

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Dino Brugioni
November 13, 2014
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PREFACE

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DINO BRUGIONI

November 13, 2014

Question: This is a **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Dino Brugioni**, on November 13th, 2014, in **Hartwood, Virginia**. And thank you Mr. **Brugioni** for agreeing to speak with us today, to share your experiences, and your professional expertise, as well as your personal experiences during World War II. I'm going to start the interview the way we start all of ours, by asking a little bit about your background, your childhood, your growing up, and some of the forces and people who influenced you. So let's start out by asking, when were you born, where were you born, and what was your name at birth?

Answer: December 16 – I was born December 16, 1921 at **Bedier, Missouri, b-e-d-i-e-r**.

Q: And your name at birth was **Dino Brugioni**?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. Do you have a middle name?

A: Yes, **Anthony**.

Q: **Anthony**. And what were your parents' names?

A: **Frances** and **John**.

Q: **Frances Brugioni** was your mother?

A: Yes.

Q: And **John** your father.

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A: Father.

Q: How did your family end up in **Mississippi**?

A: **Missouri**.

Q: **Missouri**, excuse me. Was it – sorry. I'm sorry.

A: First my grandfather came over from **Italy**, and then he brought my dad over, and my mother the same way. My mother was born – they both were born in **Fiumalbo, Italy**. It's in the north **Apennines**. In – in **Modena**, province of **Modena**. They came over – my mother came over in 1904, and my father in 1908. My – my father came over with his father. My mother came over with her m – her mother and her sister. They both – they all settled in jeffers – in **Revere, Missouri**. Was a coal mining town, and there was plenty of work, and paid well.

Q: Do they – what language do they speak at home?

A: Well, we spoke English, but my grandmother always insisted we speak Italian when we were at her place.

Q: Did – did your parents ever go back to visit **Modena**, and the village they came from?

A: No, no, they didn't.

Q: They didn't. Did you ever see it?

A: I saw it from the air.

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Q: Did you?

A: Yes, and I knew that my uncle – I had an uncle that lived there, and I – but I was afraid to drop a parachute or anything with information, because then I was afraid the – the Nazi would get ahold of it, and he'd get beaten up.

Q: So this was during World War II?

A: World War II, yeah.

Q: Okay. Tell me a little bit about your childhood. Did you have brothers and sisters?

A: Yes, I had two brothers and two sisters.

Q: And where – what were their names?

A: My brother's name was **Delmo, d-e-l-m-o**, and **John Waldo**. My – my sister's name was **Arlene** and **Elfia, e-l-f-i-a**.

Q: Where in the family were you, were you th-the youngest, the oldest, in-between?

A: No, I'm the second. My sister was the oldest.

Q: Okay –

A: Sister **Elfia** was the oldest and I was next.

Q: So you're the oldest boy.

A: Huh?

Q: You're the oldest boy in the family.

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A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And I was always lectured by my father, you gotta be an example to your brothers.

Q: Was that a burden?

A: Oh yeah. Oh yeah, because they were always acting up, and then – but my – my father was a great believer in education, in educating his boys, especially.

Q: Well, that's something I – when I talked about the – the influences, the people who influenced you and the forces that shaped you, how did – how did that play out in your life? Were you studious in school? Were you –

A: Oh yes, yes, I was very studious. And always trying to do well. I was always trying to please the teachers.

Q: And did you go to public school?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you go to high school as well?

A: Yes.

Q: And did you finish high school?

A: Yes. And I finished two years of college before I was – went into service.

Q: And what college was this?

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A: **Jefferson City Junior College.**

Q: So you were in **Jefferson City** then?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay. And were you studying something in particular?

A: Well, I wanted to be a diplomat.

Q: Did you?

A: Yeah, and so I kept looking at possible universities, and one that I always liked was **George Washington University.**

Q: Mm-hm. In **Saint Louis**?

A: No, in **Washington, D.C.**

Q: I'm sorry. I'm – oh, there's a **Washington University**, I think, in **Saint Louis.**

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Yes, yes. And tell me a little bit about home life. Were your parents religious?

Were they, you know –

A: We all had chores to do –

Q: Okay.

A: – and we'd better do them, and do them well. And I just idolized my mother and dad. I just thought they were the two grandest persons. And the same thing with my grandfather and grandmother. My grandfather was a – was a combination of – he

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was a stone mason, brick mason, and – and – and I would work with him. And I loved – I loved – still love to work with bricks and mortar and – and stone.

Q: What kind of people were they? Like, personalities.

A: Oh, my grandfather was – was a – was a kind of a – whenever working with him, he's always find little jokes. And he was always very, very particular with mixing mortar, it had to be just right. And it couldn't – if it was too wet, or too dry, he'd – he'd – he'd kind of scold me.

Q: So he knew –

A: I wasn't doing it right.

Q: He knew.

A: I mean, everything had to be done right with – with the masonry.

Q: And your father, you say he was a miner?

A: He was a coal miner, and then later he worked for the state of **Missouri** at the Supreme Court.

Q: What was his job there?

A: Huh?

Q: What was his job there?

A: Well, his job was primarily always getting ready – getting ready the exams of the year for news – new – for new st – new lawyers.

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Q: Really?

A: When they took the exams, yeah, he – he worked, helped them. He always admired doing that too, incidentally. He always thought that one of these days, one of the boys that – that took the exam, that he handled the paper to, would become president.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah, he was –

Q: Now tell me, did he go to higher education, did he finish high school and go to college?

A: No, but he was very smart man, very smart education – not education-wise, but in terms of life.

Q: Mm-hm. Was your family struggling financially, or were they well-to-do, or how did –

A: No, they were doing well with – he had a – he had a part owner in a mine. He doing well, and then during the depression they'd hit water, and he lost the job, he lost the mine, and he had his money in the bank – in the one bank, and it went broke. Had his – my mother had – had a fund that she had set aside for a house, and she lost that. And they were – they were – they were penniless. And then he took a

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job with the state in the power plant, sh-shoveling coal in a power plant, and they moved to **Jefferson City**.

Q: That's quite a shock.

A: Oh, gosh yes.

Q: You know. How did it affect you and your – your siblings?

A: Well, we all – we all took jobs on the side. I worked in a dairy for 10 cents an hour.

Q: My goodness.

A: My – my brothers worked in a welding shop. My sisters worked in state. Oh yeah, we all worked, all of us held down jobs.

Q: Well tell me, how did these early years, now when you can look back on it, how did they – what are the values you got from them? What are – how did they shape you in some ways?

A: Well, we had a respect for elders. We better not a – he – my dad better not hear any bad words fr – about us, at any time. I mean – and – and people would report, in those days, you know, to your parents. But the strange thing, even to this day, if I go home, I'm not known as **Dino**. I'm known as **John's** boy, or **Frannie's** boy.

Q: Really?

A: Right.

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Q: Wow. Do – did you live in a – before moving to **Jefferson City**, how large was the – the town you lived in?

A: Well, we had a – we – we lived on a little farm. And we had a – for example, I had to take care of an acre of garden. But my mom, my mom did – my mom canned and we had chickens, we had – we had a cow. A little farm in – we – and then we all had chores. My chores was to feed the cows and pigs and so forth. And then bring in the coal for the stoves. We all had jobs to do, and we did them. I mean, automatically. After we were told to do them, we did them.

Q: And do you remember about how large the farm was?

A: And my mother – my mother was an expert on crocheting and so she – she made a little extra money for us to go to movies and so forth.

Q: Do you remember the first movies that you saw?

A: Yes.

Q: What was it?

A: **Marx Brothers**.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. When did you first see photographs and get interested in photography?

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A: I was – I was a – a sophomore in high school. And so I – I – in those days you had a box camera, or a little bellows camera, but everything was set, pre-set. And so I wanted a – I wanted a camera, and when I was a – a senior in high school, I was working at a dairy for 10 cents an hour, and I saved my money and I bought a camera called the American **Leica**. And then I also bought the light meter that went with it for – for two more dollars, 20 more hours of o – of work.

Q: Wow. Yeah.

A: So then I wa – I could take pretty good pictures.

Q: What were the subjects that you took?

A: Well, primarily around the school. Took pictures of couples, and silly things. You know, that – you know, the typical things that went into the high school yearbooks.

Q: Did you – did you develop your own film?

A: No, not then, but I knew a guy that developed them, and – and so I-I – he was good, and so I'd take my – my negatives to him, and he would develop them.

Q: And were there many kids who had cameras?

A: What's that?

Q: Were there many kids who had cameras in those days?

A: Oh yeah.

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Q: Yeah?

A: Oh yeah. Most families there in those days were four to five children.

Q: And did mo – I mean, as f – as a hobby, was photography something that a lot of them took up? Were many kids with cameras?

A: No, no, my – my brother – my brother liked electronics and – and – and welding and so forth, and so they worked – they – they were – they had jobs in which they worked in welding shops. And then my brothers mis – and my two brothers then later, during the war they worked part time in a photo sh – lab.

Q: Oh, did they?

A: Yeah.

Q: So, when you were in **Jefferson City** in college, that would have been what year?

A: 1940 - '41.

Q: Okay. Do you remember where you were when **Pearl Harbor** was struck?

