was just under 50% of an agricultural labour's wage for a 60-hour week. So 15 shillings were a lot of money.

The government would meet the initial cost. And that's important, because local authorities where the children went to had to pay the extra costs, and people didn't like that. And school children would be evacuated with their schools. So on the 30th of August, 1939, the government issued this signal to which simply said 'Get ready for evacuation'. This was the Wednesday of that last week of August. On the following day, on the 31st, which was the Thursday, it issued the

signal saying 'evacuate forthwith' and this is my quote, 'the greatest family in social upheaval ever know in this country with about to begin'. They really did not know what they had let out of the basket basically. It caused all sorts of problems.

Now what had these children been doing that week? Well, they had gone to their schools and they had been told in many places to take with them the clothes and everything else that they were going to be evacuated with. And there was a list, they were all given a list of what they could take. So they turned up on the Monday and they would walk down to the bus stop or they would walk down to the train station and all these ex-evacuees have told me that they can remember people with clipboards and stopwatches. They would go back to school, have their lessons and go home. They did that on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday. But on the Friday, instead of going back to school, I some of them got on the bus and on the train and they were being evacuated, but in some cases the parents didn't know. They did not know their children had gone. And it wasn't until they did not come home from school at 4 o'clock in the afternoon that the parents are saying 'where are they?' that they went down to the school to find a notice on the school gate saying 'This school has been evacuated. You will be notified where your child is as soon as possible'. So some of these children didn't even have time to say goodbye.

But notice that they are still, the government is still trying to convince everybody, that there is not going to be a war. This is the Manchester Evening News on the 31st August. This is the day before evacuation, and notice this is the main headline 'Evacuation starts tomorrow, 3 million to move. Order is given as a precaution, war is not inevitable'. They kept saying these things, war is not going to happen, war is not inevitable, as they really did think as I have said before, that people would panic.

Right, this is the United Kingdom and these are the main train lines. If you took a train before the war, from London to Penzance, in Cornwall, it would have taken you 8 hours, it now takes you 8 hours 7 minutes, they must go the pretty way now. But it actually takes longer to get to Penzance now than it did in 1939. Never mind,.....Anyway, in wartime if you did that route as an evacuee it would take you a minimum of 12 hours. Why is that a problem? Well quite simply this. Every time the train stopped to pick up new evacuees, or to drop somebody off the Women's Institute, the Women's Voluntary Service, the Salvation Army, lots of other groups were there giving out drinks.

Part 6

Now, what you may not know is there used to be on the rail system in this country, third class carriages. And third class carriages were about the size of these two desks, and they would probably be a little closer, so think of that. So what you've got - normally, you would have 8 people sitting in your third class carriage. When these children were crammed in there were probably about 12. Now if you get on a train in this country now, we have a corridor, don't we, down the middle, of all the carriages, you just keep walking from carriage to carriage. At the end of each carriage is a toilet. No problem! There third class carriages did not have a corridor. They had a door at this end and a door at that end, and once

you were in the carriages you could not get out. The only way you could do it was to drop down the window, lean out, open the door, that way, and swing out. As a kid that used to be great fun – you could swing out on these doors. There were no toilets.

Now all these children were being given all these drinks and there were no toilets, so what did they do? They either pee-ed out of the window, and there were some places along the line I would not have wanted to have lived, because most of them pee-ed out of the window around the Didcot area, or they wet themselves, and that's important. When they decided to re-evacuate in 1940 they actually decided to put up some toilets, and these were temporary – buckets with seats on. Canvas at the back, canvas down the sides, canvas over the top, nothing at the front, completely open and where was the front facing – the train. So all these people were saying they were dying to go for a pee, but they couldn't because they didn't want to in front of their friends. Now the fact that they turned up having wet themselves is important for slightly later on, as I'll explain.

The first train left London and ended up in Maidenhead, just down the line. It was not the seaside. All these people who had been told that they were going to the seaside, and Maidenhead was only a few miles down. You could see London burning during the Blitz. Most children did not go from the rail termini, because once you get into a terminus there is no way out. You have got to come out the same way. So a lot of children who came west, this way, went from Acton and Ealing Broadway because you could go out either end of the platform. On the first day, that is September 1st, 44,000 children were evacuated. By the Monday 17,796 had been evacuated. Now remember this was happening in all the major cities around the countryside, to the point that about 11/2 million people were being evacuated.

