

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:05,130

2

00:00:05,130 --> 00:00:06,098

New York.

3

00:00:06,098 --> 00:00:09,090

(film slating)

4

00:00:09,090 --> 00:00:12,790

Well, do we know how
these 4,000 people--

5

00:00:12,790 --> 00:00:15,270

We'll turn right when
they leave the camp.

6

00:00:15,270 --> 00:00:18,090

And we knew that the turn
left, there's only one way--

7

00:00:18,090 --> 00:00:21,930

500 yards, and that's
where a crematorium was.

8

00:00:21,930 --> 00:00:23,520

They were loaded on the trucks.

9

00:00:23,520 --> 00:00:26,246

They sang the Czech
National Anthem, some,

10

00:00:26,246 --> 00:00:29,110

some the Jewish National Anthem.

11

00:00:29,110 --> 00:00:29,730

"Hatikvah."

12

00:00:29,730 --> 00:00:30,420

"Hatikvah."

13

00:00:30,420 --> 00:00:32,970
Depends on the taste of people.

14

00:00:32,970 --> 00:00:35,760
And the trucks that
moved and turned

15

00:00:35,760 --> 00:00:41,190
left, they were
gassed that night.

16

00:00:41,190 --> 00:00:44,520
And the next day, I heard from
a member of the Sonderkommandos

17

00:00:44,520 --> 00:00:47,610
that there was no resistance,
except of a few girls who

18

00:00:47,610 --> 00:00:49,830
refused to go into
the gas chambers

19

00:00:49,830 --> 00:00:53,910
and were beaten with clubs.

20

00:00:53,910 --> 00:00:58,530
So that was this event.

21

00:00:58,530 --> 00:01:02,760
That's how it ended with the
first Czech family transport.

22

00:01:02,760 --> 00:01:04,950
And it was quite
clear to me then

23

00:01:04,950 --> 00:01:10,660
that the resistance in the camp
is not geared for an uprising,

24

00:01:10,660 --> 00:01:12,960

but for survival.

25

00:01:12,960 --> 00:01:15,910

For the survival of the
members of the resistance.

26

00:01:15,910 --> 00:01:16,530

Yes.

27

00:01:16,530 --> 00:01:18,960

For the survivors of the
members of the resistance.

28

00:01:18,960 --> 00:01:24,600

And that I then
decided to act what

29

00:01:24,600 --> 00:01:26,550

was called by the
members of resistance

30

00:01:26,550 --> 00:01:31,320

as anarchic and individualistic
activity, like an escape

31

00:01:31,320 --> 00:01:34,500

and leaving the
community for which I'm

32

00:01:34,500 --> 00:01:35,970

responsible by that time.

33

00:01:35,970 --> 00:01:40,290

Because you escaped Auschwitz
one month later, exactly.

34

00:01:40,290 --> 00:01:41,460

Exactly one month later.

35

00:01:41,460 --> 00:01:42,810

It was quite clear to me--

36

00:01:42,810 --> 00:01:45,120
I had various preparations
for escape made.

37
00:01:45,120 --> 00:01:50,700
But, of course, the
decision to escape,

38
00:01:50,700 --> 00:01:52,980
in spite of the policy
of the resistance

39
00:01:52,980 --> 00:01:57,075
movement at that time, was--

40
00:01:57,075 --> 00:01:59,400
New York. (film slating)

41
00:01:59,400 --> 00:02:03,330
All right, Dr. Vrba, we come
to the very difficult point.

42
00:02:03,330 --> 00:02:05,820
And I want try to
figure this out,

43
00:02:05,820 --> 00:02:07,920
and I need your help for this.

44
00:02:07,920 --> 00:02:12,340
Precisely after two years, more
than two years even, of this--

45
00:02:12,340 --> 00:02:13,020
hang on--

46
00:02:13,020 --> 00:02:16,410
of Auschwitz you succeed
to escape, which,

47
00:02:16,410 --> 00:02:18,840
as a matter of fact,
never occurred,

48
00:02:18,840 --> 00:02:21,900
in order to inform the
outside world of what is going

49
00:02:21,900 --> 00:02:23,050
on in Auschwitz .

