

[INAUDIBLE]. OK. I am a child. I don't know much about World War II, and I don't even know, really, much what happened in the Holocaust. Tell me briefly what the DP camps were.

The DP camps, the displaced persons camps, were the camps to which the survivors of the Holocaust who were found alive in the German concentration camps on German soil and on Australian soil were placed after they had been liberated by the advancing allied armies.

In other words, they were camps where these survivors lived and the main Jewish survivors until the time came for them to migrate to other countries where they had chosen to live for the remainder of their lives. Their sojourn in the camps began after they had been moved out of the concentration camps soon after their liberation, and they lived in the camps until they left for the countries where they had chosen to go.

Now can you give me sort of an overview of what kind of a scale we're talking about, how many DP camps there were and different types?

There were a good number of displaced persons camps, and they varied both in size and in nature. For example, there was a displaced persons camp in Stuttgart, which, in reality, had no appearance as a camp. It was a series of what we would call apartment houses which had been taken over by the American army and to which the Army had placed Jewish survivors from German concentration camps.

On the other hand, there was a DP camp like Landsberg, where there were, when I visited it, over 6,000 survivors and which had been a large camp for military purposes which had been used also by the foreign workers who had come to Germany to help the German effort in industry during the war. So there were all kinds of displaced persons camps.

In addition, there were groups of survivors who lived in a place that could not be termed a DP camp. For example, there were some Hungarian Jewish women who had been liberated from a concentration camp in Germany and who had gone to a small town in northern Germany nearby where they just lived together in whatever kind of housing they could find. They lived as a group. I don't know whether you could call them a DP camp, but in essence, it was. So as I said at the outset, there were different kinds of DP camps. As to the number of them, I'm not exactly sure, perhaps 20 more or less.

And what kinds of numbers of displaced persons were there?

That's a difficult question to answer, and I'll tell you why. Perhaps at the time of the liberation of the German concentration camps there may have been a total of 50,000 Jewish survivors in the American zone of Germany. Remember that Germany, immediately after the defeat of the German Army, was divided among four conquering armies and were governed by the British, the Russians, the French, and the Americans.

The largest zone in Germany was the American zone, and there were about 50,000 Jewish survivors in the American zone. But Jews kept coming into the American zone of Germany day by day, and soon the number was not 50,000 but 80,000. By soon I mean over a period of a month, six weeks, or more. I'm now speaking only about the American zone in Germany.

So it was a huge-- it was a huge problem or huge situation that had to be dealt with?

It was a very difficult problem that had to be dealt with and a problem that had been unforeseen by the American military authorities who had long planned for the kind of governance they would establish in a defeated Germany. The American plans called, once Germany would be defeated, for the liberation of course of all those found in German concentration camps and for the return of all those survivors to the countries from which they had come, and that was to be done within 90 days. So the plans called for.

And indeed, after the concentration camps had been liberated, the American military authorities worked efficiently, and within 90 days, the Belgians, the French, the Greeks, the Poles, whoever were found in the concentration camps who wanted to go back to their homelands were sent home. But the military planners had not foreseen the fact that there

would be Jews in the concentration camps, they would be the largest number, and they would be people who would not or could not return to their homelands.

They could not because their homes and their businesses in their native countries had been seized by their former neighbors. They knew that if they returned and tried to reclaim their homes and businesses that they would be set upon, attacked, and perhaps even killed. And indeed, that did happen with a few Jews who did go back and who tried to regain what they had once owned. So most of the Jews didn't want to go back because they could not. There were no homes for them to return to.

In addition, they would not because the lands where they had lived-- and at the moment I'm thinking particularly of Poland as well as the Baltic countries, that they knew that the former neighbors in many cases had reported on their whereabouts to the Germans, that they could not live among those people who were responsible for their having suffered during the years of the war in concentration camps and who had been responsible for the fact that their nearest and dearest ones had been killed either on their native soil or in the concentration camps later.

They knew that the countries from which they had come where now lands where the soil had been polluted by the blood of their loved ones and the very air had been polluted by the smoke of the concentration camps that had come out of the crematoria where members of their families had been burned, at least their bodies had been burned. So as I said, at the outset, they could not return, and they would not return. They wanted to live elsewhere.

So the American Army found these people who would not go anywhere, who could not go anywhere, and no plans had been arranged for such people beforehand because the problem had not been foreseen.

Let's stop because I think we're just about running out of film.

Go to camera roll number two, slate number two.

