

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:08,039

2

00:00:08,039 --> 00:00:10,350

My name is Dr. Sidney  
Langer, and I'm

3

00:00:10,350 --> 00:00:13,710

the Director of the Oral  
History Project of the Holocaust

4

00:00:13,710 --> 00:00:17,640

Studies Resource Center at  
Kean College of New Jersey.

5

00:00:17,640 --> 00:00:21,060

I'm very pleased to talk today  
with Mr. David Altholz who

6

00:00:21,060 --> 00:00:24,040

is a resident of  
Maplewood, New Jersey,

7

00:00:24,040 --> 00:00:26,550

and has come to talk about  
some of his experiences

8

00:00:26,550 --> 00:00:28,460

during the years  
of the Holocaust.

9

00:00:28,460 --> 00:00:32,498

Mr. Altholz, thank you  
very much for coming.

10

00:00:32,498 --> 00:00:34,040

Could you tell me  
a little bit by way

11

00:00:34,040 --> 00:00:36,110

of introduction  
about when you were

12

00:00:36,110 --> 00:00:40,210  
born, the town you were born in,  
a little bit about your family?

13

00:00:40,210 --> 00:00:42,830

14

00:00:42,830 --> 00:00:47,920  
I was born in 1928 in a  
small town called Krosno,

15

00:00:47,920 --> 00:00:52,410  
K-R-O-S-N-O, in Poland.

16

00:00:52,410 --> 00:00:58,840  
At a very early age, My father  
and my mother moved to a large

17

00:00:58,840 --> 00:01:04,990  
town by the name of Chorzów  
in Western Poland, in Silesia,

18

00:01:04,990 --> 00:01:06,460  
upper Silesia.

19

00:01:06,460 --> 00:01:07,990  
How old were you  
when they moved?

20

00:01:07,990 --> 00:01:11,770  
I believe I was about  
four at that time.

21

00:01:11,770 --> 00:01:15,010  
OK, so in 1932.

22

00:01:15,010 --> 00:01:17,620  
I had a sister who was a  
year and a half younger,

23

00:01:17,620 --> 00:01:19,990

and we all moved together.

24

00:01:19,990 --> 00:01:26,200

Now, Chorzów was  
an industrial town,

25

00:01:26,200 --> 00:01:29,740

rather westernized by Polish  
standards since it was very

26

00:01:29,740 --> 00:01:31,900

close to the German border.

27

00:01:31,900 --> 00:01:35,800

And the language was  
quite often dual language,

28

00:01:35,800 --> 00:01:37,060

both Polish and German.

29

00:01:37,060 --> 00:01:40,350

As a result, I spoke German  
then, and I still do.

30

00:01:40,350 --> 00:01:42,900

31

00:01:42,900 --> 00:01:46,190

My education was--

32

00:01:46,190 --> 00:01:47,640

How large was this town?

33

00:01:47,640 --> 00:01:50,740

The town?

34

00:01:50,740 --> 00:01:52,060

I really don't recall now.

35

00:01:52,060 --> 00:01:55,493

I would venture to  
guess about 100,000.

36  
00:01:55,493 --> 00:01:57,160  
About 100,000, and  
the Jewish population

37  
00:01:57,160 --> 00:01:58,810  
and the non-Jewish  
population was?

38  
00:01:58,810 --> 00:02:05,770  
The Jewish population was small,  
very small, and most of the--

39  
00:02:05,770 --> 00:02:10,509  
I remember we belonged  
to a Conservative temple

40  
00:02:10,509 --> 00:02:13,120  
even though my grandparents  
on both my mother's

41  
00:02:13,120 --> 00:02:17,500  
and my father's side  
were strictly Orthodox.

42  
00:02:17,500 --> 00:02:19,660  
We did go to the  
synagogue, that is,

43  
00:02:19,660 --> 00:02:23,320  
my father and I, every  
Saturday morning,

44  
00:02:23,320 --> 00:02:33,850  
and my religious education  
really was not too extensive.

45  
00:02:33,850 --> 00:02:36,180  
The emphasis was on  
secular education.

46  
00:02:36,180 --> 00:02:38,760

47

00:02:38,760 --> 00:02:45,570

Now, my father was religious,  
but not in an orthodox manner.

48

00:02:45,570 --> 00:02:49,810

We lived there until  
the war broke out.

49

00:02:49,810 --> 00:02:52,350

We did of course go  
out on vacations,

50

00:02:52,350 --> 00:02:56,460

visiting my grandparents  
on both sides.

51

00:02:56,460 --> 00:03:05,220

And my education ended in the  
5th grade, which was 1939.

52

00:03:05,220 --> 00:03:08,220

I was about to start the sixth  
grade when the war broke out,

53

00:03:08,220 --> 00:03:10,650

and I haven't been  
in school since.

54

00:03:10,650 --> 00:03:13,560

This is one of  
the few occasions.

55

00:03:13,560 --> 00:03:16,590

You went straight from  
fifth grade to the college.

56

00:03:16,590 --> 00:03:18,530

Yes, a great college.

57

00:03:18,530 --> 00:03:21,480

58

00:03:21,480 --> 00:03:24,450  
What was the economic situation  
of the Jewish community

59

00:03:24,450 --> 00:03:26,340  
like in that town?

60

00:03:26,340 --> 00:03:30,570  
There was a mixture  
of well-to-do people,

61

00:03:30,570 --> 00:03:36,600  
people of middle class,  
and people of very humble

62

00:03:36,600 --> 00:03:39,750  
economic circumstances.

63

00:03:39,750 --> 00:03:42,060  
My father was a watchmaker.

64

00:03:42,060 --> 00:03:46,060  
He did quite a bit  
of work himself,

65

00:03:46,060 --> 00:03:50,400  
and he also took in their  
work from other stores.

66

00:03:50,400 --> 00:03:54,530  
He was by no means well-to-do,  
but we were very comfortable.

67

00:03:54,530 --> 00:03:58,440  
We had a very nice apartment  
and we lacked for nothing

68

00:03:58,440 --> 00:03:59,370  
that I can remember.

69

00:03:59,370 --> 00:04:02,340

70

00:04:02,340 --> 00:04:09,240  
And my sister, of course, when I  
started school at the age of 7,

71

00:04:09,240 --> 00:04:13,410  
my sister being younger  
gave us the whole family

72

00:04:13,410 --> 00:04:14,250  
a very hard time.

73

00:04:14,250 --> 00:04:16,680  
She was one of those that  
insisted on equal rights,

74

00:04:16,680 --> 00:04:21,029  
regardless of the fact that  
she was younger and a girl,

75

00:04:21,029 --> 00:04:24,330  
no pun intended here.

76

00:04:24,330 --> 00:04:27,480  
She was equal in every respect.

77

00:04:27,480 --> 00:04:33,390  
She wound up going to a  
school which was almost 100%

78

00:04:33,390 --> 00:04:36,660  
Catholic, Christian.