50
00:02:23,050 --> 00:02:25,740

51
00:02:25,740 --> 00:02:29,860
I would like to know, what
were the first people you met--

52
00:02:29,860 --> 00:02:33,540
the first people you gave
a report about Auschwitz --

53
00:02:33,540 --> 00:02:36,130
how did they welcome you?

54
00:02:36,130 --> 00:02:38,230
Did they believe what you said?

55
00:02:38,230 --> 00:02:44,700
How did you succeed to
convey what you had to say?

56
00:02:44,700 --> 00:02:49,620
My objective to
convey the material

57
00:02:49,620 --> 00:02:53,070
appeared to me simple, because
the statistics of Auschwitz,

58
00:02:53,070 --> 00:02:55,710
since I entered Auschwitz
until the day I left it--

59
00:02:55,710 --> 00:03:01,240

on 7 April, 1944,
from 30 June, 1942--

60
00:03:01,240 --> 00:03:06,660
what was the smallest
detail in my head memorized.

61
00:03:06,660 --> 00:03:09,750
It seems to be difficult
today to believe

62
00:03:09,750 --> 00:03:12,930
that I could memorize all
this, but it was by no means

63
00:03:12,930 --> 00:03:16,770
so difficult. We know by now
that some people, while they

64
00:03:16,770 --> 00:03:19,050
were in prison,
memorized whole books

65
00:03:19,050 --> 00:03:21,420
and could reproduce
them after that.

66
00:03:21,420 --> 00:03:26,910
And it was nothing special
to memorize statistics, which

67
00:03:26,910 --> 00:03:29,940
was not figures for me,
but behind each transport

68
00:03:29,940 --> 00:03:33,780
there was a picture in my mind,
a particular circumstance.

69
00:03:33,780 --> 00:03:38,040
And I can say that I saw
practically every transport,

70

00:03:38,040 --> 00:03:41,400
or at least some people from it.

71
00:03:41,400 --> 00:03:48,240
Secondly, I was perfectly
aware that a million

72
00:03:48,240 --> 00:03:52,260
of Hungarian Jews will
be murdered in Auschwitz

73
00:03:52,260 --> 00:03:54,240
within the next weeks.

74
00:03:54,240 --> 00:03:56,460
The preparations
for that operation

75
00:03:56,460 --> 00:03:59,940
were perfectly
ready in Auschwitz.

76
00:03:59,940 --> 00:04:02,730
And although it didn't
make sense in Auschwitz

77
00:04:02,730 --> 00:04:08,160
at the start, it did make
sense from 19 March onward,

78
00:04:08,160 --> 00:04:13,740
because on 19 March, the
Germans Nazis occupied Hungary.

79
00:04:13,740 --> 00:04:16,050
So the preparations
for the extermin--

80
00:04:16,050 --> 00:04:19,510
murder of Hungarian
Jews started in January.

81
00:04:19,510 --> 00:04:23,550

Occupation of Hungary
took place in March

82

00:04:23,550 --> 00:04:28,230
and confirmed the rumors, which
were spread in the Auschwitz

83

00:04:28,230 --> 00:04:31,830
concentration camp and confirmed
by the resistance movement

84

00:04:31,830 --> 00:04:34,710
that it is the Hungarian
Jews who are supposed to be--

85

00:04:34,710 --> 00:04:35,760
The next ones.

86

00:04:35,760 --> 00:04:36,510
--the next ones.

87

00:04:36,510 --> 00:04:39,340

88

00:04:39,340 --> 00:04:42,570
This is information
which was both in my head

89

00:04:42,570 --> 00:04:46,170
and in the head of
Fred Wetzler my--

90

00:04:46,170 --> 00:04:47,100
Co-escapee.

91

00:04:47,100 --> 00:04:52,680
--co-escapee, or co-conspirator,
if I may put it that way.

92

00:04:52,680 --> 00:04:59,290
And just as well, we reached
Slovakia on April 21.

93

00:04:59,290 --> 00:05:03,270

On a Friday, we left
Auschwitz-- our official escape

94

00:05:03,270 --> 00:05:05,880

was on April 7, on Friday.

