You were-- I'm ordained as a rabbi as well, so I have--

I see.

--that interest.

I see.

And also, with, I guess, my psychological background. So it's a combination of both of these things.

Sure. Yes, sir. I see. Yeah.

And I think, in a sense, most Jewish people, or, if not all Jewish people, have an interest in it.

Oh, yes.

My parents are from Poland, originally.

Yes, yes.

Almost all of my family was lost in the Holocaust, so.

I surely understand it. I'm going to read-- I'll tell a story about--

All right. All right. Just tell us when to go.

Any time.

Are you ready? OK. My name's Dr. Murray Berger. It's Monday morning, the 21st of October 1991. And we're here on campus at SMU-- Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas, for this interview this morning.

This is Dr. Diane Plotkin, October 21, 1991. I'm at SMU.

I'm Zohn Milam. This is October the 21st, 1991, here on the campus of Southern Methodist University.

My story begins, really, at a small place called Flieden, just outside of Fulda. My friend and I, Joe P. Bablo, were on what we call a roadblock, or a checkpoint. It was our job at this time to screen people, the DPs, or Displaced Persons that were streaming from all directions at this point in time.

The 103rd Infantry Division, which I was a part of. And my regiment was a 409th Regiment. And I was M company of 409th Regiment. And we had been squeezed out of the lines there, and we were taking up some occupational duties, and we were on this small checkpoint, when this fellow comes up in an automobile.

And we hadn't seen any civilian in any kind of automobile. And he gets out. And he has a small child with him, a real diminutive type of individual.

And my friend Joe Bablo's grandparents came from Poland. He speaks Polish, of course. And he and this fellow engaged in conversation. And I learned that this man, who had escaped a concentration camp. And the best of my memory, I remember that the number on his left forearm bore the letter A. Whether that was-- I don't know what significance that had. But he and the young child, 12-year-old with him, the brand of the tattoo on the left forearm.

And it so happened that this fellow's family and Joe Bablo's family were from the same village area in Poland. And he told Joe Bablo that most of his family had been wiped out or had been hauled off to the death camps.

Now as a death camp as such, we had never been-- we hadn't experienced it. We knew they had concentration camps in Germany or in the occupied countries, but the death camp was something else. We figured they'd just use them for slave labor. And this was my first introduction to the death camp syndrome, so to speak.

And as they talked on, the Polish man that was driving the German automobile says, I had to witness. He says, I had to witness my two daughters and my wife being burned alive in front of me. For some reason, they felt that I had some kind of information, or they maybe just wanted to torture me, or to show off from the others. But he said, I saw my wife and my two daughters burned alive. They shoved them in the ovens on the iron stretchers, and they're saying that the last scene I had of my wife was her blond hair going up in flames, screaming.

And he said, I was forced to watch this. And my young son here was the next to go on this situation. And I hid him in an irrigation ditch under a bridge, and I brought some potato peels for him. And he says, evidently, the guards relaxed because of the proximity of the Russian army. I was able to get away.

We ask him where he got his car, and he said, well, I killed a German just down the road there and got his car. And we said, well, is this a vendetta. He says, yes. He says, I want to kill a German every day of my life that I live. And with these words he went on the trek toward the displaced persons center that was collecting all these people.

It was our job, first of all, to raise the left arm of everybody that came in there to see if they had any SS marks on them, that the SS were already pretty well deigned to become war prisoners. And this is in the latter part of April or the first part of May. This is my introduction to the death camps.

And then we moved. We went back in the lines, and we crossed the-- we made a river crossing at Ohm, the 409th Infantry Regiment of the 103rd Division. That was the cactus division. The division insignia was a cactus. And we moved on south.

And as we become deeper into Bavaria, nearly every small town had some sort of a slave labor setup. I liken it to my small town in Graham, Texas, a town of 10,000 or 12,000 people, or 8,000 people. It might have, oh, imagine 1,000 slave laborers involved in some kind of an output of war materiel.

These slave laborers were a lot different than what we were to come to expect from Dachau. These slave laborers had enough food to give them enough sustenance to carry out the basic things of life, and to be of a profitable nature to the Third Reich.

As we moved on down toward Oberammergau, we hit a small sugarloaf-like mountain. And in this mountain, one of the Dolomite Alps, was carved out a factory to produce ME 109 engines. That's the Messerschmitt. And then the Stuka dive-bomber engines.

And as we drove, as we moved up with our tanks, and our GIs are in trucks, we were on what we call a task force. As we moved into this area here, evidently, the guards had left, because these people clambered up and over the gates. They didn't even try to break them down and lock them. And we couldn't shoot the gates or blow the gates open because so many prisoners around.

But I remember one fellow. He climbs up over this gate. And the fight that ensued before we got there, why, we had killed some Germans and killed some horse-drawn-- killed some horses of horse-drawn equipment. And this fellow goes over. And there's a small-- I believe it's a tributary of the Lech River running down through there. And it comes off a glacier. And this was this was in-- it was a lot of snow at this time.

And this fellow wades across this small stream there. And he gathers a few canned rations out of the vehicle that we had blown up. But then he looked at the horse, and he got a knife, and he started carving out a big rump roast out of the horse. And I figured they were, even though they looked fairly substantial, they were probably awfully, awfully hungry.

