

Yes, well, this is an interesting photograph because of Adolf Hitler, because this was given to me and another one by Hitler's senior secretary. And I worked with her for very many years because my so-called doctor-father and mentor suggested that I take over the discussion and dialogue with her, because both of us agreed that it would be very important for her to write her memoirs, which she refused to have published and it was very difficult for us to make her work on.

And so in conjunction with my discussion with her, she gave me a number of kind of artifacts, if you will, or if you will, memorabilia. And this happens to be Hitler in his favorite hotel, Dreesen in Bad Godesberg, and I stayed there myself and retraced his steps when I was doing some filming, a movie, documentary on Hitler, with a crew from the United States.

And so I put myself into this. So indeed, it's one of the most beautiful hotels in that area, and this was his favorite picture of himself, and that's why she gave it to me. So it's not just the setting, which is beautiful, but the fact that this was his favorite picture of himself. And very few people own it. I own it from the horse's mouth because-- and I did something important-- because I had a part in writing the memoirs which were, after the war, posthumously published.

Yeah, well, that's the same photograph. It's apparently a blow-up of the photograph he liked best. This is Hitler's secretary. She was the second senior secretary, and with a distance, the most intelligent. I interviewed two of them, and she knew most and was a person who was a very, very interesting individual.

And I'm glad I was able to encounter her, because I got inside for stories about her work with Hitler. And she started to work for Hitler in 1932 until the very end, and had to be in readiness for virtually 24 hours a day. Her name is Christa Schroeder, and she never married.

And the person she was interested in marrying was a Yugoslav of all nationalities, and she was engaged to him. And Hitler simply said that I can't permit that. I can't allow it simply because of political considerations. So he interfered with her private life, absolutely, so that she didn't have any freedom, so to speak, to live a life of her own, by virtue of the fact that she was one of one of four of Hitler's secretaries, and the most efficient, and not necessarily most attractive, but the most intelligent with a distance, no question.

So I presume she was a member of the Nazi Party?

She was a member of the Nazi Party, but was marginal because ideologically, she did not-- and we've had long discussions about it-- she did not very much identify with the ideology, but she certainly was an active Nazi Party member by virtue of the fact that she was in the immediate entourage of Hitler, and certainly admired him. It was kind of-- it was conditional admiration to a point, because she also, of course, was privy to his shortcomings, which were numerous.

So she was not an uncritical admirer of Hitler by any means, which made her more interesting to me. But obviously, her loyalties were with him. But it's amazing how quickly these loyalties changed after his demise and after World War II. But she still felt that, you know, that he was an important personage, and I don't think that she regretted being his secretary, because as such, she had unbelievable and virtually unlimited privileges on one hand.

But on the other hand, she was handicapped, because as I said before, she didn't have any private life at all. And if she wanted to marry someone, not only did she have to get permission, but she didn't get permission with the person, this Yugoslav, who happened to be a diplomat. She was not permitted to marry because he was a Yugoslav and not a German, number one.

And even if there would have been some German, well, it would have been a problem, which is not to say that some other secretaries didn't marry, but they married within their circle, and married people who were in the immediate entourage of Hitler. And that was of course then not too much of a problem, because these people were accepted by Hitler. So why, you know, would he not permit a marriage between people whom he accepted?

According to her, what were his shortcomings?

Well, they're too numerous to say in this sort of thing, but the shortcomings were simply his unbounded ambition and his ruthlessness, that he could switch from warm to cold, and accept you and be very interested and attentive and concerned about a person, and could let them-- just drop them in no time in the next second, and be devastating, and send them to camps or whatever, or have them killed.

And so that was this, from one extreme to the other. He was totally utilitarian and pragmatic, but the interesting thing, she said, and all the people I've interviewed who were in his entourage, was that he was capable of concern, and apparently authentic concern, while he needed these people. But when they were no longer useful to him, he lost interest and dropped them like a hot potato. OK, that would be just, you know, apart from his bizarre sort of lifestyle and all that. But that would be a lecture or whatever, a presentation by itself.

Do you know what year this photo was taken? This was taken in the early '80s, and not too long before she died, because the last time I talked to her was in '83. I trust '83, and she was dead in '84. Or was it '82? Well, I don't know exactly. I'm never been very good with specific dates, but I have that, of course, recorded exactly. So I think she died in '83 or '84.

'83, I think, and the last time I saw her must have been one year before and all that. And she still wrote-- I have quite a few letters from her in which she describes many things about her illness and all that. And very, very charming letters, and very warm, very, very caring letters, she wrote. And she was very appreciative of-- she knew, of course, about my background. I mean she knew that I was-- of my background, the concentration camps. So she knew that.

So this is a picture when they celebrated something. I don't know exactly what, and I don't remember anymore. It was a party at her place. I think so, or maybe not at her place. But what is important is that these people who were members of the inner circle met very periodically and regularly, and somehow provided for each other's support group.

And the person in the center, I think, is a mister called Schonhuber, former SS member and leader of the Republican Party, if I'm not mistaken, if I see that correctly. And for that reason, she gave that to me. I mean, it's something which she sent me and all that. And I probably have a more accurate description in one of her letters.

So he still is a very important leader in the rightists, former SS member. Used to be in broadcast and TV, and then turned politician after he had published a book, Schonhuber book about his experience in the SS, which was very much criticized. And then he was dismissed from his TV as an anchorman, and then started his own party and whatever. And I think that Mr. Schonhuber. I'm not 100%, but just about 90% certain that's what he is. And he is now the leader of the fairly successful Republican Party, which is a far-right party.

And who is on the left?

I don't know.

And do you know what year this photo was taken?

That was quite a while ago. That must have been in the '70s, late '70s. One of the best things which happened in my academic life, and also perhaps in so many terms of associations and relationships, when I was in Germany in 1963, I was given an Alexander von Humboldt Fellowship, which is just probably like something like Rhodes Scholarship, something on a similar level.

