

Memories

By Matt Harris

Matt Harris

Editor-in-Chief

It is said that once an individual becomes a witness to an event, hears a person talking, or reads information from a text, the knowledge that is gained is stored in the memory forever. It is also said that such data can be stored in the deepest regions of the human brain and may be retrieved by the "triggering" of sensory nerves.

However, in my case, these "triggerings" are not necessary. The events which I witnessed at the conclusion of World War II will never leave me. The events that I am referring to are the enslavement and the extermination of the millions of Jews, Gypsies,

and other citizens of the nations throughout Europe. This era in history, remembered as the darkest day in modern civilization, is more widely known as the Holocaust.

During this period of time, I was a member of the Russian army. My battalion had stormed the northern shores of Poland and Germany, along with the other military forces, among them allied troops from England and the United States. The American troops proceeded to move south towards Berlin with their objective being that of "placing the final nail into the coffin" of the Nazis and Adolf Hitler.

As for the English and the other allied troops, they marched through the German countryside and set in motion the process of the liberation of the concentration camps. Our troops had 2 objectives: the first was to aid the Americans in destroying the Nazi regime and topple the Fascist government by invading Berlin; the second objective was to liberate the survivors of both the concentration camps and the death camps throughout Europe. My battalion had the task of storming into Poland and liberating the death camps - at least those that were left to be liberated.

At some point during

the laborious journey through the treacherous Polish countryside, our troops decided to split up, with each one heading towards a different camp. Unfortunately, our battalion had the dubious honor of being chosen to unshackle the chains of death for the prisoners of THE camp - Auschwitz.

It was a dismal afternoon that day in February as we fearfully traveled towards Auschwitz. We had no idea as to the horror we would be confronted with upon our arrival at Auschwitz. Oh sure, there was talk pertaining to what was actually taking place in these camps. But who was really going to believe

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 20)