

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:14,000

2

00:00:14,000 --> 00:00:17,660

Mr. Urbach, continue, please.

3

00:00:17,660 --> 00:00:22,310

So as I stated, in Kraków,
this was my saddest moment

4

00:00:22,310 --> 00:00:25,240

of my life, not knowing
what to do next.

5

00:00:25,240 --> 00:00:29,805

I was still-- this is 1945.

6

00:00:29,805 --> 00:00:34,340

That makes me 19 years old
with the full realization

7

00:00:34,340 --> 00:00:40,310

that I have no one to
turn to, no family member,

8

00:00:40,310 --> 00:00:42,920

not even many of the
old friends that I

9

00:00:42,920 --> 00:00:45,230

would remember from the past.

10

00:00:45,230 --> 00:00:50,000

So I was totally on my own.

11

00:00:50,000 --> 00:00:53,330

With the ability to have a
place to sleep now and that

12

00:00:53,330 --> 00:00:59,690

students' home in Kraków, I

began to think about my future

13

00:00:59,690 --> 00:01:06,380

now that I was free, and I
also recognized that staying

14

00:01:06,380 --> 00:01:11,150

in Poland would not be the
most desirable thing to do.

15

00:01:11,150 --> 00:01:13,550

Now I knew that this is all--

16

00:01:13,550 --> 00:01:17,510

to begin with, it
was anti-Semitic,

17

00:01:17,510 --> 00:01:19,920

and we felt it as children.

18

00:01:19,920 --> 00:01:22,160

And now that it is
occupied by the Russians,

19

00:01:22,160 --> 00:01:23,740

it didn't make it any better.

20

00:01:23,740 --> 00:01:26,420

It's worse.

21

00:01:26,420 --> 00:01:28,310

And at that time, I
already discovered

22

00:01:28,310 --> 00:01:33,140

that other people have
left and have gone west,

23

00:01:33,140 --> 00:01:36,590

but still, totally
on my own, I did not

24

00:01:36,590 --> 00:01:40,380
know of any
organizations helping me.

25
00:01:40,380 --> 00:01:40,880
Excuse me.

26
00:01:40,880 --> 00:01:41,840
Can I ask you one question?

27
00:01:41,840 --> 00:01:42,340
Yeah.

28
00:01:42,340 --> 00:01:45,200
When you returned to Kraków,
were you recognized by anybody,

29
00:01:45,200 --> 00:01:49,580
neighbors, non-Jews?

30
00:01:49,580 --> 00:01:52,220
Only by this one fellow
whom I have worked

31
00:01:52,220 --> 00:01:55,010
for as a furniture maker.

32
00:01:55,010 --> 00:01:57,980
The other people in the
building that were there

33
00:01:57,980 --> 00:01:59,250
before were not there.

34
00:01:59,250 --> 00:02:03,560
No one was there, and it was
also not very comfortable

35
00:02:03,560 --> 00:02:09,530
as a Jewish person, a
survivor of the war,

36

00:02:09,530 --> 00:02:15,800
to roam around the Polish
population and make inquiries.

37
00:02:15,800 --> 00:02:18,410
It was not a very easy task.

38
00:02:18,410 --> 00:02:22,250
You were not totally
welcome back home

39
00:02:22,250 --> 00:02:24,570
by the non-Jewish population.

40
00:02:24,570 --> 00:02:27,890
So it was sort of a
situation that you

41
00:02:27,890 --> 00:02:30,350
did what you had to
do, and already we

42
00:02:30,350 --> 00:02:33,980
heard stories of other people
getting into trouble by trying

43
00:02:33,980 --> 00:02:38,600
to reclaim their old homes
or their own possessions.

44
00:02:38,600 --> 00:02:44,180
So it was not my intention
to spend much time there

45
00:02:44,180 --> 00:02:49,670
looking for anyone because
it was not very comfortable.

46
00:02:49,670 --> 00:02:53,860
The non-Jewish population
did not welcome it.

47
00:02:53,860 --> 00:02:58,210

So I realized that I
must get out of Poland,

48
00:02:58,210 --> 00:03:02,450
and I began to travel
to Czechoslovakia,

49
00:03:02,450 --> 00:03:05,500
or I took a trip
to Czechoslovakia.

50
00:03:05,500 --> 00:03:09,640
Somehow I did not fully realize
yet that Czechoslovakia is also

51
00:03:09,640 --> 00:03:12,970
in the Russian
sphere at that time,

52
00:03:12,970 --> 00:03:16,270
and from my memories of
the Czechoslovakian people

53
00:03:16,270 --> 00:03:17,740
through the travels
during the war

54
00:03:17,740 --> 00:03:24,550
there and during my time
in the concentration camp,

55
00:03:24,550 --> 00:03:26,090
I sort of thought
of Czechoslovakia

56
00:03:26,090 --> 00:03:28,580
as a beautiful
country to live in,

57
00:03:28,580 --> 00:03:30,280
and I wanted to settle there.

58
00:03:30,280 --> 00:03:33,130

So I first went
to Czechoslovakia

59
00:03:33,130 --> 00:03:39,880
with another friend of mine,
and we settled for a while

60
00:03:39,880 --> 00:03:41,890
in Czechoslovakia.

61
00:03:41,890 --> 00:03:44,540
Upon the realization that
this is also communist

62
00:03:44,540 --> 00:03:48,400
and it will not be a
good place to stay,

63
00:03:48,400 --> 00:03:55,000
we smuggled ourselves through
the borders of Poland,

64
00:03:55,000 --> 00:04:00,880
Czechoslovakia into Germany,
and we arrived in Germany

65
00:04:00,880 --> 00:04:05,530
sometime in September of 1945.

66
00:04:05,530 --> 00:04:09,520
I moved to Bamberg
only because I

67
00:04:09,520 --> 00:04:14,290
heard of a friend living there,
and that's where I went to a--

68
00:04:14,290 --> 00:04:16,079
I stayed in Bamberg.

69
00:04:16,079 --> 00:04:19,480
In Bamberg, now,
the American forces

70
00:04:19,480 --> 00:04:26,880
were occupying that area,
but still not much guidance

71
00:04:26,880 --> 00:04:28,440
was provided by anyone.

72
00:04:28,440 --> 00:04:30,240
You sort of had to
make your own life.

73
00:04:30,240 --> 00:04:33,660
You had to figure out
what you want to do.

74
00:04:33,660 --> 00:04:39,270
I began my studies, which
were interrupted in 1939.

75
00:04:39,270 --> 00:04:43,050
I managed to get a German
teacher who was spending time

76
00:04:43,050 --> 00:04:46,560
with me and getting
me through what

77
00:04:46,560 --> 00:04:50,450
would be the equivalency of
high school with the hopes

78
00:04:50,450 --> 00:04:54,600
that one day I would be
able to apply to a college.

79
00:04:54,600 --> 00:04:58,800
I worked as a radio mechanic.

80
00:04:58,800 --> 00:05:03,750
I started learning a new
trade, radio mechanic,

81

00:05:03,750 --> 00:05:10,000
and I was part of
a DP contingency

82

00:05:10,000 --> 00:05:14,740
that was hoping since 1945
that we will be able to get out

83

00:05:14,740 --> 00:05:19,540
into the United States,
Australia, or Canada,

84

00:05:19,540 --> 00:05:20,642
or any other country.