And that enabled me to finish my doctorate and do research and publish some things, and this was one of the most fantastic things. I could live very well, not in luxury, but very well. And so I was given that because of people who were in the leadership, very sensitive to my background and very supportive.

And if I had a lot of money, by God, I would give it to them, because it's the further international cooperation among academicians and the international research which they then fund, and people come to Germany and work at various

different universities on different levels of sophistication on their research projects. So one of the features which is a very interesting one is that annually, the group of 200, 300 people, Fellows who are in Germany at that time, are invited to the German equivalent of the White House.

It happens to be also white. And there I am in the group of people, in the center, pretty much, getting to President Lübke of Germany. He was a very controversial figure. We won't go into that because he was tainted with mischief, because he was working on building, the places in concentration camps for inmates. And he was accused of that. I had a long discussion with that which I've published in my book.

But anyway, so during one of those occasions, so every time, every year, we went to see whoever was president of the German Republic, Federal Republic of Germany. And that was always very interesting because you met all the other people who were recipients of these fellowships, and had nice discussions. We were hosted and wined and dined and just had a tremendous time dialoguing.

OK,

so that's one of the occasions which was, I think-- and I'm pretty sure it was 1964. Now, that is a very important picture, because it's the favorite picture of General Karl Wolff when he had his birthday. And he was at that time the liaison between the SS and Hitler's headquarters. And so that was his favored photograph, when Hitler congratulates him on his birthday. And at that time, he was a full general, that is to say, in an SS rank, Obergruppenführer of the SS, and stationed at Hitler's headquarters.

And because of his appearance, and because he was very glib and very easygoing and rather diplomatic, and kind of an interesting person nevertheless, a very colorful person, he was one of Hitler's favored SS generals and had a very rapid, rapid, very rapid promotion. So at that time, he was general, and he claims that on April 20, which was Hitler's birthday, in 1945, he was promoted to colonel general, which was the highest possible rank in the SS.

There were only for people who attained that rank within the SS, of about close to one million people. So that's a very high rank, so he gave that to me with a dedication, not only that, but when my son Ingmar was born, he gave him the picture with a dedication and with best wishes for his future life. Now, important thing in terms of why he did the things, gave me some of these things-- simply because he viewed me as a very close friend, simply because I was a very good listener, and I could discuss things with him and question him and challenge him in a way where he didn't feel cornered.

And he considered me a very close friend to the extent that I stayed with him when I visited him, and he came and picked me up at the railway station, and didn't have any money at that particular time. So I always invited him for some meals, and his current girlfriend came in and did things for us, and I interviewed him, and taped, of course, the interviews.

I've got all the tapes of the interviews, which will one day, if they are not already, prove to be exceedingly valuable and insightful. And by the way, that's in Hitler's headquarters during the war. And I don't know exactly. I can find out which one it is, which headquarters, because he moved from one headquarters to another during the war.

Right. The person in the center, the general, is Colonel General Jodl, and he was one of the main military leaders in Hitler's headquarters. Jodl, Alfred Jodl. There were several people whom I consider to be key interviewees. Most of them were SS generals, and this one was an SS general. And he was a general-- now, Wolff was, for example, a political general. He was not a military general in the real sense, but he was a political one. And these were the ones who were very dangerous.

And this one, in contrast, was already an officer during World War I and a pilot, and an active military career, military person. And because it was very difficult to get into any other situation during the assumption of power by Hitler after 1933, he entered into the SS, as I think, he was major. And then subsequently, because of his prowess and military leadership talents, very rapidly had risen in ranks and became general of the SS,

And that is after the war, of course, retired. And I interviewed him extensively, and we developed also a relationship which he considered to be very important to him. And I saw him very shortly before, you know, very shortly before he actually died of old age. And that was in a conversation with someone of his subordinates-- I forget the name, but a person who was very devoted to him-- in his home in Bavaria.

So that is, again, the same person in SS uniform, General Willie or Wilhelm Bittrich. And he insisted to give that photograph to me, and signed it, "In friendship! Yours, Bittrich." And you can see there is even an exclamation mark after "friendship." And at that time, he was one of the commanding officers of the Division Deutschland, which was a division in Germany.

And as I said, he was not a National Socialist, which is very interesting. He was absolutely very antisemitic, no question about that. But I would say that in terms of degrees, his antisemitism was not exceeding the bounds of simply, have a dislike for Jews. But he totally and utterly condemned all the atrocities which took place and which he found out about, and rejected Hitler as a person, and otherwise was exceedingly critical of Himmler and the leadership.

And the fact that I taped it all and all that was to the great concern of the fellow SS people who still survived, because they felt that it could be misused. And yes, I've used it, in their eyes, probably misused, what he said about his experience as SS, with the leadership and all that. It was one of the SS generals who was most vocal in his criticism of National Socialism, Hitler and the SS, which is an irony, because after all, he had the same rank as Karl Wolff.

How did he survive?

Not easy. With a great deal of difficulty, because he got a lot of threats from Himmler personally threatening him that he would send him to a concentration camp, pressed him, you know, said, why don't you have any children. You should have children. Why don't you divorce your wife-- because they couldn't have children, for whatever reason.

And also, because he was very pro-Russian. He admired, and because of his experience in the Soviet Union shortly after the war where they were trained as pilots, because they couldn't do that in Germany. So they sent to the Soviet Union-- very few people know that-- and were trained in whatever military branch they needed to be trained.

And he developed a great liking for the Russians, and that was known because, of course, Himmler had files on all his steps and whatever background he had. And so he periodically threatened him, but they didn't do anything to him because as you can see what he's wearing there, it was at the time when he was given the Knight Cross for his military success, as military leader.

And he was a very interesting man, and we've had a lot of fun together, I really must admit. And I teased him and he teased me, and he had a good sense of humor, a very dry sense of humor. He could have been a British general without any great deal of problem. And he was also named by the Allies the "Hero of Arnhem." The British parachuted at Arnhem, Holland, in order to take over. And then the SS, under his leadership and other peoples, they decimated the British, took them hostage, imprisoned them and took them as prisoners of war.