79

00:04:36,660 --> 00:04:42,660  
I went to a school that  
was predominantly Jewish.

80

00:04:42,660 --> 00:04:43,560  
A secular school?

81

00:04:43,560 --> 00:04:44,190  
Right.

82  
00:04:44,190 --> 00:04:47,340  
What happened during  
classes is very often,

83  
00:04:47,340 --> 00:04:49,500  
there was the  
subject of religion

84  
00:04:49,500 --> 00:04:52,180  
being taught in public  
school, in grade school.

85  
00:04:52,180 --> 00:04:55,260  
And when the Catholic  
teacher came on,

86  
00:04:55,260 --> 00:04:58,500  
the Jews walked out or  
were excused from class,

87  
00:04:58,500 --> 00:05:00,900  
and when the Hebrew  
teacher came in,

88  
00:05:00,900 --> 00:05:02,970  
the Christian  
students were excused

89  
00:05:02,970 --> 00:05:06,052  
from class for that period.

90  
00:05:06,052 --> 00:05:08,510  
Was there any tension in the  
classroom between the Jewish--

91  
00:05:08,510 --> 00:05:09,400  
No.

92  
00:05:09,400 --> 00:05:13,440  
I don't remember any tension  
whatsoever at that age.



93

00:05:13,440 --> 00:05:16,200

I do remember  
occasionally having

94

00:05:16,200 --> 00:05:22,680

some stone-throwing  
contests with young boys,

95

00:05:22,680 --> 00:05:25,620

non-Jewish boys, in  
the small villages

96

00:05:25,620 --> 00:05:29,640

when we went to visit my  
grandparents during the summer

97

00:05:29,640 --> 00:05:31,290

vacation.

98

00:05:31,290 --> 00:05:33,690

I don't remember any  
of it in Chorzów.

99

00:05:33,690 --> 00:05:37,245

This was a coeducational  
school that you went to?

100

00:05:37,245 --> 00:05:39,120

And your sister did not  
go to the same school

101

00:05:39,120 --> 00:05:40,740

not any special reason, or?

102

00:05:40,740 --> 00:05:41,580

Yes.

103

00:05:41,580 --> 00:05:46,800

That school took only  
children from the age of 7.

104

00:05:46,800 --> 00:05:47,500

Oh, OK.

105  
00:05:47,500 --> 00:05:49,020  
And you went to  
another school at?

106  
00:05:49,020 --> 00:05:50,650  
And then she went to school--

107  
00:05:50,650 --> 00:05:53,120  
I believe it was  
a Catholic school,

108  
00:05:53,120 --> 00:05:55,920  
but a state school nevertheless.

109  
00:05:55,920 --> 00:05:59,770  
They took kids  
from the age of 6.

110  
00:05:59,770 --> 00:06:02,130  
From the age of 6.

111  
00:06:02,130 --> 00:06:05,330  
Now, you say that when  
you went back to the towns

112  
00:06:05,330 --> 00:06:08,900  
to visit your grandparents,  
you do remember

113  
00:06:08,900 --> 00:06:10,670  
rock-throwing incidents.

114  
00:06:10,670 --> 00:06:11,930  
Yes.

115  
00:06:11,930 --> 00:06:13,220  
Yes, I do.

116  
00:06:13,220 --> 00:06:15,650  
You did not know these

other young boys.

117

00:06:15,650 --> 00:06:18,680

No, I did not, but

we were called names

118

00:06:18,680 --> 00:06:22,613

and we reacted to them, that

is, myself and my friends.

119

00:06:22,613 --> 00:06:24,030

How did they know

you were Jewish?

120

00:06:24,030 --> 00:06:27,040

121

00:06:27,040 --> 00:06:32,500

They can tell a Jew very

easily, very easily.

122

00:06:32,500 --> 00:06:33,000

Not all.

123

00:06:33,000 --> 00:06:39,420

It's not 100%, of course,

but most Jews look Jewish.

124

00:06:39,420 --> 00:06:41,070

I know here, it's

much more difficult.

125

00:06:41,070 --> 00:06:43,500

I know many Italians

look Jewish as well,

126

00:06:43,500 --> 00:06:45,220

but in Poland, it

was not quite so.

127

00:06:45,220 --> 00:06:48,420

In Poland, there

was a peculiar--

128  
00:06:48,420 --> 00:06:52,590  
not a peculiar, but a  
different look to the Jews,

129  
00:06:52,590 --> 00:06:55,440  
with some exceptions naturally.

130  
00:06:55,440 --> 00:06:58,020  
Did you understand  
what the motivation

131  
00:06:58,020 --> 00:06:59,220  
was behind this kind of--

132  
00:06:59,220 --> 00:07:00,120  
Yes, yes.

133  
00:07:00,120 --> 00:07:02,400  
I understood that  
they didn't like Jews.

134  
00:07:02,400 --> 00:07:03,420  
Did you know why?

135  
00:07:03,420 --> 00:07:09,360  
Well, I knew why by just  
listening to the adults talking

136  
00:07:09,360 --> 00:07:10,560  
very often.

137  
00:07:10,560 --> 00:07:16,190  
We were accused of killing  
their god, killing Christ,

138  
00:07:16,190 --> 00:07:18,755  
and that was the primary  
motivation for the hatred.

139  
00:07:18,755 --> 00:07:21,330

140  
00:07:21,330 --> 00:07:24,420  
Now, as a child, I didn't  
speculate any further.

141  
00:07:24,420 --> 00:07:27,990  
I simply accepted that  
as fact, that I knew

142  
00:07:27,990 --> 00:07:30,370  
that we did not kill Christ.

143  
00:07:30,370 --> 00:07:32,880  
At least, I didn't feel  
myself implicated in this

144  
00:07:32,880 --> 00:07:36,100  
or guilty of any of it.

145  
00:07:36,100 --> 00:07:39,273  
But it was an accepted fact that  
we could do nothing about it.

146  
00:07:39,273 --> 00:07:42,450

147  
00:07:42,450 --> 00:07:46,650  
Were the students in your own  
school taught the same thing

148  
00:07:46,650 --> 00:07:49,710  
by their religious instructors?

149  
00:07:49,710 --> 00:07:53,260  
Well, I never attended a  
Catholic religious class.

150  
00:07:53,260 --> 00:07:53,760  
Yeah.

151  
00:07:53,760 --> 00:07:56,218  
I'm just wondering why there

was a difference, for example,

152

00:07:56,218 --> 00:07:58,983  
in these two towns in  
terms of the relationship

153

00:07:58,983 --> 00:07:59,900  
between yourself and--

154

00:07:59,900 --> 00:08:04,050  
I'd rather feel, and this  
information, or rather

155

00:08:04,050 --> 00:08:07,060  
the realization of this,  
came to me afterwards,

156

00:08:07,060 --> 00:08:12,190  
that it wasn't in the classroom,  
that teaching in the classroom

157

00:08:12,190 --> 00:08:17,340  
did not influence the  
students in a negative way,

158

00:08:17,340 --> 00:08:21,120  
rather, the preaching from  
the pulpit in the churches.