So we moved on. And a task force at this time, in the Seventh Army consisted of two tank destroyers-- self-propelled

tank destroyers. And then behind that came about three tanks. And they're heavy tanks. And then behind that came the 614th TD or "toad" tank destroyers. These were black fellows, and they were exceptionally brave and excessively apt at what they were doing.

Then came our unit. I was with a machine gun squad, a heavy machine gun squad, a water-cooled machine gun, 30 caliber, mounted on a Jeep. And then came several trucks of riflemen.

Then the process was repeated on down the line. You had probably four or five of these elements like this. And we would travel at the forefront of the vanguard, be at the vanguard of the column, for a period of miles, and then we would switch. And therefore everybody didn't have to get out and be on point. All the time.

So we moved from Oberammergau. And by the way, we moved into Oberammergau. And we captured the man that played Christ in the passion play. And he turned out to be the, as far as our understanding was, to be the biggest Nazi there was in this part of the country.

So we moved on just a little bit past Oberammergau, if my memory serves me right, and we hit a big roadblock. And these were tall pine trees that had been set in a big ditch. And then the forest on each side eliminated any possibility of the armor moving. And at this time, we didn't have any-- we didn't need any air cover, because everybody was-- the Germans were in full flight.

So we stopped at this roadblock, I say in full flight. And they left back units to defend their roadblocks. And this was early one morning. And this is probably about May the 1st or 2nd.

And there's a-- we're in this valley, on a single road going down in this valley. And on each side there's a forest. But back toward us it was all cleared out, and it was hay meadows.

And in these hay meadows were several little huts, or little huts that they stored hay in. And when we hit this roadblock, the Germans opened fire, we returned their fire. And at this point in time, we had-- every fifth round was tracer, and we set these haymows or haymows on fire.

And in this early, early morning, the thing that was so peculiar was that the fire, and the glow, we saw all these people getting out of-- jumping out of these buildings, and not, to my knowledge, all of us that were doing the firing, we never shot at these people. There was something in us that told us this is not the enemy. This is something else.

And we had never seen anybody like this before-- these people with large heads and sunken eyes. And we had seen the striped uniform before, with the slave laborers, but these people had the sunken-in eyes, and they had the large heads, and their heads were cropped very close, which made them then look more grotesque. They were just walking skeletons, those who could walk. There wasn't any cease-fire order given. We just stopped shooting.

And these people started coming up, and we said, well, we'll investigate some of these buildings around here that's not on fire. And my friend, Bob Keesee heard this groaning and groaning, and he opened his door, and entered little old haymow, hay barn. And there was this fellow lying there in this garb. And he didn't have any shoes on. He had walked from a railroad out there a ways and got in this place, and his feet were frozen.

We had a lot of people on this-- in this area here at this time. These displaced persons were from Dachau. They had evidently had-- this train had left Dachau in order to get some of the people or the evidence out, or something. And whenever our units had hit the rail head down there, why, evidently, the engineer or the people in charge of the train had left. And these people were there, left freezing, and starving. And many of them were dead.

And evidently, when we stopped firing, when we saw these grotesque figures coming out of these barns, and we stopped firing, this ended the battle. I don't know. The Germans left. And the engineers came up and promptly blew the roadblock.

And we were sitting there on this ditch on this road, and we were sitting in a ditch on each side, and there was about a

foot of snow. And my buddy and I were sitting there waiting to get further orders.

And all of a sudden, these people had come out, and where they're kind of gathered around us. And we opened our K-rations. And they were starving to death. Everybody was starving to death.

And the first thing we did was throw down our Tang, or that lemonade that they had for us, this ration-type lemonade. You put a quart of water with a-- it must be a teaspoon of powder, and you had lemonade. And we didn't care for that. It was just too strong. We couldn't hack it. And we threw that out.

And they scrambled for it, and practically ate the paper and all. And we couldn't understand what the situation was.

And there was a-- my friend started speaking in French, and the other man the displaced person standing there, said, let's talk in English. And he turns out to be a man that the Germans had used as a technician of some sort. And he had been spared his life up until this point.

But he says, these people haven't had any vitamin C in so long that they'll eat anything that has some kind of vitamin, vitamin C, with it.

I need to back up just a little bit. The 410th Regiment had gone through Landsberg. And they had uncovered this type of death camp they had in Landsberg. Landsberg was sort of a situation where the huts were buried in the ground, or they had a berm up on the side of the hut with a continuing roof, about 5 feet inside. You couldn't hardly-- well, you couldn't stand up inside them. 410th Regiment had uncovered this particular death camp.

And the thing about Landsberg, as best I remember, was that it didn't have any type of death machine that I can remember. They just starved to death, and they worked them for so long.

You see, my understanding of the whole thing is that the Holocaust victims, by the time that they-- by the time these victims were brought in, and their hair was used for mattresses, and they worked them a certain amount of time, and by the time they killed them or they died. And they knocked their gold or their teeth out.

And the time they made soap out of their remains, and burned them, and by the time they used the ashes to fertilize fields, that the-- it's my understanding that the typical victim netted the Third Reich $144. This was what he was-- that he was actually worth. I've heard these statistics given, about $144.

