

Good afternoon, I'm Bernard Weinstein, director of the Kean College Oral Testimonies Project at the Holocaust Resource Center. Sharing the interview with me is Dan [? Gober. ?] We welcome Aaron Rosenblum. Mr. Rosenblum, thank you for coming here. And would you begin by telling us a little bit about your early life?

Thank you. When this 1939, September the 1st, I was living in Pabianice. In the evening we find out that war broke out. There was no radios, no television, no newspapers.

How old were you when the war broke out?

24 years. And the next day, this was Saturday morning. Hundreds of people, thousands of people came to Pabianice with wagons. A lot of them they walk, hijacked. And they tell us the story of what's happened. Like 5:00 in the morning Friday, September 1st, the war broke out.

After a half an hour, an hour, half the town was liquidated with bombs. People got killed, laying in the street. So people start running, and everybody wherever they could.

Some of them went to Czestochowa, was other little towns. Mostly came, but everybody wants to go to Lodz. It's a Jewish community, a big one, and they figure out maybe the war is not there. Nobody know what's happened.

After this was Saturday, Sunday, Monday the Germans was already in Pabianice, too. But we don't see them in the city the other way. Monday morning they started picking up people to work, the Germans. They catch people in the street. They went into the houses. They broke open the doors. They didn't knock on the doors, they just came in.

Were these just Jews they were picking or Poles also?

No, only Jews.

Only Jews.

The problem was the Polish people showed where the Jews live. The Germans didn't know who was a Jew, who was not a Jew. See, that's why I said, Polish people are the worst with the Germans. They show even in the fact that we have in Pabianice the same Polish people work with us, came in and start-- how they call it-- stealing and taking whatever they could.

The Jews have no business. After three days was no Jewish business. They took it over the Volksdeutsche, they call them Volksdeutsche. It was a mixture like Polaks with Germans, with the marriage and inter-marriage, whatever it is. Or maybe their father was a German, he was a lucky guy. Because he was a Volksdeutsche, they call him Volksdeutsche. I don't know if you understand what I mean. He comes from Germans.

He came from German stock?

That's it. They came another way and took over the Jewish business. The Germans needed to work.

It was a lot of destruction in Pabianice, too. They throw bombs, too. We have to clean this. So they took the Jewish people to clean.

There was a lot of dead horses because Poland didn't have trucks with tanks too many, whatever it was. It was a lot of the buildings was destroyed, the Jewish people have to clean. This was going on constantly, day after day after day.

Was no food, was no bakeries. Yes was, you're lucky you find a piece of bread. But after a few weeks start to straighten up a little bit. The Germans opened up some bakeries, they open up some groceries. By mean groceries, you could go and buy if you have the money. It was mostly a black market. People starved.

No schools, especially for Jews was no schools. There was no public school for Jews, there was no cheder, there was nothing. If you want to make a cheder you have to do it in a house, like you take together in a few houses the children. There was a lot of kids in Poland Jewish people have a lot of children.

Excuse me, at the time the war broke out, what was your occupation?

I told you, we have a manufacturing in Pabianice in the city.

Manufacturing what?

Clothing.

Clothing.

Yeah, the material. I was working there in this factory. We have maybe about 80 people working. It was some Jewish people, mostly it was non-Jewish people. When the Jewish people have-- when somebody has a factory in Europe he has a lot of Gentiles working, because it was more of a Gentile for this. And it was a nice living, they make a nice living.

And when after the war broke out you didn't open up the factory no more. It was finished. A week later, somebody was dead already. Volksdeutsche on a German and took it over. You couldn't go near that. You have nothing to say.

So what's happened, even the rich people the next day was a poor guy. He has to sell the people who sold the clothes, people sold the diamonds, whatever they have, some valuable stuff to go to buy in the black market piece of bread or whatever or potatoes. And this was going on. And the worst problem was they took every day Jewish people to work.

