

I believe in our previous conversation we were talking about acts of resistance in the concentration camp. And you told of the story of three young boys who tried to escape and were, in fact, caught very quickly. And you mentioned, I believe, that the Jewish police were asked to hang these three young men in front of the concentration camp population. Would you say that that pretty much served to deter any future acts of resistance in the camp?

Yes. That definitely was a very, very strong deterrent. Because it was not only a question of witnessing the punishment but also the mass punishment that was administered to people who are totally uninvolved. And as I stated before, considering that they did it in order to better the society, to gain something for the society, not so much for themselves, to see that everybody gets punished because you try to do something was a tremendous deterrent.

I have rarely seen an incident where the individual would be punished for what he has done. If the punishment was administered, it was always a mass punishment. The individual, obviously, was the first example and the most severe punishment. But along with it, they would take people who would be the most meaningful to expose to punishment where the rest of the community would respond very strongly. So as a result, that really paralyzed the society. Because who wants to escape knowing that thousands of people will be whip lashed?

And did that incident also serve to stimulate more cohesiveness among the individuals living in the concentration camp?

Yes. I think in a sense--

A sense of solidarity possible?

Yes. Yes. I think that there is a certain sense of solidarity when you know that you are treated-- that one for all and all for one. People were, surprisingly enough under the circumstances, at least in my experience, people were much more responsive to the community that I would expect. True, they were fighting for a piece of bread. And true, they were fighting for-- but if you consider what they were fighting for, I think that we have a lot to be proud of, for what Jews are. We were much more civilized than I would have thought. As much as we look at it as brutality, but we have to take up the consideration all the aspects leading into it.

Have there been any antagonism at all in the concentration camp between Jews from various countries?

Not from the different countries, but there are very big differences between the cities and villages and different segments. And definitely, there was a rift between the people. There were groups within the group, where the people who came from the same town, they considered themselves as one cohesive family, and they would fend for each other. Whatever the common denominator was, the people had a tendency of forming groups that would ally along the line of whatever the interest was.

Where there discussions held among the individuals living in the concentration camp?

In camp was a little more difficult, because our workday was 12 hours. The curfew was very early. And they did not encourage too much of a participation in any kind of group activity. But yet, there was definitely-- there were evenings devoted to poetry or to reading. Not so much reading. There was no reading, but discussing things. But very limited, because you wouldn't want-- there was no place to congregate. The space in the barracks were so small that there was no place to congregate. And also the fear of having a group seen by the Germans. This was not something that they would encourage or they would permit.

Did you yourself or your mother become ill at all while living in the concentration camp?

Yes. We were ill twice actually. I was ill severely twice. Once was typhoid, which we all went through. And when you're talking about the reaction of the world when the typhoid broke out, obviously the fever was the worse. And they turned to Red Cross, asking for aspirants for the camp. And they were turned down because they said that since we were not political prisoners, we did not apply for the Geneva Convention, and as a result, we did not deserve to get the aspirants. You're talking about medication. I'm not even talking about anything else but aspirants.

So there was absolutely no help from any place. As a matter of fact, there were several times an inspection, a Red Cross, an international inspection that came to the camps to see the conditions, and they claimed the conditions were fine. Usually prior to this kind of inspection, there would be weeks and weeks of painting and cleaning and washing to the point where they even made us paint the stones on the road white so it would look bright and clean.

And you have to be totally blind to know that if there are 200 women in one room, that isn't exactly a very human condition. And maybe the soup that day was a little better than the average, but that was still a little square of bread and a bowl of soup. And that cannot be considered human food ration. And yet, the reports were positive. They claimed that the conditions were fine. They didn't want to see it.

So you believe that the Red Cross in fact could have seen?

Oh, yes. Oh, surely they--

They were not deluded?

No, they couldn't have been. The whole conditions were so subhuman. How can they possibly not see it?

Did anybody make an attempt to speak to any officials of the Red Cross?

Oh, no.

Was it possible?

You couldn't. No, couldn't. They came, and they came with the Germans through the camp. They came marching through, and they had the flag of Red Cross, and there were different nations represented, but nobody could speak to them. Maybe there was some occasion someplace, but I don't know of it.

How were you able to sustain yourself? I mean, did you consider at the time the silence of the world? Here, the International Red Cross was coming into the camp. Where was the rest of the world? Where was the United States? Where was Great Britain?