And he was known as the "Hero of Arnhem" because he insisted on treating them in a very humane and camaraderie fashion. So he became very well known, and books have been written about and films have been done because of his humanistic behavior towards the British prisoners of war, which he took because he prevailed for a while at Arnhem.

So here, which I did not attend, and I am sorry because I was not in Germany at that time of his death. And I saw him shortly before, relatively shortly before he died, and visited with him. And he gave me several mementos to take with me, and it was a kind of interesting sort of experience. And there, the same person with whom you saw him before, that was sent to me after his death by this individual because my name was known and my address and he sent it to me as some sort of a memento when he was buried.

And these are some of the highest declarations he received. And there, you can see the Knight Cross. And after that, he got the Knight Cross with second and third grade and with clusters and swords. That's what it was, which was just as high as you could get, and then some other decorations for his military prowess. And that was his funeral in this local

little village where his wife was buried. And he was subsequently buried next to her.

This is Christa Schroeder with another secretary, Hitler's secretary, during the war. And at the moment, I just have a block in terms of the name of the other secretary, whom I did not interview. And I may have met her, but I have not interviewed her. And so it's just how she looked when she was Hitler's secretary during the war.

The name of the photo was Daranowski. And then she married actually an SS man who was in an employ-- of Hitler's employ entourage-- immediate entourage. Dara.

OK, that's the other person in the last photo?

The other in the last photo. Now, there we see Christa Schroeder and I was given that after her death by the person who was her heir and who inherited whatever she left. And she gave that to me, or I'm not sure whether-- yeah, she gave it to me because I think Christa Schroeder did not give that to me. And she for whatever reason, let me him have it.

And Christa Schroeder is-- I wonder where she is. I'm not sure. I think she's the one on the right, standing up on the right when she was still very young.

Yeah, in this picture I know exactly where she is. She's the one standing up on the left in the second row. And that was Christa Schroeder when she was young, also in the very old photo. And I think it may be actually there may be the year there. They may have written it. I'm not sure if it is on the other side, so I don't know offhand when it was taken.

No date on the other side.

Now, this is a very interesting curiosity because these are original patches of the highest rank in the SS. And I showed that, to verify its authenticity, I showed it to Karl Wolff. And when he saw it he just was beside himself with joy and said, John, you need to do one thing if you possibly can. If I can have it, and when I die you'll get it back.

And so he wrote on that envelope into which it was put the documentation that after his demise it would be returned to me. Why he was so interested, because that was his ambition to attain the highest rank in the SS which existed. And I already explained that, namely that of what was called in German Obergruppenführer, which means in military terms equivalent of Colonel General. And so he claimed, but it was never found in writing, that the Hitler when he saw him on the 20th of April '45 promoted him to that rank. I have my doubts about it.

Anyway, so that and he really it was so important to him that he said I need it. So you can see that he drove out to California, USA, '65. So that was the contract which he wrote where he just wanted to keep that. And I gave it to him, of course, because I had more to gain than to lose. And yes, and after he died it was returned to me by his heir and this lady friend of his.

How did you come by those?

Oh, yes, well I'm of course a collector. And with another SS officer who knew that there were some Nazis, or what you call nazistica, National Socialist memorabilia in an antique shop which had all sorts of interesting things. But they also specialized under the counter these sort of things.

He said, well, we'll go there. This Nazi officer was a very interesting person who wrote an account, the eyewitness account, of the destruction of the Warsaw ghetto, which I hope to have published hopefully soon. And so I went with him there and that's where I looked at things and bought some things and saw that. And I bought it for nothing because that person who was the owner, although had some expertise in National Socialist memorabilia, did not recognize that this was the highest rank.

And this is something I couldn't buy. I paid about 50. Today, I would not be able to buy for it because of its actual value of collector value. And so I bought it for 50 marks or something, 40 or 50 marks, which is nothing considering how rare it is. Because there are four people who had this rank in the SS of almost one million people.

Well, this is a bank note produced in the satellite camp, which was established, it was Mauthausen I trust. And I can pinpoint it, but there are so many camps and some of the smaller satellite camps of the various large camps, I don't exactly remember the names. Which was a institution which was very highly guarded, employed most people were Jewish, artisans, people who were highly skilled people whose task it was to produce counterfeit money. And this counterfeit money were most frequent these pounds, they did not quite-- I don't think they've been able to counterfeit the dollars at that particular point, but they worked at it, I trust.

And so these were in a special sealed case emerged in one of the lakes and retrieved. And I went into some detail and research, and in some of the Austrian lakes they simply submerged some of the things which they didn't want to fall into the hands of the Allied occupation troops. And these were the pounds and some other things which they had millions of.

Now, they are very skillfully made and were only recognized as counterfeit after World War II. They were used to pay debts in foreign countries and pay spies and people outside Germany. Because they are not used in Germany, only in connection with imports and primarily spying and services rendered outside of Germany.

And I was given that by a good acquaintance who said, by the way, I have something which might interest you. This really, I was given a number because when these people uncovered them then they are supposed to give it all and put that into specific very closely guarded places in Austria. But those people who uncovered them, they always took some and put them in their pocket, and then they gave it to some friends.

So in other words, they took something they are not supposed to take and distributed it to certain friends. And this person received quite a few of them. And that was his [INAUDIBLE] and said, well I know because you are such a scholar of all these things, and it is important to you. So why don't I-- and I had problems in accepting it because I know that this has and will rise in value, because there is much more-- counterfeit has more value than the real thing nowadays. Five to 10 pounds you can sell it for a great deal of money.

So that was done by inmates, by inmates, produced by inmates. And all these people then, from what I understand, and I don't want-- from what I have been able to research, they all have been killed. They didn't want to have any witnesses. But I wouldn't vouch for it. But from what I understand, yes.

This is a very important shot which I took after a very important SS rally to which I was invited and was a guest of honor. And that is the usual thing, they usually go to cemeteries where former SS people were buried. And so I was part of that, and I took snapshots and behaved very improperly. But because I was an accepted guest of honor, they trusted me and let me take all these shots.