Beating you, hitting you over the head, no food. You didn't get a sandwich on the job. You worked 12, 14 hours, you dead tired and then you have to go home with a group. You want to walk, after a month too you have to wear a swastika. They called-- not a swastika, I mean, a Magen David.

The Jewish star.

Star or some of them got it on their arm, a white band. Evening was a curfew, you couldn't go out no more til 5:00, 6:00. At night you have to be in the house. This was going on and on until they started to liquidate Pabianice.

How long did it take before they started liquidating?

Pabianice was lucky, it was 1939, 1940, end of 1940, '41 they liquidate Pabianice. They liquidate every day a different little town. There was a lot of towns was only living 500 Jews, 300 Jews. There was the worst things happened.

And how were you yourself getting along during this time? How were you--

Well I was--

Just--

I went-- I tried to hide myself not to go to work. You asking hiding? There was no name. We have no names.

Just the number?

Well, numbers was later. But they come in, they usually the Volksdeutsche. The Polish people, they come from the Germans thing, they show where Jews living. The German didn't know that you live here a Jewish guy. He just came yesterday, before yesterday. So the Polish people showed where the Jews living. And mostly was the victim the rich Jews, they was the victim.

After a month they come with trucks and they took out everything from your house. If you have a store they took everything out. If you have a silver candelabras, or you have jewelry you have to give them. You have to give them.

See, in large what they did, they open up a special office they're calling the [GERMAN]. This was a German word, [GERMAN]. This is the [GERMAN]. This was a special place where they find out who was rich, they picked them up in the middle of the night or in the morning, and they took them to this place.

Before he walked into the place they beat him up, and they knocked his teeth out or his eyes out. And then they told him where is your jewelry? Where is your fur coat? Where is this? Some people didn't have. They beat them until death.

I was in the [GERMAN]. I got beaten up. You ask me how I come out alive, I was almost half dead. I gave them what I have. I have nothing, and I give him nothing.

When they liquidate the cities you couldn't take with you nothing, just what you wear. I survive. Then from Lodz I couldn't stay long. I signed myself up I want to go to work. There was no food. There was nothing.

I went to work in a little-- was like a little factory there. They call it Dombrowa, between Lodz and Pabianice. And this was nothing, it was just an empty building where they brought us 180 people.

There was no dishes, was no food, was nothing. They say you have to make yourself beds and build a stove to cook. And they say the next day we bring you something to eat.

They brought something to eat, from the clothes. What came in while they brought the beginning something from Lodz, like a piece of bread, they make soup. They make soup from leaves and hot water. This was the soup.

After five, six days they start to come in trucks. After we build up ourselves beds, from wood. We make ourselves two by fours, and we make ourselves to lay down. We work very hard to put together this for nothing, like a desert.

They was coming in trucks, and they tell us to unload the trucks. The trucks was packed in packages, I told you, like little packages. We could see there was people was gassed in the automobiles, and they-- how do you call them? The mobiles.

Vans.

The van, it was mostly was scared the smell from the gas burned. And we have to unpack this, and looking for jewelry. Well, we find it there. We find it there, diamond rings, we find watches. We find it and something, bracelets, behind silver, something, people over there.

When they went to the vent when they gassed them some people took with them like he has a silver watch or whatever it is. And we start unpacking this. We find food in the packages, too. People didn't know this they're going to be gassed. The food even was gassed.

We ate this. It was hungry. The bread was like toast, the bread was toast, let's put this way.

Did they allow you to eat this food?

They didn't care. It was what they took, they didn't care what we did, couldn't care if we eat the dirt so long they don't have to give us. We have to take every jacket, every pants, and take it apart. We take off, usually we find a lot of money in the shoulders. And the packages inside, and they pack it inside the clothes.

We find in shoes. We have to break each shoe, we have to rip in pieces. We find in the sole-- how they're calling this?

Heel?