Tell me, when you finally started seeing some of the displaced persons camps, which, as I remember, was maybe in August, September, tell me what the conditions were that you found.

The conditions, of course, varied from camp to camp, but by and large, I think the following conditions were pretty much accurate for, if not all the camps, most of the camps. Firstly, the housing was inadequate. That is, they were crowded. The survivors were crowded in the housing. There weren't enough beds and mattresses to go around.

In addition, many of the structures were poor wooden structures that would not be good enough for the oncoming winter, and some of the structures, some of the buildings-- the water supply was insufficient, and there were often leaks. So generally, their housing was not what it should have been.

Secondly, they weren't getting enough food. These were people who had been malnourished for years under the Germans. They were now suffering from malnutrition, and they weren't getting enough calories.

When more calories were added, very often those calories came from the wrong sources. They were given a lot of potatoes and bread. Sometimes even that wasn't good. The bread was stale, and the potatoes were rotten. So food was a problem. .

In addition, they lacked all kinds of things with which to occupy their time. They had no means of doing any kind of work. Those who had been musicians before the war and who are very anxious to get their hands and fingers on a musical instrument again didn't have those. Even those who wanted to spend some time exercising, sports, using what we call in America a soccer ball to play with didn't have those things.

And of course, some people might say those were unimportant things, but for people who had been without everything for years, every little thing was important. Their are clothing lacked much to be desired. Their clothing was poor. It certainly was not enough for the oncoming winter. They needed warm clothing of all kinds, beginning with underwear and going all the way out to overcoats, and hats, and caps.

Their shoes were in bad condition. They needed shoes of all kinds. They needed medical attention, although I must say at this point that Jewish doctors among the survivors, as soon as liberation took place, tried to take care of their fellow now-liberated inmates of the former concentration camps.

But they didn't have medicines. They didn't have medical instruments or surgical instruments. The teeth of the survivors were in terrible condition. They had had no dental care all through the years of the war, and their teeth needed immediate inspection and treatment. There were dentists among the survivors who would have been glad to go to work on that, but they had nothing with which to work. In addition, they needed the materials from which to make false teeth, for example, bridges, and so on.

I'm just telling you that which comes to my mind at the moment, but the most important things they needed were better housing, better food, better clothing, and other things.

What about--

Oh, excuse me. I've left out one of the most important things, and that is, when the war was over and they were transferred from concentration camps to DP camps, among the survivors, there were non-Jews. Many of those non-Jews were victims of the Germans, and they were sent home, as I told you a little earlier, within 90 days after liberation.

There were other non-Jews who did not go home. Who were they? Had come from Eastern Europe. Most of them had come to Germany willingly as volunteers to help in the German war effort. Since many of the Germans who had worked in the factories, most of them, were now in the German armed forces, there was a need for additional industrial workers to take their places. And many men and women had come from the countries of Eastern Europe as volunteers.

They got good pay. They received good food, had adequate housing, and they worked in the war effort. But as soon as the Germans lost the war, they pronounced themselves survivors, and they were placed into displaced persons camps. Now, the problem with that was, first of all, there was a built-in anti-Semitism on the part of almost all of these non-Jewish workers who had come to help the Germans.

Secondly, they had been well-fed all through the years of the war, and if efforts were now to be made to give more food to the Jews suffering from malnutrition, they would only pour oil on the fires of anti-Semitism and would lead to disputes, and conflict, and who knows what else between the Jews and the non-Jews in the DP camps.

So one of the first things that had to be done when I took my position as advisor to General Eisenhower on Jewish affairs was to see to it that his orders of late August-- I believe August 22-- should be carried out, namely the orders to establish DP camps in which the sole inhabitants would be Jewish survivors. So that was a very great need that had to be taken care of at the very beginning.

What about the pass system and being locked-up?

Oh, yes. There were certain camps, particularly in Bavaria under the supervision of the American Third Army commanded by General Patton, like Feldafing and Landsberg, where the camps were locked and where the Jewish inmates were permitted to leave camp only by means of a pass system that permitted a small percentage of them to go out of the camp on these passes.

And of course, they returned to the camp before the end of the day. The Jewish survivors in the DP camps could look beyond the barbed wire that surrounded their camp. They could see German civilians walking on the roads. They knew that the Germans had been the enemy of the American Army, yet the Germans were free to come and go as they pleased, but they, who had been liberated by the American Army, did not have that privilege.