They are very rare shots, because you can see all these people are SS people, former SS people during a rally when they went and the speech and sang. Speech was at a cemetery to commemorate the people who had died in combat or of old age or whatever and were buried there, SS people. And you can see that there is a memorial, the thing which-- the Iron Cross.

And this?

Same thing from a different perspective. Now, it's important that they took that were there, the SS people and their families. They always came with their families, and I got to know their wives and daughters and all that. And they came from all different parts of Europe and the world for that occasion.

And I had the address them during that rally because I was the guest of honor. And I couldn't get out of it. I tried, I squirmed, did all I could to get out of it, and then I had the address them. And that was one of the most, I sweated blood to do that. It was just very, very, very difficult for me to say things which I could identify with and not be attacked on the other. So I just was just really treading on very thin ice.

Did you have to say positive things about the SS?

No, I didn't say anything positive. I said what I was saying that people who research and want to find out about the SS should talk to them. And I've written it down, and one of the things which I'm doing for John and Lani, the experiences of-- and that's practically finished. It needs to be the last thing needs to be typed up. I already have 30 pages. They wanted I think three pages, now it's 30 pages.

Same thing here, same thing here, and that too. You can see the multitudes, because you talk about 1,500 or 1,600 people. And some of them came from South Africa and whatever, and just all places, including the different countries, people who were Dutch and all that, and they also joined the SS.

And one I have met a medical doctor during that time was a Dutch SS officer. And he was still raving about that time and was a medical practitioner and all that. And didn't seem to be that fully disturbed about the fact that he had this background. Not very much happened to him.

See, that is someone just at the cemetery just giving this speech. It was all very official. And you can see the crowds up there. I just stand behind these people taking the photographs and hoping that no one will-- that I won't draw undue attention to myself. But by that time I was pretty much accepted as persona grata. And god, I really must have had a very high blood pressure then when I was doing all this.

So you see that they even had I mean, a lot of money. These people were very well-to-do. So it's not a question of money. They just could spend on these having a people play for them there whom they hired.

And this is just this stone that's the our dead comrades of the first Panzer Corps, loyalty for loyalty. Well, so all these people, SS people, '39 to '41, all these people SS except it's not clear to people who don't know any better. All these things they the wreath were given, put there, during the time I was there and all. It was a big thing and you can see them still there. So I took that in order to have what was the centerpiece of the whole thing, namely this First Panzer Corps and loyalty for loyalty.

And some of the kids, they're young, the other generation who came there. And of course, by virtue of being in this community and being interacting the way they did, of course inadvertently they are also indoctrinated by those who commemorated something which should really be condemned instead. But to me, that was just an unbelievable experience and these kids were all elated and had a good time, of course. And they saw to it that they would have a good time, and therefore associated a good time with the event.

And so that was a way to indoctrinate them. I don't know whether they thought it through, but it was a gathering, a support group, a support system, which of course sustained them to have tremendous. And not only that, but validated their activity during World War II.

Now, same thing, a different aspect, different perspective of it all. And we mustn't forget, and that's to me very important, that this is absolutely legal. They can do that legally. They have a legal organization, everything is not undercover, but it's legal, except they are very careful whom they let in.

And there are some people who wanted to disturb that, they kept them out. And it's just like during the early times when they protected their speakers, you see. So only people get in who are elected and screened, so to speak.

And it was just an unbelievable experience. I'll never forget it. It was a terrific experience, and I'm not at all sorry that I've done it that. I thought it was a tremendous, tremendous learning experience, and I'm very glad I've done it. Except I had to be very, very careful, because they could have clobbered me.

Now, this quote unquote, "gentleman" is Gerhard Martin Sommer, and he was the Hangman of Buchenwald. One of the most cruel people, and when I was-- by the way, he also was sentenced by the SS court. That's an interesting thing, Sandra. Because he was sentenced by the SS court for excessive cruelty and sabotage, and his kommandant, Koch, was shot. That's the man who was his superior.

And in connection with the Koch affair, he was investigated, found guilty, and sent instead of being punished, he was

sent to one of the worst a battle battalions, combat battalions to which he could be possibly assigned. And as a consequence, he was totally crippled, totally crippled and by miracle not killed. Anyway, Gerhard Martin Sommer has been written up as one of the worst persons about whom the inmates, survivors, have written.

And when I visited Karl Wolff, General Karl Wolff in prison, with a Swedish Countess who was a relative to the deceased wife of Hermann Goring, he said, by the way, you got some-- she said that, not Wolff. There is someone you really might interview and that's the Sommer fellow. And he had I don't know how many times life sentences, because he killed just messes of people in cruelty.

And so I was very interested, and I developed a relationship, interviewed him, taped. And have a stack of letters which by themselves would make up a book. Because to him, I became the father confessor or brother confessor. Of course, he was much older than I.

And I was, because his wife divorced him, he was written off by all his relatives and friends, so he didn't have anyone. So I became the substitute family and came and visited him and sent him letters and responded to his questions and whatever. And he in turn, wrote me his autobiographical account, which I published in my first book, continued to write about details in terms of his experience and explaining his feelings, and also how he adjusted to post-war Germany as prisoner and as inmate in a prison.

And then, because he was totally I mean, he was crippled totally, and you'll see the pictures in a moment, he had to be moved to a special institution for people in that state, in some sort of a nursing home, if you will, in which they could care for him, because they couldn't care for him in prison. And that's where I visited him whenever I had a chance and talked to him. And he died several-- so there you can see was a Nazi member and then had a very high rank, probably attained one of the highest ranks as not officer but as Sergeant Major, something like that, Gerhard Martin Sommer.

And I talked to people who were in Buchenwald and said my god, tell me where he is. I'm going to kill him. And one of them was a Jewish friend of mine, medical doctor, who since died who was a survivor of Buchenwald. And he said tell me where he is. I'll go there and kill him with my bare hands. OK, so that is Sommer when he was married in civilian clothing.

