

-TITLE-ANTHONY VAN VELSEN
-I_DATE-OCTOBER 27, 1981
-SOURCE-USHMC INTERNATIONAL LIBERATORS CONFERENCE
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-IMAGE_QUALITY-EXCELLENT
-DURATION-45 MINUTES
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-

0:30 Introduction of interviewer Yaffa Elliach a history professor at Brooklyn College who is Director for the Center for Holocaust Studies. Interviewee Anthony Van Velsen born in Holland.

2:14 Begins testimony. He was a marine officer for the Dutch and fought in the five day struggle against the Germans. Was arrested For minor espionage.

2:53 February 19, 1941 arrested by Dutch Police Forces acting for the Gestapo. Sent to a concentration camp after some months in prison.

3:27 Sent to Sachsenhausen and after a couple weeks sent to aufcommando(SP) worked in kitchen.

4:00 Transferred to administration, of Ravensbr ck.

4:35 Sent to slave labor camp of Auschwitz- Buna (Auschwitz III).

5:00 December, 1942 typhoid fever broke out and he was sent to Birkenau (Auschwitz II) where the actual gassing of Jews took place.

6:00 All Jews were gassed when they arrived at Birkenau.

6:33 Because he was a Dutch political prisoner, he could not be killed without authority from Berlin.

6:45 Sent to Gypsy camp until Jan 18, 1945.

7:00 Was at the gypsy camps between December 1942 and January 1945.

8:12 Witnesses the gassing of all the Jews that were gassed between Dec 1942 and Jan 1945.

8:45 Gypsies treated like the Jews but there were less of them.

9:00 May 1944, all the Gypsies were gassed.

10:00 Summer 1944 transports from Hungary filled with Jews arrive. Daily gassing of Jews throughout the summer.

10:35 Selection takes place at the platform by a medical doctor.

11:45 Those selected were ordered to disrobe then they were gassed and then the bodies were burned.

13:50 Most Jews were unaware of what lie in the gas chambers and therefore offered no resistance.

14:00 Some Jews who arrived from Poland knew about the gas. They resisted but were shot or burned by flame throwers. This was quite uncommon.

14:53 Number 72010 was tattooed on Anthony's arm. He wore a red patch signifying political prisoner.

15:50 Sent to Mauthausen worked in underground factory when the Russians came. He was moved to Austria.

16:11 Liberated May 6, 1945 by U.S. Third Army. He then returned to Holland.

16:48 What did he feel coming out of the camp? Glad to be alive, but total loneliness because all his friends had been killed, gassed or starved.

18:00 He and others planned to attempt to end the extermination of the Jews taking place at Auschwitz. How? Ask for help from Polish underground, destroy gas chambers contact the rest of the world and tell them about Auschwitz.

19:00 Picture of burning bodies taken behind crematorium 4 Rudolph Vbra.

20:00 Rudolph contacted a cardinal in Czechoslovakia who contacted the Pope. Asked that Allied bombers wipe out crematoria. Waited daily for the bombers. Felt alone. Total isolation, loneliness, alienation, bitterness. The planes never came.

22:00 In underground at Auschwitz he had camera and planned to burn down the wooden barracks at the moment of the uprising. When the Sondercommandos were to be moved (which means killed) they refused. Killed a few SS men, burned crematorium 3, then were themselves killed.

25:00 Anthony's parents gave shelter to Jews in hiding. This led to his father's arrest. He was later released from prison and continued to hide Jews.

26:00 As a Dutch political prisoner, Anthony was able to send one letter every two weeks until he was moved to Birkenau.

26:41 All clothing taken from exterminated Jews came into the area and Anthony and the other inmates stole what ever they could get. Attributes his survival in the death march to the shoes he was able to get.

27:50 Two picture were taken with the camera he had. Another camera was used to take a picture of naked women being sent to the gas chambers.

29:00 After liberation, returns to Holland and then goes to U.S. Is trained at Quantico, Virginia for service against the Japanese.

30:00 Loses his leg in hostilities in Indonesia. Continued in the service until reaching the rank of colonel and then retires.

31:00 At retirement, he begins to study law. He's now a lawyer.

32:00 Never dreams of Birkenau. Speaks about his experience. This helps him.

33:27 The S.S. did not get him then and they will not get him now through nightmares.

35:00 How do you survive Auschwitz? Luck, humanitarian education, determination to not give in to evil, the will to fight and even lose your life.

37:35 What do you think about Germans and Germany? The German youth is not responsible for the sins of their parents. Also there were Germans in the camps as prisoners. Responsibility for the crimes is with those that committed them. Anthony believe that many criminals are free in South America and Europe. Commends Simon Wiesenthal. Doesn't hate Germany, but he hates the Germans who committed the evil.

41:00 Advice for America and the world. There is no God who will help you, only your own stamina, conviction and determination.

42:00 Auschwitz is still a possibility and that is a danger. The United States as a world leader has the responsibility to help those in need and prevent a future Auschwitz.
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