In the heels, we find jewelry, we find dollars. We find different kind of money. This was-- we was working, and this was coming every day, a lot of trucks. It was piled up to the sky, the clothing. We couldn't open up so fast how the trucks was coming in.

Was there somebody that you had to hand this over to? The jewels and the--

Yes. They make us put a pail, each group, they make us. Each group was sitting 10 people. They make us sitting around 10 people on the deck outside. It was a big-- lots of land. When it was raining we didn't work. We have to do something else.

But mostly because the SS was wire around all over. The SS was going around like they was watching us. And every couple hours if the pail was full with the jewelry, whatever we have, we have to bring in it was an office there with a Nazi sitting there.

I remember his name, Mayer. Mayer, this was his name, M-A-Y-E-R, a Nazi. He was beaten us to death. Even if you bring in the jewelry, he beating you. This was their trick, to scare us the death.

See, we were all was behind us. You know what's behind me? We don't know what's going on. Everybody lost their mind. After doing with us all of a sudden, nobody was a human. They never worked in you, nobody was human.

You say you were surrounded by wire. Was this wire electrified?

No, there was wire around the whole factory. The building.

Barbed wire?

Barbed wire. And the Germans was going around maybe five, six all the time. You couldn't do it anyway with the money because you didn't go up. I tried to do it, I buried a lot of the jewelry in the ground. Well, everybody did. We never find it because we never went back.

We tried to destroy what we can just the Germans doesn't get. You couldn't buy nothing with the money anyway. You couldn't go out. Every two weeks they took us for that shower. We went from this, we went back behind Pabianice because it between Lodz and Pabianice, every two weeks.

We had that, everybody head full of lice. Took us for a shower, and they took us for a steam. So what's happened, we took out the clothes. We have to put the clothes in hot steam, dry steam, and we went in for the showers. When we came back, so the germs-- the bugs was killed. And they took us back home every two weeks.

They didn't do it for us. They was afraid they're going to get typhus and sick. They tried to protect them.

What longer was staying there, more food we have to eat. We have a lot of food. And the food was coming from the dead people, what they have in their packages, and we ate.

Then they start to bring in from as later on they got happy. After a year they've got a 400 kilo gold from us, 400 kilo gold. That means 800 pounds of gold. How you know we find out? This gold went to Lodz, a special place.

The Germans stole runaway. Every day they took in they package, the diamonds, the gold, whatever they could. What they have it was once a week was coming a truck with food for us. Some meat, some whatever soap, the canned dry soup, and they make us soup. We have a kitchen, we built everything from nothing.

We find and we come back to Lodz after I told you we liquidate half-- the liquidation Dombrowa. Half went to the gas chamber, and the other half we stay another few days, and they took us back to Lodz. When I come back to Lodz I want to work. Well, no work in Lodz, is no food. You don't work, you didn't get food.

So I was a fireman. I want to be a fireman-- whatever they told me, I want to be a fireman. Why a fireman? I was young, and they looked you up. They don't just give you a job.

They looked how you look, if you're good to go in a straw sort they calling like, working with-- see, in Lodz they're making shoes, the big boots for the Germans and straw. Or they make from clothes they make the hats.

And some people attended there, only the people can work. But you didn't work long. After a few weeks working the factory in Lodz you got sick. Well, they don't feed you. You have no food. You get a small piece of bread, one soup a day. A young man, how long can you live?

What was your physical condition like at this time?

Hmm?

What was your own physical condition?

Very good. Matter of fact in Dombrowa we have food to eat. So long you have food and was young, you survive. We didn't got the special food, the food what came in.

Why I went to be a straw-- I'm going to tell a fireman, I explain. A fireman got two soups a day. A worker got only one soup a day, and that means survival.

With two soup, the soup was-- I told you what the soup was. You find two potatoes in the soup, and the rest was water, and maybe a little grease, whatever it is. And I was in Lodz and working at the firemans, I was lucky. I'm talking for myself. I was watching everybody fireman, two fireman has to watch a factory. Because mostly Jewish people worked in the factory.

