

Mr. Hessel reel two.

In Rottleberode it was a place where they built in an underground factory landing gears for Junker 52 planes. And I was supposed, by this time, to be Michel [PERSONAL NAME] this Frenchman who had died of typhus, and he was a real worker, which I was not. I couldn't really deal with the machines that he would have been dealing with.

But I had, from the beginning, given myself with my good knowledge of German, as somebody who could read and write in German, and therefore I was put into a job as a buchhalter, buchführer, somebody who had to-- an accountant, if you want, in this factory.

I stayed there from October 1944 till February 1945 with a period of illness but, on the whole, managing to live under not terrible conditions because it was not one of the bad camps. Of course, we would get up at 5:00 in the morning and work and so on, all sorts of lack of food, et cetera, but nothing compared with the horrid camps that I knew later.

Then I escaped from that. I did an escape with a friend of mine, Robert [PERSONAL NAME] We managed to get ourselves a boussole, a compass, and a map of the area, and some civil clothing. And we escaped from the column at night. When we were sent to the factory, we managed to get away from it, and for five hours we were in freedom, sitting in the woods in Germany.

But it lasted only five hours. The first village we crossed, instead of waiting for the night as we should have-- I was convinced that in February of 1945-- we knew, of course, a little bit what happened in the war. I was convinced that Germany must be in disorder, in disarray. It was not. And in the first village we were stopped, sent back to the camp, given some schlag but mostly sent on to the Dora concentration camp from there, into the straf-kommando there.

And of course, the first question was, would we be hanged or not? Normally people who escaped would be hanged if they had stolen anything. We managed to convince our interrogators that we hadn't stolen anything. And it was, after all, nearing the end of the war, and we were lucky not to be hanged.

But I stayed for eight days in the bunker at Dora, which was a very interesting experiment because it was the time when the sabotage of the V-2s was discovered by the German camp commanders, and some of the people who were in that bunker with me had been sent there because they had been found out to be saboteurs. And they would come and be taken away to be hanged one after the other.

We stayed there on a far lesser charge of only having tried to escape, but the stories we were told about the way the tunnel had been built, the kind of brutality that these people had undergone, and the attempts they made to do whatever they could to sabotage the rockets was, of course, very interesting for us to learn about.

Can you give some detail about what you learned?

Mainly the feeling was that these people who had been caught were convinced that they had at least made the direction, the orientation of the rockets, wobbly and not as they were supposed to be. I knew nothing about engineering and nothing about rockets, so I'm not an interesting witness from that point of view. You will see Mr. [PERSONAL NAME] this afternoon who has been one of those who were taken for sabotage, so he will tell you much more about it.

But all I can say is that I was there when these people were gradually taken away from us, and we knew that they were hanged. So obviously the Germans were very knowledgeable about the kind of work these people had been doing on the rockets.

As far as I'm concerned, I was-- after eight days in this bunker, I was sent into a staff commando with a beautiful red dot on my suit, which meant that I was a former escapee and if I ever tried to escape again I would be shot at directly. This didn't really happen because I did escape again but in another-- under other

conditions.

As I told you, I had become by that time a professional escapist, and when the Dora camp was evacuated on April 5 and we were all put on a train which was supposed to lead us to another camp-- we didn't know, of course, where we were going, but later I found out that they had all gone to Bergen-Belsen where many of them died because it was one of the most horrid things at the end of the war, this Bergen-Belsen camp-- I and five of my comrades from Dora had decided to try to jump from the train at the first occasion.

And we had managed to take one of the things in the floor, one of the--

--planks

--planks in the floor away so that we could escape through underneath the train whenever the train would be stopping. The train actually did stop in the station of Lüneburg. I knew a little bit German geography, and I knew that Lüneburg was on the Elbe River. And when I saw the sign "Lüneburg," I thought to myself that this was the last moment to try to escape because if we had crossed the Elbe it would have been much more difficult to come back towards the Allies.

So I jumped first, and by misadventure-- as I jumped, shots were fired on the side of the train, so my comrades who heard the shots thought, probably, that I had been shot at and desisted from jumping after me. So I found myself alone. Shots were not fired at me, or at least I didn't feel anything. They weren't even very close, I think.