We were very much surprised. We didn't know that the rest of the world didn't do anything. That's why we were thinking that this whole thing would end much sooner than it did, because we thought that the rest of the world would react. We never imagined that they wouldn't. And we had no way of obtaining any official news. So we weren't informed of what was going on.

And then you asked me about the illness. Then following that, I somehow managed to scrape out from the typhoid. And I was assigned in to work on picric acid, which is a very toxic substance. It's a yellow powder which they pressed to manufacture underwater mine. And how toxic it was, the best example, that before the war in the factory, they had people working six hour shifts, two hours at a time, wearing gas masks and getting milk and all kinds of protections. We worked non-stop with no food, no protection, no interruption, nothing. Obviously no milk.

So I managed to work-- usually the duration of working in this particular point was rather short. I managed to work maybe three, four months. And my lungs were attacked. And I developed a lung disease, and I was spitting blood. And I was then shipped out to what they called a krankenstube which means in translation a sick room. And that's exactly what it was. The only advantage was that they didn't have to get up to work every morning. But that was the extent of the care you received. There were two doctors with absolutely no supplies whatsoever.

They were Jewish doctors?

Yes. They were Jewish doctors. They were very, very fine men. One of them was Adam Wasserman. And it was very interesting, because the moment the war ended, when I came back to Krakow, I came across this man on the street. And

when he saw me, he said I can't believe you are alive. As far as I could see, your lungs were completely shot. Go immediately for x-rays and see what's happening.

I went, and there was nothing. I don't even have scars. It's just totally unbelievable. But I luckily did not have to return to this work, because that was at the time when they evacuated us to Germany and I worked in a metal factory. Therefore, there were no toxic materials. And that's what helped me heal.

How many years were you in the concentration camp?

Four years.

Four years.

Yeah. And in what year were you evacuated to Germany?

In 1944. So at the end of the war.

Can you describe the last days in the camp?

You mean in Germany already?

No.

Oh, in Poland?

Yes.

At the time, as I told you, I wasn't working, because I was recovering from the sickness. And the doctors decided that they would let me stay a little longer, hoping that, by some miracle, something will happen. And as you can see, it did happen. We could see at the time the Russian front line coming. You could hear the gunshots at night. You could see the fire at night. And we thought, any day, we would be liberated.

And all of a sudden, what came to the vicinity of the camp, everything stopped. Nothing was happening. Nobody was coming. And it took about three weeks and not an inch of progress. Nothing. In the meantime, the Germans gathered enough time to put their ranks together and organize the transport of us to Germany.

And this is, again, a question of collaboration. There was a man who was the Jewish director of the camp. And he worked always with the Germans in trying to select the people who are supposed to be shot because they're too sick to work. And I had always had very big discussions with him and very big arguments with him. Luckily, somehow, he didn't take it against me.

And I said, how can you do something like that? And he kept on telling me, you don't see the fact that if the Germans tell me that today you have to deliver 100 people, I deliver only 100 people. And I see to it that I pick up the ones that are the sickest. And therefore, the rest has a chance to live. If I would say no, they will come in, and even if they would only have a hundred, they will take the healthiest, because the sick would die anyhow. Therefore, the impact would be twice as big.

I couldn't quite understand it, that he would do this kind of work anyhow. His name was Goldberg. And the day came where they were evacuating the camp, and the order came that the sickroom had to be emptied. Everybody was going to be exterminated, because they didn't want to bother taking sick people with them. And they were afraid of carrying diseases to Germany. And besides, those were useless people.

So he came together with the Germans, and he was the first one to walk in. And the Germans started talking, so they didn't enter the room that fast. And I was in my nightgown in bed. He walked in, he grabbed me and another friend of

mine, who was also at the time recovering-- and we were quite all right already by then-- grabbed us and threw us out through the back door and said get out and keep on running. And then the Germans entered, and they took everybody who was there. They killed everybody. So this really proved his point to a degree. Whether it made him feel a little less guilty because he had done something decent, it's a very complicated issue to judge that.

And your mother?

My mother was all right. She did not work. She had typhoid. And luckily, she had typhoid, I think, before me. And then I had typhoid later. So we kind of took care of each other. We were not ill at the same time. And after that, she stayed pretty much in a fair health. And she was lucky she was never working as hard as I was. I somehow seemed to have had a much heavier physical work. And she was not an old woman at the time.