This is now the fireman's at. In this factory where I was watching, was coming in the clothes after we already cleaned up in Dombrowa. See, the clothes from Dombrowa went to Lodz, and in Lodz they put it in machines, they stripped it. They make something, you know what I'm talking?

They make mattresses from the clothes, and they make whatever they could, good stuff. They make blankets, it was a lot of stuff. It was not just clothing. There was a pillowcases, there was blankets, all the clothes what the Jews have.

Whatever they took with him, before he got killed, everything went back come to us. And then after we find all the money out-- our specialist was to find money, that's all. We didn't do no buildings. Find the money, find good stuff, and put it in the packages or in bags.

And these bags we have to load up every day. There was so much, 180 people working, and it was working. We worked 12 hours a day. It was a lot jewelry, a lot of good stuff.

We went back to the trucks, and the trucks took it to Lodz. And Lodz they took it to the manufacturing. Then the people work. They still find it after we looked through to find the money, they still find it in Lodz, too.

Because you couldn't find every-- some people hide it so like you have whatever they can. You find it even gold in the sheitel. You know what a sheitel mean?

A kerchief.

Because in Europe was a lot of religious women.

Wig, yeah.

And they wear sheitels. We throw that away, but they didn't let us. The sheitels with the hair went to Lodz, too. And this went after they cleaned it up, and this went to Germany. Everything from Lodz, what went there from Lodz went back to Germany, and they got a lot of stuff. All the new stuff, too, what the people left in the cities.

They come to us, too. It was clothing, good clothing. It was fur coats. It was new stuff, too. But this stuff we didn't take it apart. This stuff they told us to pack in big suitcases, we close it up. And this went to Lodz, and from Lodz this went back to Germany.

And I was working, when I was watching firemen in Lodz, so this factory when I was working, I was lucky. I find a friend my town. He was already, how they calling, he has a good position. What's my good position? He didn't have to work. He watch everybody else.

Mostly, you have lucky if you find somebody that works in a kitchen, or works in a bakery. For money you couldn't do nothing. You only have to have a help. So I was watching there, and once in a while I got an extra soup or an extra piece of bread. I needed to eat. I was a young man.

I would eat stones. If I could buy it, I would eat stones. Everybody was hungry. This was going on until we liquidate in August 28, 1944.

They start liquidating Lodz actually before. It was every day they catch people, and put them on a transport, and they say go to work. Lodz was 600,000 people the time when it was a ghetto. 600 people has no place to stay in Lodz because it was a ghetto.

At this time were any members of your family with you in Lodz, or were you by yourself?

Yes, my brother. The rest was already gone some places. We didn't know where. Well, I'll find out later anyway.

Was the brother you were with younger or older?

The younger, he was in Lodz with me. Yeah, he was living in Lodz. When I started they already-- everybody looked for survival. The [? column ?] I thought when I was in Lodz and I was making whatever I can, so they start liquidating people.

They didn't took fireman, they didn't took the police. They only took the poor people, the children and the women. First went the children without mothers, without fathers. People know this what's happened. How can you take a two week old child and send to work? They called it they're going to work.

Biebow, maybe you heard the name Biebow. You heard the name Biebow?

Yes.

Yeah, Biebow was staying in one place, and he swore about his life that's everybody goes to work. They tried to get the people without killing them. There was a couple of times people start to making, because there was no food, people couldn't work in the factories. There was no food.

They gave you how they're calling this, like a vegetable, frozen vegetable. They give you like five pounds every two weeks. You need it for one day. The children was dying like flies. There was no milk, forget it. Was no meat. If they gave you a meat once in a week you got horse meat. It was terrible.

I survived, I ate something, and I could hold on. I didn't got no disease in Lodz, and I survive. The 28th of August this was my time. It already was 75% Lodz liquidated, then they started taking the firemen and the police.