A: Yeah, we – I was at a movie.

Q: Really?

A: I came home and mom – my mother said, **Pearl Harbor's** been hit, and I said, where's **Pearl Harbor**?

Q: Yeah.

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A: I didn't know where **Pearl Harbor** was.

Q: And how did – how did things change for you after that?

A: Well, I wanted to be a flier.

Q: Okay. Did you sign up?

A: Yes.

Q: And tell me a little about those early days of your service.

A: Well, it was – it was training. It was basic, and then there was advanced and training and I was specializing in radio and radar and jamming. And so –

Q: And this was where, in **Missouri**?

A: In – no, no, I started out in **California**, various places in **California** and **Arizona**, and then in the south. Cause the weather was a big thing.

Q: Okay.

A: So I – I – I was a member of a **B-25** bomber crew in – in – in the char – in – in **South Carolina**, when we got the word we were going overseas.

Q: So this was by what year, how – when you were going overseas, did that mean to the **Pacific** theater, or –

A: No, it was European.

Q: – the European. European.

A: But we go – we were going to go to **Africa** first.

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Q: Okay.

A: Go to **Casablanca** first.

Q: And what year was this?

A: This would be 1942.

Q: So your – your training took over a year?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Okay. Tell me sa – tell me about that.

A: Yeah, we – we got in – well, we got in **Casablanca**, and I – and I was looking, where in the hell is **Rick's** place here?

Q: You'd seen the movie?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you ever find it?

A: Nah. I was adventurer, and so they had these tours, we hired this guy with a donkey, and we went down to – through the **Medina**.

Q: Wow.

A: And I got a lesson real quick-like about Arab hospitality.

Q: What happened?

A: Oh, they were mad as hell at us. They didn't want us around.

Q: And why was that?

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A: Well, they didn't like – they didn't like – they didn't like Americans in those days.

Q: I see, I see. And was it because you were military people?

A: Well, they didn't like Americans, period.

Q: Okay. Period. Okay. So what was the purpose of having a ba – was it a base that was in **Morocco**?

A: Yeah, well, we started in **Morocco**. **Casablanca** had just been taken, but then we were shipped to **Algiers**.

Q: Okay.

A: And I got to **Algiers** and I had lice, real bad. All of us had lice. We had to be de – de-liced.

Q: Deloused, yeah.

A: We went – we were in little railcars called 40 and 8. Let me wipe my eye, see, beginning to tear.

Q: Yeah. It's right there on your lap.

A: Okay.

Q: Okay. So you were in these railcars, or you – you were going to tell me about th
–

A: They were 40 and – they – they were – we were put in – in boxcars from –

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Q: Okay.

A: – from **Casablanca** to **Algiers**. And then from **Algiers** we went down to this place called **Constantine**.

Q: Okay.

A: And then the battle – in – in the – in the – **Africa** was fought and won, and then we – we got shipped to a little town – we were supposed to go to **Naples** and – and **Vesuvius** erupted, so we went to a small town south of **Naples**.

Q: I want to go back a little bit though. What was your job, when you were first in **Casablanca** and then **Algiers**, and then further down, what was your role, what were you doing?

A: Radio – radio operator.

Q: Radio operator. And what did that involve?

A: Well –

Q: For somebody who's ne – doesn't know, what were you doing?

A: Well, this was communica – communicating to one another, in the air. But then I had my first experience, my best friend. One morning we were taking off and he said, I'll call you at nine o'clock. And I said okay. So nine o'clock came and he would – he didn't call me, so I started calling him on the radio. And then I heard the

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– I heard the pilot say, oh God, look over there. And here is the plane he was in, had crashed.

Q: Oh.

A: And so we – we – we called the base, and so they went out and got the man, and the only way I recognized my buddy was his class ring.

Q: Ohhh.

A: He had burned that bad. And so they were gonna bury him in – bur – in – in a [indecipherable] bag. And I said no, we all fought, we – we went out, we chipped money in, we had Arabs make caskets for them. So that was my first experience with death, with my buddy. A real good buddy at that.

Q: Yeah, had he been shot down?

A: Yeah. No, no, they had problems training.

Q: I see. I see.

A: Plane crashed.

Q: So you were in one plane –

A: Yeah.

Q: – and he was in another.

A: In another.

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Q: Okay. And your job in the plane was to have radio communications with the ground?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: So we – after that, we went – we went – we were supposed to go to **Naples**.

Q: I'm sorry, I'm going to ask one more thing. What was the name of your buddy who died?

A: **Phil**.

Q: **Phil**. And do you remember his last name?

A: No.

Q: Okay. All right. So, you went to **Naples**.

A: I can – I can – I've got it recorded, but I've forgotten it.

Q: That's okay. That's okay. So after – after this, you're sent to **Italy**.

A: Yes.

Q: All right. And tell me about that.

A: We were sent to **Italy**. We were supposed to land at – at – at **Naples**, and **Vesuvius** erupted. So we settled to the south, and we settled i-in – they – they had taken a – a – a tomato patch and cleared it and made it a runway. And right near us

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was a – was a – was a Roman town called **Paestum**, with beautiful – prettier than the **Parthenon**.

Q: Oh really, with an old temple?

A: Oh yeah, went clear back. And so my mother used to send me books, she was a book of the month club. And I would go into this temple at ni – during the daytime, and I would read on the altar.

Q: Oh wow.

A: Yeah.

Q: Oh wow.

A: And there's little tiny roses – blooms in – through the – through the stone in the temple. But it's **p-a-e-s-t-u-m, Paestum**.

Q: **Paestum**. And was this, I take it then was near **Naples**, down in the south of **Italy**?

A: Was it –

Q: It was near – it – this **Paestum** –

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. So, how far down had the Germans been, and yeah, how far –

A: Well, that battle – well, the battle was fought nearby.

Q: I see.

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A: At **Sa-Salerno**.

Q: Okay. So when you – when you were transferred there, had already wa – that territory was under allied control, under American contro –

A: Yes, but barely.

Q: But barely. Okay. And this was what year?

A: This would be 1940 – '43.

Q: '43, okay. And what was your job again in – in –

A: I was still the – still the same thing.

Q: Radio operator.

A: Well, radio operator and then now I – I'm giving it – I told you about that –

Q: Tell me again.

A: Well, my – the colonel was a West Pointer, and he – he was all ticked off that we had gotten some new cameras and they were – the results were terrible.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And he said, does anybody know about – anything about photography, and then I said, well, I know a little bit. Well, they hadn't set the stops on the – on the cameras properly.

Q: You mean the photographers that were there?

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A: So, with my two dollar ata – light meter, I was setting the – the – the – the – the cameras, and we were getting beautiful results. And so he'd call **Brugi(ph)** – he called me **Brugi(ph)**, and he said **Brugi(ph)**, we've gotta fly. He was always – he was – always wanted to make sure that we wouldn't bomb our own troops.

Q: Okay.

A: So – but I wasn't getting cr-credit for our – for our missions, for our reconnaissance. I had yet to drop a bomb to get credit for – for to go home. So, first, it was only 25 bombs – runs and you could go home. And then during the invasion they raised it to 50, and then they asked – asked for volunteers to fly more. And like a damn fool I volunteered for more, and I – 65th mission we got shot up real bad. Really bad. And so I went to see the colonel and he said, what's the matter? And I said, well, I – I was a poor crewman. He said, what's the matter, and I said, well, I didn't give a damn whether I lived or died today. I thought I was gonna get killed. He said, how would you like to go to **Rome**? I said, I been there. He said, how would you like to go to **Cairo**? I said, I don't care for that. He says, suppose I give you a **Jeep**, and for two weeks, just do what the hell you want to. Just travel – travel **Corsica**. And I said no. And then he said, how would you like to go home? And so I came home. And then – now they wanted me to go to the **Pacific**.

Q: Uh-huh.

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A: Re – get – we can get on to that later.

Q: Okay. So, while you were in **Italy**, then were you – you would – you were on – not only – you were not only a radio operator, still continued doing that, but you were also now photographing.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. And how was the ba – how was the takeover, the – the battles against the Nazi forces progressing? Were they being pushed further north?

A: Oh, my. **Anzio** was slaughter. And they had – they had the Americans pinned down. And I was on the – one of the – one of the places that was – they were using for cover was **Monte Cassino**. And so I was on this – I was on the raids, and we bombed **Monte Cassino**.

Q: Now I heard that there were a lot of Polish forces –

A: Yes, yes.

Q: – that were fighting in **Monte Cassino**.

A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: Yeah?

A: Not only Polish, there was – there was Indian, there was Pakistanis, there was blacks from ed – I mean, French troops. Now, let me mention one thing here. My best buddy there was a guy named Sargent **Cobb**. He would have been another

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Billy Graham. He always had a Bible. He could quote from the Bible, and he was just a wonderful guy. So, whenever we would go – before the flight would go on, we'd go for walks together, and I'd take my rosary and he would – he would take his prayer book. And he just could s – he would – he would – he was such a wonderful man, everywhere around, say – name was Sargent **Cook**. And – and he was on a mission, and his plane was hit, and he came right under me, and I photographed it. And all the propellers were stopped.

Q: Oh my.

A: And – and he crashed, and was killed.

Q: Oh my.