But anyhow, it frightened them. So I was alone on the side of the train, and I said to myself, well, let's not wait for the others. Let's get away. I got away. I found-- I was now very-- much more careful than we had been the first time. I walked only at night, and I stayed undercover in the day. I found some Polish workers who gave me some civilian clothing because I had nothing much with me in the way of clothing or anything else.

But I was very young and wild, and, all right, I went through it all, and I joined the Americans in Hannover. I managed to cross the line in Hannover, walking in this strange town, which was by that time-- now, this was April 9, 1945. It was really very close to the end. Hannover had been left by the German authorities, and the people walked around.

Of course, my knowledge of the German language helped me throughout because I could speak with people and ask them questions, and they told me where they thought that the Allies were, probably. And finally, I arrived in front of an American unit, and they took me in with them.

And I said, I want to continue to fight, and I will go with you. And they put me into a little group of avant-garde people who were working there, which was [INAUDIBLE]. And I stayed with them, the French captain. And there was a Texan. It was an American Unit with a Texan commander, and he said, who is that fella with a limey accent on the microphone? And I said, that must be me, because at that time my accent was still very English and not American. Later, I lived in America, and now you cannot distinguish it anymore.

But anyhow, it was again a great treat for me to be able to fight with a unit. We didn't do much fighting. But at one time, I was left in a little village, where we spent the night, and in the morning, when I woke up, I found myself surrounded by Germans, by an SS unit who had recaptured that little village. And the Americans had left very quickly and hadn't thought of awaking me, so I found myself again surrounded by Germans and with an SS Colonel who said, our reputation is that we do not make any prisoners.

I said, I know that. This is a very silly reputation. I'm sure you're not of that kind. And then he gave me two or three people to walk with me. And then at the beginning, we were three, and then we were five, and then we were 14. And at the end, the 14 and myself joined the Americans. I told them, in the American army there is whiskey and cigarettes, so you come over with me.

And I brought back 14 prisoners, which made the-- amused the Americans very much. After that, shortly after that, I was sent back to France on a plane, and I managed to be in Paris on May the 8th, 1945, exactly

at the time when Winston Churchill announced VE Day, Victory.

So you see, it's a sort of a very colorful story which I've been telling over and over again, but the most important from our point of view here is, of course, this question of Dora, which is very little-known. I think you're aware of that. One knows a lot about Buchenwald.

One knows about Auschwitz, of course, and these horrid things. We saw many Jews come, Jewish camps being evacuated. And when they arrived in Dora, the site was abominable because they were treated much worse than we were, but the way people were treated in Dora at the tunnel time was really something absolutely of extreme brutality.

Can we bring out the character of the Dora concentration camp by your comparing it with Buchenwald?

Certainly. You see the first enormous difference is that Buchenwald was run by political haftlinge and Dora by criminals, not the criminals-- not that political prisoners cannot be as ruthless, sometimes, as criminals, but it's a different kind of ruthlessness. It's a more disciplined ruthlessness.

Whereas the criminal ruthlessness was one of extreme violence in action and lack of any-- lack of any reluctance towards the corruption, towards the manipulation, and getting rid of the rivals. There were always rivalries between the kapos, and they would try to eliminate each other by all sorts of means.

As far as the prisoners were concerned, there were various tides in Dora. The worst was, of course, the beginning when the tunnel was constructed because the orders there, apparently-- this, of course, I cannot witness, but by what people have told me, the orders were to have the tunnel done but, if possible, not to let any of those who would have built it survive because one wanted the thing to be quiet.

They had to evacuate Peenemünde because that had been bombed by the British, and this new Mittelbau had to be completely secret. Nobody should know about it. And of course, the people who work there should, as far as possible, not be able to survive it. Therefore there were rows and rows, hundreds and hundreds who were brought in and who died very rapidly.