95

00:05:05,880 --> 00:05:08,370

We stayed in closest
vicinity of Auschwitz

96

00:05:08,370 --> 00:05:17,640

until Monday, which was
April 10, until the alarm--

97

00:05:17,640 --> 00:05:19,020

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

98

00:05:19,020 --> 00:05:25,570

I reached Slovakia on 21 April,
and I reached the town ĀĖadca,

99

00:05:25,570 --> 00:05:33,140

together with Wetzler,
on Monday, April 24.

100

00:05:33,140 --> 00:05:37,130

In ĀĖadca, I got the information
that a Jewish doctor,

101

00:05:37,130 --> 00:05:41,120

called Dr. Pollack, is
employed as a military doctor.

102

00:05:41,120 --> 00:05:44,180

I was dressed in
Slovak peasant clothes.

103

00:05:44,180 --> 00:05:50,120

My appearance and
my ability of--

104

00:05:50,120 --> 00:05:52,040
the way I am using
the Slovak language

105
00:05:52,040 --> 00:05:56,510
made it perfectly possible for
me to pose as a Slovak peasant.

106
00:05:56,510 --> 00:06:01,310
And I entered the military
command in the town ĀĒadca,

107
00:06:01,310 --> 00:06:02,840
asking for medical help.

108
00:06:02,840 --> 00:06:07,640
I came to the office of Dr.
Pollack, waited for my turn,

109
00:06:07,640 --> 00:06:08,870
and got into his office.

110
00:06:08,870 --> 00:06:10,770
I knew him personally.

111
00:06:10,770 --> 00:06:14,600
He did not recognize
me in my garb, which

112
00:06:14,600 --> 00:06:17,120
was not quite usual for me.

113
00:06:17,120 --> 00:06:20,570
Also, he didn't see
me for a long time.

114
00:06:20,570 --> 00:06:22,160
Asked me what I want.

115
00:06:22,160 --> 00:06:25,970
I told him that I cannot tell
it in front of the nurse who was

116

00:06:25,970 --> 00:06:27,200
present--

117

00:06:27,200 --> 00:06:29,960
it is a discreet matter.

118

00:06:29,960 --> 00:06:34,590
So he sent out the nurse, and
I told him what is my identity,

119

00:06:34,590 --> 00:06:37,640
that I know him, and that I'm
coming from Auschwitz, that I

120

00:06:37,640 --> 00:06:39,890
was deported in 1942.

121

00:06:39,890 --> 00:06:40,760
Two years ago.

122

00:06:40,760 --> 00:06:42,620
Two years ago.

123

00:06:42,620 --> 00:06:45,860
So he became a bit pale,
but he kept the situation.

124

00:06:45,860 --> 00:06:50,180
And he said, pro forma,
I have to do something.

125

00:06:50,180 --> 00:06:52,032
And he was bandaging
my leg so it

126

00:06:52,032 --> 00:06:53,990
should appear that he is
doing something for me

127

00:06:53,990 --> 00:06:57,290
while the nurse is out.

128

00:06:57,290 --> 00:07:02,430

And asked me what happened
to others who are deported.

129

00:07:02,430 --> 00:07:04,370

So I told him, to the
best of my knowledge,

130

00:07:04,370 --> 00:07:08,900

from the 60,000 Slovak Jews
who were deported in 1942,

131

00:07:08,900 --> 00:07:13,790

there are living now 67
men and about 400 women.

132

00:07:13,790 --> 00:07:15,650

So he asked me,
where is the rest?

133

00:07:15,650 --> 00:07:18,680

I said, the rest is dead.

134

00:07:18,680 --> 00:07:20,730

So he asked me, what
can I do for you?

135

00:07:20,730 --> 00:07:24,170

And I said to him that
I must immediately

136

00:07:24,170 --> 00:07:27,680

get into contact with
the representatives

137

00:07:27,680 --> 00:07:33,850

of the Jewish organization
which has channels

138

00:07:33,850 --> 00:07:37,630

to the rest of the
Jewish population.

139

00:07:37,630 --> 00:07:38,370

OK.

140

00:07:38,370 --> 00:07:39,630

Very good.

141

00:07:39,630 --> 00:07:42,420

(film technical words)

142

00:07:42,420 --> 00:08:12,000