

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Bert Fleming and Irene Fleming
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PREFACE

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Bert Fleming and Irene Fleming

May 17, 1996

Question: Actually it was fascinating. I don't know if your familiar with this. Are you familiar with this?

Answer: No, I never saw this book.

Q: There was some kind of a big controversy between the Polish Cultural Counsel in London and this man who lived in Sweden and he got some money from them and then he returned it and this was, I didn't follow it that closely. I don't know if your familiar with this?

A: No, no. He writes here.

Q: Yes, and then there was her letter. It's very complicated. So, very good. So, can I go with you?

A: Allow me to take off my jacket.

Q: Good for you!

A: I won't strip, don't worry!

Q: Would it be okay if I sat in between the two of you?

A: I don't mind.

A: You don't bite, scratch or kick?

Q: I cannot guarantee you that. But, usually not.

A: Where were you born?

Q: I was born in Berlin, but I grew up...

A: Are you mia-dorch-mis (ph)?

Q: No, not at all. I was five when I left and I did speak German at the time but it didn't stay with me and then I grew up in Warsaw. So, this is just the beginning that I would like to show you and ask for your comments and names etc. This will be more in connection to you, now, we have divided it by Jewish Counsel and these are General Offices, I think, we don't know exactly what did this office?

A: Where they belong to?

Q: Yes, what did this office do? Were they like junior clerks or?

A: Well, maybe Irene could look at that one because this is definitely not to my time.

Q: Okay. You think that it was earlier?

A: I have seen this yesterday.

Q: You want Irene?

A: I don't recognize it either.

Q: Yes, I will show it, in a moment. Maybe, in the meantime, you could look here and if you recognize this I understand that you've seen yesterday.

A: Oh, this is Nat-tik Zona-men (ph), but now he lives in Stockholm.

Q: Right. And this is the Pan-ter (ph)?

A: I can't.

Q: We have some information.

A: This is Nat-tik (ph), he is alive and he is the one. Everything survived because of him. He was very friendly, he was Grossman (ph) and Ross (ph). And Grossman's (ph) staff he kept during the war. Gross-off (ph), this is Grossman (ph).

Q: That's right, he photographed that. And you see that, Zona Baer (ph)?

A: And Mandel Grossman (ph).

Q: So this, this isn't Grossman (ph)?

A: Yes. They were very friendly the both of them.

A: Okay, here you have Dr. Schick-er (ph).

A: By the way, he's a very close friend of ours.

Q: And he was a medical doctor?

A: Yes.

Q: And what was his function?

A: He was in the counsel and I think that he had the, you can find it in the ghetto, the chronicle of the ghetto exactly of what he had it, Okay? And this is Mr. Char-no-broder (ph), you'll find his name in the ghetto book.

Q: So, Schick-er (ph), he's sitting?

A: Right here at this desk, yes. And he also was in the Health Department. This is Josef Rum-cof-ski (ph), the brother of Hiriarn Rum-cof-ski (ph).

Q: He was a younger brother, right?

A: He was the younger brother.

Q: And who's this?

A: Josef, of course, right here.

Q: All right, that's there. And this guy?

A: Okay, this is Char-no-broder (ph), here. All right? This guy I don't recall now. He's too, no.

Q: This is your sister, right?

A: This is Davit Gertler. And this is Dora Fuchs.

Q: And do you spell it with 'ch' or with 'k'?

A: That's correct, no 'ch' that is correct. Aaron Yakovobitch. [Inaudible] Then we have, maybe Irene can identify him, I don't know.

A: Bertie, what was Paula's maiden name in Bron-aus (ph)?

A: Schwelber.

A: Here is a picture, but there is no name of hers.

A: They are not looking for names.

Q: That's right. What is her name?

A: Paula Schwelber. She came from Vienna and her father was I think an attorney.

Q: And whom did she marry here?

A: I don't remember.

Q: And the other bride?

A: I don't know.

A: Paula, she was my first girlfriend.

A: No, this is Bron-nia (ph), not Paula. This is the older sister. Yeah, it was his love, he had so many! Who could keep count on that.

Q: You did well.

A: Here is, here everybody I know.

Q: Okay, let's..

A: Oh, I think you need the name, I think they are here.

Q: Well, let's see. We have here Leon Rosenblatt (ph), Rum-kof-sky (ph), Aaron Yakovobitch and Dora Fuchs.

A: Yes, right. So they have everybody here.

Q: But we spelled her wrong.

A: Yeah, and this is his sister, Dora.

A: This you would recognize. This is Tov-ax Platt (ph), have a look.

A: This is, you know who that is.

A: I wouldn't ask you if I did know. Don't look in the back!

A: No, no I want to see if they have it here.

A: They want to know, they want to know the...

A: Oh, they don't have it here. This is Tabaksplatt. And this is...

A: Bertie, this was Reight Reader (ph), the conductor.

A: Tom Rider (ph)?

A: Yeah.

A: I don't think so.

A: He was in charge of schools. Before the war he was my school's secretary. And in the ghetto he was also something to do with schools, but he has a son, Eton, in Tel Aviv, a concert pianist and he use to be the conductor of the Tel Aviv Opera.

Q: And his name is?

A: Alexander Tas-kee (ph) was his name. Bertie, do you remember Olex's (ph) address in Tel Aviv?

A: No.

A: Mitz-za-rona (ph), I think. I have it at home.

Q: He was born after the war, Alexander?

A: No, no he went to my school before the war and he survived and was in Russia and Moscow, I think, a conductor of Tell-par-ah (ph) and then he came to Israel.

Q: We are going back to your husband with this book and indeed Grossman photographed in the offices and gave you the print?

A: I have a print, a post card print which is, is it the one I gave to father?

A: Which one?

A: Sitting in my office.

A: Yes, you gave it to your father. I have the original with, with Bert had wrote to me...

A: With what I wrote to my father?

A: I have it at home. This is the one that I showed you the other day that we got from Moon-es-iris (ph).

A: Yeah, okay.

Q: Where was your father at that time?

A: Together with me.

Q: He was in Lodz as well?

A: All the while, all the while and he passed away in Tel Aviv. He was in New York with me until 1962. Then my sister, may she rest in peace, was very sick and terminal. And he didn't want to see her die. So he actually ran away to Israel and remarried and he died in 1971 in Israel.

Q: All of you were deported from Hannover or expelled because you were Polish citizens?

A: No. My father was.

Q: And you were not a Polish citizen?

A: No. I was considered stateless. I was born in Germany and I was not a German and I was not a Pole.

Q: I thought that you got your citizenship after your father?

A: No, you don't.

Q: And your mother was a Polish citizen as well?

A: Yes, she was, she came from Lodz.

Q: Both of them came from Lodz?

A: Yes.

Q: So it was for them coming back, did they recognize, did they know the place?

A: Well, my father, he had two brothers and a sister living in Poland.

Q: And what month in 1939 did you come back to Lodz?

A: Father went to Lodz in either July or August, between June and August, sometime in that time frame he went from Aus-when-jay (ph) to Lodz, to his brothers.

Q: But he went first to Aush-when-jay (ph), why?

A: No, not to Aush-when-jay (ph), at that time Aush-when-jay (ph) was not in the picture. We were in Spon-she (ph).