They didn't use the tube system in London unless they were absolutely desperate but they didn't use it purely and simply because they had this great fear that there was going to be a gas attack and the ventilation system would not have coped with that. Secondly there were lots and lots of rivers flowing under London into the river Thames, some of them very close to the tube system. And Charring Cross here – there are 7 rivers that flow into the Thames at Charring Cross. Had it been hit at any time it would have flooded the system, also any direct hit the network would have brought the thing to a standstill and to be honest imagine what it would have been like, if you had been in a tube train in London, with lots and lots of children where a bomb had blocked off one end of the tunnel, and in some cases may have blocked off both ends of the tunnel, it would have been horrendous. So it was a lot easier to move the children above ground in case that happened.

Now these are the numbers of children who were evacuated, just look at the totals. This is September '39 – 827,000 virtually unaccompanied children, 524,000 children who went with their mothers, 12,000 expectant mothers, 7,000 disabled/blind, and 103,000 teachers. And they were moved over those 4 days. It was an amazing logistical exercise to get all these children, all these people out into these areas of safety within 4 days.

To give you an idea of what it meant for one city, this is Manchester; 67,000 children including those under 5, about 20,000 mothers, teachers and helpers,

and on that first day, September 1st they used 114 trains, and 150 buses and they had to close 268 Manchester Schools. So those were the numbers of children that actually left.

Part 7

Now remember I said it was not compulsory. The green figures here, this is Berkshire where we are now, except Reading. The green figures are those that were expected to come to Berkshire. The red figures are the ones that actually turned up. Why was that a problem? Well quite simply, I as a Billeting Officer, have been very efficient. I have gone round my village, or I have gone round my area, and I have worked out who can actually have an evacuee. You can have two, and you can have two, you are out at work all day you don't have to have anybody, you've got an invalid living in your house, you don't have to have anybody, you've got a big house, you can have a mother and a child. And have gone through all my village – great, sorted, no problem.

Now all these others turn up – so I am having to go back to them and say 'sorry, you've now got to take 3, and you've got to take 3, and I know you are out at work all day but you have got to take 2, and you have got to take 2, and you have got to take an extra 1. Whoa, whoa, whoa whoa Hang about, that's not fair. I did not want evacuees in the first place now you are telling me I've got to take more. I don't want to, that really isn't fair. But of course it wasn't fair. But what was worse, was in fact that this discussion was going on, in many cases, in front of the children. So some of those people I have now interviewed said 'I knew we were not wanted because they made that perfectly obvious when they were arguing about who should go where. So, although they didn't want to make it compulsory, it did have this knock on effect which nobody had actually considered.

Now remember what I said just now about the 3rd class carriage. Every child was given a ration, a bag of rations in these brown paper carrier bags. They all contained the same thing. A tin of condensed milk, a tin of corned beef, biscuits and chocolate. Most of that chocolate was confiscated for safe keeping by the teachers, never to be seen again. And some cases the children were given their ration packs when they arrived, but in many areas they were given them as they got on the train. Now you are 6 or 7, 8 or 9 years-old and you are on a long journey, and sitting there with all the food in front of you, what are you going to do? You are going to eat it, aren't you? I mean it stands to reason, you are going to eat it. So after you've had a corned beef and biscuit sandwich, dunked in some condensed milk, and you are on a long stuffy journey, you are now feeling a little sick. Need I say more. If one person in a very small area is sick, a lot of other people are sick. Ever been on a boat when it's doing this? People are going 'I am not going to be sick, I am not going to be sick' and someone is sick. You see all these people rush to the side because they are going to be sick as well. Because they had seen this other person being sick and that was what was happening in some of these carriages.