159

00:08:21,120 --> 00:08:25,650  
And there was a big difference,  
a big difference, especially

160

00:08:25,650 --> 00:08:28,800  
in the smaller towns  
where people were largely

161

00:08:28,800 --> 00:08:33,480  
superstitious and  
priests, preachers

162

00:08:33,480 --> 00:08:38,054  
were largely very, very

conservative and orthodox,

163

00:08:38,054 --> 00:08:42,172

not taking the trouble of  
studying for themselves

164

00:08:42,172 --> 00:08:44,130

and finding out the facts,  
but simply accepting

165

00:08:44,130 --> 00:08:48,450

what they were taught by  
others and repeating them.

166

00:08:48,450 --> 00:08:52,820

I have found myself,  
on one occasion,

167

00:08:52,820 --> 00:08:56,370

I found that one  
priest admitted to me

168

00:08:56,370 --> 00:09:01,170

that there were references  
in their prayer books,

169

00:09:01,170 --> 00:09:07,690

in the Bible to that fact, and  
in their commentaries as well.

170

00:09:07,690 --> 00:09:12,380

Now, the people simply  
accepted that as gospel.

171

00:09:12,380 --> 00:09:17,600

I know, I myself, as I said,  
during the various holidays,

172

00:09:17,600 --> 00:09:20,660

I have detected a certain  
nervousness among the Jews,

173

00:09:20,660 --> 00:09:22,880

especially around Easter time.

174

00:09:22,880 --> 00:09:26,630  
But I myself, and my family in  
Chorzów, in the larger city,

175

00:09:26,630 --> 00:09:32,755  
had never felt any  
insecurity or any discomfort.

176

00:09:32,755 --> 00:09:34,380  
Chorzów, you said,  
was how large again?

177

00:09:34,380 --> 00:09:35,440  
You said about 100,000?

178

00:09:35,440 --> 00:09:37,010  
About 100,000.

179

00:09:37,010 --> 00:09:40,870  
Chorzów is approximately 30  
kilometers from Katowice,

180

00:09:40,870 --> 00:09:44,790  
a large town, industrial,  
iron ore and coal.

181

00:09:44,790 --> 00:09:46,980  
And how far from the  
German border, you said?

182

00:09:46,980 --> 00:09:49,140  
Very close.

183

00:09:49,140 --> 00:09:53,160  
In terms of kilometers,  
maybe an hour's trip.

184

00:09:53,160 --> 00:09:55,860  
Was the Jewish community a  
vibrant Jewish community?



185

00:09:55,860 --> 00:09:58,005

Were there Jewish organizations?

186

00:09:58,005 --> 00:09:58,630

Oh yes, oh yes.

187

00:09:58,630 --> 00:10:04,070

There were Jewish organizations  
politically as well as

188

00:10:04,070 --> 00:10:05,910

religious organizations.

189

00:10:05,910 --> 00:10:07,320

Was your father active?

190

00:10:07,320 --> 00:10:08,940

Was your mother  
active, or yourself?

191

00:10:08,940 --> 00:10:13,160

I don't remember him being  
active at the synagogue

192

00:10:13,160 --> 00:10:19,500

in any way other than just being  
a member and paying his dues.

193

00:10:19,500 --> 00:10:23,740

OK, so in 1932, you  
were four years old.

194

00:10:23,740 --> 00:10:26,500

195

00:10:26,500 --> 00:10:31,930

When Hitler came to  
power in Germany,

196

00:10:31,930 --> 00:10:34,270

did this have any immediate  
effect in the town

197  
00:10:34,270 --> 00:10:36,740  
that you lived in?

198  
00:10:36,740 --> 00:10:37,840  
1933, 1934.

199  
00:10:37,840 --> 00:10:41,590  
I was at that time a young  
boy, not very much interested

200  
00:10:41,590 --> 00:10:43,360  
in the political scene.

201  
00:10:43,360 --> 00:10:47,620  
But I remember quite  
vividly, especially

202  
00:10:47,620 --> 00:10:53,560  
in 1938, my parents used to  
socialize quite extensively.

203  
00:10:53,560 --> 00:10:55,090  
They went to visit people.

204  
00:10:55,090 --> 00:10:57,550  
When they went to visit,  
they took us along.

205  
00:10:57,550 --> 00:10:59,830  
There were no babysitters  
there at that time.

206  
00:10:59,830 --> 00:11:02,380  
And when we got company,  
of course, the same thing.

207  
00:11:02,380 --> 00:11:05,890  
We had a lot of kids, whether  
they were playing cards

208  
00:11:05,890 --> 00:11:09,310

or doing some other things.

209

00:11:09,310 --> 00:11:11,680

Most often, a lot of  
time was spent talking

210

00:11:11,680 --> 00:11:14,020

politics and the situation.

211

00:11:14,020 --> 00:11:19,900

And of course, I remember  
quite well the various opinions

212

00:11:19,900 --> 00:11:23,980

and the various  
statements as to the fact

213

00:11:23,980 --> 00:11:26,200

that the war would  
never break out,

214

00:11:26,200 --> 00:11:29,650

that Hitler may be a maniac,  
but he's not that stupid,

215

00:11:29,650 --> 00:11:32,260

and he has plenty of  
very smart advisors

216

00:11:32,260 --> 00:11:37,150

to know that when England  
guaranteed Poland safety

217

00:11:37,150 --> 00:11:41,920

or security that he  
would not invade Poland.

218

00:11:41,920 --> 00:11:47,230

And even some people  
ventured other opinions,

219

00:11:47,230 --> 00:11:51,080

that even if war did break out,

it would not last very long.

220

00:11:51,080 --> 00:11:55,360

So no one could resist  
England and France

221

00:11:55,360 --> 00:11:58,420

combined for very long.

222

00:11:58,420 --> 00:12:01,955

And besides, Poland was  
also quite well prepared.

223

00:12:01,955 --> 00:12:03,580

I mean, they must  
have had at least all

224

00:12:03,580 --> 00:12:07,120

of a half a dozen  
planes at that time,

225

00:12:07,120 --> 00:12:08,380

and plenty of horse cavalry.

226

00:12:08,380 --> 00:12:11,000

227

00:12:11,000 --> 00:12:13,970

Maybe it sounds a little  
ironic, but it was nevertheless

228

00:12:13,970 --> 00:12:15,658

the fact.

229

00:12:15,658 --> 00:12:16,470

Mm-hmm.

230

00:12:16,470 --> 00:12:17,355

Were there any laws?

231

00:12:17,355 --> 00:12:18,480

I know you were very young.

232

00:12:18,480 --> 00:12:22,360

So in 1938, you  
were 10 years old.

233

00:12:22,360 --> 00:12:24,080

Were there laws  
passed in your town

234

00:12:24,080 --> 00:12:27,110

against shechita, for example,  
ritual slaughtering, at all?