And of course, all this time, you had no information about your--

No. At that point--

--sister or your father.

--we had absolutely no information about them, nothing, until the very end of the war. And this was already in '45, in the spring of '45. All of a sudden-- when they shipped us, they shipped us into Leipzig, Germany to an ammunition factory. It was called HASAG.

How many people actually went with you to Germany?

Oh, there must have been probably about 600, 700.

Out of the total population in the camp, which was approximately what?

The entire camp at that point was transported--

The entire camp was transported.

--except for the people who were sick. I suspect that they had reached the point in their economy where they needed every able body and their hands because everybody was at the frontline. And when you think about it, you have a labor force that you didn't need to house, to feed, to pay. Obviously, that was quite a boost for their war effort. So whoever was capable of performing tasks-- and we were luckily on the stream of factories, labor camps, rather than the regular extermination camps. They tried to maintain us to the very last moment with the intention, I think, of eventually, at the end of the war when we will not be necessary, destroying us, but they just didn't get around to it.

Did you know during this time what was going on in the death camps?

Oh, yes. Yes. I'm not so sure that we were so totally aware of what was going on in Auschwitz. I know that, for example, even our camp had the ovens at the crematoria. We didn't see them. They were a little distance from us. And we could see trucks with people. The reason we knew there were people, every now and then, you would see a hand waving or you would see some motion as the trucks passed by.

And every time you saw the trucks passing by, they were covered trucks, at night, you would smell the stench of human bodies. I don't know who they were. I don't know where they came from, where they were bringing them from. But definitely, it was there. But we were never near it enough to see it actually. But we knew it was going on in our camp.

We did not have understanding of the extent of what was going on in Auschwitz. As I said, to the very end of the war, in '45 in the spring, they sent a shipment of women from Auschwitz into our camp. And a lot of our friends came in, and they told me that they have seen my sister in Auschwitz, that she was alive and she was fine.

And the irony of it being that she was originally supposed to go with this shipment to that camp. But in all the instances, nobody knew what was going on and what was going to happen to the people. I had a cousin who was from Belgium, and she worked in the kitchen, had some contacts in Auschwitz. And in order to help my sister, she arranged for her to escape from the transport, thinking that they're going into the crematoria. And she remained in Auschwitz. She remained for another month in Auschwitz.

And then they shipped the transport from there to Struthof, which was the seaport where in the last days of the war they put all the women on the ship and drowned the ship. And as a result, she was killed the last few days of the war. But when the war ended, we were convinced that she was alive, because we had such recent regards from her. And they were telling us how my cousin was helping her and bringing her food, that she really was taken care of, and she was together with her cousin and a sister of her boyfriend and they were all together and that we shouldn't worry about it. So that was really the irony of it.

And did you have any information on your father at the time?

No, not at the time. I found out very shortly after the war that my father was shipped into Auschwitz in '44. And I just very recently found out from somebody who worked in the archives in Auschwitz that, when the shipment of the men came in, there were two shipments that came in, one from Hungary and one from Krakow. And they originally planned to take the Hungarian shipment into the furnaces, into the crematoria. And somehow they shifted the trucks and by mistake took the shipment that came from Krakow and my father was executed then in the crematoria of Auschwitz. So I know exactly it was in May of '44.

In '44.

Yeah.

And you were in Germany for how long?

In Germany, I think we were only-- not quite a year, I believe. This is again a situation that I don't have the exact dates. I'm not very accurate on that.

How was the news brought to you that the war was over? What happened exactly?

It wasn't. What happened is that when the war was ended, they decided to evacuate us all. And in the process of evacuation, I suspect that the reason they evacuated us, that the soldiers who were guarding us, by the sheer fact that they were guarding us, were immune from going to the front line as the auxiliary. Because those were there as young people who would have been capable. So if they evacuated us, they had somebody to guard, and that protected them from going to the front line.

We went what they call on the death march for three weeks. We were just marching. When I looked up at the world, we were just going in circles, getting nowhere. And we got no food. We didn't have anywhere to sleep. We didn't stop. It was just thousands and thousands of people lining the roads and walking around. And finally, toward the very end, they divided us into smaller groups. And they permitted us to go into different barns.