And of course, that was the worst period of Dora. Then when they began to build the rockets there, the other danger was, of course, sabotage, and it is hard to tell, of course-- I'm quite unable to tell how effective the sabotage was. I think in many cases it was merely slowing down the work. In others it was trying to unscrew little bolts here or there, nothing very skillful. They were not engineers. They were ordinary workers who did whatever they were told to do.

But they knew, of course, that these were dangerous weapons, and they tried to do whatever they could. And this made it again into a very cruel thing because whenever there was even the suspicion of somebody not having worked the right way, they would easily be either hanged, or beaten up, or left for dead.

And the attitude of the kapos at the time-- even as much as the SS framework, the SS didn't come to great contact with the prisoners. It was the kapos who did. But they were, I must say, in Dora incomparably more brutal than they were in Buchenwald.

So I think one can really give this kind of graduation, that the extermination camps in Poland, of course, were in one category by itself. The tunnel workers were in the second category and the other camps like Mauthausen or Buchenwald were in the same category in which one was, of course, under great duress, very little to eat, all sorts of hardships, but not the extermination. The object was not to exterminate.

In fact, the administration in the larger camps like Buchenwald and others wanted manpower to be available for the various working kommandos of the Gustloff factory, and therefore at least they did whatever they could to get to-- let these people live on. Whereas in Dora that was not the object. The object was to have them work as hard as possible and, if possible, then to disappear.

Did you personally have any incidents where you were beaten by the kapos in Dora?

In Dora? Yes. I was fortunate to be in the commando called straf-kommando, penitentiary commando, headed by a very aggressive kapo who was, of course, put there because we were all supposed to be the evil people who had either escaped or done other things that put them into that penitentiary.

And he loved to box us. He was a real boxer, and he would come out in the morning box our faces just for fun. But it was not to be compared with what people suffered in the tunnel, so I was really not mishandled in any violent way.

We had the appeals every night, which were very hard because one had to stand in the cold, and it was-- people would perhaps fall down and so on. The image of all of this is very horrid. And there was lots of hangings in Dora. Dora was a hanging camp, which was not the case in Buchenwald.

And the hangings usually were public hangings, and this, of course, also bore very much on our morale. We were demoralized. I was, again, very lucky because I stayed there only from, I think, the 12th of February, 10 days-- eight days in the bunker, from the 20th of February until the 5th of April, very short time. If it had lasted much longer, it would have been much, much worse, so I cannot complain. As far as I'm concerned, it was survivable.

But one incident, for instance, I can tell you-- this was when a-- this was, of course, the period when the camps from the-- concentration camps from the east of Germany were pushed back by the Soviet advance, and they would come and be sent to the other camps. And on one evening, for instance, a whole bunch of cars had come into-- trucks had come into Dora with people in there from another camp, and many of them were corpses, were dead.

And we were asked, would you like to do something and you will get a bit of sausage for it? And so a friend of mine and I-- we said, all right, we'll do it, whatever is it. And he said, well, you just go to the trucks. You undress these people. And the bodies will be burnt on the pyre, and the dresses will be recuperated somewhere.

So we spent one night undressing corpses, and that is the kind of thing that one does not forget easily because it's one of the more unpleasant experiences that one can have during the war. So this is the kind of memories one has, of course. I've never been the nightmare kind, but many of my friends, of course, suffer from nightmares from that period, probably one of the things that one doesn't get rid of very easily.

You were mentioning the control of Buchenwald by the politicals. I've heard Polish nationalists who were there complained about the German communists, the Reds, who were in charge in Buchenwald because they said that they use their position of power for the advantage of the Communist cause and against the Poles. Were you aware of this type of thing there?

We have been aware of it for a very personal reason because when we tried to engineer an escape, we first addressed ourselves to the official camp organization, which, from the French side, was run by French communists like Marcel Paul, who was the-- and Colonel [PERSONAL NAME] They were the official spokesmen for the French organization within the camp, and they told us they couldn't do anything for us, first of all, because we were not communists, and because we were international, and that they had their own people to deal with, which were the French communists.

And in a way, we understood this. I've never-- I've never considered it that this was criminal on their side. After all, they had only a limited amount of power, and if they had used it for other than their own people, they wouldn't have enough left for their own people.