Q: Spon-she (ph), right.

A: And from Spon-she (ph) my father went to...

Q: So it's in '38, November '38 to, no?

A: November, '38, no October, '38. And I forgot to mention this to you yesterday, it reminded me later on. De-cris-nein-ach (ph), which was on the Ninth of November, 1938, was the result of Herschel Greenspan (ph) who shot Von Graff in Paris. His parents and sister were with us in Spon-she (ph). Herschel Greensbaum, I trained with him, I taught him boxing. And he was my pupil actually in boxing. When he found out that the father and the sister were sent away, he lived in Paris, he went and shot Von Graff. Was it Von Graff?

A: I don't remember the name.

A: I just said it a minute ago.

Q: We have the original telegram, a copy of the telegram sent.

A: But in any case, Greenspan, he was with us when this came out when we knew about the Christal-naght (ph). I had to hide them. We had to secure him.

Q: Your father was deported before Christal-naght (ph)?

A: We were all deported before Christal-naght (ph), it was the reason...

Q: So you were all in Spon-she (ph) during Christal-naght(ph)? Do you recall how you were notified that you have to leave, that your being deported to Poland?

A: We were arrested.

Q: They went from house to house and checked the citizenship?

A: Absolutely. The SS men who arrested me with two other guys there, three guys came to arrest me. He lost three box matches with me. I fought him three times and three times he lost. He was the one who arrested me with two other SS men. He didn't dare to come alone. Yes, we were all before the Christal-naght (ph) because that was the critical point which made him go and shoot Von Graff.

Q: I just want to understand a little. Your passport, or your identity card said 'stateless'?

A: I didn't have an identity card.

Q: What kind of a document did you have when you lived in Hannover?

A: I had the normal papers you normally have. I had my birth certificate and my drivers license. No, I didn't have an ID card.

Q: You did not have one?

A: No. I had my birth certificate and I had my drivers license, which was a little photograph.

Q: And with these two documents they identified you and deported you and your sister was in a similar situation?

A: In Germany, everybody had to be registered. So police had all, where ever you lived, that district had a police department, and in there you had to register so they knew all the people who lived in their district because they were all registered. In other words, if I would try to go to another town and want to settle there I had to register within three days so they knew where we were and we

didn't have to show anything or they didn't take my ID, my birth certificate, or they took my drivers license. But the action was to take all foreigners, all people who did not have, or Jews who did not have the German nationality. That was the action which took place in October, 1938. Because the German Jews were not touched at that time.

Q: Your father and your mother...

A: Not my mother, my mother had passed away in 1928.

Q: Okay. Your father had a passport which was a Polish passport?

A: He didn't have a passport either because he didn't travel so there was no need for a passport.

Q: I see. So, in a way he lived there with kind of, he was day to day illegal because?

A: But they knew that he came from Poland, that he was a Pole.

Q: I just don't know, I'm asking. Did he have any permanent residence papers or?

A: No. He was registered as a man who lived in Hannover.

Q: So without any papers, you were put on a train and deported?

A: No, we were just all collected. Put into a concert hall and we lived there for a whole day until we were transported to the station and into cattle cars.

Q: And the Poles, when you arrived at Spon-she (ph), did Poles make lists of who has arrived?

A: No. The Poles wouldn't let us in. We were in Normansland for forty-eight hours before they let us in.

Q: At the factory that...?

A: No. It was a boundary with wires and they didn't let us in. The Poles didn't want to let us in so we had the SS standing on one side with the bayonets in our eyes, on the other side were the Poles with bayonets on their rifles. But then, for some intervention, they opened up and let us into that small little village in As-bon-shee (ph).

Q: Do you recall a visit of A-lin-grin-glum (ph) in As-bon-shee(ph)?

A: No, I wouldn't. Doesn't ring a bell.

Q: When was he there?

Q: He came on behalf of JDC (Joint Distribution Committee) to help the refugees and organize a kitchen and supplies.

A: No, I did not meet him, I didn't know him.

Q: A shot in the dark.

A: I know that the polish Jews, the manufacturers got together and they were supplying everything. I never heard...

Q: Yes, there was an action at a joint meeting...

A: I know that we received bread and food from the Joint Committee, but I never had any contact.

Q: How old were you at the time?

A: At that time, that was in 1938, I was 22.

Q: And you were a professional boxer?

A: No, I was an amateur boxer.

Q: Describe your profession or occupation at that time.

A: I was a student.

Q: Studying in Geneva?

A: No, I was pre-med, and then I switched over to engineering.

Q: In Hannover?

A: In Hannover and then later on in the States.

Q: And your sister was older or younger than you?

A: Two years older.

Q: And what did she do in Hannover?

A: She was a secretary.

Q: So she finished right there, played school or something or?

A: Yes. Henry Nef-tally (ph).

Q: Nef-tally (ph), yes, this I have.

A: I don't remember faces, I don't remember any more names.

Q: He was a very talented young man, huh?

A: Oh yes.

A: Very bright and very pleasant man.

Q: How did Rum-cof-ski (ph) feel about this kind of...?

A: Well, his picture was in every office.

Q: It was his order?

A: No, it wasn't his order but it was like, you have here the President hanging everywhere so he was the President so his picture was hanging everywhere.

A: You must understand that the ghetto was an independent state with their own money, with their ministers of all the departments and it was really a _____.

Q: I understand that. And in other ghettos it was not exactly like that it was...

A: But the Lodz ghetto was a model ghetto.

Q: So do you think that this was a German order to put his portrait everywhere?

A: No, no.

Q: It was his own?

A: No. It was, I don't even know why and how and, but in every office we hung Hiriam Rum-cof-ski (ph).

A: That's like the money had his picture.

Q: Did people laugh at that in the beginning, until they got use to it?

A: No, nobody corrected it.

A: I didn't see anybody laughing about that. It was everywhere. We were accepted that his picture is hanging.

Q: What do you think about it today?

A: Today? Well, it's everywhere the same thing. Wherever you go you find, look at Tehran. You have this idiot, you have him blowing up _____ hanging everywhere.

Q: So you have an opinion? [laughter] I was just asking if you have an opinion about that!

A: No, it was very natural for us, not such a big deal. As we say in Turkish, we don't make big timbers out of it.

A: Helda Yakovobitch, my sister. I remember, she was redheaded. Tula, who was she? Do you recall her?

Q: Your sister is so beautiful.

A: I remember she was a red head. Brown hair. But, I didn't know the name.

A: No, I don't know the name. This was her husband.

Q: Dora's husband?

A: Borik Yakovobitch.

Q: I didn't know that they were married.

A: They married after the war.

Q: And were they keeping company during that period?

A: They were not married in the ghetto.

A: All through the ghetto he was always there for her.

Q: Do you have any idea why they didn't get married during the..?

A: She wouldn't dare get married in the ghetto.

A: She was afraid to get married.

Q: Why?

A: I think that, Bebof (ph) had a crush on her.

A: First of all, we weren't allowed to marry officially.

A: And Jews weren't really allowed to marry so when you saw these people getting married like 19-20 couples with a handkerchief and it was an inside affair. Jews weren't suppose to have children or...

Q: When you say that Bebof (ph) had a crush on her, I mean, was that very clear? Did he send her things or, and so she afraid that he would get angry if she got married?