We, for example, we entered a barn-- there were about 300 women that they put into the barn at night-- and that was the first time that we were able to get off our feet and rest a little. We hardly could walk anymore. And we woke up in the morning and we saw there was a pile of German uniforms right at the doorway. And we were absolutely stunned by it. And we were afraid to get out, because we didn't know what was outside beyond that door.

So we stayed there. And a day later, a manager of the state came in and he said the owners are on their way. I'm here. I don't really have food supplies. But there is a pile of potatoes that will start for the winter. Give me several women, and we will go out, and we'll make up some water with the potatoes, and you will have some food.

And this was our great luck. Because after all the starvation, we could not return to eating because there was no food. It

was a very, very gradual, slow return to food. He then took a bicycle and a white flag and went someplace to the nearest Red Cross post trying to get some help for us, to get some medication, to get some food. Got nothing. Came back, and we stayed there for a few days.

Two Russian soldiers came in on a motorcycle. They were injured. And since the shortage of watches in Russia was tremendous-- they were not manufactured after the revolution. They first rounded up all the Germans, took all the watches from them, and then with a gun to the mayor's head said, we are coming back tomorrow, and every single woman has to be in bed in a private home. We will not permit you to house them like that in the barn. The Germans were terrified and immediately arranged through several villages to place us in different homes. And we finally had a place to be like human beings.

They never came back. And we didn't know, because there was no communication, what's going on in the rest of the world. We were in those little villages. The peasants didn't know. We didn't know. There were some people, there was a man from Czechoslovakia who was sent to forced labor, and a lot of the people from the freedom who were working on forced labor in Germany. Nobody knew anything what was going on.

And there was a village next door to which we had to go every few days to bring the bread because there was no bakery in this village. And one day, my girlfriend and myself, we were walking to an adjoining village with a pushcart to get some bread for the village. And we still were wearing our prison dresses. That was the normal thing for us. And two soldiers came about and said, how come you're in prison dresses? And we looked at him wondering, what is he talking about? He said, don't you know? The war ended three days ago. So you can imagine we dropped everything and ran back.

But then a very difficult time started. Because we were in no man's land. At one time, several American journalists came in, and they brought some chocolates to the women. And I was very proud, and I said I'm not going to accept the chocolate. I'm not going to take anything. And it was lucky, because the ones that did got very sick because that was too heavy. We couldn't handle something like that.

And what started because there was no authorities, this became like the free ground for the Russians to come in. And the rape was tremendous. As a matter of fact, they killed some women. And their attitude was we put our lives on the line, therefore, we have the right to do whatever we want to do. It's our privilege to do it. And there was a lot of harassment and a lot of difficulty.

So after a few days, we just packed up and left. We just decided that-- and besides, we were very anxious to go back home, thinking that being that we had the car at home, and we knew that if anybody from the family survived, would come to Krakow to this house. So we wanted to get there as soon as possible.

And then we boarded trains. There were no normal trains running. But the transport trains, they went for a few miles. And there was nothing loaded on them. They permitted us to board the trains. They were usually up in platforms. And then we went a trip that normally takes maybe seven hours, eight hours. It took us an excess of a week, because it would be an hour of riding, and then we had to wait a day or two till something else came across that would take us.

Who accompanied you on that trip?

My mother and this friend of mine.

And the friend.

As a matter of fact, she lives now in Clark. It was also a strange story, because we got lost after the war and didn't know about each other for 20 years. And we met by coincidence in New York and found out that we're living 10 minutes away from each other.

Right. [INAUDIBLE] So what happened when you came back to Krakow?

So when we came back to Krakow, we tried to get back into our own apartment, which we gave to a Polish family who had to escape the Nazis closer to the border. We gave it to them together with the contents, because when they made us leave the town, we didn't want the Germans to get the apartment. And she needed one, so we let her have it.

We could not repossess the whole apartment, because you only got that many square foot per person, and there was just the two of us. And when we came, she said she's not going to live with strangers. And she was quite nasty about the whole situation. And life was too short at that time to start fighting and to get into a place and sharing an apartment with somebody who was hostile. So we just dropped the whole thing.

And at the end, this woman took us in and gave us a room in her apartment. Obviously we didn't pay her for it. We didn't give her anything. And it was just that she decided to give us a shelter. And then eventually down the line, we were able to get an assignment for a tiny little room in a basement someplace. And that's where we lived for five years.

For five years.

Then we left Poland. Yeah.

So then you left Poland in 19--

1950.

In 1950.

Yeah.