So when some of these children arrived in the reception areas, not only had some of them wet themselves, they had either been sick, or they had been sicked on. Because this was a very narrow confined space. You know you have only got to

go 'Yerrrrr-doing' and everybody is covered in it. So they were in a pretty bad way by the time they actually got to the countryside. You did get paid to have evacuees, but I'll gloss over that as I'm conscious of the time. There were problems trying to get hosts. These newspaper advertisements started coming in. But, more seriously, some of the work I have been doing now centres on how the children themselves felt. Now imagine - not only have you arrived in the reception areas, in a pretty poor state, not all of them but enough of them. They also got the blame for bringing in diseases into the countryside.

Part 8

Let me just go through this quickly and I will show you what I mean. There was a lot of anti-evacuee propaganda. In other words, they didn't want them there, because there was nothing happening. There was nothing happening. It was what was called the 'Phoney War Period'. War was declared on 3rd September 1939 but nothing really happened until June 1940. We get the Battle of Britain, then we get the Blitz starting in September 1940. So we had all the evacuees saying 'why are we here, we don't want to be here' and we had a lot of the people saying 'why are you here, we don't want you here'. There was a tremendous drift home. By Christmas of 1939 137,000 children had gone home. But they were blamed for all the ills that were taking place in some of the evacuated areas, to the point that these advertisements started appearing in the newspapers saying 'if your evacuee is dirty, use bodyguard toilet soap'. There is no mention of the children who lived in the village, so obviously they didn't get dirty. But of course they did, but it was the evacuees who were blamed for things.

Now I set my students a challenge; that we can go into a Record Office in one of the reception areas of the 2nd World War and prove, that some of the diseases that the evacuees were blamed for, ringworm, scarlet fever, head lice, body lice, diphtheria, impetigo etc. were already there. And in fact some of the evacuees have told me that they didn't have any of these diseases before they moved into the countryside. They picked them up from the village children. So this disease thing was very much an anti-evacuee propaganda situation. And a lot of evacuees now in their late 60's and 70's still get very upset when reading text books or seeing things on the television which refer to 'dirty evacuees'. The fact that some of them didn't know what a knife and fork was, the fact that some of them were supposed to have been sewn into their underwear for the whole of that winter. I have interviewed thousands and thousand of ex-evacuees and I have never come across any examples of that.

And you also get the impression that most of the children came from the poor areas of the cities. And they didn't. A lot of those who were evacuated came from the middle class areas of the cities. So it was just as much a culture shock for them to move from a nice house with full bath room, etc. etc. etc. to an agricultural labourer's house who had an earth floor and tin bath in front of the fire on a Friday night, and an earth privy at the bottom of the garden with no internal sanitation whatsoever. So, it was a culture shock for all these children. And it was also a shock for those people who were taking them in. All the sudden, they now had into look after these strangers' children that they have never met before.

And in some cases of course the languages was different. I've mentioned the Finnish, Swedish situation. But there was a situation here as well, where you had children who were moved to West and North Wales who were Welsh speaking. These children had to learn Welsh in order to communicate with their hosts. In fact two boys from Liverpool won the poetry speaking competition, Welsh poetry competition in their age group at the National Eisteddfod in 1942. So some of them became very proficient in actually learning the language. But of course when they went home, unlike the Finns who could go home and had no language at all at least in this country the children could go home and drift back very quickly, back into English albeit with a Welsh accent.

But there have been real, serious problems since the war. Some of these evacuees that I now work with cannot do simple things like say 'goodbye'. If their family come for Sunday lunch they will make every effort not to be there to say goodbye. They will lock themselves in the bathroom, or go down to the bottom of the garden or whatever, but they cannot do it. Some people - one guy I knew who was head of a big multi-national corporation in this country could not pack a suitcase. He physically could not bring himself to pack a suitcase. One woman I interviewed, knew she had a problem and when her own daughter was at primary school age in the 1950's had to get herself locked into a cupboard if her child was going on a school journey because she knew if she was allowed to, she would drag her child off the coach. She knew she had a problem, and that was the only way she could deal with it. But there is one interesting thing to remember. With the work I am now doing internationally, is that if you take away the culture, if you take away the language, and you think of these children purely as children, then the trauma that was affecting British evacuees is almost the same as those long term effects of German war children and Finnish war children. And it is only now that work is being done in this field.