85

00:05:20,642 --> 00:05:21,850
So that was [? how ?] it was.

86

00:05:21,850 --> 00:05:28,420
But the wait became a long
one, and from 1945, we

87

00:05:28,420 --> 00:05:29,890
lived in Germany.

88

00:05:29,890 --> 00:05:35,110
And I lived in Bamberg,
working as a radio mechanic,

89

00:05:35,110 --> 00:05:38,650
working for UNRRA
organization occasionally

90

00:05:38,650 --> 00:05:44,870
and studying until 1949.

91

00:05:44,870 --> 00:05:50,620
A family of my mother's, who
lived in the United States,

92

00:05:50,620 --> 00:05:55,230
was also making inquiries if

anyone of his family survived,

93

00:05:55,230 --> 00:05:59,980
and somehow he located me
through the organization that

94

00:05:59,980 --> 00:06:02,380
was active in Kraków.

95

00:06:02,380 --> 00:06:06,790
And we began to correspond
with one another,

96

00:06:06,790 --> 00:06:09,640
and he sent me out an
affidavit that would

97

00:06:09,640 --> 00:06:11,050
help me get into this country.

98

00:06:11,050 --> 00:06:13,870
He was not a person
of great means,

99

00:06:13,870 --> 00:06:17,070
but he secured it from a
friend of his who would

100

00:06:17,070 --> 00:06:19,390
have been able to employ me.

101

00:06:19,390 --> 00:06:22,750
He secured an affidavit
that would eventually permit

102

00:06:22,750 --> 00:06:25,600
me to come to this country.

103

00:06:25,600 --> 00:06:29,290
But as it happens, this
process was very slow,

104

00:06:29,290 --> 00:06:37,870
and we finally were permitted
into this country when

105
00:06:37,870 --> 00:06:42,610
President Truman permitted
200,000 DPs from Germany

106
00:06:42,610 --> 00:06:49,970
to come to this country in
1949, that part of the 200,000

107
00:06:49,970 --> 00:06:52,990
that began to leave
for United States.

108
00:06:52,990 --> 00:06:54,140
And I was among them.

109
00:06:54,140 --> 00:07:02,470
And in 1949, we came
from Bamberg, Germany.

110
00:07:02,470 --> 00:07:04,570
We were shipped to
the United States,

111
00:07:04,570 --> 00:07:06,950
or we went to United States.

112
00:07:06,950 --> 00:07:08,590
The United States I have--

113
00:07:08,590 --> 00:07:11,330

114
00:07:11,330 --> 00:07:14,750
as I stated, my uncle, and
aunt, and their children

115
00:07:14,750 --> 00:07:21,490
were living in Passaic, and
they were waiting for me

116
00:07:21,490 --> 00:07:27,830
at the ship, at the port in
Boston, where we arrived to.

117
00:07:27,830 --> 00:07:33,440
And I went to live with my
uncle and aunt in Passaic

118
00:07:33,440 --> 00:07:38,490
at that time, from 1949.

119
00:07:38,490 --> 00:07:39,470
Excuse me.

120
00:07:39,470 --> 00:07:42,320
Did you have any dealings
with the Joint Distribution

121
00:07:42,320 --> 00:07:43,380
Committee?

122
00:07:43,380 --> 00:07:46,410
The Joint Distribution
Committee I have--

123
00:07:46,410 --> 00:07:51,860
I only knew of
them during the war

124
00:07:51,860 --> 00:07:55,930
of trying to ship some
food into the camps.

125
00:07:55,930 --> 00:07:58,400
I did not personally have
any dealings with them,

126
00:07:58,400 --> 00:08:01,280
but I knew that they
were trying to ship

127

00:08:01,280 --> 00:08:03,620
some foods into the camp.

128
00:08:03,620 --> 00:08:06,830
Other than that,
after the war, it

129
00:08:06,830 --> 00:08:10,940
was UNRRA who
distributed food to us.

130
00:08:10,940 --> 00:08:14,600
It was UNRRA that
employed some of us,

131
00:08:14,600 --> 00:08:18,770
and I worked for
UNRRA for a while.

132
00:08:18,770 --> 00:08:19,520
In Bamberg?

133
00:08:19,520 --> 00:08:22,370
In Bamberg, right, in Bamberg.

134
00:08:22,370 --> 00:08:27,830
They were also helpful with
preparing us with some trades

135
00:08:27,830 --> 00:08:32,210
if we wanted to learn a
trade, and as it happens,

136
00:08:32,210 --> 00:08:35,820
I went out and secured a
place of employment of my own

137
00:08:35,820 --> 00:08:38,264
and learning to be
a radio mechanic.

138
00:08:38,264 --> 00:08:42,380

139
00:08:42,380 --> 00:08:47,690
Then when I settled, finally, in
Passaic with my uncle and aunt

140
00:08:47,690 --> 00:08:54,320
in 1949, this was also days that
getting a job in this country

141
00:08:54,320 --> 00:08:57,170
was very difficult,
and I really didn't

142
00:08:57,170 --> 00:09:00,590
know where to turn to, what
to start with, where to--

143
00:09:00,590 --> 00:09:04,520
we were driving around
daily looking for a job.

144
00:09:04,520 --> 00:09:07,110
Once again, I was
pretty much on my own.

145
00:09:07,110 --> 00:09:09,320
In other words, there
was no super organization

146
00:09:09,320 --> 00:09:12,260
that came in and said,
well, we will help you.

147
00:09:12,260 --> 00:09:14,910
If there was, I was
not aware of it,

148
00:09:14,910 --> 00:09:17,180
and I didn't know how
to go about getting it.

149
00:09:17,180 --> 00:09:20,300
So I was strictly

on my own trying

150

00:09:20,300 --> 00:09:24,800

to locate work and
earn some money.

151

00:09:24,800 --> 00:09:26,320

I tried to even--

152

00:09:26,320 --> 00:09:30,230

and I located a job
as a enamel worker

153

00:09:30,230 --> 00:09:34,100

in the pots and
pans factory, and it

154

00:09:34,100 --> 00:09:37,610

appears that it was much
more difficult to work

155

00:09:37,610 --> 00:09:42,560

in an enamelworks factory now
than it was during the war.

156

00:09:42,560 --> 00:09:48,260

When they opened these ovens
with the high temperatures

157

00:09:48,260 --> 00:09:51,170

during the summer months,
it was a very difficult job,

158

00:09:51,170 --> 00:09:54,980

and I began to look to
possibly maybe getting

159

00:09:54,980 --> 00:09:57,710

some work in furniture making,
which I had some experience.

160

00:09:57,710 --> 00:10:03,190

And I finally located a job in

furniture making in Patterson,

161
00:10:03,190 --> 00:10:04,917
and that's when I
started a new job.

162
00:10:04,917 --> 00:10:06,500
Were you already
married at this time?

163
00:10:06,500 --> 00:10:09,080
No.

164
00:10:09,080 --> 00:10:10,520
This was 1949.

165
00:10:10,520 --> 00:10:17,190
Then in 1950, I have
been keeping company

166
00:10:17,190 --> 00:10:21,560
was Eda, maiden name, Birnbaum.