But Landsberg was a sort of a-- in a spot that was revered by the Germans, especially by the Bavarians, because Landsberg is where Hitler spent his time in so-called, quote, "prison," after the Munich Putsch had failed in the early '30s. He had a room that was dedicated to him there, was one of his-- where he was put in prison.

And Landsberg was kind of a-- it was really a die-hard area on down to a town of Schongau. When we started to go across Schongau, we had to cross the-- I believe it was the Lech River that's there, and they have a bridge there.

Why, the retreating Germans, they set the explosives. And the members of the first battalion of my regiment came up on this situation, and they knew that the explosives were set on the bridge. But they had run off, or the people who set the explosives had left. And this lady from Schongau came out of a building there in town. And she knew where the detonator was, and blew herself and the bridge up.

We're down in a die-hard area, now what we're talking about, as far as Nazism. And these are some things that I bring up to show you, when you get down to this area here, we were constantly on the lookout looking for what we called Wehrwolves. And we thought that this was going to be the-- we knew this would be the final battle of the war. We knew this would be the most horrendous battle. And of course, it didn't turn out to be that way.

But back to my story. These refugees from this Dachau train started streaming to the rear. And it's quite a comparison to see this take place. On our right, as we were moving south, on our right were German soldiers giving up, and on our left were the displaced persons streaming out of here in those pajamas. They were carrying one another.

And the scene when we left is that two young men were coming along, two Jewish young men coming along, and they're holding this Jewish elderly person. And this elderly person was talking to them. And he was saying, no, no. He didn't want to go. And they were helping him along.

They set him down by our Jeep here. And of course, I was the only one of the very few men in my unit who was from the South. Everybody else from Detroit and then north up here, up in the north-- the eastern area. And Yiddish and German and all these languages sound alike to me. But anyway, they were easily-- we had contact with a lot of these people in Yiddish or German. And the ones that spoke English, we spoke English.

But these two men here was trying to get the old father to come along with the elderly, the old patrician here, to come along. And he wouldn't go. He sat down right by our Jeep in the ditch. And he sat down in the snow. And all he had on was this blue-striped pants and the jacket, and some shoes that were wooden and had some canvas on the top of them.

And my friend Bablo was listening to the conversation. He says, the old man doesn't want to go any further. And he says, the old man said he promised God that if he would let him see the American Army, that he would die and die satisfied. And the old man died there. And the two younger gentlemen went on down the road.

And by this time we were highly incensed. I mean, it finally hit us what we were really fighting for, up against, the kind of people we were up against.

We went on to Garmisch-Partenkirchen, went on down through Zirl, into the Inn Valley, into Innsbruck, Worgl, and finally down about Schwaz, Austria. May 8 came along, and the war ended.

Now my displaced persons story and my story about the Holocaust really started-- I guess began there. I was very young, had only been in the army about six or seven months. I had about 100 days of combat. And then I had about 100 days of training. So consequently, everybody that was that young, or that-- with that least experience, we were designated to go to Japan and fight in the Pacific.

So they sent us back to a station to get all the men of this caliber, and whatever they needed, together to send them to Japan or to the South Pacific. And Dachau was the marshaling station for all this.

We moved into Dachau into a forty-and-eight. We caught a train from Austria, and we went to Dachau in a forty-and-eight. And it was May, the latter part of May. There was a lot of sunshine, and we had our shirts off, and we were enjoying it, and we were just a bunch of GIs in a forty-and-eight, and we're traveling down there. And we rolled into the siding there at Dachau.

And again, the second time in my life, I saw situations where the whole mood and the psychology of the whole situation changed immediately. We were a bunch of GIs, laughing, joking. I mean it was two or three bottles of whatever flowed freely down there, being passed around. And we were going back.

And a lot of us were going to maybe go home, a lot of us are going to stay there, and a lot of us were heading for the Pacific. And we were going to go to this place, and be put in different divisions. Would this be the last time we'd ever be together, and things of this nature. And we were having a pretty good time.

But we dropped on the sighting at Dachau. "Arbieten macht frei" on the gates there. And the levity ceased. The jocularity ceased. A somber and completely different situation came upon the scene, because we knew that we were in a different place, in a different habitat, in a different atmosphere than we ever knew, and we knew-- I knew that I would never be in this situation again. I was going to see the elephant right here.

I had never heard the word "Dachau" before. I didn't know, except from the guys, well, there's some-- from a prison camp over here. And the 3rd Division, I think, went through Dachau. And we got these people off the train.

And I don't even recall whether I knew what the word "Dachau" was until we got there. And where this sign on the gate

says, "Work makes liberty," or "Arbeiten macht frei."

And all of a sudden, I saw a fellow standing by my side. And he says in very broken and halting English, he says, will you sell some cigarettes? And at that, not being a smoker, I got my ration of cigarettes, and I always had some on me. And I said, yeah. I said, here, take a little small pack, I said. Take this.

And he was, oh, highly thankful. And he was in fairly good physical condition. He was neatly-- I mean his clothes were clean. He had on these old-- the prison garb, of course, but they were very clean. And he had some kind of a cap on. And his head was just cropped very close. And he wasn't in the best shape of everybody, but he wasn't like the people we'd seen.