A: And what a – what a loss we – what a – what a man we lost in Sargent **Co-Cobb**. Sargent **Cobb**, I'm sorry, not **Cook**.

Q: Sargent **Cobb**. What was his first name?

A: I don't remember.

Q: You don't remember.

A: All I remember was Sargent **Cobb**.

Q: Yeah. Well see, these are the things that we don't know.

A: He was from **Covington**, conne – **Kentucky**.

Q: **Covington, Kentucky**.

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A: Yeah.

Q: Did you – did you speak Italian?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: So, when you were in **Italy**, were you able to converse with people?

A: Oh yeah. I have to tell you something. We were in **Africa** and – and a – we had – Italian troops were doing the mess work, cooking for us. So I told them – I told –

Q: Were these prisoners?

A: Huh?

Q: Were these prisoners, or American Italians?

A: No, they were me – they were prisoners.

Q: They were prisoners, okay.

A: So I told one of them, **Bartholomew**, I – I told him, I said, well, I – I'm – I won't see you again, so I'm saying goodbye. And he said, oh, if you ever get to – to this town – he gave me a slip of paper – in **Italy**, he said, tell them I'm alive. It so happened it was Easter, and we weren't flying, and I found out the town was about five miles away. So I started walking, and I hitched a ride, got into the town, and I – so I went to – into the church, and I said, does anybody know this – this person? They said, oh yes, he's – his parents. So they get the parents, and they – there's a mass said, and he called it a miracle. So the priest was saying a miracle had

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occurred today, that I had told them that their son was alive. **Miracoli**(ph), **miracoli**(ph), you know, miracle, miracle. Meanwhile, it was just a thing that happened.

Q: Yeah, yeah. I want to go back to your – your work a little bit. You said you flew seven – 65 missions?

A: Sixty-six.

Q: Sixty-six missions. And was this all over **Italy**, or in different places?

A: **Italy**, the **Brenner Pass**, **Yugoslavia** and **France**.

Q: And what were the things that you were photographing mostly?

A: Well, the one thing that I photographed that our – our unit – well, let me explain. The French fleet had been taken over by the Germans.

Q: Okay.

A: And there was a fear that if we invaded, that they would come out and fight our – our navy. So for a full week we would go like – and this is [**indecipherable**] we'd go like we were going to bomb the – there was a battleship and a cruiser there. But then we'd just veer away. So we'd tease them. And then one day – we didn't know – realize this, but at – every night we would look at what was being trundled to the air force, whether it was – what kind of bombs. So when we saw these long, slender

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bombs, we knew that we were going after either a – the battleship, or – or a – a sub
[indecipherable]

Q: So does that mean that you wouldn't know what your target was until the morning you're flying a mission?

A: The morning when we got briefed.

Q: Okay.

A: So we got briefed and told that our target was the stra – the battleship **Strasbourg**, and the cruiser **La Galissonnière**, and – and so we went in – we went in five waves. And the first and second got in, but the third and fourth really got s-smattered. In fact, 26 out of the 52 planes had either wounded, or were – had – were – had been – either had wounded aboard, or the planes had been h-hurt.

Q: That's huge.

A: So we got it, and we got a presidential unit citation for that, that I'm proud of.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Tell me then about – you mentioned again, off camera, that – that at one point in **Italy** you entered a cave, and what had happened in this place?

A: Well, what happened was, the Germans were – Germans still occupied **Rome**, and they would meet at a certain spot where the troops would gather for transportation back to their base. And somebody threw a grenade and killed – I don't know it was, I think 30 or something like that, and they demanded ransom.

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They – but I’ve forgotten that number, whether it was 10 to one or something like that, but I remember it was a high number.

Q: That means ransom in what? In money, or in –

A: No, in people. Th-They – the Germans wanted so many people to pay for this crime.

Q: Okay.

A: So they took them in the cave, and they – and they – was at random, but they – they machine-gunned them all, and then just closed the cave. And – and – and when we – when we occupied **Rome**, it was opened. And – and I went – I was one that was allowed to see the – but what I remember was a little girl. She had a white dress on, but she had been hit, and there were spots on her dress of blood, like it was a floral display.

Q: Oh my.

A: And they don’t – they were – they were machine-gunned, and they either fell to the right or left, or – or came over, and – and I never forgot the brutality of – of killing that little girl.

Q: The – there are many – you know, horrific thoughts, you know, or – or scenes that one could imagine. But one of them is, is weren’t Italians allies of the Germans? And they would take Italian civilians –

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A: No, they – they – they – no, they weren't. They just – they – they took them as prisoners.

Q: They took these people as prisoners?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: And then I saw another sight that I'll never forget.

Q: Before we go there, how soon after this massacre had the Americans arrived?

A: Oh, I don't know. It was the summer. I remember it was the summer of '44 –

Q: Okay.

A: – when they opened the caves.

Q: Okay. Okay, tell me about the other incident.

A: Well, the other one was, as the Germans were leaving – were leaving **Rome**, we went ar – we went after them. We were bombing their – their – their convoys, we were – we were really hitting them hard. And so when the – when the – when the war – when the – when the war was still moving up, we went – we drove past these convoys of dead soldiers. And I'll never forget the stench of – of burnt flesh. I can smell it to this day.

Q: Can you? Yeah.

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A: Yeah. And – and there was just one truck, and one vehicle after another with – with soldiers that were – were burned to death, you know, from our bombing, and – and then, one night, while we were bombing, we were bombing an airfield, and we – we came in at low level, and I remember we always had machine guns we were firing. And there was a man running. And I remember I grabbed that – the machine gun just as tight as I could, and I was – I was gonna kill the bastard. And so he was running, and I don't know if we hit him, or he dove into a ditch. But when we pulled off, I – I – I clenching – I was still clenching my fists. And I said, what the hell are you doing? You know, I wa – I meant to kill him. I meant to kill him, and – and that wasn't my nature. But I was – I was determined to kill him, and not – not only kill him, but call him a bastard. And – and I wasn't – I wasn't made that way.

Q: That sound – kind of shocked you about yourself at that moment, huh?

A: Yeah. And then there was another thing that happened along that line. The German army was bringing supplies down from – from the bavar – I mean, from the pass, and from – there was a little town called **Udinay**(ph) and there was a bunch of rail lines, and it was a – I remember it was May, and it was a beautiful Sunday. And so, it was – but we knew that the – the rail lines there merged, and there was a lot of boxcars full of ammunition. So we went after them. So, I was photographing that day, and we let go our bombs, and boy there were secondary and tertiary explosions

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and it wasn't long there was just smoke was up – almost at our altitude. So, I called the colonel, I said, let's go back and get it again. So we photographed it again, cause we were lead, and we went back and photographed it again and bis – it was still explosions all over the place. So when we got back to the squadron, I said, boy, we really plastered those bastards today, or we – we got them today, and – and so the next morning we had a briefing how many locomotives we had hit, and how many boxcars we had hit. And – and so you felt real good, and then they finally said yeah, but 2,000 slave laborers were killed. They were in the – and that was another thing that stuck with me, that's – that's has always stuck with me, that here I thought something was re – oh, that's really performed a big deed, but somebody had paid for it.

Q: I – it's – it's – I mean, a reaction that I – I have is – is almost like, in war how could you avoid that?

A: Well, yeah, I know, but that – that's what – that's what comes round, you – like when you're – when you first go in you're looking for glory, you're looking for glamour.

Q: Yeah.

A: And you don't – sometimes you – you don't get it.

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Q: Yeah. Did you know – let me segue a little bit and ask this, did you know – have any news at that time of what was happening to **Europe's** Jews?

A: No – no. But I knew what was happening to the little – little children. And that wa – that – that is, they would gather at our camp just begging for – they would come out with cans, and whatever scraps of food we had, they would give them. And so anyway, there was a – my best buddy was a guy named **Red**. And so we would go in, and we would get more pancake – well, you either got pancakes, or you got powdered eggs for breakfast. And so we would get pancakes, more than we eat – could eat, and then put more – a little bit more syrup. And we'd come out and give them to – to the kids. And so there was one little boy had his arm – he didn't have his hand, he just – and was always – always getting beat up by the other kids. So **Red** said, well, let's – let's go help that little guy. So we took him down to the machine shop, and we had an artificial arm made for him.

Q: Oh, wow.

A: But it was the clips, you know, basically a bunch of clips. And then the little boy was using his as – as a weapon with the others. He was beating the hell out of the weapons. So **Red** and I said, here we formed a monster. But it was something, poor little kids, you know, just begging for food.

Q: Hungry.

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A: That stuck with me all the time, too.

Q: Yeah, yeah. So, did you know then, when – when you heard that there had been slave laborers who had been killed, did you know that the Germans were using slave laborers?

A: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh, we'd seen that.

Q: Had you, huh?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: What had you seen?

A: Well, we seen – we seen them on the roads a lot, with the – with the chur – with the star.

Q: So that could have been ger – that could have been Jewish slave laborers.

A: Jews – Jews, yeah, they had them working on roads a lot, and just a lot of dirty stuff too, along with it.

Q: But the newspaper and American military –

A: No, nothing.

Q: – radio didn't tell you – didn't say anything, huh?