And if you read, for instance, Semprún's book, which is called *Quel Beau Dimanche!*-- I don't know whether you have it-- Jorge Semprún who is now a minister in Spain and who was in Buchenwald who wrote several novels, several books about Buchenwald. And he was in what was called the arbeits [INAUDIBLE], which was the place where one dealt with prisoners, saying this one is going to that kommando, this to that kommando.

And he tells of our story, and he tells that we couldn't have been handled by that group because they had

their own view, that what they were there for was to save as many communists as possible. So we had to go to others, and the others were really the Christians.

Kogon and [PERSONAL NAME] and the people in the typhus block were people of another organization, not the official communist organization of the camp but the Christian organization in the camp, which was also effective to a certain extent and had saved many people, in particularly many Germans who have come through, through solidarity from that group.

So it is quite true that the communist organization in Buchenwald was the most powerful. The German communists and the communists from other countries was linking up with them, of course. And for instance, Dora was fed with non-communists, and therefore you will find that most of the people, former Dora inmates who have survived, are people rather very much against communists. They are very much on the moderate side and not on the far left.

And they consider, rightly or wrongly, that it is the communists' fault that they have been sent there because, of course, the communists had to do something for all these Frenchmen who arrived, so they tried to pick out those that they wanted to save and to let go those that they were not concerned with. But this one can, of course, criticize, but it was normal tactics in the communist setup.

Did you have any contact with the Polish nationalists in Buchenwald?

We had a Polish comrade in the typhus block-- [PERSONAL NAME] I think his name was-- was there and had been more or less secured there. He was working there as infirmier, as a-- how do you say it?

Orderly?

No, one who takes care of sick people.

A nurse.

A nurse, well, yes, a male nurse, if you want to that's right. And he was one of the Poles that I knew and saw many Poles everywhere in Dora. There were many Poles, too. But I have no particular recollection of one or the other of them. One stayed very much among Frenchmen. This was also one of the tricks of the concentration camp work that they did all they could to bring feuds between nationalities.

One was very resentful of the way the Russians behaved, for instance, although they were very brave, but they were a little wild. And the Czechs were supposed to be close to the Germans, and the French were supposed to be holding out among themselves and not helping others.

All this was exaggerated, but it was the rumor of the camps. And it did a great deal of harm in the immediate after-war period because people coming back from concentration camps retained the feeling of lack of solidarity within the camps. Only in certain rather exceptional circumstances did one have the feeling of international solidarity within the camp.

What was the resentment against the Russians?

That they tried to save themselves, to take more food away from the others, to jump on the large bottles of soup that came before they were dealt out, things like that. On the other hand, one was full of admiration for the Russian soldiers. In Buchenwald, there was a group of prisoners of war from the Soviet Union, and they held among-- were among themselves, lived among themselves, kept clean and were considered to be more heroic than the others, as well as the Danes.

The Danes had a group of policemen in Buchenwald who also lived by themselves and were greatly looked at by the others as having managed to live in better conditions as the rest of the prisoners.

Now, you mentioned your [? Thomas. ?] Can you tell me about your personal relationship with him?

Yes, certainly. I had known him, of course, in London because he worked on the teams, the British teams with France. He was one of the most knowledgeable Englishmen about France. He had lived in France before the war. He spoke French like a Frenchman.

And we had been-- we had known each other in London and liked each other, and when he was sent to France and finally captured, I knew about it indirectly. And I was not altogether surprised to find him on the train with me. I was very sad for him.

But at the time, we were both buoyant because we thought the war was over now and this business of the concentration camp we didn't know much about. We thought we would be taken to Germany to some officer's camp and then quickly relieved because the war would be over.

So our relationship became very friendly right from the beginning of meeting again on this evacuation from Paris. He had had a very hard time in the hands of the Gestapo before being sent off, but he was still looking quite healthy when we joined in the Gare de l'Est in Paris and were put on the train together.

So we stayed in touch, and when we knew about this hanging business of-- execution business of our group, he was the one who decided that he could not save more than three people, and he made the choice of saving me because we knew each other. But he could have just as well picked on some of the others. And they were unfortunate because most of them were executed.