The [INAUDIBLE] went the first. People in the hospitals, the hospital was liquidated. It was started in July, a month before. I see it with my own eyes they took with they called an ambulance. That took them in wagons and load them up

on trains. 100 to 120 people in a train till they come to Auschwitz. [INAUDIBLE] their life.

I went to Auschwitz. We left Auschwitz, we went left Lodz like 12:00 noon. Took a long time to load up 70, 80 trains. And the Nazis were staying with the machine guns and dogs. We went overnight, 30 kilometer. Took us to go maybe 15 hours.

It was between 100 and 120 people in a train, in one wagon-- in each one. Excuse me, you needed to go to the bathroom. They put it in our-- how do you call it-- a drum. In each wagon was a drum.

When we come to Auschwitz, we're coming to Auschwitz I think it was 12:00 noon. We see a light. First of all, the trains were so close, dark, you couldn't see nothing. For cattle, a cattle train.

How long were you in the train? How many hours or how many days?

Not days, I was in Auschwitz maybe about 15 hours. It should take an hour-- 15 hours. When every train-- soon they open, the trains was locked from outside. When the train stopped they start to open up. You didn't know from the other wagons what's going on. It was sealed up.

When it comes to mine-- when they was coming to my train, to my wagon, I see what's going on. People is already laying dead in the train. They opened up the wagon, you see the dead people laying. One body was sleeping-- everybody was sleeping on each other.

Went out, you hardly could walk out. They stand, they beating you, they screaming. I walk out. And we went through after staying the line to go through [NON-ENGLISH] Mengele. I went through him.

And he showed you a really-- he didn't talk. And around him was maybe 25 Germans, Nazis. You couldn't move fast. He kick you, hit you.

And there was some children with us, too, alive. Where people hiding the kids in Lodz they don't want to send them to send them to work. That's what they're saying.

The kids was started ripping them out from the hand. Some mothers went with the children. They wanted to see a young mother with her child. They want to take the child away, and the mother go to work. That's what was the whole trick. She don't want to leave the-- she don't want to give up the child.

Did the people seem to know what left and right meant? What the motions meant?

Yes, we know already. Because we see the left was all the people, crippled, hardly walk. And on the right side was younger people. Like a father and a son went. Was a lot of people have children with 14 years, 13 years old, that if the son has to go on the left. It was a very maybe between 10,000 people you could smuggle through, a boy from 14 years or 15 years if you look tall. If he was little, forget it.

So some mothers didn't want to give up the kids. She hold it on their hand. They tried to hit her and beaten her. She said no, so they pushed her together with the child, and she went into the gas chamber.

And I was staying there after it was liquidated, the train was staying there. It was taken us maybe six, seven hours to go through the whole thing. So it was getting dark. We saw the crematorium. They pushed us in a separate place, the people they want to still be alive. And we heard the screaming.

That's still in my head. The screaming and the crying was going on. We were staying a whole day-- from afternoon till the next morning, a whole night. Us, the people can work, we hear the screaming till the morning.

When everything was dead, liquidated, there couldn't burn-- they're burning 20,000 people a day. It takes time. We saw a lot of Polish people working there. They carried the wood, because the wood was going into the crematorium.

See, they make like they put it in the wood, then they put it in the dead people, then they put the wood on the top. That's what's keep burning one after another. The next morning, everybody didn't care if you're alive, you're dead. We staying there a whole night.

In morning, already like 6:00 in the morning, they call us. We see-- they didn't call us, we see people getting less people, because it was a line maybe 3,000 young people still strong. You don't see what the front is. And they took us still in a barrack.

Each barrack was between 1,500 and 1,800 people. They pushed us in. Without beating they didn't go through. Everybody got hit. Everybody was bleeding. I got hit a couple of times my head. And that was the trick, to make you numb.

With what did they beat you?

Because to make that you can do nothing.

With what kind of--

Oh, they have a how they calling-- with the handle? The rubber--

A truncheon?

Yes. Oh, this hurts.

Yeah.