A: No, not until after the war when we heard about the – the **Auschwitzes** and the – and the – the death camps.

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Q: Okay, okay. So after the 66th mission, your commanding officer allowed you to go home?

A: Yes, he – he thought I had enough, I guess –

Q: Okay.

A: – and so I get to – I get to – to **Hollywood**, and while I was at **Santa Monica**, and I met **Gene Raymond's** friend. **Gene Raymond** was **Jeanette MacDonald's** husband.

Q: Wow.

A: So we go up and we're given free reign of **MGM**. We were – we were watching **Judy Garland**, and – and **Lou Costello**, and all the movies, and then there was a little yellow – there was a little guy tossing a grenade, and he – he was a poor actor, but he was the – trying hard, and it was **Robert Mitchum**.

Q: Oh wow.

A: And we got – we got to meet all the – all these stars. And my date one night was **June Allyson**.

Q: What a treat.

A: Yeah.

Q: What a treat.

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A: Hell, I didn't want to – I didn't want to leave. We toured that – the – **MGM**, we toured where the – “**Gone With The Wind**,” was made, and – and then at the – all the – then we were at – guests of the Masters Club.

Q: And this was because you had been in the – in the war in **Italy**?

A: Well, yeah, what I was doing, I wa – I – I had – I was in a crash. We – we got shot up real bad and we crashed. And a can of ammunition hit me in the face and knocked out teeth and broke my nose and bloodied my face. And so I was having the teeth work done at **Santa Monica**.

Q: I see.

A: And so – but **Jeanette MacDonald**, she was just a fine lady. Strawberry blonde.

Q: Yeah.

A: Little wa – little gal.

Q: And was – did this crash happen during that mission that you told me about just a few minutes ago, where, you know, half of the – the squadron that was sent out was either shot up or shot down? Is this where you had the accident?

A: No, no, it w – w-we – we were – we were hitting a place called – it was a naval base. Got worked over there. And we couldn't get our wheels down, and so we had – we had a choice, we could either parachute out or – or crash – crash land. And so I – we had faith in our pilot and so we said we'd ride him down. And so, you're

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coming at about a hundred miles an hour and all of a sudden you hear the screeching sounds of the metal. But it was such a jolt that the ammunition can came off and hit me in the face –

Q: I see.

A: – because I – I had taken the brace position. You take a brace position, you put your hands behind your neck and pull your neck down. And this thing came down and hit me. It was about 50 pounds of ammunition hit me in the face.

Q: Oh my. How long did your stay in **Hollywood** last?

A: Oh, about – about a month.

Q: That must have been a nice month.

A: But boy it was a month, I – I tell you, I enjoyed it, I enjoyed it.

Q: Yeah. And what happened then? Where did you go then?

A: I – well, then I was reclassified.

Q: Okay. In what way?

A: I was to go to **Pacific**, and I said now, what can I do to get trained? They said, well, we need overseas navigators.

Q: Okay.

A: I mean, over water navigators. So I said, well sign me up. So I was signed up. And I'd finished basic and was in advanced when the war ended.

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Q: Oh, so –

A: So I wa – I was – and I had asked in advance for approval to go to **George Washington University**.

Q: Excuse me. When you say you were – when the war ended, do you mean the americ – the European war, or the **Pacific** war?

A: **Pacific** war.

Q: So, August.

A: Yeah.

Q: In August '45.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. And so you had asked to go to **George Washington University**?

A: Yeah, strange thing. I had – I had 14 medals by this time.

Q: Oh my.

A: I had nine – I had nine air medals, I had a Purple Heart, I had distinguished unit citation. Anyway, so the war ended in August, and I put in for release, because of the medals and si – the time I'd served. And so I was approved. And so one day I was home in September, and the – one day I was on a train, the next day I was in university.

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Q: Amazing. I want to ask something though that I missed earlier on. I'm sorry I'm doubling back. But I understood you had also flown over **Germany**, is that correct?

A: Over what?

Q: Over **Germany** during the war.

A: No.

Q: No, you hadn't.

A: Oh, y-yes I – yes, I did. **Br-Bremer Pass**, a-and **Bremer – Bremer Pass**, and up on **Bremer Pass**.

Q: I see. But only just that little bit. You didn't have any other –

A: No.

Q: – reconnaissance or – or –

A: Against the German – I flew against the Germans in **Yugoslavia** and other places, but that was it.

Q: Okay, okay. All right. So then you're in **George Washington University**, and you're in class. And what did you study?

A: Well, I wanted to be a diplomat.

Q: I remember you said, yeah.

A: So I was taking courses in – in economics in – in – in international economics, and I became a – kind of a – well, a friend – more than a friend, he was my monitor,

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Ted Acheson, he was Dean **Acheson's** brother. And so I was studying international economics, and I had all kinds of offers of jobs, to go into banking, because the banks were just being redone. I had **Caterpillar** tractor, I had banks in **New York** wanted me and – and so. But I was going with a lady that later became my wife. And I had offers to go to **FBI**, I had offers. But then there was – **Ted Acheson** said, go down and see this organization, and it's being formed, and go down and see my buddies down there. So I went down there and ha – they was these – forming the **CIA**.

Q: Oh, so the **OSS** was being formed into the **CIA**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: So I was put in charge of – I became an expert on Soviet industries. And I knew where all the industries were. And in 1940 – 1954 –

Q: Can I stop back at – when did you join the **CIA**?

A: 1948.

Q: 1948, okay.

A: It was called the **CIG** at that time.

Q: And what did the **G** stand for?

A: Central Intelligence Group.

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Q: Okay.

A: And became **CIA**.

Q: Okay. And it – and you so – and you say in 1954, when you knew about all of the Soviet industry –

A: Yeah, I was –

Q: Okay.

A: – I was being watched pretty carefully by the **CIA**. I mean, I was a – as an uncoming – upcoming person.

Q: Okay.

A: And I met a guy that was head of the navy photo interpretation unit.

Q: Okay.

A: And so the **CIA** said they were going to form a new unit. And I don't know why, but I went in a darkened room, and I was told I had a new job. And I said, well, what am I gonna be doing? They said, well, we can't tell you. Course it was the development of the **U-2**. So I was made chief of information.

Q: Okay.

A: Because I knew about the rush – where the Russian industries were.

Q: I see. But your – your knowledge in analyzing photographs, did that come later, that expertise?

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A: Well, I took – I took courses in photo interpretation, I passed them easily because I knew it. But it – photo interpretation becomes, the more you're in it, the more you learn.

Q: Well, tell us – tell me a little bit about that, because a lot of people won't understand how do you get to be knowledgeable about something like that.

A: Well, let me mention another thing though. I had a – the – the executive was a guy named **Chick Camp**.

Q: Okay.

A: He was the dean of – had been dean of men at **Dartmouth**, and he was – been a Marine major, and he could talk to you up here, and down here.

Q: Okay.

A: So he called me in and he said, we – we're making you the – you're going to make all the briefing boards for the director to brief **Eisenhower**, and he said, if you get his – if you get the bosses ass in a sling, he said, I'll fire yours. And so that kind of gets your attention. So I was put in charge of writing – making the briefing boards, and the notes that would go to **Eisenhower**.

Q: Okay.

A: And so I – I – I got my – oh yeah, I – he – he said, you're going to get the same clearances that the boss has. I had 12 clearances.

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Q: Mow – wow.

A: On nuclear – on – on bacteriological, on si – on – on communications intelligence, on just all – you know, covert intelligence, on covert photography, all kinds of thing. So I became his right hand man, and so from that point on, I was in charge of writing and making briefing boards for all the presidents, up to **Reagan**.

Q: So from **Eisenhower** to **Reagan**, I mean, **Kennedy**, **Johnson**, **Nixon** –

A: Yeah.

Q: – **Carter** and **Reagan**, wow.

A: If you had a chance to meet them all –

Q: Excuse me, did I miss? **Ford**, **Gerry Ford**, that's right.

A: Got a chance to meet them all.

Q: Wow. If –

A: **Eisenhower** was my favorite though.

Q: Tell me why.

A: Oh, he was – he was just a wonderful guy.

Q: In what way?

A: Well, he was so knowledgeable, you – he had no – he knew about photography, and so the briefing boards, I had to look at the briefing boards, and I had to annotate anything that looked suspicious of any kind, whether it be a ground formation, or

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something that been pretty innocuous. But he would – he would look at the briefing board, and he'd say, you know, what about this, what about that? Well, I would try to make sure that my boss had the answers, so I would write the notes that would go with the briefing boards, two copies. One went to the president, one went to the **CIA** and the Department of Defense.

Q: So, when you were in – put in charge of these briefing boards, these were briefing boards of satellite images?

A: Oh, first **U-2**.

Q: First **U-2**.

A: Then satellites, and then **SR-71**, and then combat reconnaissance.

Q: Okay.

A: During **Vietnam** there was all kinds of photography. But I was also briefed in – I don't know if you know it or not, but we had planes that were flying supposedly commercial flights, but hell, they had cameras in them.

Q: So, like on commercial carriers?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: Like **TWA**, or **Pan Am**, or something like that?

A: Oh yeah, anybody.

Q: Anybody.