What year do you think this photo was taken?

Let me see, that was after the war actually probably. Shortly after the war, before he was sentenced, before he was brought to trial and sentenced. That was after the war, because already he's considerably older.

And that is his wife, and she divorced him. They all ran, they all abandoned him. And that's why he was latched on to me and he wrote to me so many letters. As I said, it's a stack of letters which by themselves so numerous that you could make a book out of them-- regularly and with unbelievable devotion.

And there also comes to mind Zimbardo's notion in terms of the situational pressures which bring out in people, or my concept, which I prefer, is that of a sleeper, that he couldn't have been more attentive. He sent me letters with flowers, with dried flowers on that. And vicious-- about my health concern, about Ingmar, about the marriage and all that. And I said, how is that possible?

And I visited him, and he was very concerned and caring and said here you are, Hangman of Buchenwald. And after the thing it was just totally innocuous, totally nice, concerned, writing letters, loyal, and telling me all the things I needed to know, writing to Ingmar and putting in all these sort of stickers on the letter just to somehow-- it's very hard to understand how these people change color. And the man would not hurt a fly at that particular point. He was not aggressive at all.

He was complaining about the way he was treated, totally non-aggressive, did all the things properly, had civil behavior, and all that. Search me, that's exactly the mind, and that's what really motivated me to do all that sort of research in order to get to the bottom of these things. The Hangman of Buchenwald, Gerhard Martin Sommer.



Well, this is again the person who is big brother, in a way. That's probably the appropriate word I was or had become. And these pictures, of course, I took myself when the man was totally crippled because of war injuries because he was sent to this sort of penal battalion because he was sentenced by the SS court. And he was very-- he never was very clear about why and what, because he was actually ashamed of it. And as I said, his master was shot, Koch.

Now, all these writers have written about him, Kogon, for example, in his very famous book which has become one of the famous book. Which he read very carefully, by the way, Sommer did, and said that many of the things he said were inaccurate and untrue. He writes about him extensively, Eugen Kogon.

And so there you can see him and just posing for me during a visit in that nursing home. See, he could not even-- couldn't get up properly himself, so he had something where he had to hold on to in order to even be in that position. And there was an organization, which is important, a political kind of women's organization which was also not just merely headed by women, but former high Nazi officials. And I penetrated these people and found out about the details and all that, which I won't go into now.

And so they supported all the so-called political prisoners. In other words, who were there because of their affiliation during World War II or because the concentration camp charges, what have you, captains, whatever, people of the concentration camp crew. And so they went there and I encountered them and talked to them and all that. Went to all these various people who were in prison because of that reason and gave them special food and presents and books and simply cared for them. And so he was one of the recipients.

That's the same, similar shot.

Right, that's a similar shot. And that's black and white. They've been taken also during different times. That was taken earlier. The other ones were more recent. And that's also in this nursing home, except he was moved from one nursing home to another, and that may have been in the previous one.

So I wanted him to-- I wanted to be sure that I had how he looked and how this thing. And his wounds never healed. I mean, he was really I mean, the punishment, I felt that the man was punished for whatever, because he always had some poison in his body which did be a lot of terrible stuff and the pain and all that. And somehow, in a way, he complained to some extent, but he was fairly stoic about his condition and really never complained too much.

He complained somewhat, not because of his pain, but the way he was treated. He found it very difficult because he was isolated. He was immobile anyway, he couldn't run any place, so I mean, so there was no question for him to run away. But he felt that he was not properly treated and that he was discriminated against.

Now, that's the irony of the ironies. Now you've got the Hangman of Buchenwald explaining to a former inmate that he was discriminated against. I mean, just if you really take that and look at it a little bit objectively, I mean, it's really a parody.

So I think this card, which is a photograph with the swastika as the sun, is indicative of what people, what was a popular postcard from Salzburg. That's Salzburg there. And so instead of the sun in the sky you got the sun is now the strength, the feature, the beauty, the warmth and all that, now the sun has developed it's now symbolically depicted with a swastika.

And I think it's hilarious because people accepted all that thing and sent this postcard. And the other side it's written and all this and that, which is an interesting text, but we don't have to go into that. But this to me, that any rationally thinking person, critically thinking person can accept it and buy that and send it to their relatives or friends, other than if you would say it's a joke. But no, but it's not a joke. This is how seriously they accepted Nazi ideology and its symbols and went along with it.

OK, well this is an interesting storm trooper, brown shirt ID card, which I bought in one of those antique shops. They just actually I think one of the people from whom I bought old books and Nazi books and all that, he gave it. As a matter of fact, I don't think that's June, 1934, so that is a very interesting thing because of the time.

And the name of this person is Ernst Calmbach, and nothing distinguished. It just tells to what sort of section, what sort of battalion he belongs or whatever. And Southwest and Brigade 54, and it was given to him, that is to say, it was a given him on June 1, 1934. And he has no charge. He's just a basic SA man. And then it's signed by a Oberscharführer, which is not even-- not even an officer. It's some sort of a sergeant. Calmbach Ernst.

This is the other side of the same thing.

Yeah, it just says SI ID card number 74. So he joined relatively early, 74 in that particular region. And it just says his activities, he is active in this battalion, and has been assigned on April 1st, '34 to the SA battalion R in whatever number six, whatever, nothing remarkable.

This is a Hitler Youth ID card which I also received from one of those people from whom I bought books. You can see that I bought it in Freiburg. It was sent there. And this fellow actually, the interesting thing that this Gerhard [Personal name] something like, it's not very clearly written-- is born in Freiburg 1929. So he's a fairly young chap. And I just took it because it was of interest so that people know how these sort of ID cards looked, and also because it's Freiburg.

That's the backside of it.

This is the backside, which had to be certified because they always had to renew it every month. They had to be certified. So that's exactly what it was certified up to September, and then it stopped, probably because of the war or whatever. But he was too young to be even drafted.