They were confined behind barbed wire to a DP camp with only a small percentage permitted to go out for a few hours each day. Moreover, psychologically, they had been behind barbed wire in German concentration camps. Now liberated, they were still behind barbed wire. I think that may have been among the first, if not the very first complaint that I heard

when I met with a committee of Jewish survivors in the Feldafing displaced persons camp.

We're just about to the end of this roll, I'm pretty sure.

Two, camera roll number three, interview continued with Judah Nadich.

Three.

What was the Harrison Report?

Dean Earl Harrison of the law school of the University of Pennsylvania was appointed by President Truman to examine the conditions in the DP camps. During the month of June 1945, newspaper correspondents, foreign correspondents in Germany had sent back stories to the American press that there were Jewish survivors of the Nazi concentration camps living in displaced persons camps under the American Army who's living conditions were abominable, and that created quite a stir, evidently, in the United States.

And President Truman, as I said, appointed the dean of the law school of the University of Pennsylvania, Dean Earl G. Harryman--

Harrison.

--Harrison-- excuse me-- to examine the camps and to report to him to see whether or not the reports of the war correspondents were accurate. Dean Harrison came to Europe, and he was accompanied by Dr. Joseph J Schwartz who was the European head of operations for the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.

And he visited the camps in Germany, in the American Zone, and he came back to Washington and submitted his report. The report caused a number of cables to go from Washington to General Eisenhower's headquarters in Frankfurt. First, General Marshall, who was chief of staff, got in touch with General Eisenhower and told him that he soon would be getting a summary of the report of Dean Earl Harrison, that it was not a good report, that it did not put the American Army in a good light.

And then I believe it was on August the 10th-- I'm certain of that date, August the 10th-- General Eisenhower got a cable from the secretary of war-- his name was Secretary Stimson-- who gave General Eisenhower a summary of the Harrison Report and said that the report contains some very damaging description of conditions in the displaced persons camps administered by the American Army, and what did General Eisenhower expect to do to correct the situation, and also told him that, in due course, he would be receiving the entire Harrison Report.

That report was the reason for the creation of a position that was rather unique in the history of the American military, the creation of an advisor to a commanding general on Jewish conditions in the area of command of the general. General Eisenhower sent back a cable the day after he had received the Stimpson cable to say that he was creating position of advisor to General Eisenhower, to himself, on Jewish affairs to be filled by an American Army Jewish chaplain. And that was the reason for my being ordered to fly from Paris, where I had been stationed for about a year, to Frankfurt to undertake my new responsibilities.

No I'm going to jump around a little bit. In general, the Jewish displaced persons who didn't want to return to their homelands-- where else could they go? What other problems did they face in terms of-- where did they want to go? Did they have choices or options?

Well, one of the questions in my questionnaire that I had prepared for myself before visiting any of the DP camps was precisely that. Where did these people want to go, assuming that there would be no barrier to their going to the lands they had chosen?

Between 70 and 75% of them said they wanted to go to the country then known as Palestine. Others chose other countries, the United States, Canada, Australia, countries in South America, usually because they had relatives living in

those countries to whom they could go.

And what were the barriers, then, for getting people out? Why couldn't they just go?

They could not go because they had no means with which to go. They had no funds. They didn't have decent clothing on their backs. They were, many of them, weak because of malnutrition, and in addition, there was the obstacle of immigration laws that limited the number of people that could arrive in any of these aforementioned countries.

Great Britain had been appealed to just a short while before the time about which I speak by President Truman to grant special visas to 100,000 of these people. Great Britain didn't act upon General Truman's request. American immigration laws were strict and permitted four very small numbers to come from the lands of Eastern Europe, and most of the people in the concentration camps were Jews who had come from Eastern European lands. So there were all kinds of reasons for their not being able to go forthwith to the countries of their choice.

Can you address differences in displaced persons, such as Feldafing and Landsberg, with, say, Bergen-Belsen, American-run camps versus British-run camps?

I can't tell you about Bergen-Belsen. I can't answer that question because Bergen-Belsen was in the British zone of Germany. I wasn't allowed into the British zone of Germany unless I requested special permission. I had more than enough to do with my responsibilities in the American zone of Germany.

All that I can tell you, an answer to that question, is that I had gotten requests from London from a number of leaders of the Jewish community in that city to send to them copies of the military orders creating my post and its duties to them in London so that they might request General Montgomery to create a similar position, that is, advisor to the commanding general on Jewish affairs, for the British zone of Germany. General Montgomery refused point blank.

We've got to stop and re-load.

Camera roll number four