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A: Fake – fake airplanes. Lot of dirty work. But the whole idea was to get pictures. We had – we had Greeks, we had foreigners with – we equipped them with cameras and they'd bring back photography.

Q: And this was all kinds of photography then, not just fr –

A: Oh yeah.

Q: – images from above?

A: Oh yeah, no, attaches photography, parade photography. No, they would pay – they'd pay a foreign seaman, they'd give him a camera. And they would go up – climb up the – the pole, and take pictures of – of **Cairo** e – ca – not **Cairo**, **Alexandria**, **Egypt**, all the ports and so forth, so we could see what was coming in and come – going out. **Russia**.

Q: Was the main purpose though, is – was the **Soviet Union**, to get in – you know, aerial or photographic information of what Soviet activities were?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: You can bribe people. You know – you know what plane we could fly with cameras in it that – that was welcomed? The **PX** plane.

Q: I can imagine.

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A: Well, the thing about it is we allowed foreigners to go into **PX**. So hell, they would wait for the plane to come in, not realizing we were photographing the hell out of the country.

Q: So then **Germany** in particular that would make a big difference.

A: Oh yeah. **France**, especially. **France** i –

Q: Oh, really?

A: **France** had a nuclear program going that they were keeping secret. **South Africa** was another one.

Q: This is fascinating information –

A: Oh yeah.

Q: – it was – it's just incredible.

A: Now, the first thing that we did –

Q: Mm-hm.

A: – the big question was the bomber gap. Did the Soviets have more planes than we did?

Q: Okay.

A: So we – we flew over – we flew five missions in 1956, and we could go to the president, **Eisenhower**, we could say, Mr. President, there's no bomber gap. The rest of them don't have that many bombers.

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Q: Okay.

A: Then the next thing was missiles. We could te – we could go to the president, say Mr. President, there's no missile gap. And then we had the Cuban missile crisis. Then we had the **Suez** War. And then we had all these places – in eight years, **Eisenhower** kept us out of war, and – because we were watching everything.

Q: Tell me, because we're talking – we're going to be talking about the satellite images that were taken during World War II – excuse me, not satellite images, but aerial photography –

A: Yeah.

Q: – in World War II, when did you first hear about Holocaust events, and – and the atrocities to the degree that they took place?

A: Right after the war. They –

Q: Right after the war.

A: – I heard about it.

Q: Okay.

A: But I didn't do anything. Now, what happened to me was, there was a program on television called "**The Holocaust.**"

Q: And this took place when?

A: Oh, I don't know. It – probably in the 70s sometime.

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Q: Okay.

A: Maybe in – maybe in the 60s. I – I remember it was – it was – it was one of those that went five or six nights.

Q: Okay.

A: And then I wondered if by chance, when we were photographing the **Auschwitz**, the – or the **I.G. Farben**, I knew that we were – during World War II we were flying over their synthetic fuel plants.

Q: Okay.

A: So there was one at **Auschwitz**. We wondered – I wondered if by chance when we were flying over that, did they see anything at the death camp, did we see the death camp. The first can of photography I put on the light table – now, keep in mind I'm using micro-stereoscopes now, I'm using fancy optics, and enlargements and everything else.

Q: Before we get there, ha – you – when you wondered that, after you saw this program –

A: Yeah.

Q: Did you know where such photographs were archived? Where the repositories were?

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A: Oh yeah, I knew that – I knew that there was World War II, or there was World War II photography.

Q: Where was it?

A: At **Venn(ph) Hill**.

Q: And where is that?

A: Was in a special repository.

Q: Uh-huh. And where is this place, **Venn(ph) Hill**?

A: In **Virginia**.

Q: Uh-huh. Okay, so it was a **CIA** place, or was it –

A: No, it was air force.

Q: It was air force.

A: So I called for the photographs of the **I.G. Farben** plant.

Q: Okay.

A: And so when I put them on, the first can of film I put on, I saw people being marched to their death.

Q: Oh my God.

A: So, I – I – and I have the example here. So anyway, I went to the director, and I said, I've got this. And I-I – I can develop it into a project. But see, this was the time when we were having all the problems with **Iran**. And – and the ri – so I – I

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had to be careful, because you know, I didn't want to be accused, what the hell you doing looking at Holocaust pictures when the **Iran** is going down the tube, intelligence. So I – I – I told him, I said, I have this photography. So he said he wanted to brief the president. So I made briefing boards, and he briefed the president. And then the president – the per – key person there was **Jody Powell**.

Now, I met a guy named **Michael Berenbaum**. Okay, now **Michael**, when he heard about I had the photography, he called me and – and he was in a – down on either **K**, or one of those streets, and he had a bunch of artifacts that he was trying to – but it was **Jodie Foster** that said, hey look, this is –

Q: **Jody Powell**, you mean.

A: **Jody Powell** was pre – was **Carter's** press agent. Was **Jodie Foster** said, this is the kind of stuff that's around here, we're not gathering it up.

Q: You mean **Jody Powell**.

A: **Jody Powell**, yeah.

Q: Right.

A: **Jody Powell**.

Q: Yeah.

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A: Okay. [laughter] I'm – I'm not – I'm not that – that – what's the name of the guy that was old and transferred **Jody Powell – Jodie Foster**? Anyway, so I developed this liking for – for **Michael Berenbaum**.

Q: Okay.

A: And I said hell, I think there's more stuff available. He said, you're kidding. I said, no, there isn't. And he said, you mean that – you mean you got photography of **Auschwitz** and – and nobody knows about it? I said, that's true. He said, you're kidding. I said no, I'm not kidding. So the president was briefed, **Carter** was briefed, and he said he liked the idea. So – so – so I wrote –

Q: So you got the green light, basically, to be able to do more analysis?

A: Yeah. But at the same time I had to be careful because I was in charge of making sure that all the intelligence was flowing, briefing boards. So sometimes I would go in on weekends and – and do this work. Or, I'd do this work whenever I was waiting for work to come in.

Q: So this was – I mean, in all of the sours – I mean, it all had been in **Venn(ph) Hill**? All the photographs that you eventually looked at and analyzed were from this one archive?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

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A: And you know, strangely enough, about half of them had really been destroyed.

Q: Really?

A: Half of the missions had been destroyed. So I made sure, I told them, I said, put the – put the stamp on that can and don't let it out, and so that – a stamp I put on that can is still on it, I think.

Q: Okay. Did the Brits have any kind of aerial photography like this?

A: Yes. But they didn't look at it either. Nobody looked at it.

Q: So the – if I can understand this, the photography had been taken of camps, but not because they were camps, but because there were plants nearby? Is that the reason why –

A: No, no, they were – the photography was taken for one purpose and one purpose alone, was to bomb the **I.G. Farben** plant.

Q: And did the plan – plan – did the **I.G.** barb – **Farben** plant have a pla – have auxiliaries in different cities and locations, or was this the one place that ended up being near **Auschwitz**?

A: No, no, no, no, nobody had looked at any of them.

Q: Okay. Okay.

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A: **Ebensee**, all – all of the ones you saw today, most of them that – nobody had ever looked at the photography. So I started looking at them on my own time primar – well, let me explain.

Q: Okay.

A: I was a senior officer.

Q: Right.

A: So I get word that hey, we got a mission over the Middle East. So wer – all right, now, where is it gonna land? Says, well, it's gonna land at **Wiesbaden**. Okay, now who's processing it? Well, they're gonna process it at **Wiesbaden**. All right, now when – where does it go from there? It's going to the [indecipherable] the **Azores** and it's going to **Dover**. Well, at that – meantime, I would be calling people in – to come in, but I had – I had a maybe six hour time that I had on my own, waiting to do work. So that's when I would do the work on the – on the – so I was told to – so I was given the go ahead to produce the – the document, and at the same time, there was a guy named **Seymour Bolton**. He wanted me to talk to – to **Jimmy Carter**.

Q: Okay.

A: And – and then **Jody Powell**, the same thing. Say, we got to get the boss really going. So then, I was supposed to meet with **Elie Wiesel**. And **Elie Wiesel** though, would – had – he had kind of – when I talked to him, they asked him to be a leader

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in the – in the – for a Holocaust Museum. And **Elie Wiesel** said he'd never raised money, he didn't know how to raise money. And – but anyway, so I had **Elie Wiesel** for an hour by myself, and what I'll never forget, **Elie Wiesel** hated brutality of any kind. And at that time the **Infantata**(ph) was going on and he didn't like the Israelis for beating up on people. But he told me about the hardships, the loss of his father, but more often – I mean, more times he'd come back to his – the la – his loss of his sister. I think she was nine years old, and – and she walking sh – when she and her mother were separated from them, sh-she held onto her mother, but she looked back at him. That's all he remembered about this sister's death. And he – he always pra – you know, her – her innocence, he proclaimed her innocent. Well, now – now, getting back to **Michael Berenbaum**. He was telling me that the tremendous f – not fight, but opposition, both sides, the liberals and the – and the – and the – and the conservative Jews. Now, especially the – the conservative Jews wanted another **Yad Vashem**.

Q: Oh, you mean about the museum, what kind of a museum it should be.