OK.

Now, this is a rather interesting picture because there is an SS adjutant, Hitler's adjutant of the SS, who then voluntarily went into combat, wanted to be sent to combat. He was a fairly high rank for his age, which was that of at that time I think of an SS major, equivalent major. And so I interviewed his brother. He died in combat, by the way, and was Hitler's favorite SS adjutant.

And but he died in combat and his brother took his place. And his name was Schulze. And his brother, whom I interviewed extensively, and who gave me this fellow's name was Richard Schulze-Kossens. And he was a lieutenant colonel last rank, and was in the combat SS, but highly political as you will find out. And he was a very interesting person.

He came to the United States, was invited by a Jewish professor to give lectures. And he enjoyed doing that and liked to do it. I wanted to invite him, but I didn't have the money to do that, to come to Sonoma State because that sort of money, flight and all that, was not available.

And he came to the East Coast to a small college where he gave lectures and told me quite about him. I was very enthusiastic because he was very well received and asked questions and all that, and felt that it was a very interesting experience. He was a very strange individual because for all practical purposes, he had not changed any colors, but he was very interested in talking about it and had many interviews and all that.

And he married a very rich lady who permitted him to live in splendor. He died of cancer a relatively young person. That was the brother of this person whom you will see later. This fellow died in combat and was the older brother, who was the first adjutant to Hitler, SS adjutant, favored adjutant of Hitler.

We're talking about the gentleman in the middle?

The middle. The one just reports to then, and this fellow whom talks to Hitler is a sergeant of sorts reporting to Hitler. And he is an army sergeant, not an SS.

So here you've got this brother of the person who deceased when he came to the headquarters and shaking hands of

Hitler. We were very proud of these pictures, and he thought that he was doing a tremendous favor giving these things, the description very meticulous. He described when and what and all that. It's all on the other side. And so he played a very interesting and colorful role in Hitler's headquarters, and then was in charge of a SS cadet school subsequently.

Yes.

Now, this is the same person, Richard Schulze-Kossens about the time I visited him and how he looked in civilian after the war. And typical so, he's always very well-dressed, and lots of money, and an excellent host. And he also introduced me to, I think, it was Daranowski, the other secretary, Hitler's Secretary. Whom he invited when I came to visit him and to discuss things and interview him.

And this?

This is the cadet school, SS cadet school he was in charge. And he gave me that.

Now, this is a very interesting picture which he also gave me. In the background you have this Richard Schulze-Kossens in civilian clothing with a Nazi emblem, the party badge, which probably was the golden Nazi badge. I'm not sure. I don't see the bit, but probably was a golden Nazi badge.

And when they came there to sign the non-aggression treaty with old Stalin, and the person shaking hands he was the adjutant at that time of Ribbentrop, the Reich's minister of foreign affairs von Ribbentrop, in Moscow during the signing of the non-aggression treaty with Stalin, shaking hands. All of a sudden, the Nazis and the communists became friends. And that's just a very rare, and again, a very valuable, very interesting sort of piece of information. And he played a very important role there, because he was Ribbentrop's adjutant. He always played this sort of very nefarious roles.

And this?

This is again in Hitler's headquarters, Richard Schulze-Kossens, when Hitler know touches him affectionately. And there he was already in this thing he was lieutenant colonel. Let me see, yeah, I guess he was already-- I'm not sure. I can't see the-- see, these are the two things which I showed you earlier in front of the on his lapels, and that was the real lapel rank. And so--

You're referring to these right here?

That's right, these two things. Yeah. And anything was a general's rank and all that, or actually as of colonel then you didn't have the SS, but you had the same things on both lapels. And so at that time, I think it looks like he was a lieutenant colonel already. But I can't see very specifically, because they had these four dots and then beneath the four dots see they had silver lining, and I don't know whether this is just-- but I think he was a lieutenant colonel.

And Hitler affectionately touches him there and all that. So this man was, of course, very enamored with Hitler. I think when he got some decoration or something for some event.

This?

This is in the Reichstag, in the Hitler's Reichstag where he addresses the members of the Reichstag. And because he was already at that, it was during the war. And he was Hitler's adjutant. You can see that Richard Schulze-Kossens is behind him and was very proud of the role he played in immediate Hitler's entourage.

And you can see Hitler already kind of very much aged. Next to him is his chief adjutant, left to him. And he was with him virtually from the very beginning. And so you can see Hitler already doesn't look healthy at all and kind of face is puffed up and all that. And that was pretty much towards the end of the war addressing the Reichstag.

So there you've got these two brothers together. And the right is the one brother who was Hitler's first adjutant until when he went back to combat. Not back to, but wanted to be in combat and then was killed.

And next to him is Richard Schulze-Kossens who then took his place, but that is also in combat. So they are actually in the field, and these are the two brothers while both of them-- while the one is still alive, I should say. Yeah.

And this?

This is a photograph in Hitler's headquarters. And I'm not quite sure why I was given that, because some place-- yeah that is Richard Schulze-Kossens also in this white thing. That's why he gave it to me. Shaking hands with the generals.

Richard is this gentleman here?

That's right. And then Goring there too on the left.

Here?

That's right. And he gave that to me simply because he's in the picture prominently portrayed in the picture when he was an SS major. At that particular point, he was an SS major and Hitler's adjutant. You had these whole things without silver underneath, so that means he's just critical. Very high decoration, he's got a golden cross on the left thing, which was not cross, the golden very high decoration, and the Iron Cross on the left.

But you can see that Goring was a pretty small chap, fat and small. He was not-- because I tried his ring, Karl Wolff was able to obtain Goring's ring. And I just put it on the finger and it just fitted me perfectly.

Well, that's an interesting picture with Karl Wolff when he was Hitler's adjutant. That is to say, no adjutant, but liaison officer, which is more than adjutant. And next to it is Bormann, the infamous Bormann, the small chap there. And the other person, I don't know exactly who is, I don't know. But Wolff gave that to me because he's in that prominently and still then looking very young, which he was because we're talking-- I don't know, we talking--

This is Wolff here?