He said, would you like me to show you around?

And I said, well, yes. All we were doing, we-- and they put us in the same billets that these people were in. Put them in the same buildings. They had turn out all these tiers of bunks that I have seen in pictures before. And all we did was sleep on the floor.

They had gone to some extent to try to delouse these places, but these long shotgun buildings were just these GIs on the floor. And we were waiting for them to cut orders for us to go to the different-- the different units that we're going to go to different places in the world.

And he says, would you like me? And I said, yes. So I met him back at a certain time at a certain place, and the place I met him was at the-- where the SS guards lived.

And we had access to their quarters, the SS quarters, in that we ate there, and we were able to take showers in the SS quarters. And the showers are tiled, ceiling, everything, really nice. Really great.

So I met him at the SS headquarters. And he says, first off, I want to show you the first crematorium that was ever built here. And he took me out there. And off out to one side was one single crematorium there.

And I said, well, what was-- and it had some remains in it. And I said, what-- I said, this is not the main crematorium, as I understand. He said, no, I'll take and show you those.

So he said this is where they cremated the prisoners of the Reich-- that is their own people, the Germans that were saboteurs, or turned against the Germans, or something. But this was the first one they had there at Dachau, and this is the one that they used to cremate their own, I guess, or whatever. But he says, I'll show you the rest of it.

So the first thing we went into was-- now if my directions are right, this camp was surrounded by a high barbed-wire fence with concrete posts. And I believe these posts had a curve through them to prevent people from getting out. And the wire was strung along it.

And it had some concertina wire before they had the-- this wire on the big concrete post. And the wire on the concrete post was electrified. Had a moat that ran around it. And I understand that there was a possibility the moat could be charged with electricity at the same time.

But there on the, if my directions are right, seemingly so on the south side was a group of buildings. And these buildings were about 12 by 12. And one building of the house, 12 by 12 rooms. And there was just one room right after the other.

The people came off the railroad siding. And those that were supposed to be eliminated were taken to these rooms here, that they're just kind of like stalls in a horse barn, and they were sealed. They had doors on each end. The room had opened up doors at each end. They were sealed.

Can we begin now? Let's see. Where was I? We were in Dachau.

They brought these prisoners in, and they told them, in these stalls here, now put your clothes down, and put your shoes down first, and put your coat, and your trousers, and-- women, men, children, everybody. Put them down here. And we're going to put you into shower baths, and we're going to delouse your clothes. We're going to seal these doors shut and delouse your clothes here.

And when you come back out, you'll be sure you know which door you went into, which one of these stalls. And then you'll be sure that you pick up your clothes when you come back out.

In the meantime, they had shorn their heads, and clipped their heads. And then they took them into this room. It says shower baden, or shower, baths up here. And of course the nozzles of the room, as best I remember were sort of recessed in the wall. And this looks kind of funny to be a shower bathroom, to have the nozzles recessed up in the ceiling. The best I recall.

But anyway, these luckless people were crowded and jammed into this room here. And then the Zyklon-B pellets were dropped in the acid, and they were gassed. They were brought out by the kapos.

Now the kapos were those guards that were either Jewish, or Romanian, or something that they had there, that elected to live, I guess, or whatever. And the kapos pulled the bodies out.

And in this gassing-- in chamber, this gas chamber, this fellow told me that they always stacked up in pyramid style, or a pyramid, because obviously the last one living was moving on up and getting on top of the pyramid.

They pulled these people out to a waiting room, for the use of some of the nomenclature. These people were pulled out there, and there they were-- the teeth were knocked out that had gold in them. And then those people were put into the ovens. The corpses were put in the ovens in the next room.

The next room housed-- I believe it was eight ovens, four ovens built back to back. They were fired with coke or coal. And when the bodies went into the ovens, they had some process that they could render some fat out of people. But it's my understanding that these people that came in were gassed. It took quite a bit to burn them, because they were in pretty good shape. Now the people that starved to death or whatever out here, or died on the job when they were gassed, why, they burned pretty readily.

The ashes fell down through a grate. And when these ashes fell down in through a grate, the Nazis were very clever. They would take these ashes and make a fire clay or an ash cake out of them.

This ash cake here has the number 9735 on it. The back is very plain, but the front of it has a number indented in it. And apparently this was prisoner number 9735. I've often wondered what happened to 9735, where he was from. And some of the-- my imagination runs away with itself when I think about this right here.

Now this prisoner told me-- this ex-prisoner at Dachau told me that this was used to garner more finances for the Third Reich, that a person back in Poland or somewhere could receive word that your kinsman has died of natural causes. It was usually typhus or pneumonia. And would you like to have his remains? And for $25, or the equal amount of $25, you could receive your kinsman's remains.

I doubt if this contains all the ashes or part of the ashes of number 9735, because there were several urns of ashes there that had not been made into fire clay bricks. I took a picture of those, and the pictures is very dim. It's so old and everything. But this was in the basement of the crematorium there. The ashes sifted down. And they had a small factory set up to run these ash cakes.