235

00:12:27,110 --> 00:12:30,860

Not that I remember, and  
I haven't read anything

236

00:12:30,860 --> 00:12:32,760

since on that subject.

237

00:12:32,760 --> 00:12:34,430

But I do not  
remember that at all.

238

00:12:34,430 --> 00:12:39,560

What I do remember,  
in the final stages

239

00:12:39,560 --> 00:12:44,450

before the war broke out,  
there were various protests

240

00:12:44,450 --> 00:12:48,740

by Polish organizations, Polish  
nationalist organizations,

241

00:12:48,740 --> 00:12:50,120

against Jews.

242

00:12:50,120 --> 00:12:54,020

And invariably, the  
ones that I remember

243

00:12:54,020 --> 00:12:56,960

because there were  
signs and placards,

244

00:12:56,960 --> 00:13:01,440

were based on business,  
on the economy.

245

00:13:01,440 --> 00:13:05,060

They were encouraging everyone  
not to go to Jewish stores

246

00:13:05,060 --> 00:13:11,220

or to frequent Jewish  
tradespeople and such,

247

00:13:11,220 --> 00:13:12,350

businesspeople.

248

00:13:12,350 --> 00:13:15,020

And there were signs all over.

249

00:13:15,020 --> 00:13:19,550

In fact, one of the slogans  
was [SPEAKING POLISH]..

250

00:13:19,550 --> 00:13:20,900

I remember that.

251

00:13:20,900 --> 00:13:21,950

I'll never forget it.

252

00:13:21,950 --> 00:13:24,845

Didn't mean much to me at  
that time, but translated,

253

00:13:24,845 --> 00:13:30,170

it means, "one should go to  
one's own for what is one's--"

254

00:13:30,170 --> 00:13:31,260

what belongs to you.

255  
00:13:31,260 --> 00:13:33,960  
In other words,  
don't go to Jews.

256  
00:13:33,960 --> 00:13:37,050  
And this then is in 1938, 1937?

257  
00:13:37,050 --> 00:13:41,420  
1938, I think, almost toward  
the outbreak of the war.

258  
00:13:41,420 --> 00:13:43,770  
Just, I didn't speculate on it.

259  
00:13:43,770 --> 00:13:45,000  
I simply accepted it.

260  
00:13:45,000 --> 00:13:45,500  
Yeah.

261  
00:13:45,500 --> 00:13:48,650  
I didn't understand it.

262  
00:13:48,650 --> 00:13:53,960  
Did you yourself feel tension,  
you know, sort of building up?

263  
00:13:53,960 --> 00:13:57,920  
I detected tension  
only with my parents.

264  
00:13:57,920 --> 00:14:02,660  
Traditionally, we went  
away for the entire summer

265  
00:14:02,660 --> 00:14:06,095  
vacation, spending  
half of it at,

266  
00:14:06,095 --> 00:14:09,140  
most of the time, my

grandparents' on my mother's

267

00:14:09,140 --> 00:14:14,130  
side, and the other half at  
this small local resort place,

268

00:14:14,130 --> 00:14:17,850  
[Place name] a very beautiful  
town in the mountains.

269

00:14:17,850 --> 00:14:23,420  
And they were very apprehensive  
about splitting up.

270

00:14:23,420 --> 00:14:26,300  
Most of the time, my father  
stayed behind and spend

271

00:14:26,300 --> 00:14:28,190  
maybe two weeks  
with us, and then

272

00:14:28,190 --> 00:14:32,640  
we went back home together, so  
that we split up at that point

273

00:14:32,640 --> 00:14:34,290  
every summer, my  
father staying behind,

274

00:14:34,290 --> 00:14:36,380  
and we went off on our vacation.

275

00:14:36,380 --> 00:14:37,350  
With your mother.

276

00:14:37,350 --> 00:14:40,210  
Right, my mother and my sister.

277

00:14:40,210 --> 00:14:41,960  
OK, and the splitting up was?

278



00:14:41,960 --> 00:14:47,300

So in 1939, it  
was the first time

279

00:14:47,300 --> 00:14:51,440

that I noticed they were  
having some arguments,

280

00:14:51,440 --> 00:14:54,200

whether we should  
all leave together

281

00:14:54,200 --> 00:14:57,890

or whether we should simply  
do what we did in the past,

282

00:14:57,890 --> 00:15:00,710

with my father staying behind  
and joining us for the last two

283

00:15:00,710 --> 00:15:01,670

weeks of vacation.

284

00:15:01,670 --> 00:15:03,670

In other words, your  
father stayed behind simply

285

00:15:03,670 --> 00:15:05,044

to mind the business?

286

00:15:05,044 --> 00:15:05,544

Yes, yes.

287

00:15:05,544 --> 00:15:06,960

Exactly, exactly.

288

00:15:06,960 --> 00:15:09,800

And then in 1939?

289

00:15:09,800 --> 00:15:13,400

They were having  
discussions on that subject.

290

00:15:13,400 --> 00:15:16,660

My mother was very  
reluctant to go without him,

291

00:15:16,660 --> 00:15:18,380

and he felt it was  
necessary for him

292

00:15:18,380 --> 00:15:22,950

to stay because there was a  
lot of work for him to do.

293

00:15:22,950 --> 00:15:28,490

And he did stay, and of  
course, as we now know,

294

00:15:28,490 --> 00:15:31,520

just shortly before we  
were scheduled to return,

295

00:15:31,520 --> 00:15:34,850

the war broke out, And  
I hadn't seen my father

296

00:15:34,850 --> 00:15:36,770

until a few months  
after the war broke out.

297

00:15:36,770 --> 00:15:39,280

298

00:15:39,280 --> 00:15:41,400

OK, so in other words--

299

00:15:41,400 --> 00:15:45,400

let's see if we can  
put some months.

300

00:15:45,400 --> 00:15:47,770

You were away during  
the summer months.

301

00:15:47,770 --> 00:15:49,300  
July and August.

302  
00:15:49,300 --> 00:15:51,640  
August, 1939.

303  
00:15:51,640 --> 00:15:55,990  
And you're with your mother,  
and your father reluctantly

304  
00:15:55,990 --> 00:15:58,120  
stayed behind in the town.

305  
00:15:58,120 --> 00:16:02,020  
The war breaks out, and  
what happened at that point?

306  
00:16:02,020 --> 00:16:04,170  
Well, we lost all  
communications with him.

307  
00:16:04,170 --> 00:16:04,990  
Right.

308  
00:16:04,990 --> 00:16:08,440  
And the war lasted  
a few weeks when

309  
00:16:08,440 --> 00:16:10,420  
Poland was finally overcome.

310  
00:16:10,420 --> 00:16:12,160  
Right.

311  
00:16:12,160 --> 00:16:19,700  
My father managed to travel by  
whatever means were available.

312  
00:16:19,700 --> 00:16:24,730  
And I think that in  
October, I saw him again.

313

00:16:24,730 --> 00:16:28,820

He came to us, to the  
small town of Tuch<sup>3</sup>w,

314

00:16:28,820 --> 00:16:32,450

which is where my grandparents  
lived on my mother's side.

