

Congressman Bachus published the following tribute in the Congressional Record on May 22, 2008 recognizing the U.S. soldiers held as prisoners of war at the Berga Labor Camp in Nazi Germany during World War II. □ □ Wallace Carden of Vestavia Hills is one of the 13 surviving soldiers.

On Memorial Day 2008, let us take time to reflect on the courage and indomitable will of a special group of World War II veterans: the survivors of the Berga POW camp.

Wallace Carden of Vestavia Hills in Alabama's Sixth District was one of the soldiers imprisoned in a cruel camp that simultaneously showed the worst of man's inhumanity – and the transcendent ability of the human spirit to endure and ultimately triumph.

Berga was a German concentration camp. 350 American soldiers were sent there after being captured during the Battle of the Bulge. Some were exiled there because they were Jewish.

Wallace Carden, then just 19 years old, was sent simply because Nazi officers thought he looked Jewish.

The soldiers were ill fed, heavily worked, badly beaten, and even killed. In clear contempt of the Geneva Convention, few distinctions were made between them and civilian prisoners.

By day, they were forced to dig underground tunnels for weapons factories; by night, they shivered in squalid conditions, emaciated from hunger.

It is believed there were few other cases where American POWs were so separated from their brethren and subjected to such daily indignities.

But confronted with such inhumanity, these American soldiers persevered. They gave each other support, equally shared what little food they had, held faith in their country and God, and never allowed their spirit to be consumed by the evil and hate surrounding them.

Though physically separated from their brothers on the battlefield, the Berga soldiers served America with their determination and will to survive. In the decades since, Wallace Carden and his fellow soldiers have provided important personal testimonials about Nazi brutality and prejudice, so that succeeding generations never forget the Holocaust and fully appreciate what it took for freedom to triumph during World War II.

Congressional Resolution H. Res. 883 rightly recognizes the service and sacrifice of the U.S. soldiers imprisoned at Berga, and I am a proud cosponsor. Their story is an integral part of the history of World War II, and their conduct under the most

extreme and trying conditions an enormous credit to themselves and their country.

For my part, I want to thank Wallace Carden for his service to his community and country. Alabama is proud of him, and it is appropriate that on this Memorial Day due recognition is being bestowed on Mr. Carden as well as an entire group of American soldiers whose soaring spirit should continue to inspire all of us.

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