

-TITLE-MEMBERS OF 522ND COMBAT TEAM  
-I\_DATE-  
-SOURCE-HAWAII HOLOCAUST PROJECT  
-RESTRICTIONS-  
-SOUND\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT  
-IMAGE\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT  
-DURATION-  
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH  
-KEY\_SEGMENT-  
-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-  
-PERSONAL\_NAME-  
-CORPORATE\_NAME-  
-KEY\_WORDS-  
-NOTES-  
-CONTENTS-  
00:00:00 Technical talk.

00:00:30 Interviewer (ITR) I am here with members of the 522nd Combat Team, 522nd Field Artillery Battalion. Going to ask a few questions to get back into the mood.

00:01:00 How did you feel as Japanese-Americans when Hawaii was bombed. Mr. Shimazu?

00:01:30 To me it was incredulous that a small country like Japan would attack the United States. I knew we were in the middle but we had been brought up to think of this as the country of our birth.

00:02:00 Our Japanese teachers had taught us that we owed our allegiance to the United States.

00:02:30 (another speaker) At the time of the attack, we were scared stiff. The next thought was whether they would land troops. Then we went on as Don mentioned.

00:03:00 We knew right away it was on Pearl Harbor. We ran out and could see. We knew it was war because the radio had been talking about it.

00:03:30 On the radio they were saying, "Take cover; this is the real thing." After the bombing, what next?

00:04:00 In my case, I climbed a tree and could see the black puffs in the air. I was just off the university campus.

Another: I was in Waikiki, . AA shells began to fall in the neighborhood. The school started to burn.

00:04:30 I lived in a dormitory and most of the people were Oriental. Another speaker - I was in a mostly mixed area. Another - O had come to Honolulu to have my birth certificate authenticated, and that was early December.

00:05:00 ITR - Mr. Ryoko, where were you at the time?

I was in bed at the time. Someone yelled, "Battleship on fire." So we all ran out and could see the flames.

00:05:30 We could see black smoke. We didn't realize there was a war on. We thought of maneuvers. We all ran to the seashore. But because of the black smoke, it seemed something was the matter.

00:06:00 About nine o'clock, the National Guard came and said it was the real thing and we should go up to the heights.

00:06:30 There was a lot of people watching. It was the first time we saw a battleship on fire. We could see the Rising Sun insignia and the heads looking out.

00:07:00 (Mr K ) I got up LATE THAT MORNING. There was a lot of traffic. So, I went out to the road and I saw a policeman I knew and asked him what was going on. When he told me the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor I couldn't believe it.

00:07:30 Big army trucks were going back and forth. I wanted to volunteer for the Home Guard.

00:08:00 I approached George Bennett who was very active in community affairs. He said, "Why, they'll shoot you down.

00:08:30 At that time, there were mainly mainland soldiers on Oahu. He figures that if I approached one with a rifle, he would take me for a Jap.

00:09:00 (Mr Obayashi) I was on the mainland, and there were only Japanese going to this school. When I heard the news, I had a great feeling of being alone. I thought of my family too.

00:09:30 I was fortunate that the people around me in the school were very supportive. I spent the Xmas with a professor and decided to call the draft board and ask to be drafted right away.

00:10:00 Soon after Xmas vacation, they drafted me. I didn't know what was going on back home on Maui.

00:10:30 I worried about my father, my brother, who was already drafted into the Army. My father was not an American citizen; I lost my mother when I was young.

00:11:00 My father WAS AN ALIEN: HE COULDN'T become a citizen.  
ITR: Did any of you have the same fear for parents who were not American citizens.

00:11:30 Yes, with all the excitement, and all the news we had was from the radio. We felt real lonely, knowing our parents were from Japan.

00:12:00 As far as my parents were concerned, they said that I was American, and I shouldn't worry about Japan.

00:12:30 It was a lonely feeling. As far as the bombing of Pearl Harbor, I was on Maui at the time. But we did have shelling from submarines at night. We watched that.

00 13:00 At that time, one of my buddies was Caucasian, the other Japanese. It didn't affect our relationship while we were going to school.

00:13:30 ITR - How about the feelings of your parents?  
Mr. . We were fishing and when we got back, the guard said to get home and listen to the radio.

00:14:00 So we did, and found out there was a war on. We decided we couldn't just sit back. I felt we had to volunteer or do something.

00:14:30 I couldn't travel from Kawai to Oahu. I was restricted because I was a welder. That kind of job was restricted; you needed a special pass.