A: Museum, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: Well – and then – but he wanted it, and that – he felt that it would be doing more good by being an educational one. So he was emphasizing the emph – the – the –

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the – the liberal view really, but the educational view. But at the same time, about this time, when I found the photographs, my boss, the director of – **Stanfield Turner**, he was a friend of – of – he was a classmate of **Carter**. He told me, he said look, he said, I'd like for you to get – get to brief these people in **Skokie**. So I said, well, I have relatives in **Highland Park**, and he said that yeah, he said, well, I'll arrange it. Get in touch with **Michael Berenbaum**. So I got in touch with **Michael Berenbaum**. And I was afraid to – to gi-give this briefing, and he said there would about 70 - 80 survivors of –

Q: Of **Auschwitz**?

A: Yeah, the **Illinois** branch.

Q: Okay.

A: Because I had briefed several temples, and when I showed the pictures of people being marched to their death, invariably somebody would – excuse me –

Q: That's okay.

A: – somebody would break down crying. So I thought, oh boy, this is going to be a disaster. And strangely enough, when I got there, I don't know why, but su – a sort of a feeling came over me that hey, these people are easy to get – going to be good to handle. So I said, now I'm going to show you what I have, what I know, but I

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want people to come up and point out things that I miss. I'm – I'm – I want you to participate with me here. And boy it took fire.

Q: Did it?

A: Oh, it was just wonderful. They were – they were really in it. And –

Q: What did they do, what did people do?

A: Well, they pointed out things. They said, now that's – the boxcars – the boxcars were here, and – and then at night, what they – they were ex – telling this – telling me experiences at the – at the camps at night, what they did at night and how they got along. And then who died, and how they died. But – but then there was a little – there was a little break and there was coffee time. And one of the fellows came up, and I said look, I said, how in the hell did you – you survive the cold, because that's e – **Auschwitz** is equivalent to the Canadian – **U.S.** border. And he said, well that was our secret. And I said, can you share it with me? And he said yes, he could. I say, well what – what was it? He said, well, he said, you know, the cement bags used to come in. The bags were made out of paper and tar and paper to keep them dry. And he said, we made ourselves underwear. Made themselves thermal underwear. Then a lady came up, and I said, I guess you strived to get first in line. She said no –

Q: First in line for what?

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A: Huh?

Q: First in line for what? What should she – what line was the first in line for? What was the line for?

A: For food.

Q: Oh, for food, okay, mm-hm.

A: Cause they – they had – I say, well, did you get in line at the beginning or at the end? If you went in the beginning, you got sure. She said no, about the middle. I said, well, why the middle? She said, because if you're at the beginning you go – only got water. But at the – but the bin – beginning – I mean, the middle to the end, you got some – some potato peelings.

Q: So it sounds to me –

A: They got – they got food –

Q: Yeah.

A: – more nutrition as food.

Q: It sounds to me that – that this was such a huge event because the photographs that you were showing, this aerial photography was the first real proof –

A: That's it, right there. That's what made them – that's what th – not a person cried, because they said, you're proving the fact that the Holocaust existed. That was – that was – that was a – that was a whole – whole – their whole feeling, was

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that I had done something. Now, when I got back – when I got back I talked to Dr. **Berenbaum**. I said, hey, look. Gosh almighty, the stories they were telling me, they gotta get – gotta get something done with them. So **Berenbaum** said, I'll – **Dino**, I agree with you, he said, but we don't have any money. So then it later was **Steven Spielberg** put the money. That's – but it started with – wi – I mean, he – he knew about it, but it was emphasized by my – my story, and – and – but th-they – they had to show me their – their – their tattoos. The men were, for the most part were, I say about five foot five, they'd been starved in there. And the women were even, some of them were –

Q: Smaller, huh?

A: But one woman came up to me and she said, you know – you know why I wanted to become American? I said no. She said well, she said she was liberated, and she said she were – they were filthy dirty. So he said, th-they put up a shower unit, but she said they put curtains around it. I mean, a tent – the tents around it. And she said, I had my first bath. And she said, I knew then I wanted to be an American. She said, they didn't bother us. She said they – they let us shower, and she said they didn't bother – and stories like that. And then they – then they start telling me about some of the little sneaky things they would do. That was – that was it – that was interesting too.

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Q: So, was this because –

A: How they falsified, they – they – especially the – the woman that were hired – not hired, but the women that made records.

Q: What were they falsifying?

A: They fal – falsifying records.

Q: What ki – and what kind of records?

A: Well, the – the personnel were – on personnel primarily, I guess.

Q: I see. I see. So –

A: But anyway, th-th-there – there were so many stories coming at me, just one right after the other. They were so wanted – they so wanted to share them with me.

Q: Was this your first – as a result of the photographs, had you ever met with any survivors before, of the camps?

A: No, but you see, my best friend was mar – was **Cohen**, a boy named **Cohen**.

And he's a classmate and he – he still comes to all of our funerals, our family funerals. I can't re – I can't think of his first name. But anyway, I have – I had Jewish friends. Simply because the Jewish friends – made friends because they were on the out, and Italian in a German – German high school was on the out. I mean –

Q: Way – way back in **Missouri**, you mean?

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A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: So we made friends.

Q: Okay. So you found out how – you had personal connections with people who were Jewish already, but had any of them had relatives who were survivors?

A: No, most of them had – lost relatives. But let me mention now, now all of a sudden, I get – I get some – I'm called down to the National Archives to brief the press.

Q: Okay.

A: So word goes out that – that **Dino** knows a little bit about the Holocaust.

Immediately I get calls also, how much did the Jews pay you? What did the Zionists – how did the Zionists – then there was a guy up in – there was a doctor up in – up in, I think **Rhode Island** that was giving me a hard time.

Q: Really?

A: Oh yeah. That I had – and then there was a – there was a guy up in **Canada** that – that I finally told him, I – he told me – he said that I had – had the zipper effect on the photograph, I had faked photographs. And you know what it is? It was people standing in line and they were – there was a gap, and the sun was shining, so it looked like a zipper. And I said, you dumb bastard, when you learn something more

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about photo interpretation, you call me again, but don't call me. But this guy up in **Canada** has constantly ti – tried to find fault. He's a professor. But then also, I got involved with the ta – the Englishman that sued –

Q: David Irving?

A: Yeah, that said that the Holocaust didn't exist, and the – the lady down in university, and I – so I told her, I – I – you know, I told her fo – the originals are still available, so she could prove her point with the originals, and she did. But then –

Q: So, in other words, the whole can of worms, or Holocaust denial opened up as well –

A: Oh yeah.

Q: – when the photographs appeared.

A: Oh yeah. Yeah, but I – yeah but – yeah but I – on that scrapbook that I gave my friend here, well, you see, there's a lot of complimentary notes in it too, I don't know what –

Q: Of course there is.

A: Yeah. But also, I got called by the district attorney of **Chicago** three times tha – whether I'd testify against people that were at **Auschwitz** that claimed that they didn't see anything, that they were in the tower but they didn't see anything. And so

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I – I said, okay, sure, I'll testify against them. And when he told them who the expert was, why they pulled away. They went back. So it's been a – been a lot of good things, but there's still people don't believe that the Holocaust existed.

Q: Well, it sou – yeah –

A: Yeah.

Q: – and if you have proof like this –

A: Yeah, so – yeah –

Q: Yeah.

A: So – so that one picture of people being marched to their death has done more good – and strangely enough, that was the first one. Now, something interesting too.

I looked at **Ebensee**. **Ebensee**, the first troops that – that – that freed them, was troops from my father's old a-army outfit.

Q: No kidding?

A: The 80th – 80th division. Isn't that something?

Q: Yeah.

A: So anyway, all of this is tied in, and so – so when – when – when my friend first – she'll beg you for anything.

Q: Excuse me?

A: She's –

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Q3: He's talking about me.

Q: Oh, I see, okay.

A: First – first she sa – first I gave her pictures, that wasn't enough. Then she saw my scrapbooks, then she wanted my scrapbook.

Q: You're talking about my colleague here from the museum, who could see, of course, the value of these photographs, yeah.

A: Well, yeah. And you know, the thing that – the thing that convinced me to give all this stuff to you; I looked – I – I Googled these ca – these camps, and there's not many photographs on them. There's no photographs, there's no [indecipherable]. So, where there's photographs, use the photographs. Not only that, but the combination of the photograph and the sketches.

Q: That's ri – and then you have – you have people on the – who were on the ground, the survivors, who can say, I was in this barracks, or this barracks. It is par – it's a puzzle, and these are the various pieces of that puzzle.

A: Well, let me mention. I – I – I – I think I briefed about probably a half a dozen temples.

Q: Okay.

A: And one guy came up to me and he said he was from **Ebensee**, he had been at **Ebensee**. And he told me, he said, you know what the punishment was? I said no.

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He said, they'd take you out in that – that square, and they'd spray you with water, and you'd – you'd freeze to death. You know what – what – so –

Q: Here's another quo – quandary, though, that I've got. And that is, you first identified these photos during the **Carter** administration, which is, I'm saying 30 years, 35 years after the war is over. And when they were first taken, albeit it was for the **I.G. Far-Farben** plant, to see if that should be destroyed, did nobody recognize what these camps were? Did nobody see them?