I have such a swollen eye. I was thinking I lost one eye. For a few days I couldn't see.

So we were staying there for two days in this barrack. And after two days they start coming out, the people start to take people out. We have no names. They're coming out and start to give them numbers on their hand.

I was there with a cousin, cousin was mine, too. We both have the same-- he has one number less. I have 8990, he has 8989. So I was happy to take me to work. We didn't care-- I didn't care if I die. I didn't know my name no more.

Emotionally, I was dead. But I want to live. They took us maybe-- still we didn't have food. We didn't eat the day before, and we didn't eat the same day either. Took us till 5:00 evening. And every time they have like 40 people, got the numbers, come a truck, and put you on the truck.

And then I went to Birkenau. I went to Birkenau. It was nine kilometers from Auschwitz to Birkenau. I came into Birkenau, they change us the clothes. We have to take a shower again. Who needed showers? We need food.

And they put me in a barrack. It was looking legitimate. Two people's living, two people could sleep on the-- how they're calling this? You know like from wood and straw? Two people can live. It was three stories. Bottom, the middle, and the third place. That means six people living in one.

And over there I was one day rest. They give us soup and coffee and a piece of bread. Well, they didn't give us, we have to stay in the line again. They didn't gave you in your hand.

After they called an appell we went outside. Without beating-- nothing went without beating. And they gave us a dish, a metal with a spoon. And this I have to hold all my life. This is mine stuff I can-- this is my dish what I am going to eat all the time. And I have to watch it. If I lose it, you get no food.

And I stay in the line, and finally we got the soup and a piece of bread and a small piece of margarine. No knife to put it



on. Just a piece of margarine on the bread and black coffee.

I went in. I sit on my place already. We have no chairs, we was sitting on the bed. And I ate. And they told us right away 4:00 in the morning is an appell. Appell, they're calling like in German I think it's an appell.

A roll call.

They call you. It was something ringing, and the 4:00 in the morning you have to be ready. That rings like a quarter to 4:00. And 4:00 you have to be on your feet. And that's what's happened.

We have nothing to-- what we have? We have a shirt, and they're calling the [NON-ENGLISH]. They're calling what the-- a special stripe, what I have. The pants and the jacket was striped, no pocket. Was no pocket in the pants, no pockets in the jacket.

Did they give you shoes?

Shoes, yes. They gave me shoes.

Did the shoes fit?

I was lucky fit. Some of them got it, some people got some old shoes with big feet. I'm going to tell, I'll come to later with this story again. So there was shoes, and they gave us-- and they have no shoe laces. I got a piece of wire, and I put it around wire.

We went appell 4:00, we have to walk out to the place. It was an empty place like a football place, let's say. It was a place. Everybody came together.

We have 10,000 people in our camp, 10,000 in Birkenau. It was 10,000 prisoners. And there was lines every kapo-- you know what a kapo mean?

Yes.

Every kapo got his own people. Because it was so organized you couldn't-- when we stay on appell you could hear a-- if you would throw a nickel on the floor you would hear. So quiet was.

How many people were assigned to each kapo?

In mine was maybe about 30. But we went in groups. You have more kapos. We went, let's say, to the work. I was working, and the GA, the Krupps factory?

Yes.

I was working there. So over there was working thousands of people. It was a lot of kapos. I work in mostly in the cement and the bricks. Carry the brick up and then mixing the cement.

So from the beginning it was suicide. We staying from 4:00 in the morning till 7:00 in the morning every day, winter and summer. Wintertime sometime my foot was freezing to the ground. Some people didn't have good shoes, they never went to work. They freezed to death.

It was like five below zero, or zero. A shirt, no sweater, no jacket, no pocket. With your hand you had it shivering like the wind blows. It was going tremendous. And we went to work.

We was walking a half an hour to work. We didn't go with the buses or with the trucks. From Birkenau to Buna, we walk every day.

Buna was where the Krupp factory was?

What?