Wolff here, yes, yes. And Martin Bormann next to him, Martin Bormann on his right.

This?

Well, that's a kind of interesting sort of thing. Again, just like so other people, and I didn't ask for it, gave me that was his favorite portrait, Wolff's favorite portrait. And he wrote a dedication again to my dear friend and all this and that. And with all some of the highest decorations he had, not all, but some of them. And prominently, up on his right pocket on my right side pocket is the golden party badge.

And that to me is very important, because in Schindler's List, that's right, in Schindler's List, Schindler supposedly was portrayed as having the golden body badge, which is totally and utterly ridiculous. Because he never could have been-- only the highest people and a very select group of people had the golden party badge. I happen to have one which I was able to buy some place for my collection.

So then beneath that then he was a full general in the SS. And beneath it he says, "To my dear friend Professor John Steiner," with admiration or something, I can't-- no, no, no. "To my dear friend Professor John Steiner, cordially, Karl Wolff."

Now again, these sort of things these people gave me because they wanted, not because I've asked. Of course, I didn't say no thank you because now we have use for that. A lot of things can be documented with it. So that was his-- why did he give this to me? Well, he gave that to me because that was his favorite photograph of himself.

Now, this is Karl Wolff with his most faithful girlfriend, who was with him until the end. But she was one of several, but she was the most faithful and stuck by him even though he had affairs with others. Now, when I came to a visit on

one particular occasion, she was with him in his bedroom. And actually, they were in one bedroom and I was sleeping in the other one, which actually was in his bed and his real bedroom, beautiful bed, very antique bed, beautiful thing. I slept there very well.

So one day, he comes when I was there and said John, I mean, because you are such a good friend of mine and we are going to get married with her very shortly, which they never did, I want to offer you that any time you want to have a relationship with her, and I won't go any further to call it the baby by its name, I'll move out into the other bedroom and you two can have a relationship. And so he was offered and I said it's very kind of you. I said, Karl, that's very kind of but, I don't think I will avail myself of that.

And I discussed it with her after the war because she didn't have a say in it. And said, well that's the Germanic custom to offer the bride to a very close friend. And I just had problems in just responding to that because it was totally unexpected, unanticipated. And what do you do with such an offer?

Well, you can accept it or refuse it gracefully, and I hope I refused it as gracefully as I could. And after he had asked here, why didn't you say anything? Did you want to do that? Didn't you have a say in it? Talking about authoritarian personality.

She said, well, I mean he knew that I liked you and that I would not object to it. That it wouldn't be something very bad. I would have done it, it's all right. And I didn't have any serious objections.

If he wanted me to do it, I would have done it. And I just was speechless, I was absolutely speechless. So that was Karl Wolff.

Well, that's actually the last photograph of Karl Wolff. And I was given that I think already during his lifetime. He didn't live much long after it. And that was a very typical sort of portrait, the way he actually looked. It's very realistic.

And you can see he's got this very friendly features, and he could be very different, to be sure. But in most times, that's how I saw him and that's how we behaved pretty much towards me. This type of expression behaved towards me. And so he died in 1984, I trust. I have the exact date.

Now, this is a very important photograph. On the right hand side, and I don't have very many photographs of Steiner after World War II, but this is one of them. You can see he was fairly corpulent individual, heavy set.

And when he brought me and introduced me, took me, and that was a tremendous strategy which worked out that he was my first interviewee. And then he handed me, because he liked me, because we got along and he could see that I was sincere in my whatever he thought I was in, you can see that third glass is where I stood up and the other ones have there.

He introduced me to Karl Wolff. And at that time, he was still living in his mansion at his so-called-- so Starnberg, a city in Bavaria. And that's right on the-- right in the middle is his wife. And she's his second wife. And that was a story by itself, because Himmler opposed his divorce because he wanted to marry her.

And she was very much 150% National Socialist, which was a good thing, except she was known she was sleeping around. And but he was enamored with her, and so was Felix Steiner. And he told me all about the fact that he was going to pick her up on a railway station and there instead of she coming by herself with flowers in his hand wanting to pick her up. And there was Wolff with her, and he had to withdraw because Wolff won her over.

And Steiner never married, and she married him in his second marriage. In spite of he went straight to Himmler-- straight to Hitler over the head of Himmler, and that was the beginning of the breaking the relationship broke at that particular time between Wolff and Himmler, who's right hand he was. Because of that marriage, because he went over his head straight to Hitler, and he okayed that marriage because all these marriages had to be approved in the SS. They had to be approved regardless of rank.

Now, there again you've got Steiner and Wolff. They both were pretty tall people. And Wolff, of course, Stalin and Steiner, and so because Wolff didn't want to be just photographed in a shirt I gave him my coat to wear. And which was, of course, too small because then I was much slimmer than I am now.

And so I took them and because I wanted them two together. So I did things which, if I think back, I was able to do things which I can't believe myself anymore. But I pulled it off. I pulled it off.

So that's close to a railway station with Wolff. When Wolff picked me up from the railway station, which he always did. And then we went to his place where I stayed and then continued the interviews, which are dozens, dozens of hours. Same thing in his flat in Darmstadt.

Now, this is a very interesting photo, and I purposefully did it precisely where he had this portrait in his gala uniform as SS general, a painting which was done for him in Italy when he was the commanding highest police and SS general in Italy. And that was his favorite portrait, and I wanted to be sure that this is going to be in that thing. So you can see he just takes me under the arm and all that, which reflects the kind of trust he had in me. Then I will say you can see I was also a little bit slimmer then.

Yes?

Now, this is the cemetery where Wolff buried. And so I wanted to see it, and his ex-girlfriend, that is to say his quasi-widow, took that. And you see there all the dates there specific when he was born in 1900 and died in 19-- I can't read it, 1980. I think it was, as I said before, '84, but we have the exact date.

There you can read it better. It is '84, isn't it? Yes. Can you read it? I think it's '84.