315

00:16:32,450 --> 00:16:35,690

And you had not heard from  
your father this entire time.

316

00:16:35,690 --> 00:16:36,880

Until he came back, no.

317

00:16:36,880 --> 00:16:38,872

Until he came back.

318

00:16:38,872 --> 00:16:40,080

He didn't know what happened.

319

00:16:40,080 --> 00:16:40,390

Right.

320

00:16:40,390 --> 00:16:41,807

There was no  
communication at all,

321

00:16:41,807 --> 00:16:43,460

I assume, with the entire town.

322

00:16:43,460 --> 00:16:46,060

Well, how far away  
was this town from--

323

00:16:46,060 --> 00:16:49,210

Well maybe it's --

324

00:16:49,210 --> 00:16:49,920

From my hometown?

325

00:16:49,920 --> 00:16:50,420

Yeah.

326

00:16:50,420 --> 00:16:55,435

Well, maybe two, two and  
a half hours by train.

327

00:16:55,435 --> 00:16:59,540

OK, so you were reunited  
then with your father

328

00:16:59,540 --> 00:17:01,610

after a few months.

329

00:17:01,610 --> 00:17:04,500

OK, and what happened then?

330

00:17:04,500 --> 00:17:10,130

Well, we were together, and we  
lived in my grandparents' home.

331

00:17:10,130 --> 00:17:19,160

And every day, we were notified  
of new rules and regulations

332

00:17:19,160 --> 00:17:20,839

that were posted on  
the bulletin board

333

00:17:20,839 --> 00:17:26,990

and given out to the so-called  
Judenaltester, the head

334

00:17:26,990 --> 00:17:29,670

of the Jewish community, which  
was appointed by the Germans.

335

00:17:29,670 --> 00:17:30,170

Right.

336

00:17:30,170 --> 00:17:31,850

So you had a Judenrat  
in that city.

337

00:17:31,850 --> 00:17:32,350

Yes.

338

00:17:32,350 --> 00:17:34,880

A very small town, your  
grandparents' town.

339

00:17:34,880 --> 00:17:35,840

Yes.

340

00:17:35,840 --> 00:17:38,090

There was no consideration  
of going back.

341

00:17:38,090 --> 00:17:41,070

No, whatsoever.

342

00:17:41,070 --> 00:17:43,650

And we eventually left TuchÃ³w.

343

00:17:43,650 --> 00:17:45,830

But did you know what had  
happened to the Jews who

344

00:17:45,830 --> 00:17:47,280

remained in your town?

345

00:17:47,280 --> 00:17:47,780

No.

346

00:17:47,780 --> 00:17:51,400

347

00:17:51,400 --> 00:17:52,510

They were dispersed.

348

00:17:52,510 --> 00:17:54,490

I mean, each went in  
different directions.

349

00:17:54,490 --> 00:18:01,750

I know that from my own family,  
aunts and uncles and such,

350  
00:18:01,750 --> 00:18:06,670  
some went to Russia, to the  
Eastern side of Poland, which

351  
00:18:06,670 --> 00:18:14,320  
was occupied by Russia, and the  
others went to larger cities,

352  
00:18:14,320 --> 00:18:15,910  
but they were dispersed.

353  
00:18:15,910 --> 00:18:18,490  
Eventually, we went  
to Krosno, which

354  
00:18:18,490 --> 00:18:21,510  
was the town where I was  
born, with my grandparents.

355  
00:18:21,510 --> 00:18:25,240  
And my father's-- actually,  
not my father's grandparents,

356  
00:18:25,240 --> 00:18:29,110  
but that was the nearest town  
to where my father's parents

357  
00:18:29,110 --> 00:18:30,730  
lived.

358  
00:18:30,730 --> 00:18:32,450  
And we stayed there awhile.

359  
00:18:32,450 --> 00:18:35,770

360  
00:18:35,770 --> 00:18:38,140  
Why did you move  
just from one town

361

00:18:38,140 --> 00:18:39,400  
to the other at that point?

362

00:18:39,400 --> 00:18:42,870  
I don't remember anymore.

363

00:18:42,870 --> 00:18:45,150  
I don't remember  
the reason for that.

364

00:18:45,150 --> 00:18:49,942  
I guess my father wanted  
to see his parents

365

00:18:49,942 --> 00:18:50,900  
or something like that.

366

00:18:50,900 --> 00:18:52,080  
It's speculation.

367

00:18:52,080 --> 00:18:55,590  
I really don't remember  
any particular reason.

368

00:18:55,590 --> 00:18:58,380  
Did your mother's parents  
come along with you, or just

369

00:18:58,380 --> 00:18:59,900  
your immediate--

370

00:18:59,900 --> 00:19:02,170  
No, my mother's parents  
remained behind.

371

00:19:02,170 --> 00:19:05,850

372

00:19:05,850 --> 00:19:16,570  
Oh, I think what happened,  
in time, we were required,



373

00:19:16,570 --> 00:19:18,220  
the Jewish community  
was required,

374

00:19:18,220 --> 00:19:21,220  
to supply a certain  
number of people to work.

375

00:19:21,220 --> 00:19:28,310  
And some of the people in our  
family were taken to work,

376

00:19:28,310 --> 00:19:30,070  
and one of them  
did not come back.

377

00:19:30,070 --> 00:19:32,980

378

00:19:32,980 --> 00:19:35,920  
I think he was shot.

379

00:19:35,920 --> 00:19:37,140  
I don't remember who it was.

380

00:19:37,140 --> 00:19:40,890  
I think it was a young man,  
an uncle who was married

381

00:19:40,890 --> 00:19:44,680  
to one of my mother's sisters.

382

00:19:44,680 --> 00:19:48,030  
And then shortly  
thereafter, we left.

383

00:19:48,030 --> 00:19:50,825  
I don't remember any  
particular reason.

384

00:19:50,825 --> 00:19:52,200  
Maybe this was

connected with it.

385

00:19:52,200 --> 00:19:54,710

Maybe it wasn't.

386

00:19:54,710 --> 00:19:58,520

But of course, as part  
of this, what I do

387

00:19:58,520 --> 00:20:04,530

remember shortly after the  
occupation, the Germans--

388

00:20:04,530 --> 00:20:08,910

and I remember that because  
my father commented on it

389

00:20:08,910 --> 00:20:10,980

over and over again.

390

00:20:10,980 --> 00:20:14,460

The Germans went  
from house to house

391

00:20:14,460 --> 00:20:19,800

and took people out of there,  
mostly men, who were educated

392

00:20:19,800 --> 00:20:26,760

or were educators or doctors,  
lawyers, former military men

393

00:20:26,760 --> 00:20:27,870

and young people.

394

00:20:27,870 --> 00:20:32,430

They just took them  
outside and they were shot.

395

00:20:32,430 --> 00:20:33,810

You witnessed this yourself?

396

00:20:33,810 --> 00:20:36,385

I witnessed that myself.