A: No, no, she, I know every time she had a meeting or something she was sick. She got ulcers. She was so petrified. We knew she was scared but she would never tell us it. When we asked she never said anything. Even after the worst. We wouldn't talk about it at all. But we saw that she was scared and we saw her reaction. She would come from a meeting, she would lock herself in her room and we didn't see her until the next day. She was boiling over and couldn't say anything, couldn't do anything. She was afraid.

Q: What was his function, _____ Yakovobitch?

A: He had no function.

A: Oh yes, he was, Bert, he was in our department...

A: Yeah, but he had no big function.

A: Oh, he was in a...

A: He worked there but...

A: He was working with me together, in the housing department. The people were getting living space, he was showing them where it is.

A: I couldn't stand him!

Q: You couldn't stand him?

A: No.

Q: How did it happen that Dora got the position of the secretary to Rum-cof-ski (ph)?

A: I wouldn't know. She never told me how it happened.

A: Well, she was a brilliant woman.

A: She was very bright.

A: She was educated. She was fluent in German and she did that, exercised the same profession in Hannover before the war.

Q: But, did Rum-cof-ski (ph) speak with German?

A: Speak Yiddish.

A: We spoke Yiddish to the Germans. He did, Bertie.

A: He spoke Yiddish to them.

A: And he spoke Yiddish to Dora too and she knew Yiddish well?

A: But he could not speak Polish to us because we didn't speak Polish. We spoke English, my wife, I courted her in English. That was the only common language we had. So he spoke Yiddish.

Q: Did he test many women who had secretarial skills?

A: You know, when she talks I come to think about it. All the people, the liaisons that were working around Dora, a few secretaries, they were all German speaking girls from Germany or from France.

A: A-move-na (ph). What was the other one?

A: Shift-ling-ger (ph). And then...

A: Marisha? The little one. She talked like a man. Very low voice. A little one. She wasn't young. Mona was young. Shift-ling-ger was young.

A: She was also one secretary, and, oh what was her name. You know, this is so long ago. I use to remember everybody's name and now...

A: But to answer your question, no, I don't know how she became the executive secretary.

Q: Did she consider it a privilege?

A: No. She was down to earth really. She did it, it was a job. She wanted to survive like everybody else, of course.

A: I don't think she considered it a privilege.

A: No, no.

Q: So she didn't admire Rum-cof-ski (ph) as a savior or...?

A: No, no, no, she did not worship him, no way.

A: She was a very independent, very, very strong minded person.

A: And she had in some instances very, very much...

A: They were fighting all the time I know. She was telling him off.

A: She was holding her own. When she was against it, she was against it. She fought him.

Q: In what instances, do you know what instances there was a...?

A: There was a lot of differences that they had and she spoke up, she wasn't afraid of him. You had to know Rum-cof-ski (ph), he admired somebody very feisty, somebody that gave him back and he admired people like that. Especially women, he was a terrific womanizer, I don't know if you heard about it, but he was.

Q: He wasn't married before the war, was he?

A: Yes he was. He was a widower and he was married and he was very active in this...

A: I need that book again to identify him. This was Reingold (ph) he was a police...

A: No, Reingold (ph) was, where they had food, he was in charge of that, Bert.

A: Yes, but he wore a police uniform.

A: Yes, he did.

Q: So is there a contradiction between working in the supply department and wearing a police uniform?

A: No. Police were everywhere. He was a commander, they called him Commander Reingold (ph). But you find his biography or whatever in the chronicle of the Lodz ghettos. You find him. This is Shane Shivik (ph). You find his _____ also.

A: Somebody screwed up here in this picture. They did screw up.

Q: I'll check in a second.

A: Oh, I see him, I hear him talk. What's his name, Tula?

A: What?

A: Here is Rinegold (ph) again. Do you remember him? He was on the _____.

A: Oh, this is Lies-a-row-vich (ph). The two brothers Lies-a-row-vich (ph), he was in charge of bakeries. And he passed away in Los Angeles a few years ago. Everywhere they put Dora's name she doesn't even figure in here. I know who that is. That is Dabby-dovich (ph), Dr. Klousenberg's daughter.

Q: I'll tell you what it is, it's the hat.

A: The hat! It's because of the hat.

Q: Their not in any order.

A: This is Mrs. Dabby-dovich (ph) was her name. She was married to an architect, but he wasn't with her in the ghetto and she was the daughter of Dr. Klousenberg. She was the aristocracy of the ghetto. She was a very lovely lady.

Q: And Dr. Klousenberg?

A: Was a psychiatrist. The other one is his brother, younger brother.

Q: What did he do, Josef Rum-cof-ski (ph)?

A: He wasn't, he was connected with the health department because I think he was in charge of the hospital.

Q: And the hospital stopped existing after 1942?

A: Until the last day. Until we left.

A: So when we were there, _____ they didn't have any doctors or anything. I remember where I was sleeping?

A: Yes, _____ 44.

A: Outside in the corridor.

A: In '44 we went into the hospital in September. Until then it was working as a hospital.

A: When we came in the last transport there was nothing anymore.

A: But the ghetto was finished basically at that time. But it was in full swing until September or August of 1944.

Q: The hospital was still...?

A: Until they liquidated everybody out of the hospital.

A: Excuse me, this is very important. He was a very important member of the family, Baa-roo-flas-ker (ph). And it's not written either here and he's so physical here. He was a protege'' of Rum-cof-ski (ph). He survived and died in Israel a few years ago.

Q: And why was he a protege''?

A: I don't know, they had some connections, I can't remember now. I knew it but I don't know. As I said, people that he knew Rum-cof-ski(ph) and people that supported his orphanage before the war, when they came to the ghetto he was very generous to these people.

Q: What was the occasion here?

A: I have no idea.

Q: And where was it, do you recognize this place?

A: No I don't.

Q: That's Rosenblatt?

A: This is Rosenblatt, here. I don't know. As I told you, Joanne, I was very low, laying very low. I didn't go anywhere, we didn't participate in anything. You won't see me on the picture anywhere because I didn't want to mix. And I told you that Rum-cof-ski (ph) wanted to send me with a broom [responded in foreign language at this point].

Q: As a punishment?

A: [Still answering in foreign language]. Excuse me, I don't want you to get so tired of me because I told you this a few times, but Rum-cof-ski (ph) said he's going to send me to clean the streets.

Q: So actually the order was that everybody who worked for the Counsel had to participate, had to stand there and do what?

A: Whoever was called to this meeting, you just didn't come in to Rum-cof-ski (ph), you couldn't come in uninvited.

Q: But how did you know which meeting is about, but you said that you wouldn't let him go when there was a deportation?

A: This was when there was a deportation.

Q: Which means that you had to go to the _____, the train station?

A: I don't know how it worked, Bertie. When there was, like for instance, they were taking people away. I don't know how it worked.

Q: From what I read in the Chronicle, people were getting, not in '42, the early...

A: Oh, the Chronicle _____?

Q: I did, yes. That people were getting notices and then they came to the central prison and then waited there until everybody behaved...

A: They were collected there.

Q: And then they had to walk to Mechelen, to _____, right?

A: They brought them to Mechelen, I think.

