

Podcast Notes: Radio Lab

The podcast was called “Nazi Summer Camp” which was about reporter Karen Duffin tells her dad’s story of living on his Idaho farm as a kid with Nazi prisoners working on their land. The podcast asked the question of how prisoners should be treated when they are in your mercy.

- There were 200 base camps in the US with about 1,000 prisoners.
- Nazi prisoners worked throughout the United States, except in Montana.
- Nazi “supermen” were sent to in Aliceville, Alabama as prisoners. They were deemed as Hitler’s finest troops. When they got off the train the first time, they looked beaten and miserable.
- One Nazi soldier, Hanz, said how he was captured in North Africa and eventually sent to America as a prisoner. On the train to Alabama, they were crammed into a boxcar without room to move.
- The people in Aliceville hated them because the Nazi’s were known to kill your country’s men.
- Americans could technically do anything that they wanted because they were at US mercy.
- Historians said that the Geneva Conventions said that these prisoners must be supplied a certain amount of food and money given to them for their work. Prisoners had to be treated like any other soldier.
- Geneva Convention set the standard straight on what needed to be handled towards the prisoners.
- Hanz recalled how coming to the US as a prisoner was heaven—they were washed with fresh towels and having good food. Many had peanut butter for the first time. They were given ham and corn to the point that the prisoners were sick of it.
- The POW created orchestras and instruments. They built a community with university. They had a newspaper called *The Fenced Guests*. They established themselves while in these concentration camps.
- During the middle of WW2 war while the US had POW’s, Hitler sent money for their art exhibitions.
- Americans start to become upset when they find out how the POW’s were being well treated. Reporter Walter Winchell gets the nation all upset about how these Nazi’s were living the life of leisure.
- Believed that the US was building a hotel for the Nazi POW’s to radicalize against the Americans again.
- Same arguments are still argued today—treating enemies well so that our troops that are captured are also treated well. Vice President Joe Biden regurgitated this same argument while in office.

- Americans were upset after seeing what happened in the German concentration camps compared to how the US were treating with Nazi POW's. US saw the full horrors of the holocaust. No reason to treat these prisoners well.
- US decided to stick with the Geneva Convention—not go down to German's level of cruelty.
- US treated the Germans better than the Japanese citizens in the internment camps because they were white—connection between the Americans in the South and the German POW's. German laws against the Jews were similar to Mississippi's Black Codes.
- Governing international law made the US treat Japanese POW's better than Japanese citizens. Outside law cannot dictate how you treat your own citizens.
- This argument was made when it came to how to treat the prisoners from Al-Qaeda.

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- I love how RadioLab plays with sound in their podcast. It is like a mix-podcast with different ambient sounds.
- I also enjoy how they do cuts in between the different speakers. They layer the different voices so that there isn't a long pause/space between the different voices. There is a very nice flow that happens amongst the different ambient sounds and voices.
- I especially liked how in this podcast, they used the actual recordings from when the US government announced their treatment towards the Al-Qaeda terrorist group. It sounded like the listener was present at the conference.