397

00:20:36,385 --> 00:20:38,010

I didn't witness the  
shooting, but they

398

00:20:38,010 --> 00:20:42,540

loaded them up on the trucks  
and the word came back.

399

00:20:42,540 --> 00:20:44,760

And what amazed my father--

400

00:20:44,760 --> 00:20:46,450

This was before  
you moved-- sorry,

401

00:20:46,450 --> 00:20:48,700

to make sure I know this--  
before you moved to Krosno.

402

00:20:48,700 --> 00:20:50,490

Before I moved to Krosno, right.

403

00:20:50,490 --> 00:20:55,800

These Germans, these groups,  
a dozen or so at a time,

404

00:20:55,800 --> 00:20:58,710

came with a long list  
of names and addresses.

405

00:20:58,710 --> 00:21:00,450

They knew exactly  
where they were going

406

00:21:00,450 --> 00:21:02,070

and for whom they were looking.

407

00:21:02,070 --> 00:21:04,368

Those names were  
provided by the Judenrat.

408  
00:21:04,368 --> 00:21:04,910  
By the Poles.

409  
00:21:04,910 --> 00:21:06,878  
No, by the Poles.

410  
00:21:06,878 --> 00:21:07,670  
When you say that--

411  
00:21:07,670 --> 00:21:08,565  
By Polish spies.

412  
00:21:08,565 --> 00:21:10,890

413  
00:21:10,890 --> 00:21:11,890  
You had mentioned that--

414  
00:21:11,890 --> 00:21:14,610  
Most of those people were Jews,  
but not all of them were Jews.

415  
00:21:14,610 --> 00:21:15,450  
Right.

416  
00:21:15,450 --> 00:21:16,985  
Many Poles were also taken.

417  
00:21:16,985 --> 00:21:20,035

418  
00:21:20,035 --> 00:21:21,535  
Well, the Poles who  
were taken, were

419  
00:21:21,535 --> 00:21:23,800  
they politically active Poles?

420  
00:21:23,800 --> 00:21:27,560  
They were either politically

active or formerly belonging

421

00:21:27,560 --> 00:21:32,860  
to a socialist party, perhaps,  
or in a position of leadership.

422

00:21:32,860 --> 00:21:35,840  
Anyone, apparently, that  
seemed like a potential threat

423

00:21:35,840 --> 00:21:40,520  
to them, or potentially  
a leader of a resistance,

424

00:21:40,520 --> 00:21:41,390  
was taken and shot.

425

00:21:41,390 --> 00:21:45,443

426

00:21:45,443 --> 00:21:47,360  
The only reason I asked  
you about the Judenrat

427

00:21:47,360 --> 00:21:49,152  
is because you had  
mentioned that there was

428

00:21:49,152 --> 00:21:51,320  
a Jewish council in the town.

429

00:21:51,320 --> 00:21:51,920  
Yes.

430

00:21:51,920 --> 00:21:55,970  
And I was just  
wondering what kind

431

00:21:55,970 --> 00:21:57,470  
of relationship  
or perception you

432

00:21:57,470 --> 00:22:00,320  
had of the relationship  
between the Jewish council

433  
00:22:00,320 --> 00:22:01,870  
in the town--

434  
00:22:01,870 --> 00:22:04,880  
Well, they were primarily  
there to carry out

435  
00:22:04,880 --> 00:22:08,930  
the orders of the Germans, to  
supply the number of people

436  
00:22:08,930 --> 00:22:12,080  
to work, to supply the  
number of fur coats

437  
00:22:12,080 --> 00:22:15,350  
or the number of pounds  
of gold or whatever they

438  
00:22:15,350 --> 00:22:17,670  
were required to do that time.

439  
00:22:17,670 --> 00:22:20,120  
And every week, there  
was something else

440  
00:22:20,120 --> 00:22:23,510  
that the Jewish community  
had to give up or deliver,

441  
00:22:23,510 --> 00:22:26,160  
and they were in charge  
of delivering it.

442  
00:22:26,160 --> 00:22:26,990  
Yeah.

443  
00:22:26,990 --> 00:22:28,490  
And you were very

young at the time.

444

00:22:28,490 --> 00:22:29,470

You were 10, 11.

445

00:22:29,470 --> 00:22:30,550

I was was 11.

446

00:22:30,550 --> 00:22:33,116

11 years old at the time.

447

00:22:33,116 --> 00:22:36,980

Yeah, that's right.

'39, I was 11 year old.

448

00:22:36,980 --> 00:22:39,000

Did you have any  
feelings toward--

449

00:22:39,000 --> 00:22:42,010

did you understand the role  
or the function of the Jews?

450

00:22:42,010 --> 00:22:44,470

No, I did not  
understand anything.

451

00:22:44,470 --> 00:22:49,990

I just had fear because  
everyone was so insecure,

452

00:22:49,990 --> 00:22:52,820

and people were looking  
for hiding places.

453

00:22:52,820 --> 00:22:56,120

My father at one  
time, and my mother,

454

00:22:56,120 --> 00:23:01,010

were contemplating  
to give us away,

455

00:23:01,010 --> 00:23:04,490

both my sister and myself,  
to a Christian family

456

00:23:04,490 --> 00:23:07,820

for safekeeping, and  
they decided against it.

457

00:23:07,820 --> 00:23:11,450

458

00:23:11,450 --> 00:23:14,600

But I know that this  
was very seriously

459

00:23:14,600 --> 00:23:18,200

considered at that time because  
some people were doing it.

460

00:23:18,200 --> 00:23:21,530

As I mentioned previously  
before this interview,

461

00:23:21,530 --> 00:23:25,860

my wife was given  
away in such a manner.

462

00:23:25,860 --> 00:23:32,560

And this family kept her alive  
as a niece from out of town,

463

00:23:32,560 --> 00:23:35,180

but she had no identity  
papers, and this

464

00:23:35,180 --> 00:23:37,250

is how she survived the war.

465

00:23:37,250 --> 00:23:41,772

And we visited those people,  
incidentally, six years ago.

466



00:23:41,772 --> 00:23:43,696  
Mm-hmm.

467  
00:23:43,696 --> 00:23:48,640  
Do you have any  
idea how many men

468  
00:23:48,640 --> 00:23:50,740  
from the town, or  
young boys, were

469  
00:23:50,740 --> 00:23:54,350  
taken during the time  
you were living there?

470  
00:23:54,350 --> 00:23:57,550  
No, not really,  
because I remember

471  
00:23:57,550 --> 00:24:00,390  
the names being mentioned of  
people that my family knew.

472  
00:24:00,390 --> 00:24:01,030  
Yeah.

473  
00:24:01,030 --> 00:24:06,290  
But I really don't  
remember about the others.

474  
00:24:06,290 --> 00:24:08,770  
How long were you there  
before you went to Krosno?

475  
00:24:08,770 --> 00:24:10,880  
In TuchÃ³w?