A: Mechelen is by the city in the Trecin, in the prison.

Q: Yes, that was in jail.

A: _____.

Q: But you said that the heads of the factories, directors of the factories, would make a list?

A: They had to make a list, yes.

Q: And that list was then sent to whom?

A: To the commission, the committee, the committee took it and then they took the people and gathered the people together.

Q: And did the commission choose from those people or they simply accepted the list?

A: No, I think that they went through the list.

A: They went through the list and there was always somebody who was taken out or it was put back in or added to it. It all depends.

A: Because I remember _____. They took him too, remember? And then they let him go.

Q: Were you ever on this commission?

A: No.

Q: Were you asked to be?

A: No. I always finagled somehow to get out of it and She-nis-kee (ph) took care of it. I must say I have sometimes people that took them out like a friend of Irene, you know?

Q: How would you do it?

A: I just took him out, I just let him go. I told the people to let him go. I told the people, listen I had some weight, I carried some weight in the ghetto so if I go there and I said, release him, they had no choice but to release him.

Q: So you would go to where they were gathered and you would say...?

A: I would tell, Eisman, not Eisman, who was in charge of this thing? It must be in the book there. I would call him and would say, let him out.

Q: On the phone?

A: Yes.

Q: How different was the deportations in '42? In the beginning I understand all the Western Jews were...?

A: No, you have to understand. The first transport as I mentioned in my interview were the three "F's", the Flesch-man (ph), the For-man (ph) and the Fisherman (ph). These three categories of people were sent by order of Rum-cof-ski (ph) as the first transport to go to work. And most of them survived because they were characters who are...

Q: If you will allow me, I will show you the picture because I think I have a photograph of these young men being deported probably to work. The first transport, that was Winter time, right?

A: No, it went on all the time. It was just specifically in Winter, you had in Winter transport, yet in Summer transport. I saw in Spring and Fall, however, there were a lot of volunteers, don't forget who voluntarily registered themselves to be sent out to a working camp as has been told.

A: Yes, and there was this young, attractive woman, Alla Kol-a-nos-ka (ph), she went _____ here and then she came back to the ghetto, she survived. She lives now in Fairlong and her married name is now Mee-gees (ph), she married Lola's brother.

A: And I remember one girl volunteered, went out, came back and went out again. I forgot her name, a blond girl, I can see her.

A: Alla Ko-la-nos-ka (ph) was her name. She was the sister of _____, you know, of a young dancer. She married _____.

Q: _____ that survived.

A: Yako-stoputzki (ph) and Yatsek Denser (ph), they survived. They live Miami Beach.

Q: There was a Panther (ph) that stayed in Poland after the war?

A: There are a few, there was a big family who survived like five brothers, they all survived.

Q: Golda Panzer (ph) who now lives in Warsaw.

A: But I know the fellows, what was his name? Brow-may-kee (ph) was the one that saved my life, I told you he brought me to the Mechelen, he was one of them.

Q: I have difficulties distinguishing in the photographs which were the arrivals and which are the deportations?

A: You cannot tell.

A: In general I can tell you.

Q: You can?

A: Yes.

Q: When was it that people had tags?

A: When they came in. When they left they didn't have any tags. The didn't have any tags, when they came in they had tags.

Q: The tags were only when they came in?

A: Came in.

Q: And these were usually the Western Jews or...?

A: They were all people.

A: Not necessarily.

A: They were _____ people and Viennese people, very well dressed people, everywhere...

A: Well, we had people from Austria, we had people from Czechoslovakia but also from the small, little villages and towns around Lodz. Pab-nein-leet-sa (ph) and...

Q: But that was earlier?

A: This was in the beginning, right in the beginning.

A: Was until '42. We had people coming into Lodz.

A: This I didn't know. You know, when we went there...

A: No, they also came in '42.

Q: Tell me about the Gay-sphel (ph)?

A: The Gay-sphel (ph)? Well, it was a poster that we had posted all over the ghettos that from this and this date, from this and this time nobody's allowed to be on the street. And the reason for it was that they wanted to have an easy job going to the houses and collect whom they wanted to collect.

Q: This was a fairly unusual activity in that the Germans themselves came in, right?

A: No, they always came in.

A: They never asked our permission.

A: You see, Na-ba-loskie (ph) is where you had the central office, okay? You had the ghetto far-va-doonk (ph) which was Bebof (ph) and cohorts and you had our people, Rum-cof-ski (ph) and Aaron Yakovobitch had his office there and from there everything was, that was the central point of all the activities within the ghetto. And what the transports are concerned they went on until actually even in '43, we still got transports into the ghetto. They called people and brought them in the ghetto. They brought some people, put them in the cemetery and shot them. And they hung people and they shot them, but it was outside, not within. Within we had also shootings, like for instance, in the Krim-a-nall Po-da-sigh (ph), Gooby Oben-stein-er (ph) who was the big shot there was sitting, when he was drunk he was sitting at the window and there was like a sniper, shooting. Whether he killed someone or not, he just started to shoot, that's all.

Q: I understood, and if you know, in all the pictures of the, whether they are arrivals or deportations, this is so difficult for me and I will ask you to show me the...

A: Well, whatever I can help you with we are here.

Q: The only ones that we recognize as Gay-sphel (ph) the Germans, we can see the German soldiers as opposed to others that you don't, that you see Jewish police, ghetto police?

A: The ghetto police had to go with them in all actions. They were forced to. In other words, the SS would come in with trucks and the Jewish police had to work with them.

Q: And I understand that.

A: Because they had to interpret.

Q: And I see these columns walking. Like 5,000 people walking to Mechelen and I don't see any Germans in the picture. Except for the Gay-schel (ph), would they actually come and grab people from the hospital and from the old peoples home and...?

A: The Germans, when the transport went out, you wouldn't see them but you would see them at the tracks. There they would be. They would do the loading into the cattle cars. So you would not see any escorts at Rather-gorch (ph). You would not see them on the way to Rather-gorch (ph). There you would see only our own police.

Q: In the Chronicle it says at a point in '42 one of the people who, for instance he writes, a very curious thing is happening, he writes. The trains leave with people for labor and their luggage is coming back. And he doesn't go into, he doesn't draw any conclusions that it means these people went to death, but he kind of writes, it is very strange that their clothes should come back and we should have to clean them and sort them.

A: Well, this leaves yourself to various interpretations. Because normally when you come into a camp you had to get rid of everything, or your clothing and you get fresh clothing.

A: You know what happened?

Q: So that was the rationalization?

A: All right.

A: I will tell you what happened. My sister-in-law, my brother's widow, she built Auschwitz. She lived in Ka-to-beet-sa (ph), it's very close to Auschwitz, and they grabbed her, she was 14 years old. Her family was shot, everybody of her family was shot. She was left 14 years, a girl before the war in Europe was very sheltered. And she was taken to Auschwitz, they were building the barracks at that time, she told us. And then, they put her to the Prin-ya (ph), laundry. Every piece of Jewish clothing was checked out and you wouldn't believe the stuff that they found in this, in buttons, diamonds, there was a lot of dollars and paper money was found and some people, when they were in Auschwitz they collected it, they had connections and when they came out after the war they had...

Q: Do you mean Auschwitz or do you mean Bruckenuau?