Buna was where the Krupp factory was?

Correct. Every day walking seven, eight miles with the shoes. In wintertime the snow was so high you have to walk. If you fall down you couldn't wait, you couldn't stand up. They bear you until you dead.

I was working in this factory, and I have to carry bricks maybe on the second floor or the 10th floor on a ladder. So they make you from two by fours, they was made from two by fours, like make two pieces together. And then at the bottom they put a little Y there, just the bricks come. I would make you what it looks. Look like a ladder, too. But here it was sticking out, it lays on your shoulder.

So the minimum you have to take 30 bricks. If you couldn't take 30 bricks, well they beat you, or they throw you to another job. I was working a few weeks and walking with 30 bricks up, up and down, up and down. The Polaks usually, Polish people didn't work so hard.

There was Polish prisoners, too, there was Ukrainian prisoners. There was from other nations. They have the easy work. We did it the most horrible work.

We came home, you have no water to wash your face. You are working with cement, with bricks. You have no water to wash your hands or wash your face.

When I got my coffee I used half coffee to wash my face. Coffee, what was the coffee? From some wheat, burned wheat, and they put hot water in. This was the coffee. I washed my-- I couldn't see my eyes. It was full with dust, with cement. I used half to wash my eyes and my face a little. And the rest I drink.

We have no good water to drink. The water was contaminated. Some people drink water, got typhus and die. Matter of fact, I got by the end, I got the typhus.

As this was going on, until 14 January. No, I work a different job after this, too. I was lucky a couple times they needed to work on cement, the plaster. I was very handy when I was young. I was lucky, it was handy.

I could make a platform. So I was working couple times, and other-- they needed people of other jobs. So they pick up you, you-- we have no name. Took us, and pushed us on the truck, and they took us on another job.

No, they was doing, who can work on cement? I said me. I know I can do it. I don't know if I would do it, I want to get away from them. We tried to run from one place to another place. And we was thinking-- I was thinking maybe over there is better.

I come in a place and it was outside. It was summertime. And they gave me the job to do it. They gave me sand and cement to mix, and to make a little-- like a need a foundation to make a platform, to throw in cement. I was there and a couple of other people, too. The same like I am, same people for me.

There was a guy who didn't know how to do it. I teach him, I showed him. I said keep working. Because if not, they was watching you. You can't breathe a second. He worked.

So the next day they sent me back to the same job. They didn't go no more with the bricks laying, they send me to the same job. Because the job wasn't finished. It was taking a long time to do it. So I was there a couple.

They calling a Vorarbeiter. See, I can more explain in German. Vorarbeiter mean a manager from us is watching the job.

A foreman.

Foreman, and he liked my work. He said you-- he was a German, but he was a-- he wasn't a Nazi. He was a criminal-- a German criminal. What reason he was there, I don't know. He was from Berlin.

And he said you, [GERMAN], to me he said. So the next day he-- because they got a lot of power. If he said to the Nazi, he's a good worker, and especially he's not a Jew, he's a German himself. So they let me-- they took me out from this kommando in the Buna Kommando and they send me they calling outside kommando, outside work-- field work.

And then I see a little life. They was making fires every day with the potatoes. They've got potatoes from the field. They brought themselves potatoes, all kind of stuff. And they make fires and they ate.

The kapos didn't have too much to eat inside either. But they were stealing. They were stealing from somebody else. Somebody else has to be a victim.

So I got a little like a dog, you throw a bone under the table, a potato extra. Until I worked with him almost until January the 14, 1945. When the Russians started going, taking Poland, then liquidated Buna. They liquidated us, and they send us further-- more to how they call more near to Germany.

To the west?

Yeah. They took us to Buchenwald. I was in Buchenwald-- Weimar Buchenwald. But that was terrible. They took us 10,000 people out. They save us 9,500 people. That was January 14, 1945, the snow was so high.