00:15:00 I said I wanted to get to Honolulu to work or something. I signed a petition that we Japanese could be drafted and served our country overseas.

00:15:30 About six months later the opportunity came and I talked with my father. My brother wanted to go too, but he was younger and I said I would go and he could stay.

00:16:00 My father wanted me to go too. (Tears) We wanted to serve our country but felt there was no sense two of us go.

00:16:30 I found out about a year later that he volunteered too. We never met up. Fortunately he didn't go through the thick of things like I did, and we came out clean.

00:17:00 My father is not much of a talker - he didn't say much about what it was like for the family. He managed to get along with people.

00:17:30 It's not much of a story to talk about - they got along.

00:18:00 ITR: Mr. S was living on the mainland. We heard about the bombing. We were just appalled about it.

00:18:30 We didn't know how to react. We had a certain amount of fear. We were a small minority but large enough to evoke reaction.

00:19:00 I lived in student housing and the adjacent building were apartments. In the middle of the night we would get catcalls. Even prior to that there was a certain amount

00:19:30 Of anti-Japanese sentiment in the press so we had an uncomfortable time at that point. But school was to last just a

little longer, so we stuck it out.

00:20:00 In one of the classes there was a very courageous young lady, an instructor, a Caucasian, who spoke up and said we should be treated as Americans.

00:20:30 Not as the Japanese enemy. I thought that was courageous I have always been thankful. I was embarrassed to be the focus of the class at that point.

00:21:00 I didn't say anything to her and I regret that. Since I was away from home, I can't give the reaction of the family just after Pearl Harbor.

00:21:30 After the semester, I went home to be with the family. In February, the order for the evacuation of Japanese from the west coast was issued.

00:22:00 We weren't evacuated until May because they had to allow time for the camps to be built. I grew up in a farm area about 30 miles south of Seattle.

00:22:30 Time was allowed for the construction of the assembly centers. In my area, the exhibition center was converted to the area.

00:23:00 In the parking lots they built barracks which were divided into rooms which were assigned one to 1 family.

00:23:30 Army coats and blankets were about all they gave us. Those in the cities were loaded onto buses and taken to the camps. But we were more scattered.

00:24:00 When the time came we loaded up our one or two suitcases that we were allowed, and we drove ourselves to the camp in our farm truck. I don't know what happened to the truck.

00:24:30 We had to inventory our crops and things for the people who might take over. As I recall, after the order was issued, nothing much happened for a number of weeks, until the government was organized.

00:25:00 So we had two weeks to a month. Whereas in the city, I understand they actually had little time.

ITR: How did you feel about the evacuation from your family farm?

00:25:30 Resentment. But by that time, the West Coast community had agreed to comply.

00:26:00 So we went along without creating too much of a disturbance. A few brave souls took the matter to court.

00:26:30 ITR: Do you remember talking with your parents about what

you should do?

A: At that stage, especially in rural areas, we didn't get into any discussion about volunteering.

00:27:00 We complied, thinking more of staying with the family units. Things could have gotten ugly; fortunately, they didn't.

00:27:30 In certain pockets, a certain amount of ugliness was present and you couldn't tell when it might flare up. So it seemed best to stay with the family unit and see what happened.

00:28:00 ITR - The evacuation experience was something we didn't have to deal with on Oahi or the outer islands. But we have heard of Buddhist ministers who were picked up. Anyone care to talk about that?

00:28:30 We knew a Japanese school teacher who lived across from my home. And a priest. I asked where they were and was told they had been called in by the FBI.

00:29:00 My father-in-law was picked up - That was because he was active in community affairs on Maui. He was set, I think to Santa Fe as an alien.

00:29:30 Eventually he was released and went to a cousin in Spokane and stayed there until the end of the war. My mother-in-law ran a drug store. Two of her children were at school on the mainland, the other two were at home.

00:30:00 She kept the drug store open.

00:30:30 It was a tough time and they had to do what they could. I think they had some communication. And my wife and her sister visited him in Spokane.

00:31:00 We didn't talk too much about that situation.

ITR - Anyone else?

00:31:30 My Japanese school principal was another one who was pulled in. In his family there were many boys, and they served in the military.

00:32:00 But in spite of everything, they did what they thought they had to do. Didn't talk to any family members about that.

00:32:30 I didn't talk to my family until after I volunteered. All we did was shake hands. We didn't say a word. But everything was there in his eyes.