The ashes were then hauled out in bulk to a cabbage field. And this cabbage field looked very large to me. For some reason, there's a-- 75 acres sticks in my mind, the prettiest cabbage that I've ever seen in my life. The heads, the plants, were about two feet apart.

And this is different than we do it in Texas. We plant them-- cabbages, just like anything else, we plant them pretty

close together. But these cabbages were 3 feet apart, and had monstrous leaves and monstrous head.

But you look down at the ground, and you could see flecks of bone and ashes there, that evidently that this cabbage field had been partially fertilized with some of the human ashes that came out of the crematorium there.

I spent two weeks at Dachau. And this fellow was-- and I never-- if I knew his name, it never stayed with me. I saw him often times. We even-- a friend of mine even went to a back window that was being guarded by a soldier. And we talked him into letting us go in this warehouse. And we were going to get some more mementos of this Dachau place. But when we got in there, why, the things that we thought would be incriminating, they were under pretty heavy guard, and we didn't-- we had no success there whatsoever.

But we were in the gas chamber one day. And an officer, a second lieutenant comes in. And there was an American soldier guarding about four or five PWs.

Now my understanding that this-- especially this waiting room where they pull the bodies out of the gas chamber into this waiting room, where they knocked out the teeth and things like this, the drainage system had stopped up, and human fluid was up on the walls and had stained the walls. And these German PWs were scouring the walls. And this second lieutenant comes in and says, let's do no more cleanup. Said, the Nuremberg Trials are going to begin pretty soon. I don't-- anything-- we're going to leave everything just like it is. In the gas chamber itself, I remember seeing hand prints, or where you'd-- it was stucco wall, where somebody-- and fingernail prints, where people had tried to claw their way out.

But as they gassed them, they-- it took about 10 or 15 minutes to gas that group of those people. It took a little bit of time, probably not much longer, to exhaust it.

Now I think I remember a very complicated-looking, and probably a very efficient-looking exhaust system that was for this, because of course the gas, the Zyklon-B gas, had to be cleared very quickly so that the people could get in there and process these corpses that were there.

I stayed there two weeks. Our regimental headquarters was there at Dachau. The 409th Regiment had their headquarters at Dachau. We were moved to Musberg, the 3rd Battalion, and Company M is a part of 3rd Battalion, to Musberg. And there we guarded a lot of the SS prisoners that were going to be-- that were going to be put on trial at the Nuremberg Trials. I don't know whether I guarded people that were-- I was just a soldier at that time, a PFC. Whether I had guarded a man that was going to be hanged or not, I don't know.

I do have one or two other items here besides the ash cake. I have this is kind of a scourged thing. And only has-- this is horsehide strands. And they only have two or three of those left.

And I have pictures here that I'm sure the Holocaust has a lot of these pictures, and the Holocaust museum has a lot of them. And I took the pictures of the camp here. I did not take this picture of the dead bodies there. This guard that I saw, this fellow that helped me, my guide, so to speak, had some of these made. I have several negatives of a lot of these, and the way that the camp was put together.

This, of course, here is the 103rd 409th Infantry Regiment, that this book that tells about our journeys through through Southern Germany and Bavaria. And this book here, Report After Action, also is the division book. 109th, 410th, and 411th regiments made up the 103rd Division with its various attack-- attached groups. And we have a very graphic picture in here of the Landsberg.

Now this right here is a flag that I took at Ludwigshafen. And I just used the Nazi symbol there to put my platoon's members in. And I just took an indelible pencil, and with a little bit of water. And I have the first squad, second squad, third squad, and fourth squad with our other people there in this. And then this, along with the ash cake, are some of my most treasured mementos.

This about concludes my testimony. The one thing that I do want to get across is my understanding is that Dachau has

been downplayed as a place where they gassed the victims. And mine may be just second-hand knowledge, but I saw the room. The gassing room had been used, as best I could tell, and my friend, or my guide, said it had been used.

The experience of seeing the victims of Dachau, and the experience of being at Dachau, is something that will probably never leave me. And how this could happen, I don't know.

There was a lot of time in my life, when my children were very young, that-- a boy and a girl-- that I would get up in the night and go see if my children were all right. It all stems from this.

But I appreciate the opportunity to have had to tell this, and all these friends that I have here that are still alive can bear me out. Thank you.

Mr. Milam, has this experience affected the work that you do now, or the work that you took up after the war.

Yes. I, coming from the background I come from--

Which is--

Was-- yes, Southern Texas. I was telling Dr. Berger here that my uncle was a hero in the Texas Revolution, you know, great-great uncle, and all this kind of stuff. And I was-- I've always been one to be a definite, and this is the way it's going to be, and to heck with anybody else's feelings, and things of this nature. But--

And I'm a student of the old Bible. Now I belong to the Church of Christ, and I'm a Christian, but I'm a student of the old Bible.

And this all is very meaningful to me, the way that these people have been persecuted. And it's had a definite change in my life. Totally different change.

I like to think I'm a lot more tolerant. And as a teacher, and as a principal, when a person come in, and I didn't think they had a fair shake, I like to think that maybe I was-- that what I'd seen in this right here that maybe I could evaluate them and give them a better shot at things. And I like to think I was successful as a principal of a high school.

