

silberinfo talks to

Barbara Lips, daughter of Swiss banker and book author Ferdinand Lips, who gave silberinfo the following exclusive interview:

silberinfo:

Ms. Lips, we believe your father left behind a great legacy to future generations. His book "Gold Wars" viewed the gold market from a completely new perspective at the time. Do you know what motivated or gave him the idea to write the book?

B. Lips:

My father spent decades contemplating history and economic questions – focusing especially on precious metals, currency systems and their related shortcomings. And his involvement went beyond the theoretical; he also took an active role. The ignorance and narrow-mindedness of politicians and "business luminaries" always bothered him. He openly expressed his opinion and was frequently criticized as a result. He thus sought and found an outlet or opportunity, through his books, to inform a broad range of people and draw attention to certain flaws.

silberinfo:

Did he have a favorite place where he liked to do his writing, i.e. a retreat of sorts?

B. Lips:

He used to spend a lot of time in Tuscany. The countryside, the peacefulness, the people and the culinary delights were always very inspiring for him. Later, he wanted to set up a second home in Mesox, Switzerland, but he unfortunately never got the chance to fully complete this.

silberinfo:

Do you remember the initial reactions after the book came out? Were there any people or organizations that would have preferred it had not been published?

B. Lips:

The reactions were mostly quite positive, and my father received countless letters

from readers. He was always convinced of his viewpoint and his predictions for the future. He was used to the disparaging comments of critics and people who ridiculed him. It did not make much of an impression on him. Quite the contrary, it motivated him even more to inform as many people as possible, because he was confident of his position. And as we can see today, his predictions were correct!

silberinfo:

To write a book of this quality requires not only a great deal of knowledge but also numerous contacts. Do you know of any meetings that never officially took place?

B. Lips:

I am not personally aware of any such meetings, but he certainly did have links to experts around the world. As I already mentioned, he was convinced of his viewpoint and did not keep it a secret when he met with people who were perhaps not exactly "en vogue" in financial circles. He mostly found the conversations to be informative and profitable – in a figurative sense.

silberinfo:

Did you learn, as an "insider" so to speak, what ultimately led to the decision to sharply reduce the Swiss gold reserves, details that are perhaps not revealed in the book?

B. Lips:

I can remember my father was often very frustrated about gold reserves and how they were handled by the central banks – including the Swiss National Bank. He also wrote many articles and letters that were not published and which also unfortunately received no response. He would usually say that they simply have no idea!

silberinfo:

Did your father ever have direct contact with the people at the Swiss National Bank who were responsible for initiating the sale of gold? Was there a discussion on this topic in which your father participated?

B. Lips:

He knew those who were responsible and was very well informed about their activities, but I have no knowledge of the content of any discussions on this topic.

silberinfo:

Is it true that important media outlets like the Neue Zürcher Zeitung deliberately suppressed the book and the topic?

B. Lips:

When the first edition appeared in the English language, it was not really an interesting theme for the press. They restricted themselves to the usual topics. Furthermore, most of the media did not make the effort to gather more in-depth information and be somewhat "inquisitive".

silberinfo:

The Rothschild dynasty used to be closely linked with gold trading. Today, it is no longer a priority for the Rothschild Bank. Did your father ever talk about this development, and did he try to counteract it?

B. Lips:

No, he did not try to counteract this development. But he did certainly regret that even Bank Rothschild increasingly turned away from gold.

silberinfo:

What role did the topic of silver play in the Lips house?

B. Lips:

It was always a topic. Books and reports generally on precious metals were lying around everywhere, and my father always told my sister and me that we were lucky to be witnessing an unprecedented boom in precious metals! Although he was known as "Gold Ferdi," he was very firmly convinced of an impending silver boom!

silberinfo:

Can you tell our readers how many copies of his book have opened the eyes of the public up to now?

B. Lips:

Approximately 70,000 to 75,000 copies have been sold.



Gold Wars in good company

silberinfo:

It would be interesting to know what languages the book has been published in thus far. Can you fill us in?

B. Lips:

The German version is the most widely read. Around 45,000 copies have been sold to date. The original version was published in English. And the book has also been translated into Japanese and Bulgarian.

silberinfo:

This naturally also raises the question of whether further editions are planned for other countries. If so, which ones?