00:33:00 I volunteered first then went home to tell them.

Q: ITR - Anyone else?

00:33:30 Those who were interned immediately were often leaders of the community - ,school teachers, priests. I think it was ironic because prior to the war and ever during the war

00:34:00 Teachers and schools were the subject of abuse, but it was only through their efforts that there existed a pool of somewhat trained, loyal Japanese Americans.

00:34:30 Who could be put into the intelligence services for the Asian and European theaters, and is known now, these linguists came to be known as "the secret weapon."

00:35:00 In spite of all the abuse they got, it seems to me these schools should get recognition for their contribution to the war effort.

Mr. Kuba: It was pretty long after Pearl Harbor that we found out about the camps.

00:35:30 Our school teacher was picked up by the FBI. He was also the teacher of judo, and any broken bones, he mended.

00:36:00 We owed a lot to him. Yes, we knew about it at the time he was picked up.

00:36:30 The news went around pretty fast.

Q: ITR - What was the reaction of the community?

00:37:00 I don't know because we never had a chance to get together. After the war, we couldn't get together, like before.

00:37:30 I think aliens were barred from getting together. You don't know. I remember there was one time we did.

00:38:00 Gov. Burns (PH) he was from Kailva, and he got us together. I don't remember what he talked about, by I remember one question that he asked me

00:38:30 He asked me why I was going to volunteer. I said to prove our loyalty and to protect democracy. But at the same time, I wanted to see what the mainland was like.

00:39:00 ITR: Some of you may not have heard each other's stories. Now want to get into more individual experiences.

00:39:30 Susan: When I was growing up my parents and grand PARENTS USED TO TALK ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES. They were on a plantation on the big island, and they used to tell stories about neighbor turning against neighbor.

00:40:00 Non-oriental used to listen under the floor to hear if Japanese was being spoken and turn people in to the authorities. Also, about the military people, according to my grandmother, they used to force them to dig up their patches to see if anything was buried there, and they confiscated all their kimonos with family crests.

00:40:30 No one was allowed to carry more than four dollars or the money was taken away. I was wondering if any of you heard similar stories?

00:41:00 Either during the war, or after you came back. I never asked them what happened when I got back. We just were happy to be back and wanted to forget what happened.

00:41:30 When others came in, we just clammed shut. Among the veterans, it was different. Even my wife was not aware that such things were happening.

00:42:00 Susan: So basically, no one spoke to their parents about what happened to them?

(Another) Long after we did. I found out that some works of art they had were confiscated.

00:42:30 I could swear I saw some of the things in some \_\_\_\_ (ph) years later. But apparently all homes were visited to confiscate things considered contraband.

00:43:00 (Another) Yes, I remember, they came to my house, they took an old rifle, a classic, IF WE STILL HAD IT. It was used to shoot birds. It was old - you pumped the powder in.

00:43:30 Used it to scare the rice birds. They tried to pull my dad IN, BUT HE HAD A stroke. He was completely paralyzed.

00:44:00 They searched the house, took the rifle, we never got it back.

ITR: Did anyone ever ask for things to be returned?

00:44:30 (Another) They took my phonograph radio, and it never came back.

ITR: Who came in and did these things?

00:45:00 (Another) I don't know. Federal people. The FBI maybe. They never told me who came.

(Another) Most things were probably put in storage and taken by staff people.

00:45:30 (Another) We had a 15 foot boat in dry-dock and we never saw it again. Somebody used it.

00:46:00 During the war. you wouldn't make a claim because they would consider you a spy.

Susan and another exchange information - where did you live. She says her grandparents were interned several times.

00:46:30 We should have asked our parents while they were still young. Now they are senile.

(Another) I think there was an effort by the Japanese community and leadership to get of Japanese things to show their loyalty.

ITR You're saying that much of this was done voluntarily?

00:47:00 ITR Mr Naga I understand you learned only recently about your family being removed from the plantation.

A: What happened to my family was not as cruel as what happened to \_\_\_\_\_ family. Four months AFTER I volunteered, I was in Camp Shelby.

00:47:30 My school aged brother died and the family was in the hospital. Another brother was ordered to report to a manager's office.

00:48:00 He was told that since I was not working, but in service they had 30 days to get out of the home. I didn't know about this until about two years ago.

00:48:30 ITR: Sounds like lot of other families didn't share these experiences. Have most of you shared these experiences with you own families?