Part 9

I was in Germany, should have been in Germany last week, I was in Germany last year, and those were the first conferences in Germany where they were actually addressing the problems of war children. And the research that I am doing here, now at Reading, as I was saying with my colleague at Cambridge and my colleague at Bristol is doing, we are the only ones working in this field at the depth we are working at. And the reason for that is because I hear it time and time again - 'I don't know why you are interested in looking at war children because they're only children and they grow out of it'. Well I'm sorry they don't, they really don't. And some of these children of that time have got real, real problems now because of what they went through during wartime. Some of them find it difficult to maintain relationships, some of them have multi-marriages, some of them have not got married purely and simply because when the relationship gets to the point where someone has to make a commitment, they pull out of it. Not because they want to pull out of it, because they are afraid that their partner will pull out of it, and it's a real and serious problem. I am finding that not only here, but with the people I am working with in Finland and the people I am working with in Germany.

Now if we could say that when the Second World War finished in 1945, that was the end of the war and that was 'it', it wouldn't be a problem, because we now

know that war trauma in children goes through 3 generations. Now it may be diluted over those 3 generations, but it happens. If we could say 1945 was the end of it, that's fine because it's my children's generation who will be the last generation affected by the Second World War. But off course we can't. For the simple reason I said earlier on, there are 30 wars going on in the world as we speak and not only that 1967 is the only year since 1945 when a British serviceman has not been killed in action. One year since 1945 when there were no fatalities in the British services working with the U.N., N.A.T.O. or the British services. So these war zones, and this war trauma is going to be perpetuated over a period of time. So I go back to my very first statement one of the problems we have, and the reasons why I do my research to this is quite simply because children are the invisible victims of war.

Thank you very much.

Are there any questions that anyone would like to ask?

Unintelligible question. Well I think that's a very good point, because the same situation really occurred in Germany because there was nowhere for the German children to go except within the country. It might well be that we cannot protect the children from what's going on around them. I mean you might know better than I do that there would be areas within Iraq which would be deemed to be 'safer' if not 'safe. Of course that was the point with this evacuation. The areas that some of these children were sent to were not necessarily safe but they were safer. I think that's what's got to happen is that countries have not to realise that when they are working with war related trauma, or post-war reconstruction, that the children have to be part of that. And one of the things that we have been trying to do is to inform people that should happen. Because one of the problems is, in a way if you don't they are brewing up trouble for the future. Not necessarily in terms of future conflicts, but within those children themselves. Because those children growing up within the war zone of Iraq will be affected by it. They have to be affected by it, they are seeing people blown up every day, they are seeing families being killed and it's not only now what with all the purges and everything else which have gone on for years.

Part 10

So what someone has to do is say 'Right we have now got to get hold of this next generation, we have now got to do something about it. And there were attempts made at the end of the Second World War to do precisely that. Some German children, for instance, were sent to Denmark, some German children were sent here - German orphans. There was a famous village in Switzerland called the Pestalozzi Village which some of you may have heard of. If you've ever read the novel 'The Silver Sword' by Ian Serraillier that's based on the Pestalozzi Villages where what they did is they had hostels basically, but they were homes. Which were looked after by - let's say you were Polish children, looking after you would be Polish adults. So you had your own national communities within this village, but then they joined together for various activities. And what they were trying to do within that unit was to create a generation which would be much more tolerant of their neighbours, both in terms of political and religious views etc, etc, etc. Whether it worked or not I don't know, because I am not sure if anyone has

done any follow-up with the children who were in the Pestalozzi Villages. So I think going back to your original question, I think that what has to happen is that if you cannot shield the children from what is going on you have to be aware of what, the effects of what they are living through is going to have. And so they are really going to have to put in child psychologists, trauma experts, sociologists, educationists, whatever within the country. And this is not a quick fix, this is not 'oh dear we've got a real problem here lets flood the place with counsellors'. And as soon as they think its finished they bring all the counsellors out, - that's not going to work. They are going to have to have government strategies which are going to have to go on for years in order to help these people through it because we have enough evidence to show that for some of these people 50 or 60 years is not enough time. Does that answer your question? *Yes thank you.*