167
00:10:21,560 --> 00:10:25,880
We met previously in Germany,
in Bamberg, and upon arrival

168
00:10:25,880 --> 00:10:28,700
here, by both of
us, we continued

169
00:10:28,700 --> 00:10:33,380
keeping company and making
plans for our marriage.

170
00:10:33,380 --> 00:10:39,500
And in 1950, we got
married, and we settled

171
00:10:39,500 --> 00:10:42,190
in New York, both of us.

172

00:10:42,190 --> 00:10:46,080
Eda's parents and the rest of
the family lived in New York,

173
00:10:46,080 --> 00:10:52,560
and we both settled in New
York, got an apartment.

174
00:10:52,560 --> 00:10:56,330
And I continued a job that
I had with a furniture

175
00:10:56,330 --> 00:11:00,320
maker in New Jersey, so
I traveled to New Jersey.

176
00:11:00,320 --> 00:11:07,010
Eda began to work in the
garment center as a seamstress,

177
00:11:07,010 --> 00:11:10,910
and we both were earning
a comfortable living now,

178
00:11:10,910 --> 00:11:15,650
living in New York and
both being fully employed.

179
00:11:15,650 --> 00:11:25,310
In 1951, Eda's family decided to
move to Flemington, New Jersey,

180
00:11:25,310 --> 00:11:29,210
where her father was
contemplating operating

181
00:11:29,210 --> 00:11:32,360
a chicken farm, a poultry farm.

182
00:11:32,360 --> 00:11:38,540
And when he moved to
Flemington, New Jersey,

183

00:11:38,540 --> 00:11:43,310
we also picked up, and left,
and moved to Flemington.

184
00:11:43,310 --> 00:11:48,150
That is in 1951.

185
00:11:48,150 --> 00:11:49,490
It was a struggle.

186
00:11:49,490 --> 00:11:52,440
We did not have it very easy.

187
00:11:52,440 --> 00:11:56,220
At this time, Eda did
not work any longer.

188
00:11:56,220 --> 00:12:01,200
I was taking on any odd jobs
I could lay my hands on,

189
00:12:01,200 --> 00:12:05,750
which included building
chicken houses, digging

190
00:12:05,750 --> 00:12:09,620
basements by hand, get under
houses that already existed.

191
00:12:09,620 --> 00:12:15,430
Anything that I could
pick up I would take on.

192
00:12:15,430 --> 00:12:20,710
\$.75 an hour was the
wage at that time.

193
00:12:20,710 --> 00:12:28,190
But we began to make plans for
a family, and I also joined--

194
00:12:28,190 --> 00:12:32,570
in 1953, I became a partner--

195
00:12:32,570 --> 00:12:36,620
it was another friend
of mine, and we

196
00:12:36,620 --> 00:12:39,200
started a building business.

197
00:12:39,200 --> 00:12:41,930
It was the experience
of the furniture making

198
00:12:41,930 --> 00:12:45,150
and some carpentry experience.

199
00:12:45,150 --> 00:12:50,000
I thought I was qualified to
enter into a building business.

200
00:12:50,000 --> 00:12:53,750
We began a struggle
of a partnership,

201
00:12:53,750 --> 00:12:56,630
earning very little
but, nevertheless,

202
00:12:56,630 --> 00:12:59,630
hoping that there
was a future in this.

203
00:12:59,630 --> 00:13:05,150
And in truth, we did very well.

204
00:13:05,150 --> 00:13:10,310
We managed to buy
some tracts of land,

205
00:13:10,310 --> 00:13:14,575
and we built homes and sell
homes, and we did rather well.

206

00:13:14,575 --> 00:13:22,250
In 1952, our first son was
born, who is now a cardiologist

207
00:13:22,250 --> 00:13:25,250
and lives on Cape Cod.

208
00:13:25,250 --> 00:13:31,490
In 1955, a baby was
born, and a baby girl,

209
00:13:31,490 --> 00:13:34,370
and she is now a lawyer,
lives in Fort Lee,

210
00:13:34,370 --> 00:13:35,570
and has her own family.

211
00:13:35,570 --> 00:13:38,480
My oldest son has a family
with three children,

212
00:13:38,480 --> 00:13:43,770
and the daughter has a
family of two children.

213
00:13:43,770 --> 00:13:58,520
And the third child
was born in 1955.

214
00:13:58,520 --> 00:14:01,290
In any event, he's
now 26 years old,

215
00:14:01,290 --> 00:14:07,270
so that'll make
him born in 1960.

216
00:14:07,270 --> 00:14:11,860
He is a graduate of
Princeton, finished

217
00:14:11,860 --> 00:14:16,480

one year of Columbia Law, and
then switched to architecture

218
00:14:16,480 --> 00:14:18,815
and is presently on the
second year of architecture

219
00:14:18,815 --> 00:14:19,315
at Columbia.

220
00:14:19,315 --> 00:14:22,440

221
00:14:22,440 --> 00:14:26,620
In the building business, I
continued very successfully

222
00:14:26,620 --> 00:14:30,940
and became one of the largest
builder in my area eventually.

223
00:14:30,940 --> 00:14:38,290
And judging myself on the scale
with others, I did rather well.

224
00:14:38,290 --> 00:14:42,270
I live now in a very
comfortable home.

225
00:14:42,270 --> 00:14:45,040
All the kids have
been educated well,

226
00:14:45,040 --> 00:14:49,430
and we don't lack anything.

227
00:14:49,430 --> 00:14:51,070
So we're very happy.

228
00:14:51,070 --> 00:14:52,750
When your children
were growing up,

229

00:14:52,750 --> 00:14:55,840

did you share with
them your experience?

230

00:14:55,840 --> 00:14:58,570

Yes, my oldest
children are fully

231

00:14:58,570 --> 00:15:04,660

aware of our past, as well
Eda's as mine, and some of them

232

00:15:04,660 --> 00:15:10,420

could recite it fairly well,
what went on in our lives.

233

00:15:10,420 --> 00:15:17,920

If I may, I would want to go
back to the time of the ghetto

234

00:15:17,920 --> 00:15:20,830

and when we entered
the ghetto in 1943

235

00:15:20,830 --> 00:15:26,260

and the difficulties that
came with living in a ghetto.

236

00:15:26,260 --> 00:15:28,750

This was like a
giant waiting room

237

00:15:28,750 --> 00:15:33,460

that people were compacted into.

238

00:15:33,460 --> 00:15:38,080

As I say, the sanitary
conditions were horrible.

239

00:15:38,080 --> 00:15:44,080

Food was very
difficult to come by.

240

00:15:44,080 --> 00:15:48,320

But nevertheless, the whole
thing that kept us going

241

00:15:48,320 --> 00:15:51,580

is the hope that this
can not last forever,

242

00:15:51,580 --> 00:15:56,410

that somehow this situation
is going to break,

243

00:15:56,410 --> 00:16:02,680

and we will see a change where
the Germans would eventually

244

00:16:02,680 --> 00:16:03,830

leave.

245

00:16:03,830 --> 00:16:10,300

But this was not
happening, and in 1943,

246

00:16:10,300 --> 00:16:14,020

at the time of the
liquidation of the ghetto,

247

00:16:14,020 --> 00:16:17,080

the barbaric Germans
entered the ghetto

248

00:16:17,080 --> 00:16:21,700

and began shooting on the spot,
killing, throwing people out

249

00:16:21,700 --> 00:16:26,920

of windows in the ghetto,
people from hospitals,

250

00:16:26,920 --> 00:16:29,680

from other buildings.