I'm now in probation work, and the people I deal with, many of them had a pretty good shake in life-- pretty fair. But I still deal with them as best I possibly can, and as fairly as possible. Of course, the laws are very strict now. It's very democratic.

But this Holocaust thing-- and I came back, and I would give these same kind of talk to people, and people, until they made the movie, The Holocaust, I-- I would give this to my classes while I was a teacher, and I would show these pictures of these bodies, and answer questions.

But it was just like, well, we've explained what causes earthquakes, and things like this, and what's going on.

But since the movie The Holocaust, it's taken a whole different-- a different depth. I mean, a whole different meaning, a more concentrated and sincere meaning. So I've seen The Holocaust twice.

And I'm a farmer and rancher. And when I ship cattle, when I load those cattle out, not a time fails that it'll go back to this. When they put those little people-- those people on trains and ship them to god only knows where. And by the time I was over there, when people got on a train, they knew they weren't coming back. And I still have that feeling when I load cattle to go to market. It is the strangest thing in the world.

What would you say to the revisionists?

Oh, the revisionist, that's the people that a lot of them say it never happened and things like this? Well, they're all liars or they're crazy. When you see a pile of bones and a skull in an oven, and you can't reject the eyewitnesses. And it's all

right to move on to other things. But these are things we don't-- in the United States of America, we don't forget the Civil War.

I had an uncle and a grandpa. One fought-- and one fought on the other side, and one side, one fought on the other side. And it's a terrible thing that we went through this, but we don't forget it.

We have lynchings that we're not proud of. We have a lot of things in our history that we're not proud of at all, but we dare not forget it. And the revisionists, those people that want to forget this thing, put it aside, why, they're the same ilk the man who started, Adolf Hitler and Joe Stalin.

And I had to go back into service during the Korean War. And I was in the reserve. I went back in the service, and it didn't bother a bit in the world or anything. I was worried about-- I knew what I was getting into at that time. Fortunately, I didn't have to go overseas.

But and going over at Saddam, we ought to do the same thing to Saddam we've done to the Germans. We ought to take them out and try them. They take him, and get him, and put him before the World Court, just like they did the Eichmann, the Jews did Eichmann.

We're in a in a situation where news is instant. Everybody knows it. Just about even the remotest, the darkest continents, they get some kind of news. When people find out if you do a certain thing, if you're-- if you're a genocide person, then you're going to pay for your own life. It's fundamental. It's very fundamental. Take him out and execute him, just like they did Eichmann.

The Jewish people, I've been a student of their history. And it's amazing how those people have come through. And I understand above all, now, most of all, I understand why they say "never again."

With your children and your grandchildren, I guess, if-- what would you want them to learn from your experience?

Well, I'm very basic. I want them to learn that if you infringe on somebody else's way of life, if you're prejudiced against that way of life, you better let them be, because you can-- it's going to get you one way or the other. It's going to get you, whether I'm under Hitler, and I caused them to be killed, and then I had to kill myself, or my henchmen are killed or hung, or whether psychologically I drive myself insane or whatever it is, because it's just against God's way of doing things. God allows it for some reason to happen, but it's against his-- it's against his will.

And to be a person of-- and lord, I'm rednecked. And I'm-- it's black or it's white. And I've come up in that old school of the dirty '30s and the Depression. And this white man had better not fool with that black woman, or this black woman foll with that white man, and you better not marry out of your race, and things like this, well, I still would like to keep my grandchildren within our own way. But I don't want them to do anything about anybody else. I don't think you should persecute, or run a person out, or do something to a person unless it's through the law.

And I have felons that are the-- there's 20 people around my area that if you could do away with them, they'd just be a lot better area. But you can't do that. And it's not right to do that.

But above all, God almighty is going to take care of a lot of this in his own fashion. He's going to take care of a lot of this situation. And I think this thing with Russia, we pray that men might live more peaceably, one toward the other. And I think, well, maybe my grandchildren, my grandchildren might see something that might get our prayers answered overnight. Prayers are answered. Russia. Communism fall, it's dead. With freedom, you know.

And I know it's not like we have here in the United States, but I know it's a whole lot better than it was 10 years ago, see? The wall comes down. And we really don't depend on God enough, really.

And now the thing that bothers me too, that Roosevelt, and our leaders knew that this was going on, but do you know that I had to go over there and talk to one of these men before I found out that it was a death camp, there were such thing as a death camp. Do you know that I was always taught that Russia was our ally. "Ivan is our ally," coming down

the stairs at Camp Walters, training. There was a big picture-- "Ivan loves you," or "Ivan is our ally."

And at that very time, the Ivan was plotting to overthrow us, and do us in. And at that very time, Ivan was persecuting the Jews and everybody else, just like Hitler was. And I had to do that.

But now, because of the media, the technology, men's sins will find them out, as we've seen on television here. And if your sins find you out, you're a dead duck. That's all there is to it.

OK?

Thank you.

You bet.

Thank you very much.

Well.

[INAUDIBLE] maybe you can get closer [INAUDIBLE].

Oh, you want to get some close-up? Yeah.

If you can do the same thing, like--

OK. Yeah, OK.