How did you happen to come to the United States?

I married a man who lived in America. My road was I met my husband during the war-- actually, I'm sorry, right after the war in school. And he immediately left. He lived in Germany and studied in Germany. And I stayed in Poland. And when Israel was created, they gave us a right to emigrate to Israel. So when I came to Israel, he was by then already in the States. He came over, we were married, and I came here.

Oh, so what year then did you emigrate to Israel.

1950.

Oh, in 1950 you went directly to Israel.

Directly to Israel, yes. And then in '52 I came here.

And in 1952, you came to the United States.

Yeah. Which was also a very difficult situation, because we were married, and for still another year after we were married, I could not get American papers. They would not let us come in. I was able, finally, as a wife of a-- he was not yet a citizen, but a resident. I was able to come, but they would not permit my mother to come. And my mother had to stay in Israel for another five years. And they would not permit her to come till I got my citizenship. And then I could bring her over. So the door wasn't open even after the war.

Just come back to Krakow. You were in Krakow from 1945 to 1950.

That's correct.

What was life like in Krakow during those five years?

I came to Krakow immediately. I decided I'm going to live on my own. On my own living, there was a lot of help coming in, and I didn't want it. One organization that I felt was really outstanding was ORT. Because they were teaching trade and they were giving people opportunity to get on their own two feet. And this is why I today believe so strongly that if you want to help people, help them become independent.

And I took some courses from ORT, and I also started working in a sewing factory. I was sewing German uniforms. And shortly after, the news came in that they're trying to form a school. And I helped organize the school. And they gave us the possibility to attend school in the evening while working during the day for credit. And they abbreviated high school, because obviously I had lost the whole six years of education. I didn't go to high school at all because I was in sixth grade when the war ended.

And within a year, I was able to make up the high school equivalency. And conditionally on that, they admitted us into University in order to give us a possibility to finish the high school education while already enrolled in the first year of college. And as a result, I was able to make up all the lost years. And within five years, I graduated with a master's degree in musicology.

When I graduated, I was not quite 24. So when you think about it, all those last years really didn't delay me in completing my education. And that was a tremendous satisfaction as a result. I never really used it, because I left Poland the moment I graduated. And in Israel in 1950, there wasn't exactly a great big field for musicologists. So I never worked in my profession for a finite extent of time. But it gave me a very good feeling. And I felt tremendous pride in being able to achieve it.

Were you ever questioned during those years by any of the Allied officials about your experiences during the war?

No. No I did not have the opportunity to talk to anybody.

What other organizations between 1945 and 1950 in Krakow were offering assistance other than ORT?

It was UNRWA and-- basically it was UNRWA and ORT. They did have a tremendous organization where they were bringing goods, they were supporting hospitals. I can't minimize that because this was really a lifeblood to many, many people. There were many sick people, and there were people who needed assistance and wanted assistance.

But I was a little apprehensive, because in many instances, it prevented some people from taking their own steps and restoring their life and also created a lot of corruption. Because free goods were coming and the ones who had the jurisdiction of it help themselves to it. But without it, it would have been totally impossible. Because it was very nice to say that you want to do things on your own. But if everybody would have said it, it wouldn't have been possible. It was possible because for the few people that tried to do it, there was always room, but not for so many people.

And then in 1952, you came to the United States.

Yeah.

To New York?

Yes. I came originally to New York. And I lived in New York for about three months and decided I didn't want to live in the city. I moved right away to New Jersey.

You came over with your mother?

No, no. My mother had to wait another five years--

Oh, I'm sorry.

--until she was permitted to come here.



That's right.

I came alone. We got an apartment in Union City. And we lived in Union City in New Jersey for four years. And then I had my first child. So then I stopped working. And my husband continued with his career, but I stopped working. For the time, I was raising the children.

What was your perception of the United States when you came here?

At first when I came, I was very unhappy. First of all, I have resented the fact that I was treated very badly in the American embassy when I applied for the papers. This was 1950, 1951. The receptionist at the American embassy was an Egyptian woman who treated Jews in a terrible manner. And we were interrogated and treated in such a terrible way that I really didn't want to come.

And I had a terrible image of American people. I felt that everybody was moneygrubbing and that everybody was pushy and that people were callous and people were just awful, self-centered. And so far, the image all over Europe wasn't the greatest. Because people didn't really travel. There was no exposure. And it took me quite a long time to really sift through the whole thing and find out who the people really were and what was here and what were the opportunities. And it came to me as quite a shock to find out that there is no other nation like it, there are no other people like this.