251

00:16:29,680 --> 00:16:32,230
It was just a horrible scene.

252
00:16:32,230 --> 00:16:41,900
Later on, when the whole
ghetto was silenced,

253
00:16:41,900 --> 00:16:44,860
I was transported to
a concentration camp

254
00:16:44,860 --> 00:16:47,390
in Kraków-Plaszow.

255
00:16:47,390 --> 00:16:48,800
The Germans were
still clearing--

256
00:16:48,800 --> 00:16:54,240
with the help of Jewish forced
labor, they were cleaning,

257
00:16:54,240 --> 00:16:57,190
and cleaning the
streets of the ghetto,

258
00:16:57,190 --> 00:17:00,290
and loading the bodies
that were killed

259
00:17:00,290 --> 00:17:03,290
during the massacre and the
liquidation of the ghetto.

260
00:17:03,290 --> 00:17:06,020
They were loading the
bodies onto trucks

261
00:17:06,020 --> 00:17:08,869
and bringing them, in
fact, to the same camp

262
00:17:08,869 --> 00:17:11,510

that I was now in, in
the concentration camp.

263
00:17:11,510 --> 00:17:15,380
Mass graves were
prepared for those trucks

264
00:17:15,380 --> 00:17:19,560
to unload the bodies.

265
00:17:19,560 --> 00:17:24,800
Whether my whole family
that was lost at that time

266
00:17:24,800 --> 00:17:28,250
suffered that fate of
being killed in the ghetto

267
00:17:28,250 --> 00:17:31,370
or whether they went to
Auschwitz I will never know,

268
00:17:31,370 --> 00:17:34,730
but they died in that
liquidation of the ghetto.

269
00:17:34,730 --> 00:17:38,060
Or I have never heard
from them again.

270
00:17:38,060 --> 00:17:46,130
Later on, in a visit to
Auschwitz after the war,

271
00:17:46,130 --> 00:17:50,420
I went to the archives
to look if there

272
00:17:50,420 --> 00:17:55,520
was any kind of a listing
of my family members,

273
00:17:55,520 --> 00:18:00,560

and I gave them the names
of my family members,

274
00:18:00,560 --> 00:18:02,540
beginning with my father,
and they could not

275
00:18:02,540 --> 00:18:10,620
find any evidence of
him coming to Auschwitz.

276
00:18:10,620 --> 00:18:12,980
I gave them all the other
names of my family members,

277
00:18:12,980 --> 00:18:16,520
and they could not
find anyone at all

278
00:18:16,520 --> 00:18:20,720
as having come
through to Auschwitz.

279
00:18:20,720 --> 00:18:25,710
So I finally thought of an
idea that I'll ask for myself,

280
00:18:25,710 --> 00:18:27,230
and I gave them my name.

281
00:18:27,230 --> 00:18:31,070
I gave them my name
as Solomon Urbach.

282
00:18:31,070 --> 00:18:34,910
And lo and behold, in the
archives, they had me.

283
00:18:34,910 --> 00:18:36,430
They had my name.

284
00:18:36,430 --> 00:18:42,590
How it got there, I don't know,

and in the archives it also

285

00:18:42,590 --> 00:18:45,750
showed that I have
survived in Brännitz,

286

00:18:45,750 --> 00:18:51,770
in the Oskar Schindler camp,
and also showed that I was

287

00:18:51,770 --> 00:18:55,860
in Czechoslovakia
during that time.

288

00:18:55,860 --> 00:18:57,620
So I ask them how
this is possible

289

00:18:57,620 --> 00:19:00,260
that no other
member of my family

290

00:19:00,260 --> 00:19:03,650
is listed but
myself, who survived,

291

00:19:03,650 --> 00:19:07,100
and the explanation was
that the Germans felt fairly

292

00:19:07,100 --> 00:19:10,160
obligated to keep some
records of people that

293

00:19:10,160 --> 00:19:13,130
left the borders of Poland.

294

00:19:13,130 --> 00:19:16,700
But those that remained in
the borders within Poland--

295

00:19:16,700 --> 00:19:18,860
they had absolutely no records.

296

00:19:18,860 --> 00:19:21,655

They did not feel obligated
to keep any records,

297

00:19:21,655 --> 00:19:23,030

so therefore the
archives did not

298

00:19:23,030 --> 00:19:27,520

have any people that travels
from one city to another,

299

00:19:27,520 --> 00:19:29,690

from a ghetto to a
concentration camp.

300

00:19:29,690 --> 00:19:34,190

301

00:19:34,190 --> 00:19:39,530

The life in Kraków-Plaszow,
which was the concentration

302

00:19:39,530 --> 00:19:45,920

camp headed by Amon Goth, was
actually a very brutal camp.

303

00:19:45,920 --> 00:19:52,060

In that camp, there were
daily beatings, hangings.

304

00:19:52,060 --> 00:19:56,750

The hangings were most
generally supervised

305

00:19:56,750 --> 00:20:03,920

by Amon Goth, who seemed to
enjoy every moment of hangings

306

00:20:03,920 --> 00:20:05,210

and killings.

307

00:20:05,210 --> 00:20:11,690

He had a nasty habit of calling
an assembly of some 40,000

308

00:20:11,690 --> 00:20:14,870

people at times, of
people that lived

309

00:20:14,870 --> 00:20:20,870

in that camp, and select many
people for beatings randomly,

310

00:20:20,870 --> 00:20:23,240

without any reason or cause.

311

00:20:23,240 --> 00:20:25,290

He simply selected people.

312

00:20:25,290 --> 00:20:31,820

And he had the habit of
walking amongst those assembled

313

00:20:31,820 --> 00:20:35,840

and pulling out a
little revolver, which

314

00:20:35,840 --> 00:20:37,520

was totally silent.

315

00:20:37,520 --> 00:20:40,940

And if he felt like it, he
just shot people at random,

316

00:20:40,940 --> 00:20:46,760

just as he walked by and
looked at the assembled people.

317

00:20:46,760 --> 00:20:48,920

With the hangings,
beatings, and shootings

318

00:20:48,920 --> 00:20:52,280

that were going on
inside the camp,

319
00:20:52,280 --> 00:20:56,000
there was such a fear
instilled in the inmates

320
00:20:56,000 --> 00:21:00,860
there that if there was
only a word out that Goth

321
00:21:00,860 --> 00:21:03,380
is in the neighborhood,
you actually didn't

322
00:21:03,380 --> 00:21:05,010
hear people breathe anymore.

323
00:21:05,010 --> 00:21:07,370
Everybody held his
breath out of fear

324
00:21:07,370 --> 00:21:12,470
that if he made a wrong move
or seemed to say something,

325
00:21:12,470 --> 00:21:15,470
he simply would be
shot on the spot

326
00:21:15,470 --> 00:21:19,185
or could be taken out for
beatings or a hanging.

327
00:21:19,185 --> 00:21:20,060
What happened to him?