A: But who – who did – who did they make photo interpreters out – young people, six week course. What the hell – what the hell did I know about **Fischer-Tropsch** coal distill – distillation process? I didn't know anything about them. But I – I – I gained interest in them. And whether I'll bite into anything, I – I won't let go.

Q: Okay, I didn't understand that. I'm saying aft – at the war, during the war itself, there were other people who were taking these photographs. You weren't in – in that part of it.

A: Well, one thing – one thing historians didn't use fo – aerial photos.

Q: Okay.

A: And yet I find out that historians make excellent photo interpreters. I'm the first guy – you see, let me just – let me explain. Intelligence was primarily a main

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domain. And the only time that you – the on – only time that you hired a woman was to be a clerk in the 1960s and 50s.

Q: Okay.

A: Oka, I was getting real good folders of women that applied for a job with the **CIA**. And I said, why in the hell can't I use them? So I go up in the career board, and I'd get flogged. Navy – old navy men, and oh, I don't want – I don't want to work with a wo – oh God, you have to put up with her, you know, you have to **[indecipherable]** then you work, you train her, and then three years later she'll – she'll leave and she'll get married. And then when they're – when they're in love you can't handle them **[indecipherable]** you know. And so I started hiring them. I got – I got backing by the exec, cause he had been a dean of men at **Dartmouth** and he said, by God, we'll start hiring them. You know that 50 percent now are – are – of the photo interpreters are women? Simply because we made – we made – we made room for them. We had – we had enough intellect, I guess, that we – we – we wanted women to try. And not only women, not only – not only photo interpreters, they became supervisors. But, you know, I told them, when you come in, damn it, I don't want you to cry. You – y-you get – you get – you get – I – I gotta go to career board, I don't want to hear that stuff. Not only that, but don't ask for any – don't ask for any credit, an-and don't take crap – crap from anybody.

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Q: Mm-hm. But I want to go back to the wartime. So you're saying that people took – who took the aerial photographs in 1944, of **Auschwitz** didn't know what they were looking at?

A: No. No, I talked to two pilots. Nobody – said nobody told us. Nobody told us anything was there. One – one in **South Africa**, my – I think there's a letter in the folder, I don't know, I've forgotten his name. But then, they were flying out of **Fogia(ph)**. There were people flying out of those areas.

Q: So in other words, they would take these aerial photographs, they would bring them back –

A: Well, they would – let – well, let me mention another thing.

Q: Okay.

A: The eight – the eighth air force was a – was a – you got a – you – you – you – you had a good life. You lived in **London**, you had – you could eat good, you drank good, you had the parties you had and so forth. You had th – and so the eighth air force was kind of the organization. Now here was a second cousin down in – in **Fogia(ph)**, the 15th. And they were primarily you mi – might get some Italian food and maybe a bottle of wine, but you didn't have the life that you had in – in – in **England**. So when it came to bombing **Auschwitz**, it was – the English pre – would – was barely – they were hitting – being able to hit, but it was about the extremes.

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But the 15 had no problem at all hitting and re-conning th – **Auschwitz**. But they didn't particularly care for the 15th. There was a snobbery among the air forces, beca-because th-the real work –

Q: The British American?

A: – both – both the re – both the recon and – and the – and the bombing of **Auschwitz** was done by the 15th.

Q: But I thought **Auschwitz** wasn't bombed.

A: No, I mean, the – the – I'm not – talking about bombing of the **I.G. Farben** plant.

Q: You're talking about the bombing of the **I.G. Farben** plant.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay. Okay. And –

A: But nobody had looked at those photographs. I checked that. Nobody had looked at the photograph, and nobody had – had sent any copies of those photographs to **England**.

Q: Did the Brits have any of their own photographs of any of the camps?

A: Yeah, they had the one of **Auschwitz** – I mean, the one of – one that's got **[indecipherable]** on it, which – which one is that?

Q3: You mean of the **Auschwitz** photos?

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A: No, not **Auschwitz**, the one –

Q: Of any – of any camp.

Q3: I think they have **Belsen**.

Q: And they did –

A: Which one?

Q: Okay.

Q3: **Bergen-Belsen**.

Q: **Bergen-Belsen**? Did they ha –

Q3: No, **Westerbork**.

A: No.

Q: **Westerbork**?

A: No, it's – it's in – what's a – what's the one that still near **Munich**?

Q: **Dachau**.

Q3: **Dachau**.

A: **Dachau**.

Q3: Okay.

A: **Dachau**. They had fa – pictures of **Dachau**.

Q: And they didn't know what they were looking at either?

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A: No, they knew about **Dachau** because **Dachau** wa – you know, that – that was sort of built up about – if you look at the photographs of **Dachau**, it looks more like a prison that it does a –

Q: Concentration camp?

A: I mean, it – it's a – it – it looks like a – oh, a modified vacation plant, vacation hotel. You know [**indecipherable**] what I'm talking about is small units.

Q: Right.

A: Me – where – where all the other camps were made out of wood.

Q: I keep going back to my question though, that with this aerial photography going on, at the time, in 1944 and '45, nobody was looking at it, loo – ca – looking at what came back and said, aha, in addition to **I.G. Farben**, there's also the camp.

A: Oh, more than that. The first thing that you do in photography is always look for the transportation. What – how – who – who's there? What – what – what's transportation. The biggest sin that World War II photographers tha – with all those boxcars, all those trains and boxcars, my God that should have – somebody should have said what the hell are – what the hell are the – what the hell are they there for? Nobody did.

Q: And they didn't because they didn't think to?

A: They didn't have a requirement. Nobody had asked them.

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Q: I see.

A: See, normally you work when you get a requirement. Somebody asks you to do something. But then it was the training too. They weren't – they weren't the – you know, what – what can you expect from – from just a few weeks of training? And basically the training was primarily on ships and – and things military.

Q: And would this have been the very first war that there would have been aerial photography?

A: No. There was – war – World War I

Q: World War I had it as well?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: I've written about them.

Q: Uh-huh. Is there anything else that you'd like to add to what you have explained to us today about how you got the photographs, how you – how you found them?

A: Well, I think – I think – I think somebody ought to ca – what's **Mauthausen**?

Have you got a photograph of that one?

Q: **Mauthausen**.

Q3: **Mauthausen**, yeah. You want to see it?

A: **Mauthausen**.

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Q: **Mauthausen**, yeah.

A: Huh? I don't think – I don't think there's a photograph. Is there?

Q3: Yeah. No, there's one of **Ebensee**.

A: See, but I – I'm sure that – I'm sure that if you research, you have to back into the problem.

Q: Okay.

A: I mean, I'd like to see a – an album of – of all these photographs put together.

And then – then ti – for example, if you had a – a survivor of a – of **Ebensee**, I – I can't – I couldn't find a – a – a – normally – normally at these places you have a place that get – makes the food. You have a place that – for – you have toilets.

Q: Right.

A: In other words, I always looked at sa – li-li-like – like **Auschwitz** as kind of an example for me. You gotta see that – you gotta feed people, and you gotta – they gotta be – they gotta have places to **[indecipherable]**. For example – now I found the – I found the ... what the hell, help me out there. By the – by the – by the – by the shadow fall.

Q: The crematoria?

A: The crematorium.

Q: Right.

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A: Found the crematorium by the shadow. But okay now th-the – what the hell – what's that – what's that – what's the – what's the fire going on there? I don't see any cordwood. See, not only that, but there's – there must have been a hospital or someplace to – to take sick. Which – which building is the hospital? In other words, somebody that – that lived through – could help you – could help you, and you ought to get them before they pass away, too.

Q: I – I – I fully agree. I fully agree.

A: I'd like – I'd like – I'd like to sit down with the guy that looks at **Ebensee** together. All I – all I heard about **Ebensee**, the people that – few people that I've met, is that – how harsh it was.

Q: Yeah.

A: How cold it was, and how bad it was.

Q: How had this changed you, or changed the world that you moved in, p-prior to looking and analyzing the **Auschwitz** photo and then meeting with Mr.

Berenbaum?

A: All right, there was one photograph of the wa – Russians women with a bunch of kids.

Q: Okay.

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A: Okay. I have a grandson, he's Jewish, and I think about him, you know, wo-wo – what ha – what would have been him – what would have been **Ben's** fate? Or how would **Ben** felt?

Q: Yeah.

A: Now, he happens to be an army surgeon now, and he's my buddy. And he comes to me with problems. Now, he came back, and I said, who have you worked on? He's – he was in – he was in **Afghanistan**. So while he worked on American soldiers, he worked on – on – on the – on the state guard troopers, he worked on Italians and Germans that were assigned to that area. He said, Grandpa, I even worked on the Taliban.

Q: Wow.

A: He said, he had his arm shot. He said, I saved his arm. I said, you feel good about it or bad about it? He said, I feel good about it. That was it. So I – I – so –

Q: Is this how you feel about having – having dug into the archives and looked and found those photos? Do you feel –

A: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

Q: Yeah?

A: That's why I keep the one book. I'll keep one book and he'll – he'll probably be the one that – that will – will get it when I pass.

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Q: Well, I'd like to thank you for sharing all of this.

A: Oh, you don't have to thank me.

Q: But I do, I do.

Q2: Do we get to ask one question?

Q: Sure. All right.

Q3: I mean, I have a few, too, sorry.