But the image in the world, the ugly American image, it's not a movie. It's reality. Because the people who first ventured abroad were people who the nouveau rich for the most part. And it wasn't the nouveau rich who ventured. Those were the ones who made the impact because they were noticeable. They came at the time-- this was Vogue wearing the Hawaiian shirts and all this.

And people came, they had comparatively money to everybody, and they tried to wield the power because they had the money. So they expected everybody to bow for it. By the way, the very small minority who came in this fashion, the others who came weren't noticed. So as a result, this was the image that stayed. And everything else that went wasn't noticed because it was not conspicuous. It was done in a peaceful manner, so nobody knew it was there.

So you went from New York to Union City.

To Union City. And we lived in Union City for five years. And then we moved into New Brunswick for another four years. And then the rest of the time, I'm already for 23 years in Watchung.

In Watchung. What was the reaction of the Jewish community that you encountered in New York or in New Jersey?

In New York at that time, the Jewish community that I knew were only the people who came before me to America. And I decided if I was coming here, I was not going to live in the ghetto from Europe. And I very shortly cut off ties. And that's when we moved into Union City, where I had no special connection with the Jewish community at that time. I was involved with the young people.

We moved to New Brunswick, I was not very much involved in anything. I was working in New York, commuting, and I didn't know too many people. I had some neighbors with whom I was very close, Italian people whom we befriended. And I really tried to make an effort to get to know the American people and the American way of life.

I worked in a bank. I had an opportunity to work in a sewing factory, because I had the skills and the pay was three times as big. But I felt that if I would go, I would sit again among immigrants who didn't speak English. I could not learn the language. I could not learn the customs and the way of life in the States.

And I didn't want to stand still, so I took the job in the bank because I felt the exposure would be much more interesting. And as a matter of fact, I worked with Senator Javits' sister. She was the sister or cousin. She was the vice president in charge of my section. So I had a pretty good introduction to what the life here has to offer. And that changed my views drastically.

And then when we went to New Brunswick, I started getting interested in American politics, finding out, how does the country function? I joined the League of Women Voters. And that was a very big eye-opener for me. I finally found out, what does it mean, democracy? And how does it work and what it is. And from there on, I have been always very involved in the public life in many different facets.

But not until my children were ready to go to religious school that I even considered looking at the Jewish community and the Jewish organization. I didn't feel that it had any place in my life. I didn't know much about it. I didn't know where to go about it. I had no contact with it. I finally joined a temple when it was time to send my kids to school. It swallowed me very fast.

What would you say-- I know this is a very difficult question to answer. But what are the lessons of the Holocaust to be learned, to be transmitted?

I think that-- I do speak a lot on the Holocaust. And I usually like to go to schools where the children have problems functioning in the society. And many of the schools that I do speak to are schools in the ghettos. And I feel it's very essential for them to understand that the society is not going to make a life for them good, great, or indifferent, that it's their attitude and their ability to function and their desire to function that can give them the opportunity to get into the lifestyle that they would like to be.

I feel that anger is very counterproductive. Because if you are angry and you go and break a window, nobody really cares whether you broke the window. Nobody is going to give you a bouquet of flowers when you did it. But you wind up in jail, and you have a record. And that anger prevents you from functioning and doing something constructive for yourself. But it just doesn't solve anything.

And it is very amazing to them to see me walk into the classroom and talk to them, how hungry I was and how deprived I was of any human dignity, and yet, that it was in my power to do something about it. It is an absolute revelation to them. Because they think because our society has a tendency of saying, you have the rights to do it and people are doing such terrible things to you.

They sit and they wait. It people are doing terrible things to me, they are to do great things to me. And it's not true either way. You have to do it yourself. And I think this is a lesson that is very strongly overlooked, that it is our obligation to give everybody the tools and the encouragement, to give them the understanding how much is in their hands what they can accomplish with it, what they have and where it can get them.

And I think this is why teaching Holocaust is such an important factor. Because if we just want to go back and say, all right, we want the sympathy because so many people were killed and we want the sympathy because we had a difficult time, nobody will listen. Because they have guilt. Because it's past history. And then you see the number of movies that were produced that show all the horrors, and they start looking at it like they were watching Hitchcock movie.