328
00:21:20,060 --> 00:21:22,830

329
00:21:22,830 --> 00:21:40,980
Amon Goth was captured by
the Poles, and then in 1945,

330
00:21:40,980 --> 00:21:44,820
after the war, was
hung in Kraków by a--

331
00:21:44,820 --> 00:21:51,390
was convicted and hung by the
court of the Polish government

332
00:21:51,390 --> 00:21:53,340
already after the war.

333
00:21:53,340 --> 00:21:56,840

334
00:21:56,840 --> 00:21:59,100
We had many incidents there.

335
00:21:59,100 --> 00:22:02,610
The fear was enormous
in that camp.

336
00:22:02,610 --> 00:22:08,160
At one time, a SS
officer marched

337
00:22:08,160 --> 00:22:12,120
into the barracks in
which I was sleeping,

338
00:22:12,120 --> 00:22:20,280
and the SS guard
yelled out, Urbach.

339
00:22:20,280 --> 00:22:25,170
Well, as it happens, in the same
barrack there were two people,

340
00:22:25,170 --> 00:22:30,360
one by the name of Auerbach and
myself by the name of Urbach.

341

00:22:30,360 --> 00:22:34,590

And since he didn't know
whether he's being called

342

00:22:34,590 --> 00:22:38,340

and I didn't know whether
I was being called,

343

00:22:38,340 --> 00:22:45,720

we both stuck out our necks
from the triple-decker berth

344

00:22:45,720 --> 00:22:47,730

in which we laid.

345

00:22:47,730 --> 00:22:51,900

And now the SS guard
was also confused

346

00:22:51,900 --> 00:22:53,550

as to which he really wanted.

347

00:22:53,550 --> 00:22:57,010

He didn't know anymore whether
he wanted Auerbach or he wanted

348

00:22:57,010 --> 00:23:03,280

Urbach, so just to be sure,
he took both of us with him.

349

00:23:03,280 --> 00:23:07,110

They took us down to a
little guard house which

350

00:23:07,110 --> 00:23:12,420

was operated by a
Ukrainian who was

351

00:23:12,420 --> 00:23:16,080

the head of the
guards of the camp,

352

00:23:16,080 --> 00:23:21,210

and it seems that the man
that was really wanted

353
00:23:21,210 --> 00:23:25,090
was this fellow
Auerbach, not me.

354
00:23:25,090 --> 00:23:27,930
And as I stood and
watched, they took him in.

355
00:23:27,930 --> 00:23:35,520
They took Auerbach
in and tortured him,

356
00:23:35,520 --> 00:23:36,810
which I could see.

357
00:23:36,810 --> 00:23:41,850
They hung him by his
wrists on the wall,

358
00:23:41,850 --> 00:23:44,760
by his wrists on the
back, pulled him up

359
00:23:44,760 --> 00:23:46,290
on the wall on a rope.

360
00:23:46,290 --> 00:23:48,460
And when he couldn't
stand it any longer,

361
00:23:48,460 --> 00:23:51,150
they dropped him and
beat him severely.

362
00:23:51,150 --> 00:23:54,690
When he was
unconscious, they would

363
00:23:54,690 --> 00:23:57,900
dump some buckets of water

on him to revive him again,

364

00:23:57,900 --> 00:24:01,245

and this went on and
on in my presence.

365

00:24:01,245 --> 00:24:04,320

366

00:24:04,320 --> 00:24:08,460

Later on, we discovered
that there is a potential

367

00:24:08,460 --> 00:24:12,240

that somebody referred
to him as a communist

368

00:24:12,240 --> 00:24:15,990

or made a statement
as the Red Auerbach.

369

00:24:15,990 --> 00:24:19,950

He was a redhead, and that's
how the rumor started.

370

00:24:19,950 --> 00:24:24,540

And that's why he was called
out and being punished.

371

00:24:24,540 --> 00:24:28,980

Oddly enough, while I watched
all this and observed all this,

372

00:24:28,980 --> 00:24:31,470

we were both freed later
on without me going

373

00:24:31,470 --> 00:24:33,690

through any tortures at all.

374

00:24:33,690 --> 00:24:37,050

But it was a very
difficult moment

375
00:24:37,050 --> 00:24:42,060
to observe a fellow inmate
being tortured as he was.

376
00:24:42,060 --> 00:24:46,310

377
00:24:46,310 --> 00:24:49,250
Krak³w-Plaszow--
this was a camp of--

378
00:24:49,250 --> 00:24:51,590
most of the people came
from the Krak³w ghetto,

379
00:24:51,590 --> 00:24:59,120
but there were also people there
herded in from the outskirt

380
00:24:59,120 --> 00:25:02,160
of Portland or smaller towns,
the smaller towns around

381
00:25:02,160 --> 00:25:02,660
Krak³w.

382
00:25:02,660 --> 00:25:05,680

383
00:25:05,680 --> 00:25:15,030
Postwar, in 1971, I went to the
site of this camp, and I saw--

384
00:25:15,030 --> 00:25:16,580
I knew exactly where it was.

385
00:25:16,580 --> 00:25:22,700
I drove up to it and found
a giant monument standing

386
00:25:22,700 --> 00:25:25,370

about 200 feet away
from the road so

387
00:25:25,370 --> 00:25:28,873
that you actually couldn't
find it unless you knew exactly

388
00:25:28,873 --> 00:25:30,290
that you're looking
for something,

389
00:25:30,290 --> 00:25:31,695
that there was a site of a camp.

390
00:25:31,695 --> 00:25:32,570
You couldn't find it.

391
00:25:32,570 --> 00:25:36,720
Also, it was a giant
monument of potentially 30,

392
00:25:36,720 --> 00:25:45,800
40 feet tall showing six
figures carved out of stone

393
00:25:45,800 --> 00:25:51,020
and showing that those
Poles suffered in this camp.

394
00:25:51,020 --> 00:25:52,850
Poles, not Jews?

395
00:25:52,850 --> 00:26:01,340
Poles suffered in this camp,
and next to it, evidently

396
00:26:01,340 --> 00:26:03,530
by way of a disagreement
between the Jews

397
00:26:03,530 --> 00:26:07,250
and the Polish
government at the time

398
00:26:07,250 --> 00:26:10,640
in which the Jewish
inmates were not exactly

399
00:26:10,640 --> 00:26:16,720
happy with the monument,
they erected a small monument

400
00:26:16,720 --> 00:26:24,500
that looked almost like
a microscopic monument

401
00:26:24,500 --> 00:26:26,600
with relation with
the other one.

402
00:26:26,600 --> 00:26:31,610
But on that it simply stated on
this site they were tortured,

403
00:26:31,610 --> 00:26:40,590
beaten in the years 1943 to
1945 30,000 Jews herded in from

404
00:26:40,590 --> 00:26:43,160
Kraków and surrounding towns.

405
00:26:43,160 --> 00:26:47,930
So the small monument
next to the giant one

406
00:26:47,930 --> 00:26:50,960
told the story of what
really happened in that camp.

407
00:26:50,960 --> 00:26:53,790
The large one did not
speak about Jews at all.

408
00:26:53,790 --> 00:26:56,600
In fact, only Jews were in
that concentration camp.

409

00:26:56,600 --> 00:26:59,460

410

00:26:59,460 --> 00:27:08,920

And as I mentioned
before, in 1971,

411

00:27:08,920 --> 00:27:15,010

I undertook a trip with
my family, my wife,

412

00:27:15,010 --> 00:27:17,620

three children, and
my daughter-in-law.