A: I am talking about Auschwitz. I don't know the distinction between Bruckenu and Auschwitz, I know this was the center of point when people heard this.

A: We know that Bruckenu was where the crematoriums and where the gassing took place. Not in Auschwitz but in Bruckenu.

A: [Inaudible] We were in Auschwitz. We were a few years ago, three years ago. We went, we took a pilgrimage to Auschwitz.

A: The working camp was Auschwitz and the final solution took place in Bruckenu.

Q: When I look at you and I try to think in the standards of war time. You look good, I mean you are a beautiful woman today, but you looked good, you looked airy and you looked, you know, blue eyes, and, did it occur to you to run away and hide?

A: Yes. I got married in order to survive. Not to him, I was married for three months and later on I got a _____. He was my father's age, or maybe a little bit older, but my parents told me I was...

Q: Polish man, or?

A: He was a Jew. [inaudible]

A: The police. We call them the OD man. _____.

A: And this is why I wanted to run away, but my parents, the factory was still going full swing and my mother was telling me in the First World War they were having a paradise in Poland. They were working for the Kaiser you know and they were making money and they didn't want to, my mother didn't want to leave. My father wanted to leave. And then, my mother said to me, your going away and we are left behind. This is when I changed my mind.

Q: So you married this man in order to, how would it help you to run away if you were married?

A: Because I would have somebody to take care of me. I was a spoiled young girl.

Q: When the ghetto was already closed was there a possibility, were there some individuals that could get away?

A: A lot of them fled and went to Russia.

Q: After the closing of the ghetto?

A: They could get out, some of them.

A: Before and after. If you realize, people smuggled them out but most of them, most of the, they fled in '39 when the war broke out.

A: They survived in Russia.

A: Then they fled, okay? And went East. And they wound up and they survived in Siberia.

A: I bet you know that in Poland the family ties were very close so you couldn't do anything. You would live all your life with a guilt complex. It's true! You couldn't just do whatever was good for you.

Q: It's a long story?

A: Yes, everybody has long stories to tell.

Q: When it became scary in the ghetto and you understood that people are taken away. Did you think of leaving and, you know?

A: I couldn't. I had a big package. I had my parents and my brother and my aunts and my uncles and the whole families. We didn't live for ourselves, we shared our lives.

Q: Your parents, they had a factory here? Were they able to have some gold or some material or?

A: Of course, we had a lot of jewelry. But we exchanged it for the last supper before they took us away. We gave away to a person that is alive, I don't know if you heard about She-mek-fel-don (ph). He was working the _____ with the Germans and he had connections.

Q: And he would give it to the Germans and get something?

A: He exchanged it and he brought us the food and he was left to clean the ghetto also.

Q: One of the 600?

A: No, it was close to thousands in the ghetto to clean. Officially I think it was 800 but there were a lot of people hidden. And he sort of _____ with the whole family, a few brothers and his sister and parents. And after the war they went to Israel. He's now in Sal-o Pal-o (ph).

Q: Did your parents survive?

A: Pardon me?

Q: Did your parents survive?

A: My mother. My father was killed three days after the initial civil war. 3rd of May. He was on the march and he couldn't walk. He was with my brother, so they shot him and we tried to find out where, what. We never found anything.

Q: Can we break from the photographs for a moment? This is Susie Goldstein from collections and I actually don't know you.

Q: I'm Diane Salsen in the curator department.

Q: This is Irene Fleming. What I don't know is how long we have this room, we may have to go to _____. I think she wants to take information now about the artifacts which I think will be an interesting experience.

A: Who get's this, ah...?

Q: I get those. Susie gets...

A: So should I give it to her now?

Q: Yes.

A: I wanted you to know that it's our most private possession. It survived everything.

Q: They also have a violin that Bert took out of the ghetto and ended up with.

A: This is how this survived. In a casing in, also the violin, that somebody else had it. This is a calendar, the last calendar of the ghetto. With Rum-cof-ski (ph) on the front page. This is the way I got it and this is the way I put it, I don't know what made me put this away instead of jewelry. I didn't put any jewelry in the case.

Q: There's some writing in it.

Q: There is?

Q: That little bit of writing, yes, that was Bert.

A: Let me see. I never looked inside.

Q: Remember when I opened it, I opened it to a page where...

A: You told me, but I never opened it.

Q: On the left hand side of one of the pages, in the middle, I think.

A: Yeah, it was done outside _____.

Q: This was his ID card.

A: That has to be polished, I didn't have a chance to polish it.

A: You wrote down 'Hoc-side' (ph) but I don't know who is 'Moi-she' (ph)?

A: There were so many Moi-she's (ph).

Q: I'm sure that you have probably told this story before to Joan and Teresa in these past two days at least three times, but...

A: They are sick of us, I know!

Q: These things you put in the violin case?

A: My husband has. We gave it to our grandson, a violin. So we took, we take the lining of the violin, it was a lining and he opened the lining and put in this two, the watch I had and the budda. The budda was in it. I put a little china budda that my father gave to my mother. And this was my

mascot. Where ever I went I had it with me. And we put this in the lining, it survived. And I have it at home. One day you will see it.

Q: Were you in hiding?

A: No. I was in ghetto.

Q: But, I guess my question is how did the violin survive once you...?

A: When they took us on the transport they told us to take some luggage. What we can carry.

A: That's the only luggage I took was my violin.

A: And he took the only luggage, he took was the violin. And then when he came to the concentration camp they gave him the violin.

A: They took it away, but the next day they gave it to us.

A: They wanted them to be entertained by the...

A: This friend of mine who had an accordion, his accordion was also taken away then given back to him so he could play it for that.

Q: And what camp were you in?

A: I? We were in ghetto Lodz and then I was in the Ravensbruck and in Zh-Hna. You know, it's funny, amazing, that Zh-Hna is next door to the Luder-schadt (ph) where Luder was preaching. It's called now Vietta-Luder-Schadt-Veet-n-borg (ph) on the Elb River and this is the church where he was preaching.

Q: And you were, the camp was?

A: My camp was, after the ghetto? Reichenbach Sachsenhausen and then we were in a factory in Kurdenbukhausen (ph) which is about 33 kilometers from Berlin.

Q: And the whole time your violin went with you?

A: Yes. The violin is what survived because I took it with me. After the liberation I went always with my violin. I never let them go.

Q: When you went to slave labor and the did not, they still did not confiscate it, which is a little unusual.

Q: They took it away and then they...

A: It went with us into the cattle car and then when we came to Sachsenhausen they took it away and when we were transported to Kurdenbukhausen (ph) they gave it back to us. The instruments.

A: This is unique information. We have friends living in Israel. Dr. Veed-det (ph) that was living together so to speak with Rum-cof-ski (ph) because in the beginning, you remember, he lived in the hospital? And Stefan was there, I was there almost everyday.

A: Yes.

A: This friend of ours...

Q: You know we are wanting to get names from you so we can interview...

A: Yes, I will give you names and addresses. He is still alive, retired. He was patronizing, very patronizing and his wife was a social climber. They are very good friends of mine, I put them together, they got married and I was his witness. And he really knows everything because he was living with Rum-cof-ski (ph) in the hospital in the beginning. Then there was Genia Leap-mon-beard (ph), she was in charge of the children in Mar-ee-she (ph)...