Now that is his quasi-widow. She took me first and I took her at his grave. Blonde, very Aryan, unbelievably antisemitic for our time, in spite of-- and I had lots of discussions with her over that. And the Jews, the Jews, and all this sort of stuff.

Well, then it should be, I think it's 1984. Can't you read it?

I can't.

Yeah, well it's 1984 I think. Yeah. That is at the place where he-- when I'm a guest at their place, which was in Bavaria, they moved from Darmstadt to Bavaria. And that's where I stay always when I come to a visit, or came to a visit. And so they took my snapshot. Same thing.

Now, there is one important thing, as you observe that it was during the summer I'm there most of the time. Of course, when I come there it's during the summer. And you can see that I have a long sleeved shirt. And I have a long sleeve shirt for a very specific reason, and guess what? Right.

So they wouldn't see your tattoo number?

That's right. Yeah this is a selection scene at Auschwitz-Birkenau. And I think that, to me, this is perhaps the most well, the realistic one I can because you can see this mother with this child. And I have problems in looking at that, just tears you up.

And this you don't see as frequently, but this is one of the best I've ever seen. It's just terrible. It just tears you up. I mean, it really conveys the situation and the atmosphere which prevailed during these times. It's just very realistic.

I think that's fairly interesting because that's the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau. I think it is Birkenau, or Auschwitz in any case, by the Soviet troops. And you can see the expression on the inmates and also the Soviet officers. It's a remarkable picture, I think, which shows the liberation and the response to liberation.

The interesting thing of this picture is that that was taken when-- was given to me by Wolff, where he is next to Martin Bormann and Hitler in the center. And then he had all the people sign it who are present there. And that I think is Goring, man called Julius Schaub, is the fellow who was the most permanent and highest Himmler's adjutant, permanent ever since the beginning, more or less.

Then beneath that is Bormann, Martin Bormann's signature. The first one above is Adolf Hitler's signature, then comes Wolff's signature. Then this one I can't quite, and then Bauer, Hans Bauer was Hitler's pilot. And we interviewed him when I was in Germany with him.

Hitler is this one?

That's right.

OK.

And the other one I would have to take some time to decipher, because I don't know. It's one of the generals.

Can you tell us what that little caption says? Is that legible?

No, it isn't.

OK.

They don't give their ranks. It's just the names. So and he was very proud of that, because obviously he must have had the original and he gave me a copy.

So what I used to do, when I had more motivation and energy, whenever we had a lecture series I had some sort of an exhibit. And I loved to do that because you have to put some artistry into it and all that. And it's not very, it's kind of blurred a little bit and so that the students can relate to some of the more important "symbol-ry."

And as you can see, some of the things which you see the copies of use including books, including the Jewish star of my aunt, and the military thing of World War II and money. All sorts of stuff so that people could see things in a broader context. And I found it to be always very functional. Particularly the way we've done it, the way I put it together with the help one of the librarian who was a very supportive person of our activities, and so that people get a little bit of a feel in terms of some of, as I said, "symbol-ry" of what took place during World War II in connection with the Holocaust and World War II. And this is one of my artistic, quote unquote.

On that upper left is the mask sculpture John did.

It's amazing. It's beautiful.

Yes. And you can talk about other sculptures that you have made, Holocaust related sculptures.

Well, I made Holocaust related and other types of sculptures, which are not Holocaust related. And that gives me some sort of and outlet of something which cannot be described or cannot be reflected in writing. And so I do that and it gives me a great deal of satisfaction.

And so what I have in this picture on the left hand side, above the whatever sculpture, whatever you want to call it, is a photograph which this General Bittrich, Wilhelm Bittrich gave me, running out of his house. When we already have left with one of my associates, who was a very interesting and beautiful woman, and I took her there for a purpose because he related to beautiful and interesting women, and that was the right thing to do at that time.

So he ran after me and said, Professor Steiner, I forgot give to you. It was in the middle of winter, as a matter of fact. And he gave me this sort of picture, which hung in his room with the highest ranking SS general on the left hand side

and Bittrich on the right hand side. He was an actual colonel general, but he was already a general immediately after World War I.

So he was the senior general in the SS, Hausser, and they called him Papa Hausser. And then Bittrich. And below that is the book on Dachau and it's called Christ in Dachau. And on the right hand side, you've got the full circle, which is one of the only one written by remark, which had its premiere a theater piece of remark, which was translated and it's called Full Circle.

And I was able to get a poster because I thought it was which talks about the full circle where the swastika is actually replaced by the sickle and hammer. So when Berlin, which was Nazi, was taken over by the communists. And the whole thing goes on this person is caught in this totalitarian circle. Well, there are various flags and other things but what I think is important that people just get a little bit of a feel of media, different types of thing which then somehow portrays some sort of symbolism. OK.

Well, that's a decoration I received from the Czechoslovak Republic in whatever for being in the concentration camps and behaving bravely and what have you. Can see the Czech line there and all that. And I was quite proud when I was given that by a high some sort of an official for bravery and whatever things, the cross for bravery and heroism or whatever. It's all kind of, don't take it seriously, but I think kind of I'm glad that I got it. And I didn't get much recognition for anything in my life, so might as well get something.

What year did you get this?

I got that in 1947.

This is a favorite photograph of my son, Ingmar Michael Augustus Steiner when he was a baby, and I really loved that. It's just I really think that really portrays his type of personality. He was at that particular time just very cute and just a terrific cute baby. So that's one of my favorite.

What year was that taken?

That was-- he was about god, I don't know, two years old.

So that would have been what year?

That would be '80, '81. And that was in Bonn taken at some sort of a church festivity. And then he was about six years old, roughly six, seven years old, I guess.

And that was in 1989, and then he was 10 years old. And I like that also. It's kind of nice.

And this?

And that is when he was also around that time, at around 11. 10, 11. That's it. And he's showing his tooth and he retained his first teeth for a very long time. And then he's just displaying this one tooth which is just on the verge of coming out. And that's it.