413

00:27:17,620 --> 00:27:24,400

We went back to
Portland in 1971,

414

00:27:24,400 --> 00:27:28,600

and that was not to look for
the beauty of the country

415

00:27:28,600 --> 00:27:31,870

but simply to go
to a place where

416

00:27:31,870 --> 00:27:36,600

I come from which I, at present,
considered at a cemetery.

417

00:27:36,600 --> 00:27:40,030

And I simply was going
on a nostalgic trip

418

00:27:40,030 --> 00:27:47,140

to look at primary cemeteries.

419

00:27:47,140 --> 00:27:51,580

I did not undertake this trip
for the purpose of seeing

420

00:27:51,580 --> 00:27:53,050
anything else, and we didn't.

421

00:27:53,050 --> 00:27:56,350
We went simply from one
cemetery to another one.

422

00:27:56,350 --> 00:27:58,900

423

00:27:58,900 --> 00:28:02,320
Since I don't know where my
family was buried, all of it

424

00:28:02,320 --> 00:28:04,780
was a cemetery, and
that's how I viewed it.

425

00:28:04,780 --> 00:28:08,520

426

00:28:08,520 --> 00:28:14,410
In Kraków, we discovered a
Jewish cemetery which was still

427

00:28:14,410 --> 00:28:20,140
in good shape, operated
by a Polish woman.

428

00:28:20,140 --> 00:28:26,290
Snails were being
farmed on that cemetery.

429

00:28:26,290 --> 00:28:30,370
I was told that they
sell those because

430

00:28:30,370 --> 00:28:32,620
of the coldness of the
stone, and all the snails

431

00:28:32,620 --> 00:28:34,180

were roaming all over.

432

00:28:34,180 --> 00:28:38,610

And it was in bad
shape, but still, there

433

00:28:38,610 --> 00:28:41,320

are signs of a Jewish
cemetery there.

434

00:28:41,320 --> 00:28:44,020

We went to Kalwaria,
where I was born.

435

00:28:44,020 --> 00:28:48,720

We also located a
Jewish cemetery there,

436

00:28:48,720 --> 00:28:51,670

and we discovered
some of the stones

437

00:28:51,670 --> 00:28:56,350

with my mother's maiden
name of Bollinger.

438

00:28:56,350 --> 00:29:01,390

We went to Nowy Sacz,
where my wife comes from

439

00:29:01,390 --> 00:29:05,080

and her family came from,
and the Jewish cemetery there

440

00:29:05,080 --> 00:29:09,730

was practically totally
destroyed because in that town

441

00:29:09,730 --> 00:29:11,920

they used the stones
from the cemetery

442

00:29:11,920 --> 00:29:14,440

for paving some of the streets.

443

00:29:14,440 --> 00:29:16,700

So that cemetery was
practically gone.

444

00:29:16,700 --> 00:29:18,280

On the other hand,
in that town, we

445

00:29:18,280 --> 00:29:22,570

located a magnificent
giant structure

446

00:29:22,570 --> 00:29:27,160

of a temple, which
simply indicated

447

00:29:27,160 --> 00:29:31,080

what type of Jewish life existed
in that small town of Nowy

448

00:29:31,080 --> 00:29:33,850

Sacz.

449

00:29:33,850 --> 00:29:39,370

And this temple was simply
not maintained, not improved

450

00:29:39,370 --> 00:29:41,410

but simply permitted
to stay there

451

00:29:41,410 --> 00:29:45,940

because they wanted the Jewish
population from United States

452

00:29:45,940 --> 00:29:50,040

to visit the country and become
tourists in that country.

453

00:29:50,040 --> 00:29:53,450

So the Polish government didn't

do anything to destroy it.

454

00:29:53,450 --> 00:29:58,090

On the other hand, they didn't
do anything to improve it.

455

00:29:58,090 --> 00:30:00,970

What did you find in the
popular attitude of Poles

456

00:30:00,970 --> 00:30:05,590

toward the Holocaust or toward
Jews [? when you talked-- ?]

457

00:30:05,590 --> 00:30:10,090

With the contact that I had
with a few people, all of it

458

00:30:10,090 --> 00:30:14,230

was fairly uncomfortable.

459

00:30:14,230 --> 00:30:16,030

We always walked
around with the feeling

460

00:30:16,030 --> 00:30:17,620

of not being welcomed there.

461

00:30:17,620 --> 00:30:21,570

We better get our act
together and move on.

462

00:30:21,570 --> 00:30:22,780

It was never comfortable.

463

00:30:22,780 --> 00:30:26,110

When I arrived in the
small town of Kalwaria,

464

00:30:26,110 --> 00:30:30,640

where my grandfather, and
grandmother, and their families

465

00:30:30,640 --> 00:30:32,770
lived--

466

00:30:32,770 --> 00:30:36,280
I knew of this little town
because I spent some summers

467

00:30:36,280 --> 00:30:39,070
there with my
grandfather, and I knew

468

00:30:39,070 --> 00:30:46,600
that my uncle was the head of
a religious school, a Talmud

469

00:30:46,600 --> 00:30:48,010
Torah.

470

00:30:48,010 --> 00:30:50,020
I knew where that was located.

471

00:30:50,020 --> 00:30:53,260
So I went straight
to the Talmud Torah

472

00:30:53,260 --> 00:30:56,530
to see if there are any
signs of mementos or anything

473

00:30:56,530 --> 00:31:02,620
of a Jewish background that
I could have possibly picked

474

00:31:02,620 --> 00:31:06,460
up and taken with me,
but there were no signs.

475

00:31:06,460 --> 00:31:08,560
The whole Talmud
Torah was converted

476

00:31:08,560 --> 00:31:12,760

into communist offices
of one or another sort,

477
00:31:12,760 --> 00:31:14,890
and the only indication
you had that this

478
00:31:14,890 --> 00:31:19,270
was a Jewish house of
prayer was the many places

479
00:31:19,270 --> 00:31:25,780
that you could find the markings
of a mezuzah that was removed

480
00:31:25,780 --> 00:31:29,320
but the marks were left.

481
00:31:29,320 --> 00:31:32,800

482
00:31:32,800 --> 00:31:35,920
Trying to make any conversation
with the people that

483
00:31:35,920 --> 00:31:37,480
were there--

484
00:31:37,480 --> 00:31:39,610
we began to grow a
little uncomfortable

485
00:31:39,610 --> 00:31:44,450
because no one was
sympathizing or trying to help.

486
00:31:44,450 --> 00:31:47,470
It was simply a well,
what are you doing here,

487
00:31:47,470 --> 00:31:48,500
this kind of a thing.

488

00:31:48,500 --> 00:31:50,710

So we really had to move on.

489

00:31:50,710 --> 00:31:55,240

We did not dare ourselves
staying there too long because

490

00:31:55,240 --> 00:31:59,260

of fear, whether some of
it was imaginary or not,

491

00:31:59,260 --> 00:32:03,260

but we certainly had felt
that we better move on.

492

00:32:03,260 --> 00:32:06,670

So we spent as
little time, really,

493

00:32:06,670 --> 00:32:13,800

as we had to in order to take
a look, possibly a last look.