And unless we can relate to what happens if you go to a school where there is a very strongly segregated group and they think they are superior because they might be the model, the tall, blond, blue-eyed with all the trimmings that is, and you show them what the tall, blond, blue-eyed intellectuals did to the rest of the world, then they start looking at the others and understanding that it's not such a tremendous glory in it, that this is not sufficient, that, all right, you are part of a society and you should be respected, but you have to respect the others.

Nobody gives you the lease on it. And you don't really have the advantage of it. It is how you turn it and what you do with it that gives you the aim to strike at someone. And that isn't such a great thing to do. There is no glory and no dignity in it and no beauty. And when you look at people who are having a very difficult time, you should understand that those are not subhumans.

And I think even also again on the other spectrum, to see the kids who knew the treatment we received and see what we emerged from it, they all of a sudden start thinking, you know something, we are mistreating somebody. And they probably aren't what we are trying to paint them. They might be something else beneath that. Maybe we shouldn't do it.

So I hope that it will be understood and taught in that vein and not with bitterness and not with viciousness.

The children asked me if I would see a German on the street, would I kill him? And I explain to them I wasn't surprised that they asked me that. It was in a ghetto school, and I could understand where they were coming from. And I tried to explain to them that the Germans were teaching us a certain lesson. If I were to do it, I would emulate the Germans. They are not exactly my model.

Therefore, for me to turn around and walk away with it, with the hatred-- granted, it is to the Germans, but it is a hatred. It is something that I condemn. So to turn around and say, all right, now I have the right to do it, I'm putting myself just exactly together with them in line. And this is what I want them to see. I said I will never forgive anybody. I will never let any criminal go without proper trial. But I will never think to put justice in my own hands.

Because this is why we are civilized people, that we make people accountable for their actions, and we want them in the proper court of law. And the reason to bring them to the account and bring them to account like Eichmann was brought, publicly, where the world will understand the justice of it, that makes sense. But for me to go ahead and kill Eichmann, I wouldn't be doing anything else they were doing.

Did you happen to go to the recent gathering in Washington of Holocaust survivors?

Yes. Yes. I was at the gathering.

How was it?

It was very interesting. I feel it was a very important statement to make an impact in the capital for them to see that there is such a tremendous power. And I think it dramatized very strongly the need for the existence of Israel. They came into contact with the survivors, and they could realize that there is a way of lifting yourself up and rebuilding your life. And I think the reaction was great, and they really understood that the people have a dignity in what they did with their life.

They had expected, I think, a bunch of people for whom they could feel sorry. And they encountered something totally different. They encountered a very vocal, very accomplished group of people. And they started thinking we better see we have to do with civilized people. And we better don't look down and understand what is the chemistry of Israel, that Israel is a country consisting of people on whom you can count, people with integrity, people with motivation, with sense of values, that this is not a bunch of some savages that escaped into the desert, and that if this is an ally, this is a true ally, and this is a country that has to stand on its own two feet with the dignity of the country, because this is the people that produced it. And I think that was a very positive impact.

And the next gathering is going to be in Sweden.

Oh, is it? I didn't hear anything about it. I have no idea.

I understand you're also involved in another project.

Yes. I felt that it is time now to open a new chapter in history. I think that we are exploring the part of Holocaust, but I think it is necessary also to explore the part of the American soldier, the man on the street who had the sacrifice of his own home and his own life came to Europe to the rescue. And I think it dramatizes very strongly what America stands for.

And as a result, I'm working right now with Governor Kaine on a major project for New Jersey, which will be, I believe, the first national project of-- I don't know of any place else-- which will be paying tribute to the liberators of Europe and the liberation of Europe. Because we are all in it together. We wouldn't be here if somebody didn't come to our rescue.

This is how the world functions. Today, you are the victim. Tomorrow, somebody else is the victim. And if we do not keep our eyes on the issue of brotherhood and we don't understand that we are our brothers' keepers, that we are in need-- that's the only thing we can turn, is to turn to another human being, to another nation. So this monument will be for the

30th anniversary of the second war. And I think it is essential that this segment of history was brought to the public view and also that the tribute was paid to the man who laid their life on the line. Because this is--

Very important.

This is how our life came about.

I want to thank you very much for speaking with me. And I wish you a lot of luck in the future and on your work in the project.

Thank you.

Thank you.