Did he tell you what he'd been through in Paris?

Vaguely, but in ways as we did all then. We tried not to play up the hard things about it. We rather tried to play up the way in which we had been more clever than the Germans and gotten out of their hands, or at least we thought so.

And he was not the type to complain or to tell horror stories. He disliked that. We all did, in a way. Now we feel that now we must say more about the horrid aspects of concentration camps, mainly because people still make this difference, there are the extermination camps of Auschwitz, Birkenau, et cetera, and the rest of the camps were all right. One could survive.

Mr. Hessel reel three.

And that, of course, is a gross exaggeration because if there have been camps in which one could survive on condition that one knew why one was there, that one had done something and was not completely [? dismissed. ?] Many people were and therefore found it impossible to survive even under conditions which were not completely unsurvivable.

But there were such camps, but there were others. And particularly, those held by criminals and not by political haftlinge-- they were really very, very difficult to survive, camps like Ellrich and Harzungen, who were the outcamps of Dora, where camps were, really, only very few came out.

And the treatment that they were dealt was such that it was indeed practically impossible to stay there longer than three or four months. Those who came in late survived. Those who came in early in great, great, great numbers did not survive. I do not know the exact proportion of those who came and survived, but one can probably find out those proportions. And they are just as amazing as in camps of the East.

The conditions were different. It was not gas extermination. But it was extermination through forced labor and unsurvivable conditions. That is really why I think we have a sort of responsibility, those who have survived, and again, my personal position is of a great privileged person because I stayed there only so short, such a short time. But those who have stayed longer can now bear witness to the extremes to which brutality was put in these camps through the desire to not leave any mark of whatever had been done in the construction of the rockets.

Whilst talking about these conceptions about the camps, we often hear about the question of whether the German civilian population knew what was going on inside them. People say, well, we knew there were

punishment camps, but we didn't really know what was going on there. Can you find that attitude comprehensible?

Well, I would say that in my greatest criticism on the way all this was done by the Germans at the time is that they made people in Germany have such a despising attitude towards the haftlinge that they didn't even consider them as ordinary human beings. That was really, to my mind, the worst aspect of Nazism.

It was not that they were more brutal than others-- probably the Russian camps had been just as horrid from the point of view of violence, hunger, et cetera-- but from the point of view of despising the others. That is something very typically Nazi. We are the good people. We are the race of the lords. And the others are just like animals, and if one sees groups of haftlinge go to work in bad clothing, and not shaven, and with no hair, and looking like poor animals, hastening through the roads-- the feeling the civilians must have had and probably had was that these people didn't count.

So the feeling of compassion, pity that one would have had normally for people in bad conditions, in bad shape-- this feeling of compassion did not arise very frequently. I think that is really where the Nazi system had its worst effects, the feeling that there are two categories of people, those who count and those who just do not count.

And I think most of the German civilians who have seen hefting around must have had a little bit like-- now we sometimes have that with immigrants. That's why I'm afraid of the question of immigration in Europe. If one sees poor immigrants-- if one sees rich immigrants, one finds them very nice and good people to live with and to speak with. But if they are poor and live in shabby conditions one says, oh, these people-- they do not count.

And that would be the worst effect of a Nazi ideology. I hope we will never turn into that kind of attitude, a lack of compassion because the other looks too shabby, looks too forlorn. And then one says, he's not really a human being anymore. This the Nazis did.

And I think it is the only explanation why there is relatively little witnesses of good compassion and solidarity. There are some. I know of German girls who were very helpful to French prisoners in Berlin. And these stories exist, but they are rather rare, and it sounds sometimes unexplainable why Germans who, after all, are just as soft-hearted as any other nation of people, should not have behaved more tolerantly or more compassionately with the concentration camp prisoners.

What is the exact meaning of haftlinge?

It is the German word for people in the concentration camp. They were not called prisoners, like gefangene, but they were haftlinge, which really means that they are in haft, which is in detention. They're detainees, if you want, detainees or, you would say, inmates of a concentration camp.