494

00:32:13,800 --> 00:32:20,500

I have also located my
grandfather's and family home

495

00:32:20,500 --> 00:32:26,110

presently occupied by
non-Jews, and they vaguely

496

00:32:26,110 --> 00:32:34,960

remembered the Bollingers but
did not express any eagerness

497

00:32:34,960 --> 00:32:38,080

to talk about it,
not try to make

498

00:32:38,080 --> 00:32:40,180

us comfortable or anything.

499

00:32:40,180 --> 00:32:42,950

Also, this was my
grandfather's home.

500

00:32:42,950 --> 00:32:46,900

They lived in this house,
and any presence of mine

501

00:32:46,900 --> 00:32:49,360

there seemed like an
intrusion to them.

502

00:32:49,360 --> 00:32:52,390

So they really made the
conversation very short

503

00:32:52,390 --> 00:32:54,760

and looked for me to leave.

504

00:32:54,760 --> 00:32:59,500

This was the best
answer to their player.

505

00:32:59,500 --> 00:33:04,840

We went also to Auschwitz
where-- as it happens,

506

00:33:04,840 --> 00:33:09,400

my father was born in the city
of Auschwitz, which was known

507

00:33:09,400 --> 00:33:12,230

as Oswiecim before the war.

508

00:33:12,230 --> 00:33:15,070

And it happened to be a very
large Jewish community that

509

00:33:15,070 --> 00:33:16,630

lived in that city.

510

00:33:16,630 --> 00:33:19,480

My father came from there.

511
00:33:19,480 --> 00:33:23,590
A giant cemetery
again was located

512
00:33:23,590 --> 00:33:27,550
in the middle of the city,
practically, a Jewish cemetery,

513
00:33:27,550 --> 00:33:29,380
horribly neglected.

514
00:33:29,380 --> 00:33:34,690
But what one, myself
and my children,

515
00:33:34,690 --> 00:33:39,400
particularly, got out of this--
by viewing all these cemeteries

516
00:33:39,400 --> 00:33:44,350
of enormous sizes in almost
any small town in the country

517
00:33:44,350 --> 00:33:46,960
of Poland, you simply
got the feeling

518
00:33:46,960 --> 00:33:49,810
of how many people lived
there and died there.

519
00:33:49,810 --> 00:33:53,460
You could almost assess the
enormous Jewish populations

520
00:33:53,460 --> 00:33:57,310
that lived in that country
by viewing cemeteries

521
00:33:57,310 --> 00:34:00,310
in small towns and large
cities, Jewish cemeteries

522
00:34:00,310 --> 00:34:01,540
in those cities.

523
00:34:01,540 --> 00:34:04,630
And this was our
trip through Poland.

524
00:34:04,630 --> 00:34:07,030
We spent as little
time as we had to.

525
00:34:07,030 --> 00:34:10,480
It was an enormously
educational trip

526
00:34:10,480 --> 00:34:15,010
for the children who already
knew of our backgrounds,

527
00:34:15,010 --> 00:34:18,219
but being there and
seeing it really

528
00:34:18,219 --> 00:34:26,730
was a lifelong experience.

529
00:34:26,730 --> 00:34:29,340
Did you meet any Jews who
still lived in Poland?

530
00:34:29,340 --> 00:34:32,040
No, we met--

531
00:34:32,040 --> 00:34:35,909
I should say, no, we
did not meet many Jews.

532
00:34:35,909 --> 00:34:38,639
We knew of some people that
lived in the city of Kraków

533

00:34:38,639 --> 00:34:41,250
that were Jewish, and we tried
to locate them desperately,

534
00:34:41,250 --> 00:34:42,780
but we didn't.

535
00:34:42,780 --> 00:34:54,179
We met one Jew in a city of Nowy
Sacz, where my wife comes from,

536
00:34:54,179 --> 00:34:57,660
and he was not too
excited about going go on

537
00:34:57,660 --> 00:34:58,980
with this conversation with us.

538
00:34:58,980 --> 00:35:02,570
He was not comfortable
working amongst the Poles

539
00:35:02,570 --> 00:35:05,070
and not bringing up the
Jewish issue anymore,

540
00:35:05,070 --> 00:35:07,710
and he didn't want
any contact with us.

541
00:35:07,710 --> 00:35:11,760
The same thing happened in my
hometown of Borek FaÅ, eÅski where

542
00:35:11,760 --> 00:35:14,790
we located one Jewish man.

543
00:35:14,790 --> 00:35:17,580
And he was now
married to a non-Jew,

544
00:35:17,580 --> 00:35:20,400
and he was not very

interested also.

545

00:35:20,400 --> 00:35:23,340

He could have shed some
light on my family.

546

00:35:23,340 --> 00:35:27,060

He simply let us know
that, look, I'm here.

547

00:35:27,060 --> 00:35:28,890

I'm stuck.

548

00:35:28,890 --> 00:35:31,230

I have a non-Jewish wife.

549

00:35:31,230 --> 00:35:34,930

I don't want to get back
to talking about it.

550

00:35:34,930 --> 00:35:41,060

So we did not have much
to learn from them.

551

00:35:41,060 --> 00:35:45,750

A interesting episode
happened to us while

552

00:35:45,750 --> 00:35:49,500

in the town of Nowy Sacz,
where we went with our family,

553

00:35:49,500 --> 00:35:52,230

where my wife comes from.

554

00:35:52,230 --> 00:35:56,430

My wife could not remember
where her family lived.

555

00:35:56,430 --> 00:35:58,500

When she arrived in Nowy Sacz--

556

00:35:58,500 --> 00:36:00,060
before she went
there, she thought

557
00:36:00,060 --> 00:36:04,770
she knew the town real well,
but when she got there,

558
00:36:04,770 --> 00:36:05,580
it was all gone.

559
00:36:05,580 --> 00:36:08,640
She just couldn't remember
which street to go for.

560
00:36:08,640 --> 00:36:11,190
I stopped the first
older gentleman

561
00:36:11,190 --> 00:36:14,250
that was walking towards
us, and I told him

562
00:36:14,250 --> 00:36:18,250
exactly what I'm doing here
and who I'm looking for.

563
00:36:18,250 --> 00:36:22,188
And I gave him my wife's
maiden name, Birnbaum.

564
00:36:22,188 --> 00:36:23,355
I'm looking for that family.

565
00:36:23,355 --> 00:36:25,980

566
00:36:25,980 --> 00:36:30,060
So this Pole
started speculating,

567
00:36:30,060 --> 00:36:32,120
is it Joe Birnbaum.

568
00:36:32,120 --> 00:36:34,730
I says, yes, Joe Birnbaum.

569
00:36:34,730 --> 00:36:37,050
He said, is that
the Joe Birnbaum

570
00:36:37,050 --> 00:36:43,448
that brought himself a bride,
a pharmacist wife from Vienna?

571
00:36:43,448 --> 00:36:45,240
I says, that's exactly
who I'm looking for.

572
00:36:45,240 --> 00:36:46,690
Oh my goodness.

573
00:36:46,690 --> 00:36:47,190
Amazing.

574
00:36:47,190 --> 00:36:51,470

575
00:36:51,470 --> 00:36:57,550
He led us to the former
home of my wife's family,

576
00:36:57,550 --> 00:37:03,350
and he also pointed out
all the Jewish homes that

577
00:37:03,350 --> 00:37:06,020
were occupied before
the war by Jews

578
00:37:06,020 --> 00:37:10,425
and now were occupied by Poles.