00:49:00 Its a spur of the moment kind of thing.

Mr. --- I wrote up some notes and showed them to my wife.

00:49:30 She said she had never heard of those things and said that we should make copies and send then to our children. So I have sent of copies to my two children on the mainland, but the one here hasn't seen it yet.

00:50:00 ITR: What about you Mr. Nagata, you were a school teacher; what happened? I talked to my father, being all alone, and with my brother in the 100th infantry battalion.

00:50:30 I was away at Camp Shelby. It was tough on him all alone. He was working on a tug, and because he was an enemy alien, they moved him out of there.

00:51:00 He became a bartender at the country club, which was a



good thing because he had regular hours and didn't have to get up early. The tubs used to have to go out to meet the steamers, and during the war he would have been busy.

00:51:30 To me it was a blessing to have him out of the war zone, but it hurt his dignity that he was not a sailor anymore. He was a lonesome person, that's all I know.

00:52:00 ITR: Q: I keep hearing the term, "enemy alien.'" I was wondering how you felt about having your families labelled that way. Mr Shimazu?

A: That was a fact and they knew they had no opportunity to become American citizens.

00:52:30 There was nothing they could do but obey the local authorities. But there's no way of getting away from it - they were enemy aliens.

00:53:00 (Another) My mother became a naturalized citizen long after the war. I think she suffered the most because my father was an invalid and she carried the burden along with my eldest brother.

00:53:30 My two other brothers were in the service also. Women are very strong. She died at 94 and was active until the end.

00:54:00 She had arthritis but was able to hobble around with a cane.

ITR: Q: I wanted to move to more recent events, this is 1988, of course. From time to time we see things in the paper which suggest that there still is not recognition that these were people who were loyal to Americans.

00:54:30 What is your reaction when you read that kind of letter and you see that kind of racism?

A: I feel a certain amount of disgust at the ignorance of people who are writing in this manner.

00:55:00 Moving back, I think an important factor that helps build up the racism is that all the immigrants from Europe came with the Statue of Liberty holding up the flame of promise.

00:55:30 And with full opportunity to become citizens. But in the case of our parents and all oriental, as I recall, they were shut off from that opportunity and a lot of people don't understand why they didn't become citizens.

00:56:00 Certainly there was injustice there. Just recently a fellow raised a question relating to the reparations, as to dual citizenship. Yes, early on, they were closer to their homeland and they were precluded from becoming citizens.

00:56:30 Their only hope was to go back to Japan when they made their fortune - the typical dream of immigrants. I read somewhere that European immigrants, with full citizenship, some 40 percent did, over time, though that figure seems high.

00:57:00 For people precluded from citizenship, it seems reasonable to me that they would retain their old ties. This business of dual citizenship, I believe it was just a custom that every newborn would be added to the family register.

00:57:30 In Japan, that was handled by local government officials and that automatically made them dual citizens. It wasn't as though anyone made an affirmative statement at some point in time that he was a dual citizen.

00:58:00 That criticism was unjustified in that it was the result of following old customs. What was the original question?

00:58:30 I was wondering about your reaction to the recent raising of racism. How do you feel when you read of these people whose interpretation of life is very different from how you know it?

00:59:00 A: There was a recent incident - a 3-star general retired here and he put a letter in the paper - he couldn't see why the Japanese were entitled to reparations when they were given the privilege to wander around wherever

00:00:00 Repeat of above

00:01:00 Repeat. He claimed they wandered around freely, without guards.

00:01:30 It was in the military press and well-circulated. When I read that, I just couldn't believe it. That they weren't forced out at the point of a gun. It's hard to believe, but there are people like that.

00:02:00 Recently, when the diaries were published, people said they weren't supposed to keep diaries. But people scribble things, and we had to run them in.

00:02:30 But there are elements. Maybe one in a thousand. But you can't deny these things.

ITR: Q What do we do about things like that?

00:03:00 (Another) There isn't much you can do. In any community you'll have these people with some kind of axe to grind. The extreme is when some local citizens say that the Holocaust never happened. But we were there.

00:03:30 In Germany, they talk that there was no such thing as the Holocaust.

ITR: What do you think we can do about something like that?

00:04:00 Publicity. As was mentioned, there always will be an element in society, there will be people who point their fingers at others to satisfy their own ego.

00:04:30 Education. As far as the preparations, I think they are justified but I don't know what the amount should be.