Did you come across Jehovah's Witnesses in the camps?

Yes, indeed. They were in groups. I saw some in Buchenwald. They had a special sign, a special little triangle, which was-- I believe it was-- pink where the homosexuals, and the Jehovah Witnesses were, I think mauve or something like that. But I'm not quite sure.

And again, contact with people of other categories were rather difficult in Buchenwald and as well in Dora, so one knew about them. One had sympathy for them, like for all other haftlinge, but I didn't have much conversations with them.

Did they seem to stand up to the conditions any better than other people?

Yes, I think so. I would guess so. I have no particular evidence of it, but they certainly behaved like a group. And that was always the best way, of course, to keep up. And I did not witness any of them becoming what we call Muslims. You know that the word "Muslim" was used in the camps to-- which has nothing to do with Islam, but it meant people who started to behave slovenly and to get out of touch with real life.

And they would wander about in the camps, and they would very soon die. And when one saw somebody who was sort of worn-out and shabby, one would say, here-- this is a Muslim, Muselmane or Muselmann, Muslim. Not very nice for Islam, but it was just a word used in the camps.

Did you know how this term had arisen?

No, really not. But I can imagine that it was part of what the Germans thought about people from the South.

You were saying that you developed the mentality of a professional escaper. Why do you think was this? Because for many people, they must have assumed that the best way to survive was to try to stick to the rules.

Yes. Well, it is, I think, a question of age. I was very young then. I was 27, and I felt that it was just disreputable to be held by the enemy. And I thought that one-- that the first duty of anybody during a war was not to stay in jail but to get out.

And when I say professional, it merely means that, at the time, I really had the feeling that I had become quite clever at getting away, and having experienced success and failure, I still wanted to try success. So escaping seemed to me the only normal attempt when one was held by the enemy.

And in fact, I shared this feeling with many of my comrades there, but you're quite right that the most safe thing was probably to try to stick by the rules. Of course, it wouldn't have helped me in the first place since the rule for me was to be executed, so there I had to do something to escape. And later on, I found that to stay in this kommando when it was possible to escape was something one shouldn't do.

You mentioned this place, Rottleberode, [INAUDIBLE]?

Yes.

How do you spell that?

Rottleberode. It's R-O-T-T-L-E-B-E-R-O-D-E. Rode is a determination of towns in the Harz There are many rodes, [INAUDIBLE], et cetera. Rottleberode was a small camp where we were living in barracks about 3/4 of an hour march away from the underground factory. So every morning we went up very early, about 5:00, and walked in a column to the factory. And this is why it was possible from that column during the early-- during the end of the night to escaped without being seen. That is how we managed to leave the column and be free for a few hours.

So these are the Harz Mountains in Turingia?

Yes, it is all around Nordhausen. The main town there is Nordhausen, which is very close to Dora and which is not very far from Weimar, I should think about 50 miles or so from Weimar. And it is in the middle of Germany. It is now part of the DDR, of the German Democrat-- DDR.

You were talking about the spring of 1945 in Germany, which was a rather interesting period because German authority was breaking down. People were wandering around with sometimes with weapons in their hands, and it must have been a very hazardous time to be in Germany at that time.

Yes. Of course, I've had these two experiences, one very short, in February, when we hoped that it would be possible to walk through Germany. We had civilian clothes. We had, of course, no hair, but we had little caps. And we thought it was possible to walk through there because we had the feeling that the Germans must be in disorder and not looking very much at what was happening.

There we were wrong. In February of 1945, in every village there was still the [INAUDIBLE], the old people who looked at everything that happened, and if they saw somebody suspicious, they would ask him for his papers and, if he had none, arrest him.



Later on, when I had left-- when I jumped from the train and came through the north of Germany, that was a time when the Russian army was already close to Berlin. The Allied armies had already reached Hannover, and the land in between was indeed disorganized. One saw people in the streets of cities, walking around, not knowing where to go. Bombing was taking place.

At one time, in the town of [PLACE NAME] for instance, which is only about 100 kilometers from Hannover and which I came through, there was a bombing taking place, and I saw a house on the side of the road which was open. And I looked in to see whether I would find anything to eat, and the table was set with chocolate pie and all sorts of beautiful things to eat.