579
00:37:10,425 --> 00:37:11,950
That's an extraordinary story.

580
00:37:11,950 --> 00:37:12,450
Yeah.

581
00:37:12,450 --> 00:37:16,870

582
00:37:16,870 --> 00:37:20,440
It seemed like I had wrapped up
the war in a very short time.

583
00:37:20,440 --> 00:37:24,870
It was a long,
horrible experience,

584
00:37:24,870 --> 00:37:28,240
and at times, it seemed
like we will never

585
00:37:28,240 --> 00:37:29,290
make it through the war.

586
00:37:29,290 --> 00:37:32,840

587
00:37:32,840 --> 00:37:36,260
It seemed to have
gone on and on and on,

588
00:37:36,260 --> 00:37:40,490
and we just simply went
from a difficult time

589
00:37:40,490 --> 00:37:42,090
to a more difficult time.

590
00:37:42,090 --> 00:37:45,960
There was never a end to it
until the final liberation

591
00:37:45,960 --> 00:37:49,200
in 1945.

592

00:37:49,200 --> 00:37:50,950

You were liberated
by the Russians?

593

00:37:50,950 --> 00:37:52,360

By the Russians, in BrÄ¼nnlitz.

594

00:37:52,360 --> 00:37:54,720

What was your impression of
the Russians at that time?

595

00:37:54,720 --> 00:37:58,300

Well, the Russians, as
I remember them now,

596

00:37:58,300 --> 00:38:04,660

as I recall it, came in
as one individual man,

597

00:38:04,660 --> 00:38:09,280

and I am being told now that
this was a Jewish officer,

598

00:38:09,280 --> 00:38:15,970

actually, of the Russian army
that simply decided to look

599

00:38:15,970 --> 00:38:19,720

for possible liberated camps.

600

00:38:19,720 --> 00:38:23,750

And he was the one that marched
in, opposed to any unit.

601

00:38:23,750 --> 00:38:25,360

And I saw him myself.

602

00:38:25,360 --> 00:38:28,330

I did not know at that
time he was Jewish,

603

00:38:28,330 --> 00:38:32,440
but those that were in
the know at that time

604
00:38:32,440 --> 00:38:36,220
had conversation with him and
learned that he was Jewish.

605
00:38:36,220 --> 00:38:39,250
My memories go back
to this one solo

606
00:38:39,250 --> 00:38:43,390
Russian army man arriving
with our hearts practically

607
00:38:43,390 --> 00:38:45,790
dropping out on the--

608
00:38:45,790 --> 00:38:49,190
we already were warned that
we will be free people,

609
00:38:49,190 --> 00:38:51,100
but with a Russian
soldier marching in,

610
00:38:51,100 --> 00:38:56,290
this was driven home that we
are potentially free people.

611
00:38:56,290 --> 00:38:59,770
He seemed to have
marched in and walked

612
00:38:59,770 --> 00:39:04,150
alongside of a horse that
looked more like a donkey

613
00:39:04,150 --> 00:39:06,490
than a horse.

614
00:39:06,490 --> 00:39:11,150

Either it was in my mind that
he was so tall and so big

615
00:39:11,150 --> 00:39:13,840
and the horse looked
so small, but there

616
00:39:13,840 --> 00:39:17,170
could be that,
psychologically, the picture

617
00:39:17,170 --> 00:39:20,860
was distorted because he
looked like a giant to me

618
00:39:20,860 --> 00:39:23,510
at that time.

619
00:39:23,510 --> 00:39:27,140
Again, the tears, and
screams, and cries, and not

620
00:39:27,140 --> 00:39:28,326
knowing where to go next--

621
00:39:28,326 --> 00:39:32,200

622
00:39:32,200 --> 00:39:37,330
it would have been a
unbelievable ending to a story

623
00:39:37,330 --> 00:39:39,680
if it could be captured.

624
00:39:39,680 --> 00:39:41,770
But it is in my mind that--

625
00:39:41,770 --> 00:39:47,230
I remember vividly
the people crying,

626

00:39:47,230 --> 00:39:51,490
and how we did that crying
and laughing at the same time

627
00:39:51,490 --> 00:39:52,760
is beyond me.

628
00:39:52,760 --> 00:39:54,555
But that's what
actually happened.

629
00:39:54,555 --> 00:39:56,430
We were crying and
laughing at the same time.

630
00:39:56,430 --> 00:39:59,960

631
00:39:59,960 --> 00:40:03,080
You were how old
when this happened?

632
00:40:03,080 --> 00:40:04,140
When the war broke out--

633
00:40:04,140 --> 00:40:04,640
Liberation.

634
00:40:04,640 --> 00:40:10,455
The liberation-- it was
1945, so I was 19 years old.

635
00:40:10,455 --> 00:40:11,830
Is there anything
else you'd like

636
00:40:11,830 --> 00:40:13,770
to say by way of conclusion?

637
00:40:13,770 --> 00:40:19,620

638

00:40:19,620 --> 00:40:28,060

The most important thing of
this totally horrible experience

639

00:40:28,060 --> 00:40:30,430

that would seem to be very
important at this point

640

00:40:30,430 --> 00:40:35,980

is that this somehow not be
written off into history books

641

00:40:35,980 --> 00:40:40,020

and be read as one would
read any other history books,

642

00:40:40,020 --> 00:40:43,320

that that's what happens
during a war, but, in fact,

643

00:40:43,320 --> 00:40:48,580

that we somehow
be able to project

644

00:40:48,580 --> 00:40:54,580

and teach present generations
and future generations of what

645

00:40:54,580 --> 00:41:00,910

can happen to a
minority group when

646

00:41:00,910 --> 00:41:03,570

no one comes to the rescue.

647

00:41:03,570 --> 00:41:08,500

What happened to us is simply,
where 90% of our people

648

00:41:08,500 --> 00:41:11,020

vanished into the
European theater,

649

00:41:11,020 --> 00:41:13,750
it is because the
other people did not

650
00:41:13,750 --> 00:41:16,120
come to the rescue of us.

651
00:41:16,120 --> 00:41:18,070
They simply thought,
well, as long

652
00:41:18,070 --> 00:41:22,570
as the picking is on the
Jews, why not leave it alone?

653
00:41:22,570 --> 00:41:28,090
And that's how our
people vanished.

654
00:41:28,090 --> 00:41:31,420
So the important
lesson to be learned,

655
00:41:31,420 --> 00:41:34,690
in which I would
like to help with,

656
00:41:34,690 --> 00:41:37,960
is to teach the younger people
that this really happened.

657
00:41:37,960 --> 00:41:43,300
This is not a story as many
stories that you find in books

658
00:41:43,300 --> 00:41:44,860
and you tend to disbelieve.

659
00:41:44,860 --> 00:41:46,630
This actually happened.

660
00:41:46,630 --> 00:41:50,080
People were killed,

shot just because they

661

00:41:50,080 --> 00:41:53,170

practice a different
religion, as we did.

662

00:41:53,170 --> 00:41:54,970

Thank you very much, Mr. Urbach.

663

00:41:54,970 --> 00:41:56,820

Thank you.

664

00:41:56,820 --> 00:42:04,054