00:05:00 I visited two camps when I was in military camp in Arkansas, before I went to the 522nd, their sense of deprivation, where before they were living in their own homes and now they were in barracks.

00:05:30 Gang bathrooms, gang showers, dining rooms, no privacy. As far as discrimination, we get mad once in a while.

00:06:00 I think that, hopefully these are the oddballs, and the majority doesn't feel that way.

(Another) I agree, education might minimize the problem.

00:06:30 And TV could help to educate the public, instead of having these rotten movies. Once in a while, I watch PBS, and they have good movies. I think the churches can play a role.

00:07:00 But even among churches, they have this division. Rely on education to minimize this.

ITR: Anyone write letters to the editor in response.

A: I thought about it but I never did.

00:07:30 If we had written diaries, we could have written many things to remember. When I had a diary, I wrote every day on that ship, and when I read it, it was amazing what I had written.

00:08:00 ITR: Did everyone get their diaries back?

A: (a confusion of responses). (one person) Well, when Fred called me, he said it was one And he thought it was mine.

00:08:30 He asked me my serial number and I told him and he said it was my diary.

ITR: How did you get the diaries?

00:09:00 It all started at a Board of Director's meeting, Obayashi was asked what happened with the diaries. I was delegated to find out and I found they were on the mainland.

00:09:30 We had to find a way to bring them back. The diaries were confiscated April 9, after we left Scofield and were brought into

B . That was '43.

00:10:00 The army confiscated them, and after 40 years or so the National Japanese Historical Society found out that they were in a storehouse near the Presidio. They found out they were scattered around in the warehouse.

00:10:30 He used his influence. No need to keep it there. The diary writers were the lawful owners. So the Customs transferred it to the Japanese American Historical Society.

00:11:00 It took two years, because they didn't know who to distribute them to. I called the executive director and he gave us the names and we tracked down the addresses here. Those who were left

00:11:30 he took back. Those who were in the mainland, about 30, the rest scattered on various islands.

00:12:00 From here to the mainland, we were recruits and we scribbled. The Red Cross and other organizations gave us the diaries.

00:12:30 We could write as long as we weren't overseas.

00:13:00 Most of them don't remember what they wrote.

(Another) Yes, when I started reading through

00:13:30 it brought back memories. Except one person I wrote about. I can't remember. There really wasn't anything in them that I wanted to talk about.

00:14:00 I think I had written that at Tent City, that is Scoffield, there was a guy who limped, he was about 10 years older than most of us, he was very helpful.

00:14:30 When I saw him limp, I wondered how he made the Army. This guy with bad asthma, how he made the Army.

00:15:00 Other than that, the train ride was pretty exciting. We rode that train to come to the depot on Oahu.

00:15:30 It was used by the plantation to haul sugar cane, I guess.

ITR: Any further response to the matter of the letters to the editor?

00:16:00 Yes, about the reparations, I would like to let them know that people volunteered for military intelligence in the Pacific and that shortened the war by two years and saved thousands of casualties.

00:16:30 These people, many of them volunteered from the concentration camps were their parents were locked up. Why do they oppose the reparations bill? Do they believe in upholding the constitution of the United States?

00:17:00 ITR: Why do you think people are opposing the reparations?

(Another) They think that the people don't deserve that monetary thing.

00:17:30 Must be those people whoever went into the army or were minorities. I guess some of the people want to be in the papers.

00:18:00 (Another) There's a lot of confusion among those people about the Japanese Americans. Confusion of the elder generation with the actual Japanese in Japan.

00:18:30 That's where they seem to go of the track.

Another - Something that was unjustly done, some payment is due - they must uphold the constitution.

00:19:00 The poor guy thinks, with all the deficit, why should the money go for that. The Constitution comes first, and money seems the most appropriate way, then the problem is how to finance it.

00:19:30 It has to be financed one way or another.

ITR: Many of you went to the Smithsonian and the exhibit concerning the Japanese Americans and the Constitution. Do you think we are moving towards "the more perfect union?"

00:20:00 That the things that happened to the Japanese Americans happened under the laws of the land and that perhaps the laws ought to be questioned sometimes.

00:20:30 Sometimes there are laws passed that really are against what the Constitution stands for. I wondered what your reaction was to the exhibit?

(Another) I think we are going in the right direction.

00:21:00 It will take time. The right should be brought forward in order to right the wrong. If you do another wrong for the wrong, then you're going backwards.

00:21:30 Even if its only a penny. We should all back this bill.