I want to--

You want to focus in?

Yes.

Do you want him to stand up or sit down.

Sit down, please. [INAUDIBLE] just maybe.

OK, do you want someone to hand that to him? You might want to hand it--

[CROSS TALK]

We will stay out of the picture, so.

Yeah, this is the ash cake here. And I don't know. I don't think the Holocaust Museum has one, and I'm surprised. I don't know why this is-- and to my knowledge, I was the only one in my group that ever picked up one. I've never seen one. Now Mike has seen some-- Mike Jacobs. OK?

Yeah, we'll just set it back there. Yeah. OK, right.

[INAUDIBLE].

OK. This is the type of whip that most of the kapos used. The SS guard had the Schmeisser. Had sling arms all the time, that you've seen so many in the movies.

And the Schmeisser was very inventive type of a weapon. The Schmeisser machine gun fired, I think, about 1,500

rounds per minute. The fastest one we had was about 600 rounds per minute.

And another thing that I remember at Dachau were the guard dogs that they had. And these dogs were set up on the people at different times. And the inmates at Dachau had air-raid shelters. They were about this deep. And they were covered with boards with dirt on top. And it was a great pastime for the guards to put the inmates in the air-raid shelters and then set the dogs in there with them. And some of these dogs weighed 150 pounds, big German shepherd dogs.

This particular whip here was used to hit people in the face, and head, and neck, and shoulders.

Here are some pictures here of the camp. And they were-- these here are of Dachau. This is of another group of prisoners that's at another camp nearby. These are German prisoners here. This is just a pile of-- picture with a pile of bodies that were-- that I titled them in my little paper "the uncremated." So that's the situation there.

I have some-- about three or four typewritten pages that I wrote a letter to my sister. And I just entitled this, "Camp Dachau, Germany." And I typed it on an old Army typewriter. And of course, I couldn't type very good. But then I had these laminated. And these were my impressions in 1945.

Do you want to read them?

Well, I'll tell you that I'll be glad to read it if you want to.

We just have four minutes.

Four minutes?

Why don't you sit down?

All right.

"The concentration camp at Dachau was and still is a large spacious place covering many acres. As you enter the camp, you pass by many administration buildings. The railroad station theater. Oh, yes, there is a theater at Dachau, but it was used exclusively by the jailers and not the jailed.

Dachau was used before the war as a camp for German political prisoners by the Nazi party. This was continued throughout the war with captured military personnel being added. It was always operated by the German SS troops.

It was here that 53,000 were executed during the war period. Prisoners, yes, prisoners because they believed in decency, or merely because they did not think as the Nazis thought, or because they bore arms against Germany and were unfortunate enough to be captured.

For these latter, there was no Geneva Convention to protect them against injustices. Prisoners, yes, but people, human beings, who had homes, who were loved and were loved, who had families, fathers and mothers, wives and children, who loved life even as you and I. They were not criminals or murderers, but they did not agree with the Nazi ideology. That was enough. 53,000 of them were killed, slaughtered here. No one knows the number that lived throughout Dachau-- through Dachau. Somehow, I don't believe there were many.

It is not my purpose, however, to horrify you with the infamy of Dachau. My wish is to write simply and coolly the things I saw there, and to tell you the things that were told to me by our guide.

We finally met our guide, who, by the way, knew Dachau very well. He should have, for he spent four years there as a prisoner of war of the Germans. His head was shaven, his face expressive, scarred, ecstatic. He rarely smiled, and his eyes had a deep sorrowful look. He spoke English very slowly and softly with considerable effort. After making some particular shocking exposure, he had a habit of lowering his face, closing his eyes, as though to rid his mind of the thoughts.

His nationality was undoubtedly that of Eastern Europe. His clothes were better than those of the average liberated prisoner. He wore the thin cotton trousers and coat, dark blue in color, patched but clean and well pressed. He was hatless, but his shoes were good.

We passed by some American soldiers on guard duty at the entrance of the prison grounds, and came upon a huge level field about the size of 10 football fields put together. There are many single-story barracks here, and the whole thing is surrounded by an electric-charged barbed wire.

Between the fence and where we stood there was a moat only 10 feet wide, but the water flow is very swift. There are guard posts every 30 feet at this point. Inside this enclosure, but at some distance from them, so there was a group of German soldiers dressed in various uniforms. While we looked at them, their conversations seemed to stop, and they hardly seemed to move. They returned look for look, however.

We were told by our guide that these were not regular SS troops, but from the army, who were still firm in their Nazi belief. The SS troops are-- the SS troops resided in buildings out of sight together with the SS commander.

The barracks in front of us were formerly used to house the prisoners of the camp. We were told by our guide that large as the barracks were, they're always overcrowded, and that they were without any toilet facilities. No blankets were provided for by the-- for the prisoners winter or summer, and, of course, no bedding. They were supposed to sleep on bare wooden bunks.

We passed by the large field and entered a huge bare room in a modern building constructed of concrete and cement. Here prisoners were brought. They were told to undress. And as sort of a treat, given soap and towels, and led into another room which had a large sign above the door reading in German, "Shower Bath." Many prisoners were forced into this room at one time. Then a large double steel door closed, and the prisoners were ready to take showers.