476  
00:24:10,880 --> 00:24:16,920  
After the war started, the  
war broke out, maybe a year,

477  
00:24:16,920 --> 00:24:17,780  
maybe nine months.

478  
00:24:17,780 --> 00:24:21,208

479  
00:24:21,208 --> 00:24:22,625  
Now, during that  
nine-month period

480  
00:24:22,625 --> 00:24:28,675  
or that 10-month period, your  
father, he was sent to work.

481  
00:24:28,675 --> 00:24:29,800  
My father was sent to work.

482  
00:24:29,800 --> 00:24:33,310  
I remember the very first  
time when this came out

483  
00:24:33,310 --> 00:24:36,280  
because I was with him, and  
I don't know what happened,

484  
00:24:36,280 --> 00:24:38,700  
but I wasn't able to  
do any of the work.

485  
00:24:38,700 --> 00:24:42,160  
And apparently, a lot of  
people were doing it for me.

486  
00:24:42,160 --> 00:24:47,440  
A train pulled up at the  
railroad siding and left,

487  
00:24:47,440 --> 00:24:50,470  
I don't remember, two or  
three railroad cars of cement,

488  
00:24:50,470 --> 00:24:53,200  
cement bags.

489

00:24:53,200 --> 00:24:56,610

And we were required to  
unload it very quickly.

490

00:24:56,610 --> 00:25:00,970

Now, the guards were  
whipping everybody

491

00:25:00,970 --> 00:25:02,290

who wasn't moving fast enough.

492

00:25:02,290 --> 00:25:04,540

It was total chaos.

493

00:25:04,540 --> 00:25:07,690

People were running, and I  
can't believe to this day

494

00:25:07,690 --> 00:25:09,790

that my father was  
carrying a bag of cement.

495

00:25:09,790 --> 00:25:11,650

Today, since I'm  
in the business,

496

00:25:11,650 --> 00:25:17,060

I know what it weighs, and  
he was no great athlete.

497

00:25:17,060 --> 00:25:17,560

Right.

498

00:25:17,560 --> 00:25:21,910

He carried it, and  
very quickly, too.

499

00:25:21,910 --> 00:25:24,040

And that was one of the details.

500

00:25:24,040 --> 00:25:27,415

Then I remember when the  
winter came, we had--

501  
00:25:27,415 --> 00:25:31,870  
I don't remember the reason  
for it, simply roundups,

502  
00:25:31,870 --> 00:25:32,740  
so-called--

503  
00:25:32,740 --> 00:25:35,810

504  
00:25:35,810 --> 00:25:41,890  
they used to call it  
Aktion, roundups of people.

505  
00:25:41,890 --> 00:25:43,032  
And they were taking--

506  
00:25:43,032 --> 00:25:45,490  
I don't know whether they had  
any particular people in mind

507  
00:25:45,490 --> 00:25:47,300  
or just Jews in general.

508  
00:25:47,300 --> 00:25:49,120  
They were taken  
out, and anybody who

509  
00:25:49,120 --> 00:25:53,050  
was seen fleeing from the ranks  
of those that were gathered

510  
00:25:53,050 --> 00:25:55,150  
was shot on sight.

511  
00:25:55,150 --> 00:25:57,910  
And I do remember that  
that's another reason why

512  
00:25:57,910 --> 00:25:59,920  
I feel that it was

about late spring

513

00:25:59,920 --> 00:26:02,683

when we left, because  
people were shot,

514

00:26:02,683 --> 00:26:04,100

and of course,  
they were bleeding.

515

00:26:04,100 --> 00:26:07,430

And snow eventually fell and  
froze, and the whole thing.

516

00:26:07,430 --> 00:26:10,950

And I remember when the  
snow started to melt,

517

00:26:10,950 --> 00:26:14,050

the blood and the stains  
came up again, all over again

518

00:26:14,050 --> 00:26:15,500

in the spring.

519

00:26:15,500 --> 00:26:17,890

And this is how I  
know that we must have

520

00:26:17,890 --> 00:26:19,360

left after the snows melted.

521

00:26:19,360 --> 00:26:22,840

522

00:26:22,840 --> 00:26:24,940

During that nine-month  
period that you

523

00:26:24,940 --> 00:26:27,430

were living in  
the town, I assume

524

00:26:27,430 --> 00:26:29,544  
the family was living in fear.

525

00:26:29,544 --> 00:26:32,380  
Yes.

526

00:26:32,380 --> 00:26:36,240  
Was your mother required  
to work at the time also?

527

00:26:36,240 --> 00:26:37,690  
No.

528

00:26:37,690 --> 00:26:39,970  
So she's staying in  
the home, your sister.

529

00:26:39,970 --> 00:26:40,470  
Yes.

530

00:26:40,470 --> 00:26:43,690  
They mostly wanted men.

531

00:26:43,690 --> 00:26:48,070  
And there was the same situation  
as far as the workforce

532

00:26:48,070 --> 00:26:52,480  
is concerned in Krosno.

533

00:26:52,480 --> 00:26:54,000  
And after the  
arrival of Krosno--

534

00:26:54,000 --> 00:26:57,990

535

00:26:57,990 --> 00:26:59,630  
what happened?

536

00:26:59,630 --> 00:27:00,760

Oh.

537

00:27:00,760 --> 00:27:04,890

The work parties were  
again ordered out

538

00:27:04,890 --> 00:27:13,050

by the elders of the  
Jewish community.

539

00:27:13,050 --> 00:27:15,810

And one of these work  
parties consisted

540

00:27:15,810 --> 00:27:23,160

of my uncle, my two cousins,  
my aunt, about eight members

541

00:27:23,160 --> 00:27:25,410

of my family with the  
exception of my father

542

00:27:25,410 --> 00:27:28,880

and my mother my sister,  
but including myself.

543

00:27:28,880 --> 00:27:32,310

And we were sent out to a  
refinery outside of town

544

00:27:32,310 --> 00:27:35,220

in Krosno where we worked.

545

00:27:35,220 --> 00:27:41,130

We were treated  
quite well there as

546

00:27:41,130 --> 00:27:44,720

compared to other work parties.

547

00:27:44,720 --> 00:27:49,380

We were fed, and this routine  
went on on a daily basis.

548  
00:27:49,380 --> 00:27:52,740  
We were taken out on trucks  
and brought back on trucks.

549  
00:27:52,740 --> 00:27:55,590  
After a few months  
of that, one day, we

550  
00:27:55,590 --> 00:27:58,490  
were taken out on  
trucks to the refinery

551  
00:27:58,490 --> 00:28:01,230  
and we did not return anymore.

552  
00:28:01,230 --> 00:28:05,610  
It seems that all the Jews  
in Krosno were gathered.

553  
00:28:05,610 --> 00:28:08,190  
At that time, there was  
a small ghetto organized.

554  
00:28:08,190 --> 00:28:10,470  
And all the Jews in Krosno  
lived in that ghetto,

555  
00:28:10,470 --> 00:28:12,510  
and the work parties  
went out of this ghetto

556  
00:28:12,510 --> 00:28:15,540  
and came back to the ghetto.