A: The orphanage.

A: ...and she lives in Paris but I don't know her married name. We can find out. But these people were there at the source. They were kind of gray elements. They didn't have a physical position but they were everywhere, where it pays to be, understand?

Q: And do you want to go ahead and give us the calendar and then...?

A: Oh, most definitely. You see, I gave my daughters, in this violin I had two rings. They were made to open up and we had sien-ka-lee (ph) in it, arsenic, in case the time comes that we can't take it anymore we were going to use it. My mother knew about it and she got rid of it, she says, every moment you are breathing you are alive, you have hope. So, whatever should happen will happen and she got rid of it and we just, these rings we have and our daughter has them.

Q: And this, Teresa actually picked it up before I saw what it was, but it's a case?

A: This was a case for identification but it crumbled. I had it here not long ago, but it was never used.

Q: This was not a typical case?

A: No, it was...

Q: This was a present given to Bert from...

A: From his workers. It says here, to our dear leader art-by-lieb-shen-stop-da-di-luk (ph) in German and the date.

Q: And his name then was Bernard Fuchs.

A: Yes. These are the things that I put in the safe. Isn't that funny, you see, my cousin came over and she, her brother had TB, young man, beautiful young man. He was bleeding, coughing, so she came to me, she needed quad-goo-lin (ph), you know what that is? It's a medication that stops bleeding and we didn't have it in the ghetto and these people that I mentions to this lady before they had connections. They were smuggling, so I went to him, he's alive, he's in Miami, and I told him what I needed. He got it for me, he was a good friend of mine, and my cousin, her father was my father's partner in the business, wanted to give me a lot of diamonds. I said, what do I need, I don't care about, I cared about having a full stomach, who cares about jewelry, about things.

End of Tape 1.

Tape 2

A: There's age and I wanted to run away. Everybody was running to Russia to save themselves. I wanted to go but I was young and I didn't know life really. So my parents made me stay. I got a guilt complex, you want to go and say, but I got married and I got stuck, but after three months we parted and he fell in love with my cousin. He was with my cousin until they separated and she perished.

Q: And when did you meet Mr. Fuchs?

A: I met him maybe close to a year later when I separated.

Q: That information we have on tape. They married in '43, right?

A: June '43.

Q: Ten months after you had met.

A: Yeah.

Q: They were married by Rum-cof-ski (ph) right?

A: Yup, sure.

Q: With 18 other couples?

A: Sure. I think it was 19 couples with us.

Q: I think there are pictures of that in the press shot.

A: I have pictures...

Q: Unfortunately she didn't bring them.

A: I didn't know that. I didn't know if you are interested because, as I said, Hanya Gross gave me a lot of pictures. This is the only thing that I had, what I got from him and what people send us from Argentina, the pictures.

Q: The cigarette case that Teresa is copying? Did you also want to donate the cigarette case?

A: Yes, I want to donate my most precious possessions, they are. You see, I was hesitating to give it to my daughter, my older daughter is very active, second generation. She's very outspoken, very vocal. So I gave her these rings and I figure, what is she going to do with that? And this is a piece of history.

Q: Do you want to tell me a little bit about the cigarette case?

A: I cannot tell you anything about it, my husband got it from, I think, Bert, did you get the cigarette case for your birthday or something?

A: My birthday in 1941.

A: Oh, I didn't know him at that time, but his people gave it to him.

A: The date is engraved on that cigarette case. September 17, 1941.

Q: And who gave you the case?

A: The workers in his department...

A: My personnel.

A: That worked for him. I met you a year and a month later. It's cold in here.

(Looking at pictures)

A: What picture is that?

Q: This is of the cigarette case.

A: Came out pretty good.

A: Bertie, don't you think that they should get in touch with Moo-lock (ph)?

A: I don't know but he has, he might have...

A: Yakovobitch's son.

A: Ivan Yakovobitch's son.

A: And Laura's (ph) nephew. And they live in Florida.

Q: Do you think they might have things from...

A: Oh sure they have it.

A: He might even have the golden bridge which was taken off my cigarette case.

A: This is what we suspect.

Q: That he has the golden bridge taken off the back?

A: Yes, because my brother-in-law, we gave it to him and he probably gave it to his, one thing I know that they hid things, so this is how this survived I guess. We gave it to Dora's husband and he gave it to his brother. But the bridge as you see is taken so we suspect that they have it.

Q: And there was a bridge made like this?

A: On the back side.

Q: The Lodz bridge on the back, but it's not there.

A: Do you know that the ghetto was divided by bridge and the people went from this holder on this side was what you would see when you see from the other side still where, and it disappeared. After the war it was hidden. It's not Munich anymore.

Q: So, it was, the case was something that was not carried with you?

A: No, no, no. It was too heavy.

Q: Could you have entrusted it with somebody else?

A: Yeah, we entrusted it to Erik Yakovobitch. Because I know they had a lot on the premises of the hospital.

Q: To people that weren't hiding or?

A: No. He survived after the war.

Q: Was he one of the last group to stay in Lodz?

A: Yes. No, no, he was in our transport.

A: He was with me.

Q: So then, how was this found?

A: Because he had it left in the hospital. They dug it...

A: He left it somewhere, in other words, they hid it somewhere in a secure place and then after the war they went and dug it out again.

Q: This isn't saying that it's Yakovobitch that made that case, is it? The three brothers who lived in Lodz that are Lee and Yakovobitch and his two brothers?

A: No.

A: Oh, this...

A: The other three brothers Yakovobitch. I know what you are talking about. No, these are not the ones. There were just two brothers. Alan and Bobeck.

Q: okay.

A: Oh, your talking about the people that lived in Spring Valley, these brothers? But they were with you on the transport. We knew everybody that was on the transport. We had like 300 people. But, you know it's so many years ago. I don't remember.

A: You think they would be interested in taking this to their archives?

Q: The archives?

A: These artifacts, yes?

Q: Oh yes, absolutely.

A: This is what Lusik (ph) wanted when he came to visit us and he wanted Bert's diary, I told you the diary we have, but I didn't give it to him. He wanted it so badly. This was before he wrote the book, he came to us and spent the day with us.

Q: You haven't Xeroxed the diary? Because what I'm worried about it that...

A: It's hardly visible.

A: Well, I didn't have a pen. I wrote in pencil you know and I wrote at night.

Q: Can you read it now?

A: I think I still would be able to read it, to make it out. I have to take it and I have to record it.

A: If you would have a forensic department I think they would be able to do something about it, but it's fading. It's so faded.

Q: I was just wondering if we should get it copied so that at least there is a permanent record of it?

A: I don't think I would make it public because it's all personal. My life, my feelings, you know, and happenings if there were something.

Q: Do you think at some point you might want to make it available, even 100 years from now?

A: If I would make it available I would make it available for my children maybe. But...

A: You should read it out at least...

A: Well, I said, I would have to read it first in English, er, in German and then eventually translate it with...

Q: We could tape record it...

A: I would tape record it.

A: _____ have been coaxing him for years to do it.

Q: Well somebody should just come to the house with a tape recorded, who doesn't know German so they don't understand what your doing, and you just read it out in German and at least there is a record because it's important to have something like that.