Q: So, my colleagues would like to ask a few questions.

A: Sure.

Q: And now at the end of our interview, so I'll start with **Josh Blinder**. What would you like to ask?

Q3: Do you know, I'm going to ask you to look at her while I ask the questions, cause it's going to be as if she was asking.

A: Ask what?

Q: Okay, all right, he's going to ask, but you look at me, okay?

A: Okay.

Q: Okay.

Q2: **Dino**, this is kind of a hard one, but if you had to put a quantity on what you think you're the most proud of for having done this, in looking at these photos, what

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do you think of this achievement – what – o-of this achievement, what do you think you're the most proud of having done?

A: When a – when I was at **Skokie**, I was expecting – I was expecting the worst, people crying. And meanwhile it was just the reverse. They were happy that I had – I had proof that the Holocaust existed. That's – I'll never forget **Skokie**. And a funny thing, I had my cousin with me.

Q: Yeah?

A: And he couldn't get over it either.

Q: What it meant.

A: What it meant to them.

Q: Yeah. **Becky**?

Q3: Okay, so I have a few more questions about the reaction to the release of the photos. So part of it was –

Q: Come over here **Becky**, come over here.

Q3: Sorry.

Q: Okay, hang on a minute.

A: She won't come near me now – now.

Q3: I'm not supposed to be on camera.

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A: Before – before – before she – before she – she was – she couldn't – she couldn't leave me. Now she got it – now she's got a man, she said the hell with –

Q3: I'm not supposed to be on camera, so I have to use –

Q2: Stand right in back of her.

Q3: I have to use **Ina's** microphone. So you and I have talked about this before, but when – thank you – when the photos were released, there was the reaction of, this proves what we – this proves that this actually happened. And for a lot of people, especially **Auschwitz** survivors, there really weren't a lot of photos of **Auschwitz** taken during the war, so it really was proof that – in-incredible proof that people could point to, it was all over the news. It also started a debate among historians, which you know, and you and I have talked about, and you've written about it, about whether or not **Auschwitz**, the crematoriums and gas chambers at **Auschwitz** could have been bombed. And you and **Ina** have talked about the intelligence aspects of that, how these photos weren't discovered until the 70s when you discovered them, and how at the time, the interpretation couldn't have happened. You know, they didn't have the intelligence or the tools to analyze the photos, to be able to pin out what was the crematorium, and what was the gas chambers and do those sorts of things. But **Ina** was surprised to hear that **Auschwitz** had been bombed, and so I wanted to – you to talk through kind of what happened when the

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U.S. tried to bomb **I.G. Farben**, when the **Auschwitz** complex actually was bombed, and whether you think – and again, I know you’ve written this, but I want you to say it on camera, so we have you on camera saying it; what you think the – say, **McCoy**(ph) had said, yes, we should go ahead and do it. What would have happened after that? Does that make sense?

A: Yes.

Q3: Is it a fair question.

A: Yeah.

Q3: Okay.

A: Now I think – now, I was with an outfit that we had – we took pleasure in pinpoint bombing. We – we knocked out bri – we had a record for knocking out bridges, we had – we – we hit the battleship and cruiser. Whatever they had something [**indecipherable**] they – we could hit it. And – and medium bombers, they are much more accurate than the – than the heavies. And I think it could have been bombed by medium. In fact, I would have volunteered on that type of mission. You could have moved **B** fif – **B-25s** into position and **B-25s** could have got them, cause it – now, how long would it take them though to – to reconstruct? I don’t think you can reconstruct one of those killing stations in say, six weeks. They – somebody said, well you can – oh, we can build them in six weeks. But they said,

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well, the one guy said oh yeah, well, we can't – we can't – we can't gas them, but we'll – we'll u – we'll kill them with rifles. Well, the Germans had found out that killing by – by rifles is – is pretty hard on the people that are doing the killing, too. So I – I – I think it – if – if – if it – if somebody said gets – get a – bomb it, I think the medium **L-2** bombers would do it, **B-25s** especially. And – and our outfit would have been a good one to do it.

Q3: Were – were medium bombers flying over **Auschwitz** at the time? Th – who was doing the recon and the bombing of –

A: No, that was heavies.

Q3: Okay.

A: But you could move – you could move the – you see, we had taken – we had moved into **France** by that time.

Q: So, **E.J.** far – **E.J. Farben** – **I.G. Farben** was bombed. Is that correct?

A: Well, let me tell you, when you release your bombs, normally you have something in mind. You want to – they call them linear. You la – you drop them so that they – they're pinpoint bombing in a l-long area. Or you salvo, you want them all to go one time. Now, one of the problems that they have is that when the bombs come out, when you – when you release the bombs and they hit – hit the airflow, they have a tendency sometime to fishbed, or sometime even to tundle – tumble.

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And the fins are very, very li – they're sheet – the sheet metal, they're not heavy. So that I – I think that what happened, either bombs got hit and tumbled and one of – one or more – more had hit the – not – didn't hit the – what you want to hit, they hit they ark – hit the barracks.

Q: Oh, I see.

Q3: Yeah, so we –

A: You – you want them to hit the –

Q: We inadvertently –

Q3: We inadvertently hit **Birkenau**.

Q: I see. Okay.

Q3: So that – so part of the debate has always been, why wasn't **Auschwitz** bombed, and that's the wrong question, because **Auschwitz** was bombed, just by accident.

Q: That's right.

A: Well, the thing about it though, my God, you got the – you got the stick of bombs right over the – right over the number one and number two killing complexes.

Q: Yeah.

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Q3: So – so the – the problem that I’m hearing you say – and I don’t want to put words in your mouth, so make sure that you correct me, is we didn’t have the intelligence – the – the photos were not interpreted properly at the time to give us the intelligence needed –

A: Yeah.

Q3: – to bomb the gas chambers and the crematorium, and we were using the wrong bombers. We would have had to put different planes in place to actually pinpoint hit –

A: But don’t – don’t –

Q3: Both of those things could have happened.

A: Yeah, but just don’t blame the photo interpreters.

Q3: No, no, no, no –

A: Blame the fact that – blame the fact that you had people that had been at

Auschwitz –

Q3: Yeah.

A: – and were trying to tell people that – and – and were – were – you had a failure of intelligence –

Q3: Yeah.

A: – hey, hey, what’s – what the hell’s going on?

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Q3: Yeah.

A: That's collateral information that something – something is going on and we got some source – not one source, but –

Q: Several.

A: – I – I think probably if you add them up there was about 10 sources that had said that there was something going on.

Q3: And because that report never got to the 15th –

A: Well –

Q: Not only.

Q3: Not only.

Q: Not only.

Q3: There are lots of different –

Q: A direction would have had to come down, as you explained before.

Q3: Right.

Q: You said that, you know, when you analyze a photograph it's based on what instructions you've gotten as to what to look for. And if you haven't gotten instructions to look for something, you won't look for it.

A: Well, there was something about – see, you had the – the invasion was about ready to come off, okay. So the idea was wh-where do we use our resources? And

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the – we use most of our resources on **V-1s** and **V-2** sights. General **Spotz**(ph) wanted the – the synthetic fuel plants to be hit. So, you had so many photo interpreters doing work, searching for **V-1** and **V-2** sights that – that they weren't looking at these synthetic fuel plants.

Q: I see. I see.

A: But I – I think the big – biggest sin though, my God, the – those – all those boxcars and they – nobody – nobody said what the hell are these – all these railcars, boxcars, especially during wartime? Cause boxcars are in short supply always in wartime, and not only that, but you see so many, gosh I don't know how many. I mean i – tha – there again, you can – you can measure those and count how many boxcars there are, but has anybody ever counted them?

Q: Yeah.

Q3: In those photos, I don't think so. I think people have said 40.

A: Huh?

Q3: I think people – the one that we have at the museum, I think it has about 40 boxcars in it. The one that we have in the big mural.

Q: Somebody has –

Q3: Yeah.

Q: Somebody has counted them –

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A: I think that's –

Q: – but it's not conclusive.

Q3: Yeah. And that's a zoomed in part of the photo. When you zoom out there's –

Q: Yeah.

Q3: – actually more.

A: Well, you could do it, you could do it, you could measure it –

Q3: Yeah, you could do it.

A: – measure the – measure the size and then divide that by the size of a boxcar, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: In-Incidentally too, you have to be a little careful there too, because in some cases – did you see that there's some – some vehicles next to the boxcars? In other words, those are probably buses taking the people from the boxcars to the main –

Q3: Yeah, the Red Cross out –

A: Yeah.

Q3: – ambulances, yeah.

Q: So called.

Q3: I'm making **[indecipherable]** yes.

Q: Okay. Any other questions? Any other questions.

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Q3: No.

Q: So –

Q2: Now let's give about 15 seconds of room time please.

Q: Wait – yeah, hang on a second. So I would like – I would like to thank you, and I would like to then formally conclude the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Dino Brugioni**, on November 13th, 2014.

A: You tell your boss that it was a joy having you down here.

Q: Thank you, thank you.

A: And then you – you give her a little photo interpretation lesson on **Ebensee**.

Q: Okay.

Q3: It won't be as good, but maybe we can just play the video.

Conclusion of Interview