B. Lips:

The French version will be published in autumn 2009, and the book will be released in Chinese at the end of 2009 or in early 2010. Given the current financial crisis, there is an absolute run on the book at present! I am currently engaged in talks to publish the book in Spanish and Russian as well. These two versions would be extremely interesting in my opinion and would certainly appeal to a wide readership.

silberinfo:

Some years have gone by since the book was first published. Do you still get feedback from time to time?

B. Lips:

It is truly satisfying that I still receive letters from readers, because the book has lost none of its relevance. They come mostly from individuals – mainly from the German-speaking countries.

The letters are very kind, and one senses from them that many people are skeptical about the current monetary systems and are looking for suitable alternatives. My father certainly would have been very pleased by the positive opinions and the respect given to his book. Something of note in all of this is that the younger generation has recently begun giving thought to this topic once again.



„Gold Wars“ in Japanese

silberinfo:

Did your father have enemies?

B. Lips:

That is definitely possible, but it would never have swayed him from his convictions. Quite the opposite is true.

silberinfo:

In order to quell any speculation, can you confirm to us that your father died a natural death?

B. Lips:

My father did die a natural death. However, I received numerous phone calls from people who told me there was a conspiracy against my father. The speculation about a conspiracy could also have been encouraged by the fact that 10 days before my father's death, a good friend of his from South Africa was killed. I do not know of any death threats against my father or anything of that nature.

silberinfo:

It is very likely that your father's estate includes documents which did not appear in the book and are highly explosive. Can you tell us more?

B. Lips:

I am currently in the process of organizing all of his published and unpublished articles,

speeches and theories and will release these on a website in the near future.

silberinfo:

Were you proud of your father when you were a child, and how was your relationship with him?

B. Lips:

He was a "free thinker" and raised my sister Beatrice and me accordingly. Since our mother died at a young age, he was forced to do this on his own. We had a great deal of freedom, and he always emphasized that we should live our lives according to our own design, but with respect for other people and that a lot of work is also involved. We became truly proud of him only when we were older and realized how he lived, worked, expressed his convictions and still took the time to enjoy life very much.

silberinfo:

Were there times when he did not want you around, for example when he was meeting with business partners?



B. Lips:

No. He was always very open and communicative and always included me. He showed great trust in me. Even regarding highly sensitive matters, he informed me about his meetings and activities.

silberinfo:

How old were you when you held your first gold bars in your hands?

B. Lips:

I cannot remember the first gold bars, but we received Swiss gold coins as gifts ever since we were quite young. And he was always very happy to present them to us. It was a nice tradition!

silberinfo:

In what way do you remain involved with the topic of gold, precious metals and gold mines?

B. Lips:

When I went into business for myself 5 years ago with my own marketing agency, Lips, Marti & Partner (www.lipsmartipartner.ch),

I worked closely with my father from the outset. I thus specialized in the mining business. Given that I was repeatedly confronted with the subject of gold, silver, etc. since my childhood, I was very familiar with the topic and I had a perfect teacher as well as access to very good contacts. It was also always extremely interesting to talk with my father, because his knowledge was enormous – especially in this area. He always had interesting information, and his network was unique in my opinion.

silberinfo:

Where do you live today, and are you pursuing any new professional challenges?

B. Lips:

I live and work close to Zurich and am still active in the mining area – my main business. It interests me professionally and, of course, also personally because it has always been a part of my life. Through my father, I have met a lot of interesting people who continue to support and motivate me even today.

In addition and as a change of pace from the mining business, I am building up business in the art & design area. I work together with various highly talented artists and support them in the marketing & sales area. It is an extremely interesting field and complements my other activities perfectly. Furthermore, the topics of precious metals and art have a lot more in common than I initially thought.

An important project to which I am devoting my full attention at the moment – as I said earlier – is the preparation of the website showcasing my father's work. His experience and knowledge should be made accessible to as broad an audience as possible, and I naturally hope there will be an active exchange of opinions. It will undoubtedly be quite fascinating. The site should be activated in autumn at the latest.

silberinfo:

Thank you for taking the time to talk with us. We wish you all the best!