A: I will try to do that.

A: He can do it by himself, he doesn't need anybody to do it...

Q: Well, but sometimes you need someone to just come and say, okay, now we are going to do...

A: I have two tape recorders, but both are in need of repair.

Q: I could have Jodie, Jodie doesn't understand any German so whatever your saying is safe.

A: Well, I translated some for her.

Q: Oh, you did?

A: For the, she made a video tape for the Museum in Houston, Texas and they showed me the video and I made them in English and the titles, sub titles.

A: Oh, it's really so, like _____ all those years, it was so touching to get this. How could he have hidden it, I don't understand?

A: I hid it in my straw mattress.

A: They looked through our...

A: Every night in a different spot.

A: They cut open all of our straw mattresses.

A: No, they didn't cut mine. But in any case I hid it in the mattress every night I put it in a different spot.

Q: Did you write everyday?

A: Yes. Everyday I wrote.

Q: How did you find each other after the war?

A: I found him.

Q: It's a very long story.

A: Yeah, it's a long story.

Q: _____ going back to Lodz?

A: No, no, no, no. I had nothing to go back to anymore.

Q: When did you finally re-unite?

A: August 8, 1946, right?

A: 1945.

Q: And were either of you in displaced persons camp?

A: No. We were never in a camp. We had a room with a German family and this is how we...

A: We were separated in October of '44 and we found each other in August, ten months.

Q: These two are for you.

A: Oh, thank you very much.

Q: One you can read this better and the other you can see this better, so you have both.

A: I'll give these to the girls, Bert.

Q: And if you need more copies we can always make more.

Q: Or we can photograph the for you.

A: Oh this would be nice because I want to give it to my daughters.

Q: We can have them photograph the whole collection and then we can give you copies and we will always have copies. Can I ask what your address is in Connecticut?

A: Yeah. (Gave address and phone number)

<<<<<Discussed Deed of Gift, custody receipt and other factors here.>>>>>

Q: Would you like, for instance, if somebody comes in from the outside world and they want to look up your collection, would it be clearer for them to look under 'Fuchs' or would it be clearer to look under 'Fleming'?

A: Under 'Fuchs' because not everybody knows that we changed our names.

Q: It's F-U-C-H-S.

A: Yes.

Q: okay.

A: And the first name is Bernard.

Q: Their doing some ceremony here, there is suppose to be food so I'm assuming that their not going to just walk in and we're going to be in some very uncomfortable position?

A: What kind of ceremonies do they have here?

Q: I don't know, somebody's getting an award.

Q: I'm sure you told Susie, but what was the occasion?

A: That he got it? For his birthday. From the employees, and one is from...

A: One is from two OD men. There were two British men who were assigned to...

Q: Ko-vo-is-key (ph)?

A: Yes, and one is David Pyttl.

Q: What was his first name?

A: David.

A: Sima, it's a Russian name.

Q: So these were the two?

A: The two OD policemen who were assigned to me, yes.

A: They were the, a lot of people came to the office so they took care of the order, really.

Q: And was it personally from these two or?

A: No, the whole department.

A: The plaque on top is specifically from these two. And the other one...

A: Turn it around. This is where the bridge was. The same workmanship like this, somebody thought it was valuable because it's gold, gold plated.

A: And the other one is from the personnel, from the first personnel.

Q: The top one or the bottom one? What is this one, the one on the top right?

A: The one on top in front of the book is from the original first personnel and this is from the complete personnel because I had a staff. The book form is from my personal staff, from the executive staff. And this is from all the personnel.

Q: I see. So each one paid for the separate plaque?

A: I don't know how they did it, but they had it engraved, yes.

Q: And they presented it to you as a whole?

A: Pardon me?

Q: They presented it to you as a whole, complete, as it is now with the rest?

A: No, it was with the bridge on it.

Q: Is your birthday actually on the 17th of September?

A: That's correct.

Q: Because one year says 29th of May? What is that?

A: Yes.

Q: Why is that?

A: They added this on.

Q: I see, I see.

Q: Why did they add that on?

A: Well, they wanted to be part of it.

Q: So when it was first given to you did it look like this or they added something later?

A: No, it was just like this and the bridge, then they took it and added this.

Q: I see. I may take this photo as well. Do you mind if I do that too?

A: That's why my staff, they had it made up in the factory and then they had it engraved.

Q: You had metal works, right? There were engravers in the?

A: We had everything in the ghetto. Everything.

A: We had very creative people.

Q: And where did such material come from for this kind of thing? Do you know?

A: People told you that we had to have ein-kof-sent-ral (ph), it means...

A: People came there and...

A: We had given everything valuable, jewelry...

A: So they went and received money or other valuables for that.

A: But they received ghetto money.

A: Well, naturally. What else?

Q: So the bridge that was on the back, when it was taken, are you just assuming somebody didn't take the whole thing and take away the whole case they just wanted it, just took off the back?

A: This is what they wanted. I don't know if they wanted it for the value of it. There is no value. Or they had it as a historical piece of history.

A: Or for the gold.

Q: When did you recover this object?

A: After the war, after the liberation, we got that from my brother-in-law.

Q: Did you get it when you were back in Hannover?

A: We were in Hannover.

Q: And that's when you got it?

A: Yes.

Q: When you found your brother, when your brother came? No, you found your brother before?

A: No. My brother-in-law.

A: I told you half of it. That we were feeding a fellow from my home town and when he went back to Lodz he put it in the, and my brother knew where we are and he found us. He came to us.

Q: Right.

A: Because everybody, you know, was seeking someone, searching for him, searching for her, everybody was trying and that was all over the area. In Germany, in Poland, everybody was looking to find relatives or closer ones.

Q: What was your brother's name?

A: David.

A: And then the radio, every morning, announced who was seeking who there.

A: Last name S-A-L-O-M-O-N-O-W-I-C-Z. Then he changed it to Salomn (ph) when he became a citizen they told him that he should change his name because...

A: Did Irene tell you? I had a friend who lived near Hannover in a small place and he was a joker. He always was full of jokes and one morning, it must have been about quarter of four, after three in the morning, he rang my bell. I was half asleep and I went and opened the door and he said, I heard on the radio that your sister is looking for you and I answered it, and I took him and almost killed him. I said, don't make such a joke, take me out of sleep, so he went on his knees and said, everything that is holy, I am telling the truth! Sure enough, about ten days later she came.

Q: He was the one who told you about Irene?

A: He answered the radio station to my sister that I was alive and lived in Hannover. We have a lot of photographs to go through yet, huh?

Q: Yes, but I think what we'll do is we will take a break and you can either go to the cafe and eat something or you can go to the permanent exhibition and see who you can see and then you can come back and help them out with more photographs.

A: What are we doing for lunch?

Q: Well, the closest place is the cafe. We can bring you back lunch, if you want. We can go to the cafe and get lunch and you can come and eat in my office, if you want? Or you can go to the cafe yourselves and sit there?

A: I think it would be nice if we can lunch in your office, that would be all right.

Q: okay. We can get things for you.

A: _____ name is Teresa?

Q: Teresa, yes. I don't know what she's, she's trying to make a more perfect...

Q: Now she took the other one.

A: Now she took the calendar?

Q: Yes.

A: The calendar and...