(Another) I think we are going in the right direction, but slowly because we are not vocal enough.

00:22:00 The whites are vocal and now, so are the blacks, and look at the progress they have made. I think the 3rd, 4th generation are getting more vocal, they'll let their feelings be known.

00:22:30 ITR : Take a break now.

00:23:00 ITR: Let's talk about the events that lead up to Dachau.

(Another) The 522nd was detached because they needed our artillery to help cross the Rhine.

00:23:30 The targets were less and less. Often the artillery was ahead of the infantry. All this took us through many towns. By the end of the war we were almost in Austria.

00:24:00 But we came to Dachau. The first thing I saw was these people running around in their prison shirts. I myself took the time to go into one of the camps, though I don't know which one it was.

00:24:30 I still remember seeing Rev. Martin Neimuller sitting on a couch. We had to keep moving, but that day we made camp close to that camp.

00:25:00 We were about a mile away, and our area was filled with these released prisoners. They were down to skin and bones. You wonder what kept them up, they were so skinny. Yet their minds were alert.

00:25:30 After we ate, we couldn't just throw away the leftovers. But orders were out not to feed them because they couldn't eat the food. In due time they would be fed food they could eat. Being a staff sergeant, I had to carry out the orders.

00:26:00 I wanted to feed them, but I didn't. I was getting rid of my leftovers at the slump, and there right across from me were fellows asking why I was throwing all that away.

00:26:30 That's my recollection of meeting these prisoners.

ITR: Q When, did you become aware of the camps?

A: I think we were privileged to see things in the Stars & Stripes from time to time.

00:27:00 ITR: When you first saw these prisoners walking around, what was your feeling?

A: To recall the reaction at that time is very difficult.

00:27:30 It was one of sympathy, knowing about the concentration camps, and seeing the condition they were in, what they must have endured to survive to this day.

00:28:00 These were the survivors, but hundreds of thousands did not survive.

Mr. Obayashi: I was a private, so all I knew was what I saw.

00:28:30 I don't know if we were there first, but later I found out that two other units claimed they were first. I don't know what camp we passed, but outside of Munich we passed

00:29:00 this camp, and there is the concrete wall inside the perimeter line and I realized it was a prison. The gates were open. I don't know when I was told that the Germans left the doors open when they retreated.

00:29:30 So I don't actually know when I knew about it. Also, passing through there, they had a handful of prisoners. I could see people going in and out and on the ground.

00:30:00 They were dying or dead. There were no troops there. I recall we were scouting at that time. We were told to look for the front line but we didn't encounter any allied forces.

00:30:30 Later I found that other troops had gone there, but I don't know what prison it was. There were no allied troops there. The only thing I saw were the prisoners.

00:31:00 While going through the area I saw two dead horses.

00:31:30 When we came back, we saw a lot of people around the dead animals and eating them. That is the scene that I cannot forget.

ITR: Did they react to you in any way?

00:32:00 No. They were eating. One person said it was a rib.

ITR: Were you able to talk to any prisoners at that time?

A: No, not at that time.

00:32:30 We saw a lot of prisoners, hard to tell whether men or women, they wear the same clothing. I assumed they were all men. But in their condition, it's hard to tell.

00:33:00 We returned to the bivouac area and that's where we met them, they were walking around there. They were healthy - they could walk. Some of the others could barely lift their heads.

00:33:30 We had some C-rations and others - (lists other personnel present).

00:34:00 We gave out our rations through our mess halls (more info on units around).

00:34:30 When we were cooking our rations and coffee, we fed them anyway. One person, I remember was an old person, we invited him

in, and he ate, and ate and drank coffee.

00:35:00 He stood aside and we offered food to others. They accepted the food, very politely. There was no rush. It was something to see, knowing that they were starving. It was something to see.

ITR: Do you think they knew you were Americans?

00:35:30 Yes. It was hard to communicate. As we passed through Germany we picked up a few words, but not to carry on a conversation.

00:36:00 If we had people who could understand the language, we would have asked questions.

ITR: What was your feeling about people doing this to other people?

00:36:30 It was really a pitiful sight. Seeing people, how skinny they were. It was the first time I saw people like that. Just skeletons. You can't tell their age, their sex.

00:37:00 Seeing people like that, how do you feel? There are no words to describe that.

