

-TITLE-FRANCIS ROBERTS
-I_DATE-OCTOBER 1981
-SOURCE-INTERNATIONAL LIBERATORS CONFERENCE
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-VERY POOR
-IMAGE_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-DURATION-24 MINUTES
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

1:03:10 The General said he participated in the liberation of Camp Niederhagen (Wewelsburg). He was a member of the third army. Because of the Battle of the Bulge, his company was ordered North. The General talks about military strategy; they were pinning down the remaining German army. He was a part of the Southern flank of General Montgomery's group. He dealt with planning strategy.

1:05:44 The General got a call from his liaison officer who informed him of a large concentration camp in the area. They didn't know exactly where it was, but found it after wandering around for several hours. He was not aware of what exactly the camp was, or what it functioned for. He and another officer were the first to enter the camp. They met two Jews dressed in uniforms, who were skilled workers like cobblers. The Jews took them on a tour of the camp. By this time, the SS had left, and most of the inhabitants had left as well.

1:08:47 These two men gave him two volumes of records about the camps which told of the casualties. He met a fifteen year old boy in the camp who said 50,000 to 60,000 people were killed. When he arrived, there were 2,000 people left. The soldiers brought the records from the camp to their intelligence officers. He wonders if the records have ever surfaced during the war crime trials. He looked for them, found the WWII records, but never these specifics ones.

1:10:30 The General went to the camp out of curiosity. He had seen movies about concentration camps during military training. His company had liberated factories and farms, but had never seen a camp. The Jews they had liberated previously were treated like animals.

1:12:28 The General enlisted in January, 1937. He remembers being told always to obey the orders of superiors. In his opinion, the German soldiers were committing immoral acts because the officers were issuing immoral orders. he thinks the Germans that lived in the town knew about the camps, and the oppression of Jews took place in every town.

1:15:45 In the camp, he saw the showers, gas and crematoria, but not up close. (This section of the tape has a lot of static; it is difficult to hear what he is saying). He talks about a prisoner who worked in the kitchens who showered every three or four days. He said you didn't take a shower unless you saw whether the gas had been fitted or not. The General had hoped he would have found other British officers at the camp. Some people turned over some records to him. They were leaving the camps if they were in good enough shape to leave.

1:17:45 The General talks about slave labor in farms and factories. They had a part in the Holocaust as well as the camps. At one time, his company of five hundred men were in charge of a city of 500,000. The British were eventually supposed to come take over. He was in charge of watching for SS troops. He wondered where they would hide out. He searched insane asylums and hospitals.

1:19:20 One hospital he visited was run by a priest. It had 800 people in it. The priest told the General that 3 SS men were hiding in the hospital. (The sound on the tape again becomes very distorted here)

1:21:35 In the camps, the soldiers tried to determine the nationalities of the prisoners. He talks about the devastation to the cities and the people who were displaced from their homes. There was lots more misery in the second world war than Korea.

1:22:49 The General talks about the media. The Holocaust and other topics like Vietnam are no longer of media interest. (The sound blurs again.)

The interviewer films herself asking the questions for the interview.

.END.