557  
00:28:15,540 --> 00:28:18,540  
One day, we went out  
and we did not return.

558  
00:28:18,540 --> 00:28:21,910  
We were given quarters  
at the refinery.



559

00:28:21,910 --> 00:28:22,610

OK.

560

00:28:22,610 --> 00:28:25,210

Now, what happened afterwards--

561

00:28:25,210 --> 00:28:28,240

That group, you said, was  
yourself and about nine?

562

00:28:28,240 --> 00:28:30,760

My aunt, who's my  
father's sister,

563

00:28:30,760 --> 00:28:34,825

her husband, her two children,  
which was a boy and a girl.

564

00:28:34,825 --> 00:28:36,953

And how old were they?

565

00:28:36,953 --> 00:28:38,620

They were older than  
I. They were older.

566

00:28:38,620 --> 00:28:41,070

They were about four or  
five years older than I.

567

00:28:41,070 --> 00:28:42,960

We were young men and women.

568

00:28:42,960 --> 00:28:44,530

Right.

569

00:28:44,530 --> 00:28:47,890

And we were kept there.

570

00:28:47,890 --> 00:28:49,660

Your sister and  
your parents stayed?

571

00:28:49,660 --> 00:28:51,230

Stayed behind.

572

00:28:51,230 --> 00:28:51,730

OK.

573

00:28:51,730 --> 00:28:56,290

And that is the last time I had  
seen my sister and my mother.

574

00:28:56,290 --> 00:29:01,908

And my father I had seen  
again a year and a half later,

575

00:29:01,908 --> 00:29:02,950

but that's another story.

576

00:29:02,950 --> 00:29:05,760

577

00:29:05,760 --> 00:29:10,290

I found out subsequently  
that the ghetto in Krosno

578

00:29:10,290 --> 00:29:17,540

was terminated, and whoever  
was in the ghetto at that time

579

00:29:17,540 --> 00:29:20,520

was taken to a larger  
ghetto, which was, I guess,

580

00:29:20,520 --> 00:29:23,667

a county seat.

581

00:29:23,667 --> 00:29:25,250

It was a ghetto for  
the entire region,

582

00:29:25,250 --> 00:29:28,070

because a lot of these smaller  
ghettos were then terminated,

583  
00:29:28,070 --> 00:29:31,680  
and all these people  
were taking to JÄ™drzejÄ³w,

584  
00:29:31,680 --> 00:29:36,220  
which was a larger town,  
and it had a larger ghetto.

585  
00:29:36,220 --> 00:29:40,920

586  
00:29:40,920 --> 00:29:45,145  
That was the last that I had  
seen my mother and my sister.

587  
00:29:45,145 --> 00:29:46,770  
So you had to be  
working in the factory

588  
00:29:46,770 --> 00:29:51,040  
then, with the other members  
of your family for about--

589  
00:29:51,040 --> 00:29:52,230  
It was a refinery.

590  
00:29:52,230 --> 00:29:56,560  
At the refinery for what,  
seven months, eight months?

591  
00:29:56,560 --> 00:29:57,390  
Maybe nine months.

592  
00:29:57,390 --> 00:30:02,050  
For about nine months until you  
were told you can now return,

593  
00:30:02,050 --> 00:30:04,410  
and there was no prior warning.

594  
00:30:04,410 --> 00:30:05,640

Oh, I see.

595

00:30:05,640 --> 00:30:07,020

No, no, no.

596

00:30:07,020 --> 00:30:09,930

We worked there for a very  
short time, maybe six months,

597

00:30:09,930 --> 00:30:13,343

maybe three months before we  
were told we can now return.

598

00:30:13,343 --> 00:30:14,760

When you were told  
you can return,

599

00:30:14,760 --> 00:30:17,010

you were told obviously when  
you were at the refinery.

600

00:30:17,010 --> 00:30:20,130

We were given quarters to sleep,  
to stay, and we were fed there.

601

00:30:20,130 --> 00:30:22,920

And my aunt and my cousin  
were in charge of the food,

602

00:30:22,920 --> 00:30:24,580

of the kitchen.

603

00:30:24,580 --> 00:30:29,160

And we were given food supplies  
and sleeping accommodations,

604

00:30:29,160 --> 00:30:32,250

and we worked there  
for about six months.

605

00:30:32,250 --> 00:30:35,970

How many people were  
working in this refinery?

606  
00:30:35,970 --> 00:30:39,210  
Maybe 30, a total of 30.

607  
00:30:39,210 --> 00:30:45,210  
And we were treated quite,  
I would say normally.

608  
00:30:45,210 --> 00:30:47,010  
I didn't feel any animosity.

609  
00:30:47,010 --> 00:30:50,540  
In fact, the people,  
there were no SS guards.

610  
00:30:50,540 --> 00:30:51,980  
It was one civilian  
administrator,

611  
00:30:51,980 --> 00:30:55,830  
and they were  
mostly army people.

612  
00:30:55,830 --> 00:30:59,400  
They were nice, as  
pleasant as the one could

613  
00:30:59,400 --> 00:31:02,070  
expect them to be.

614  
00:31:02,070 --> 00:31:05,370  
Subsequently, only  
recently, I came

615  
00:31:05,370 --> 00:31:07,800  
across someone who was  
with me at the refinery,

616  
00:31:07,800 --> 00:31:11,010  
and I haven't seen him  
since, Rabbi [Personal name]

617

00:31:11,010 --> 00:31:16,690  
He lives in Long Island now, and  
of course, he is today a rabbi.

618  
00:31:16,690 --> 00:31:20,550  
He was very religious  
then, very, very religious.

619  
00:31:20,550 --> 00:31:23,550  
And he filled me  
in on many details

620  
00:31:23,550 --> 00:31:25,530  
that I was not even aware of.

621  
00:31:25,530 --> 00:31:27,610  
I couldn't believe some of them.

622  
00:31:27,610 --> 00:31:34,500  
For instance, one of the people,  
one of the army officers,

623  
00:31:34,500 --> 00:31:37,950  
important people  
in the refinery,

624  
00:31:37,950 --> 00:31:46,350  
was very helpful to us by  
giving us medical supplies

625  
00:31:46,350 --> 00:31:50,640  
and giving us extra food,  
and this man subsequently,

626  
00:31:50,640 --> 00:31:52,530  
according to this  
Rabbi [Personal name]

627  
00:31:52,530 --> 00:31:58,050  
lost his life during one of  
the attempts on Hitler's life.

628  
00:31:58,050 --> 00:32:01,860

He was apparently blacklisted  
for quite some time,

629

00:32:01,860 --> 00:32:06,270  
and he was, according to  
this Rabbi [Personal name]

630

00:32:06,270 --> 00:32:09,150  
an extraordinary person.

631

00:32:09,150 --> 00:32:12,620  
He risked, truly, his safety.

632

00:32:12,620 --> 00:32:15,000