We walked 70 miles. On the way they was killing like dogs. Who couldn't walk, they would kill. The whole road was filled dead people till we come to Buchenwald.

Were you wearing the same clothes you were wearing in September and October?

Yes, same clothes. They never gave you other clothes. They gave you beginning in Buna, they gave you every two weeks a shirt. But you have to-- no, you have to wash your own shirt. We have no water to wash. So we wash with snow.

In summertime it was terrible. You can imagine what was on my body. So my shirt fall apart. I wear from that cement, in a cement bag, I make myself a shirt. It was good news and was bad news.

The good news was, you couldn't get bugs on your body. And the bad news was cold. So I survive, I come to Buchenwald.

Buchenwald I was there not long. The Russians started coming closer. They took us back from Buchenwald. I didn't work no more, we have no work. We only went in one transport to the next one, there was no more work. Because the Russian took them around.

But this was the worst part, the transportation, no food. We came in from Buchenwald. They took us from Buchenwald to Dachau. On the way I was with a lot of Russians and a lot of other nationalities. It was not many Jews left. And we don't know who's a Jew and not a Jew. Everybody looks ugly-- beards, dirty.

Every three days, it took us 21 days to go from Buchenwald to Dachau-- 21 days. You couldn't go, because it was we had shooting, we had everything. Every three, four days the train stopped. We took out the dead people. I saw my own eyes, people cut off meat from the dead people and ate. People drink the urine in somebody else.

So finally, we went from March till April the 29th-- till April 28th. Took us three weeks to go from Buchenwald to Dachau. And I come into Dachau, I was already sick. I didn't know what my name is. I didn't know nothing. I couldn't

walk.

In Dachau there was no more Nazis. It was only the watch people, the civil, German and civil, no more uniform. They open up the trains, nobody could walk. The American was there already, but we didn't know.

They took us on [INAUDIBLE] and something, they took us to a place and laid us down on the ground. And some of them inside. It was April, it was pretty chilly. But I don't feel nothing anyway. I was seeing good my eyes, I could talk. I couldn't walk no more.

So they took us in to one room together. We want to drink water. This was a disaster what we did. We drink water, the water was contaminated. And people got diarrhea, typhoid, all kinds of stuff.

I drank water, too. The only thing I could eat, I couldn't eat no more. You could give me bread, butter, I couldn't eat. 21 days, no food.

So I was there laying there, and I drank a little water. And maybe three hours later come we see the American coming in. And they us, the American soldiers came. Ambulances, American, you see MP, you see a lot of things. And they looked on us, they got enough.

They took us to the hospitals. They took me-- that's when they told me where I am. They took me to the SS hospitals. Threw out all the clothes, and took out from us, and they wash us. They clean us. It was the German nurses that was doing this.

And they put me in a bed. After this, I didn't know for 10 days what's happened. That's what the nurse told me after I start to talk.

You were delirious? Or you were in a comatose? What was your condition during that time?

I must have maybe 105 fever all the time. So I didn't talk. I was burning like a fire, but I didn't know what was burning. I got no body on me. I was skinny like a bone, 80 pounds I weigh, 80 pounds-- 79 pound.

So they gave me medications. That's what the nurse told me. They gave me all kind of vitamins, all medication, and then I was a bottle hanging liquid. It was 10 days, nine days, I was laying.

Was this an American field hospital?

This used to be the Nazi hospital.

The Nazi hospital.

But for the better Nazis, it was a big hospital. It was all kind of doctors, a lot of things. And they start to give me-- after 10 days they start to give me vitamins, to swallow vitamins. I couldn't swallow. My mouth was-- but I started coming to myself.

And I saw they brought food in the morning and I didn't eat. They brought like a white bread, was American food. White bread and milk, I didn't eat.

After 10, 11 days I started feeling better. It looks like this was helping me. They feed me, how they calling, intravenous. This was helping me. And I start to talk.

Excuse me, Mr. Rosenblum, we're going to pause for just a moment. We just have to put on a new tape.