(Another) I was a colonel's radio operator, and as we got into this village with all the prisoners

00:37:30 On the day to that village, I saw some of the ex-prisoners dead or dying along the road. Because of the mass of army trucks, we had to slow down, and this fairly young man

00:38:00 hung on to our jeep. I could see he was feverish and I asked where he was from. He didn't understand, so I asked in French, and he said, "Belgique." I gave him some chocolate and rations.

00:38:30 In poor French and sign language I told him to do down the road to a First Aid station. That evening, some of us were eating near the mess truck, and we saw these people just standing and watching us eat.

00:39:00 I'm not sure when we heard about not feeding them, but its not easy to eat when people are standing there watching and you know they are starving. Later on, I visited a German house and there was an ex-prisoner there. He said,

00:39:30 and this one spoke English, and I remember saying, "Gee, the way the Germans treated you, why don't you go into a German house and ask for food." He said, "Nicht gut."

00:40:00 He said that the German people were alright, but the SS "nicht gut." I was impressed by what he said. I guess the German



people, many

00:40:30 living near the camps, didn't know what was going on. Later I saw German civilians, with three dead bodies in his yard, digging a grave. I asked him what he was doing.

00:41:00 He said, over there, there are four more bodies that I buried. That's about all I remember.

ITR: Mr. Kuba

00:41:30 I remember a time we were eating, and its hard to do when these people are looking at you. I went to the slump (?) to get rid of the food, and there was a lady there with a child. I don't know whether she was a prisoner. I went to give her the food and the 1st sgt. yelled at me.

00:42:00 He said not to give them food because we would have an army of prisoners coming down to our place. There were some people wearing German uniforms. I don't know whether they were soldiers or just wearing the uniforms for clothing.

00:42:30 Others in pyjama type clothing with striped jacket. I should just have given them the food. I felt very bad. I think it was very cruel

00:43:00 to get rid of the food right there. The kitchen could have provided us with a big can away from them. I couldn't eat; many couldn't. Also I remember a dead cow which was bloated.

00:43:30 I don't remember how many minutes later I passed again, and the cow was a skeleton. The people were just picking the meat from the skeleton.

00:44:00 You asked me in the interview how they were able to get the meat. I suppose if you are starving, you would do.

00:44:30 Somebody may have had a knife, but that cow was right down to the bone the second time we passed there.

ITR: I wanted to ask why you think it's important to tell this story about Dachau.

00:45:00 To prevent it from happening again. Back in 1934, when we went back to see Dachau, some local Jewish organization had displays there and I think that is a good idea. I think all these relocation camps

00:45:30 should be preserved, so people can see what was done to other people. They should be kept as a reminder, and I think what the Jewish committee is doing is a good idea.

ITR: Does anyone want to talk about the 1984 trip back?

00:46:00 And some of your reactions to meeting the survivors there.

A: That is why this has to be remembered. I couldn't eat either. This time, we saw the gas chamber

00:46:30 You had the gas chamber, the oven, and the mound where people got shot in the back. The stench was so bad that when I came back I couldn't eat.

00:47:00 Things like this have to be brought out. Hopefully it won't happen again. People have to know what people went through. Its hard to believe that there were 30 other camps like this.

00:47:30 More so if you count the smaller camps. The German people would like to forget those things. But this is history and you can't erase history. Going back in '84, this was not a trip.

00:48:00 Come back to bad memories but we went back to D (?) which we may have called our home. We were there six months after the war and we enjoyed it.

00:48:30 We came out to refresh our memories.

(Another) I would like to mention beside /Dachau there were lots of labor camps in the area. After the war.

00:49:00 At one location where we were stationed we had these Russian laborers in the camp. They were living in poor conditions, sleeping on straw, lots of insects and we were asked not to fraternize with them, but we did

00:49:30 talk to a few of them and they seemed to be healthy, other than the fact that they were denied things.

(Another) These camps were also referred to as Displaced Persons camps. And I remember once, they had a wedding.

00:50:00 This was during the occupation. And they had a custom there, all males, the bridegroom would go around and drink toasts with every person, in vodka. That was the first time I got drunk.

00:50:30 Your question, why we should publicize this, I think it is one of those examples of man's inhumanity to man. Because there are people who said it didn't happen, we have to say it did happen, that we are eyewitnesses.

00:51:00 This should be part of the education program for all people, so it should never happen again.

ITR: I wonder now, looking back, what was very significant for you?

00:51:30 Has that experience at Dachau had any impact on your life? Some of you have gone to Holocaust survivors' meetings.

