

-TITLE-ANTON BILD  
-I\_DATE-OCTOBER 1981  
-SOURCE-USHMC INTERNATIONAL LIBERATORS CONFERENCE  
-RESTRICTIONS-  
-SOUND\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT  
-IMAGE\_QUALITY-EXCELLENT  
-DURATION-20 MINUTES  
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH  
-KEY\_SEGMENT-  
-GEOGRAPHIC\_NAME-  
-PERSONAL\_NAME-  
-CORPORATE\_NAME-  
-KEY\_WORDS-  
-NOTES-  
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1:1:42 Anton was born April 1, 1923 in Westbend, Wisconsin. He was 21 when he went with the US army into Dachau. He was a sergeant in the section of the Judge Advocate, headquarters 7th Army unit, which was involved in liberating Dachau.

1:2:42 The army chose him because he knew German. He was taken off the front lines to become an interpreter.

1:3:43 He thought he could take almost anything after 3 months on the front line, but to be confronted with Dachau was an "earth-shaking cataclysmic event" in his mind. He says "it was the day for me when humanity failed miserably in the world."

1:4:33 He was not involved in the actual liberation of the camp. He came a day later as part of an investigative corps to take down the factual evidence of the atrocities at Dachau.

1:5:00 As he approached the camp he was confronted by 30-40 boxcars of dead people who had starved to death in the cars. Anton thinks nobody should have to face a death like this.

1:5:17 They were taken into the camp and given Typhoid/typhus shots. Then they were assigned to a specific part of camp-gun executions.

1:5:56 Before being assigned they were taken on a tour of the camp and saw the gas chambers, crematoriums, the conditions of the prisoners-- the Jews, the Russians, the French-- the various nationalities that were victims to the Nazis.

1:6:31 According to the Dachau book of investigation, there were 30,000 still alive in the camp. The army estimated that 300,000 people went through Dachau, but since Dachau was one of the first camps no one can be sure of the total number.

1:7:32 In taking down the information, Anton had the opportunity to talk to some ex-inmates. At this time he didn't cry. He was one of the tough ones, probably one of the few who didn't break down and have to be led away weeping. But he says his soul has been weeping. He still gets emotional over it 35 years later. He says the psychological scars are with him to this day.

1:8:46 He says he crawled into a tough self-preservation shell and swore he would keep up his fight for humanity, so he would be able to strike a blow as he is doing now in his lectures. He decided to lecture publicly about what he saw when he was confronted by a neo-Nazi trying to give him literature last year.

1:10:49 He feels his task is to educate today's youth and he is retiring from his job to work on this, so that "the iron fists of truth will be dashed into the lying mouths of the detractors that are coming forth saying; that the Holocaust never existed."

1:12:25 Anton says some Germans even today cannot accept what happened, but the truth is being brought out. There was a program that brought in German civilians to see the newly liberated camps. He says there is truth in the fact that many German civilians didn't know what was being done by the Nazis, since the Nazis had, he says, a very closed system.

1:13:38 Anton's job was to take down testimony of eyewitnesses to the gun executions of Russian officers at Dachau. The testimony revealed that daily 30-40 Russian soldiers were led into an execution spot and shot in the back of the head. For Dachau, he says, this was a humane form of execution.

1:14:47 Anton says the Nazi system was for elimination of "untermenchen", which included people of many nationalities, although the Jews bore the brunt.

1:15:54 After the investigation of Dachau was over, he was sent into the field to investigate war crimes.

1:17:13 He questioned Dr. Use [ph] and Ilse Koch, then questioned Nazis at Landsberg prison over killing of American flyers. He says "the question was not that Hitler, one man, could be so evil, but that millions had not the courage to be good."

1:18:09 He has given Yad Vashem a testimonial and says he will give them all his materials. He feels his perspective has not changed since the Holocaust. When he hears of hate groups in the world he worries "the U.S. will too become a land of Cain where brother will be fighting brother."

1:19:49 Anton worries that a Nazi political system could come into being if we do not raise a responsible electorate in our schools.

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