And I jumped on it. The people had left the house to hide because of the bomb attack, and I ate as much as I could and walked away from it. This kind of thing wouldn't have happened, of course, a few months before.

The feeling I had in Hannover, where I tried to ask advice of people, saying, well, what is going to happen, I found people very dismayed, very convinced that the end had come for them, that there was no future for Germany, very angry at the Nazi command, at the army command who had left the town without any help, and really not knowing where they were or where to go.

But this, of course, means two or three people which I spoke with, so it is not a testimony of the general nature. I can only give you the impression of people that was convinced that it was doomed and therefore very despondent.

And they would tell me-- I would say, you see, I'm a French worker. I always tried not to speak about concentration camp. I'm a French worker. I want to join the Allies. How do I do it? And they would say, well, the Allies on this side. Perhaps if you go through there you might find them. So they gave me helpful advice, which they wouldn't have done, probably, a few months before.

What effect on your subsequent life has the concentration camp experience had?

I would say far less than it would have had for somebody who had stayed there longer. You see, my experience, my personal experience, is very atypical because, first of all, I was taken only in August 1944. I mean July of '44 and sent August '44. The effect-- the worst effect on me was, of course, interrogations by the Gestapo. That was harmful.

And particularly in Dora, the few days before I was put into the straf-kommando and when I was in the bunker, there we were standing up frequently, and dogs were behind us, and they would bite. And the kapo who were guarding us as bunker prisoners would be a little brutal on us.

So of all that, I had a few traces when I came back from the point of view of health but very little compared to what happened to people who, for instance, even only had been evacuated from Dora to Bergen-Belsen and stayed there a few days. And the conditions of the Bergen-Belsen camp were so horrid that many of them who had survived until then either died or were really completely mauled there.

Therefore I can only say that, from the physical point of view, I had no bad after-effect, and from the psychological point of view, I never had either any bad nightmarish kind of things. But from the mental point of view, it led me to become a very ardent supporter of the United Nations, and I was one of the drafters of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for instance, because I joined the United Nations in 1946.

And this whole experience led me to believe that what we need is a united Europe and a better-organized international community. But that's an indirect effect of concentration camp.

Just going back to the period you spent with the resistance after March 1944, you told me what the objective was. How much of those objectives were you able to achieve, do you think?

A very limited amount because the radio work at that time was still very hazardous. It was very difficult to be

sure that one would have good radio operators with sufficient equipment and with sufficient contacts to take their radio set from one place to another quickly because one never should emit more than 20 minutes at a time. If one had long messages, one would do that and then go to some other place before the [? loup, ?] [? Grogne ?] operation of the Germans would take you in.

So we did achieve a certain amount of our objectives, particularly in the western area of the country. There were several operators set up in Normandy and in the Pas-de-Calais. And that probably had some use during the time of the beginning of the disembarkment.

But in the south, the handling of radio operators was much more difficult, and on the whole, many of them continued to stay either in the Lyon area-- the only one that we could put into Dijon was precisely the one who was captured and who made an appointment with me and the Gestapo. So it was not very successful, but we did whatever we could.

You said that when you were in England you were able to observe the English or the Londoners under the impact of war. What was your impression as an outsider?

Well, that was, of course, the great admiration we had for the way in which the British people reacted to war. For instance, when I arrived, which was March '41, the blitz was not over yet. It was still-- there were still lots of night bombings with fire bombs, which were among the worst of-- very bad thing to look at because the whole sky of London was covered with ashes.

And the way in which people in the streets behaved naturally, taking this for granted and not making any particular fuss about it, gave us great admiration. Also the way in which we were received as foreigners but fighting with the British-- there was a great feeling of friendliness and solidarity.

Our only problem was with the Australians and Canadians because they were much more popular with the girls than we were. They had these beautiful, large hats, and they were very good-looking. And we were very jealous of them from that point of view. But of course, we also had the exaggerated reputation of being liked by the girls, so it was probably a twofold experience.