

I know you did.

And I think the profound resentment of the French has much to do with their attitude toward the Germans. The French were collaborationists.

Yeah.

And they were always-- beginning and always, that came through whenever there was a problem.

Right.

I describe, here, a situation where we got a problem, where we--

I remember--

--went to get a bath.

Right, right, right, right.

And I didn't add this, when you went back, and somebody asked me, how do you feel about, they wrecked her place? And the answer was, she was fucking Krauts six months ago. That is not a sex component. But the collaboration component is what counts.

Right. So by the time they came in to Germany, they felt--

They felt this. I meant the people, the peasants, who were-- the pipeline, where I was, our pumping station was, I think it says in the book, seven miles to the nearest blacktop road. And these are the most humble people.

The Germans?

No.

The French?

The French.

The French, yeah.

These are peasants. These are poor.

Right.

Seven miles from a road-- they'd never been to any city except Verdun. And that only had 19,000 people.

Right.

And they loved the Germans. The Germans, as part of creating the 1,000 year Reich, had taught them how to be efficient farmers instead of inefficient farmers. And they'd built silos for them. And they would show me what the Boche built and all this kind of business. And they taught them how to make their farms successful. That was their pride. That was their life.

We spilled gasoline all over the goddamn farms, and we gave them money they didn't know what to do with.

Yeah.

And then we blew up their trees, so we did what we had to do to win the war. I mean most Americans, I don't think, understand that the American high command issued a lot of business about Paris welcoming us--

Yeah, right.

--and sent some phony general for Paris. But the fact is that, for us, it was just a way to get to Germany. And Germany was part of making Paris the second city of the Third Reich.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

And this is an entire-- so by the time you got to Germany-- and let me give you another example. I went to Rouen, the largest city in Normandy, which we bombed. And it's in my book, the numbers. And I checked it, because I found it almost unbelievable. We killed more people, from the air, in Rouen, the week before D-day than we lost American soldiers on the beach on D-day.

Really? Wow. Yeah.

The day after there, we bombed Rouen, because it was the rail, what would now be called, hub--

Hub, yeah.

--center of all the railroads in Normandy.

Right.

It was a portal. It was on the Seine. And nobody knew exactly what beach we were going to land at.

Yeah.

We had to bomb it, every night, again. Because you can rebuild a railroad pretty quickly.

Right.

We couldn't do precision bombing, so we killed thousands of people.

Yeah.

And they lost nine, I think, when the Germans came in, because they capitulated. So they hated us.

Yeah.

I went with some guy down there with a couple of soldiers. And somebody, some Frenchman-- and I had a little pidgin French-- was going to show us what damage the Americans did. Among other things, we destroyed the cathedral where Joan of Arc was tried-- the only Cathedral destroyed. Now, it may be by the-- I think it was by the RAF, but it's all the same.

Yeah. Yeah.

It was rebuilt. And you can't find any evidence of how it was rebuilt. But I have pictures of it, in there, before it was rebuilt. So he takes us around. He shows us all this. There were streets full of rubble. This is six months later.

And their reaction is, fucking frogs are too lazy to clean their own streets. The Germans? I was in Frankfurt, in July of

'45. That's two months after peace.

Yeah.

And we may be running it. I'm not sure about how it was managed, because it wasn't my business to know. But the Germans were cleaning the streets. Now, when I was in Frankfurt, the building my headquarters was in, my office was in, was probably the only building standing of more than three stories--

Right.

--in all of downtown Frankfurt. You could look out. It was leveled. So you couldn't-- there were only certain streets you could go down. I don't remember all the rules. But they had streetcars on one. And that's how we went to work.

But every night at, 4 or 5 o'clock, there'd be people out there cleaning these streets. And they had these little, tiny rail cars you see in pictures about how terrible the conditions were in the coal mines in England, where they have little kids pulling them in coal mines. They had these little, tiny rail cars down the streets. And guys are out there putting rubble in these little rail cars. And then they'd push them down. And I don't know where the hell they went. It wasn't my business to know.

The French didn't do this. Now, there may be several answers. One answer is the French were not vanquished. We could not give them orders. So nobody else gave more orders. And the place was a shithouse.

Yeah.

The American soldier resented this. The American soldiers thought they-- A, they collaborated. That may not be the word you're going to use.

Well, I mean, they clearly did.

They capitulated regardless of whether they collaborated.

Right.

And they became part of the Third Reich.

Yeah.

This was occupied France.

Right.

Vichy is only Southern France.

Right. Right. Right. Right. Right. OK. Got you there. OK.

What is our attitude toward the Germans? I think it was very much tempered--

By that experience?

--by the experience. And I suspect that maybe we had ordered them, and maybe we didn't have soldiers out there directing. But whoever was the military mayor of Frankfurt, we gave orders, at every afternoon, at 5 o'clock, there shall be 500 guys out there picking up stones.

Wow.

Yeah.

Those are the little marks that haven't been there.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Amazing. All right, well, I don't want to abuse my hospitality, here. And let's just have a nice lunch. But thank you, that's all.

Tell me the burden of this book.

Yeah, I will.

The one you left me to read, I'll have to read to right.

Right. Right.

Like, I say, I've got a Nazi--