But the prisoners that entered this room were never to know the simple joy of a shower bath. After these-- in 15 minutes after entering the shower room, these prisoners were removed dead. They were killed by poison gas that that innocent looking shower unit led out by a large vent in the left wall. The bodies were then moved into a third room, much like the first, and from here taken to still another room where they were hung from a cross beam by meat hooks like so many sides of beef.

In this room, there were not two, but four crematory ovens, large brick affairs that burned coal and with every convenience for the fulfillment of their grisly business. The bodies were lowered onto a sort of steel litter which was easily pushed into the oven by means of rollers. Flames soon consumed the body. Human bones and ashes were all that remained. There were still great quantities or ashes in the crematories, and the sickening odor was still very strong.

If a prisoner had relatives, they were usually notified of his, quote, "natural death," unquote, and an urn containing some ashes was sent them provided they had enough money to pay the huge fee asked. An identification disk came with these ashes that was made of fire clay. The urn was made just like an ordinary flower pot. In the basement there were shelves lined with urns full of ashes that had not yet been sent to the victims-- the victim's relatives.

The SS troops were not without imagination, and occasionally they would vary the procedure by pushing and cramming as many live bodies as possible into the rooms, sealing it overnight, and let the victims suffocate. Then the bodies were cremated in the usual manner. Again the SS troops would not bother to kill their victims, but cremate them while still alive. Many suffered this horrible end.

In one room, where dead bodies were stored, I saw footprints on the wall to a height of about 6 feet. The ceiling lights had been crushed by the ever increasing pile of the uncremated.

Our guide led us from this building to a large yard containing a great many cages. It was here that the dogs of Dachau were kept. These dogs were not used to hunt escaped prisoners from Dachau. They were used to terrify the prisoners.

Some poor wretch would be thrown stark naked to the hungry, mad dogs which were released to a gruesome meal of live human flesh. This was not a rare thing, but happened frequently. Moreover, the dogs were trained to attack a certain part of the body-- the sex organs.

We went on our way to a small plot of ground, about two or three feet above the rest of the plot, that was surrounded by a high hedge. These hedges were set deep in the ground, about 2 feet deep. On the slope from this high ground, one noticed immediately three bare spots on each of the three sides where the hedges grew. We were told that SS brought prisoners here, especially the Russian officers, and made them kneel at these points, and then shoot them in the back of the head.

A few feet from these plots, there were two more of them adjoining an identical. There was a ditch about 2 feet wide and 3 feet deep. The sides of this ditch were bordered. Here the bodies were dragged by meat hooks, and the blood permitted to drain down the ditch.

Our guide next led us to some evergreen trees whose branches had been sawed off 8 inches from the trunk to a height of 10 feet. Here prisoners were punished for minor infractions of the camp rules, or at the whim of the SS troopers. This punishment consisted of hanging a prisoner by his wrists, which were laced behind his back together, for a period of one or two hours from one of these sawed-off branches, so that if he moved at all, the other sawed-off branches would scar his flesh.

Near these trees, there was a blind passage that was filled with large pebbles. Prisoners were forced to enter here and were jammed inside until the place could hold no more. They were forced to remain on their hands and knees for periods of hours. It was customary to put the dogs in with the prisoners at this point.

The breaking of a prisoner's arms or legs across the knee of a trooper was not uncommon, and no medical treatment followed. One SS trooper was so proficient at this art that he was known as "The Bone Crusher."

Camp Dachau did have a hospital, though. It was not used to mend broken bones or cure sick prisoners. Here their doctors and scientists used the prisoners as guinea pigs for the various experiments they conducted.

I have not written of the food given the prisoners. I can judge the truth of the guide's statements by photographs that I have seen of the starving men unlucky enough to be prisoners of Dachau. He told us that they were fed two meals a day. The first meal consisted of a piece of black bread and some thin watery potato or cabbage soup. The second meal consisted of a piece of black bread and some thin watery potato or cabbage soup.

For any infraction of camp rules, a prisoner's food might be withheld for three or four days, or longer, or if he displeased an SS trooper in any way-- and they were very easily displeased. If a prisoner attempted to pick up a cigarette butt discarded by an SS trooper, it was customary to shoot the prisoner in the arm or hand, and no medical treatment was given the victim.

It was customary, we were told, for the SS to call out the prisoners at any hour of the day or night, particularly in the wintertime or when the weather was bad, make them strip, and then conduct physical exercise. These exercises were very vigorous, especially for men in a semi-starving condition. But if one prisoner failed to keep up with the count of the guard, the whole group would be punished. The prisoners might be kept at these exercises for a great length of time. After the exercises were completed, the prisoners were forced to parade around the ground, still naked and singing at the top of their voices.

Another favorite sport of the SS was to cover the prisoner with a blanket and make other prisoners beat him with hand-billlies. If they did not beat their fellow prisoner hard enough to suit the guard, they in turn were beaten.

I have written as though all the prisoners at Dachau were men. They were not. Many were women. They were subject to the same treatment as the men, plus many other indignities. And yes, I must include, it was one of the favorite methods for executing a woman was to insert a hot iron bar into her body.