A: It was military intelligence, and I was concerned. Nisei history is military intelligence too.

00:52:00 ITR Do you want to tell a little of what happened when you went to the survivors' meeting in Philadelphia?

A: You witness the Holocaust, you cannot forget it. When the invitation was made to WW II veterans

00:52:30 I accepted and the Jewish War Veterans of Hawaii helped me a lot. Unfortunately I was the only Nisei at the convention.

ITR: What was the reaction to you of the survivors at the meeting?

00:53:00 I was curious to see how the survivors were making out in America today. How they compared their experience before with that in America.

ITR: Did they say anything that sticks with you?

00:53:30 I wanted to know about their experience when the Americans liberated their camp. One survivor told me he saw an American tank cross over the fence.

00:54:00 I've been making some research into this, and there were about 30 camps in the Dachau area. There are American units that are claiming that they are the only ones that liberated camps and that isn't true

00:54:30 There were many units involved.

ITR: How do you feel about your role in liberating the camps?

00:55:00 Question again?

ITR: How do you feel about your role as a liberator?

00:55:30 Its so ironic - one persecuted minority in America, the Nisei soldiers, their parents were thrown into camps. A lot of these boys were from Hawaii and volunteered and fought in Italy, France and Germany.

00:56:00 This experience in Germany, I see the Nisei boys persecuted in our country, they're aiding another minority.

ITR: Did that have anything to do with why you are taking part in this project?

00:56:30 Its the main reason. If we forget, history will be repeated again. So many of them died in these death camps. I cannot forget what happened in WWII.

00:57:00 (Another) I agree that this is something that none of us can forget. Whenever I see news items, it does bring back memories of these people.

00:57:30 I hope that things like this will never happen again.

(Another) I guess when you have a sick Leader Leading a country, he's going to do a lot of sick things. What Hitler did to the Jews - the rest of the people in the camps just had to follow his orders.

00:58:00 And exterminate them. I heard one of the doctors say that he thought Hitler was sick in his mind and this is what made all of the death camps.

ITR: What about us who knew about the death camps

00:58:30 or the relocation camps, and did nothing? The indifference

(Another) I talked to a professor at the University of Hawaii once, he had lived in Europe, and asked him why the Jewish people! did not leave Germany when all of this happened?

00:59:00 He said that these people were born German citizens and for them to pull up roots was a traumatic experience so they would not leave unless they had to.

00:59:30 By then it was too late. I understood - they were born in Germany, they grew up there, their culture was Germanic. It was hard to them to leave but you wonder why they didn't leave when all this terrorism was beginning to build up.

01:00:00 ITR: Why didn't the Japanese leave?

A: We didn't know about concentration camps. People didn't come and break our things and throw us into ghettos.

ITR: On the mainland, they did.

00:00:00 Repeat of above

00:00:30 And we really did nothing to stop that.

00:01:00 ITR Why that we don't do anything?

A: Because we're riding a wave. Everybody is abiding by the law. Well, you have a few who don't. But it is following the law.

00:01:30 ITR: So, a lot of it is going along with the law, and probably it was the same thing in Germany, as Mr. Nogato was saying. Its hard to believe when you're at the end.

00:02:00 When Hitler was going - we're going too, get the Jews, its like a wave going from town to town. Everybody wants to belong. Germany is going to be the supreme race. They have the upper hand.

00:02:30 You're not going to buck the trend. The Jews were the scapegoats. They were - well, we're one of them too.

ITR: Do you think the relocation camps can come again here?

00:03:00 Even worse, the death camps, the annihilation of a people? The chances are less now, knowing what happened.

ITR: I just have one thing I want to read to you.

00:03:30 (She quotes) Neo Nazis are now producing anti-semitic computer games. (She continues to quote)

00:04:00 (Someone) We have the Nazi party in this country too. And we have the Klu Klux Klan. I think there will always be people like that. Its up to the majority to take action to keep them from controlling.

00:04:30 (Another) With regard to people not having taken any action at all, its not totally true. There were groups that were supportive. I don't agree with some of the activist stances the ACLU has taken in recent years,

00:05:00 but I recall they were one of the groups that were helpful. And I thank them. The Quakers were another.

ITR And even in Germany there were upright citizens.

(Another) Even in Hawaii there were people who helped.

00:05:30 If it weren't for those good people, we were able to help the United States.

ITR: Any other comments. Well, thank you very much. If down the road you think you want to say something more, let us know.  
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