A: And the leather case.

Q: With a calendar like that, how many might be printed? Would thousands be printed or?

A: I have no idea.

Q: Where would you get it from?

A: I told you, my professor was in charge of the newspaper and printing and people were getting the newspaper. It was printed for the people.

Q: No, I mean, where would you get something like that?

A: I would assume that there would be a few thousand.

Q: And given out to just a few people?

A: And given out to at least the department heads.

Q: Did you walk around in the course of the day, going to the different factories and talking with people or did you mainly stay in your office?

A: No, I walked around too. I visited the various resorts all the time.

Q: And were you looking for particular things, were you looking to see...

A: No, just what the conditions were. What I could do to improve it or when I criticize. I had quite a task. I pulled quite some weight in that sense because even if he was a director of the factory he still had to, if I said something, it was that word. It had to be done. And on the other end I also patted him on the shoulder if he did something well so it went both ways. Yes, I did go around. But I always had one with me, one of my OD men.

Q: When you would go to the places would people run up to you and talk to you or would they stay working?

A: They would come. Ask me for favors or something.

A: He was very accessible, Bert.

Q: And the other workers, you had 40 or 50 other people working for you, were they mainly in the office or did they also walk around so they could report to you?

A: No, they were mainly in the office because to keep up the data, we didn't have computers naturally so everything had to be done by hand so we kept pretty busy.

Q: Did you have to make labor charts about who was working where?

A: No, but we had to register definitely all the personnel to which we are, and somebody got a delegation to that factory it was put onto the index cards.

Q: So you could trail where the people, they had gone from this factory to that factory so you knew exactly?

A: Yes, absolutely.

Q: Are those cards still available?

A: Well that depends on...

A: He had something.

A: He's the one that donated everything to...

A: To the Vi-vel (ph).

A: And he told us that he saved, he was left with the crew to clean up and then the Russians came and liberated them. This is how he kept everything intact. All his papers, everything what was Rum-cof-ski (ph) he has, he had. I don't know what, but I know he donated it a lot.

Q: Now I know in Lodz, what?

Q: In some cases, here but I'm not sure if it was...

A: Not On-zone-o-vitch (ph). I know he told us that he donated an awful lot here.

Q: There are cards in Lodz now, that I know, with the names of a lot of people. Where they were living. Which is something else I wanted to ask you. I wanted to show you the map. We have a list of the ghetto inhabitants and your listed here. As living in Belzar (ph).

A: Yes.

Q: Now, where was that?

A: Belzar-nacht (ph). Let's see that.

A: It was next to Rib-now (ph), Bert.

A: One moment.

A: You have to go by Lud-no-mier-skein (ph), it's a side street.

A: Yes, right here. Bazarro (ph), Bazar Plats, it's right here.

Q: And what's this other street, Huntz, what does that mean?

A: Hundrea-auten (ph)? I have no idea.

Q: So you were Bezar (ph) Seven?

A: Yeah. I don't know what this Handrea-auten (ph) means here.

Q: Unless it means we're in or near that street? I didn't see it anywhere.

A: No, I don't even know Hundrea-auten (ph) street.

Q: Maybe it's one of the closest main streets?

A: Like Aud-nitz-ka (ph), Hundrea-auten (ph) is like...

Q: Yes, so it's over there. I don't know why, it's very strange.

A: Here was the bridge, you see?

Q: That's where the bridge...

A: That's the bridge we are talking about. There were two bridges and gates. There were some gates here. They are not marked, the gates are not marked. Only the bridges are marked here. There was a hospital.

Q: There was an Aryan street?

A: So, what they meant here Huandy-aut-en-schtaz (ph), what they meant covered the Huandy-aut-en-schtaz (ph) so that they had to go from there to here, you know? Should have said humble-aut-en-schtaz (ph) rather than Huandy-aut-en-schtaz (ph).

Q: Right, because that's much closer?

A: Right.

Q: And this is the train tracks, the trolley tracks?

A: The trolley. The trolley went there.

<<<<Inquiring about lunch, what to eat>>>>

A: So you are not disappointed? Getting enough information?

Q: Yes. (inaudible), but I'm getting more. How did you feel about it?

A: I had a very restless night. I don't know, I tried to knock it out.

A: And you were talking I want you to know, but I couldn't understand about what.

A: I was mumbling?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have dreams last night?

A: No.

A: I didn't dream last night too.

A: Yeah, at one time you were saying something too and I touched you and you stopped.

Q: Did you have particular things that were bothering you last night?

A: I don't recall. I know I was very restless and I looked at the clock almost every hour.

A: I know we wanted to walk and get something to eat. We walked, we couldn't find it, so we went back to the hotel and we ate downstairs. They should close the place, but they served people, it's unbelievable. And the prices! A cup of soup, watery soup, five dollars!

Q: I think we have to change the hotel.

A: Yes, you should.

Q: I'm going to tell Chris.

A: Oh, it's a depressing place, very depressing.

Q: Where are you staying?

A: In the Holiday Inn on Franklin Square.

Q: I don't like the area. So, you couldn't find the restaurant I told you about?

A: No we didn't.

A: I went to "K" and...

Q: "K" and 17th, I think.

A: Oh, we went to 16th and then we went back. So, what are you going to do with this?

A: It's a beautiful piece, isn't it?

Q: Yes, it's interesting. I think this is something that's easy for us to just put into the permanent exhibition because we have that case with all the currency. I mean, I would ask Yatz-ka (ph) if we could contribute that because it's so small. And it's in great condition.

A: It's in good condition, isn't it?

Q: But this is such a _____, I would hope we would have an opportunity to exhibit it, but also to be very clear in the text what it was. Especially because it's really very significant because of the odyssey or, it made it really something that is connected with the Jewish people. It's been very lovely meeting you. I hope the rest of your stay here is _____.

A: We leaving tomorrow morning. Nice meeting you.

Q: I am trying to think if we should move into my office and they can have some lunch because if they are going to come in here. Are there other things that we want to do, do a few more things with photographs now?

A: There were some photographs...

Q: We could do it after lunch.

A: We can continue, but I think it's pretty awkward if she looks at one and I look at one and...

Q: Your right. We probably should do one at a time.

A: Maybe, the ten more minutes that we have. If you could sit here.

A: Shall I take it over there, or should I just, oh, finish this one? Do you want us to finish this one? Because there are not too many left as I can see.

Q: I very much want to show you the deportation photos, for you to tell me what is what, what is coming and what is going.

A: Women! _____ and _____. All right. This is Rum-cof-ski-key's (ph)wife, Regina. No, I don't know her name.

A: No, that is not Rum-cof-ski-key's (ph)wife.

A: Yes, this was his wife and this is Mrs. Dabby-dovich (ph), Bert. And this is Erika Nien-en-ginka (ph).

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: When did they marry?

A: In the ghetto.

Q: Do you remember when?

A: No, I don't. I know in the ghetto.

A: Was her name Helena?

A: I don't remember her name.

A: Helena, I think it was...

A: I don't know, I can't tell because...

Q: And this is?

A: This is Mrs. Dabby-dovich (ph), Dr. Klausenburg's daughter. And this is Aaron Yakovobitch (ph), that had my, that we gave for...

Q: Brother of Bolack (ph)?

A: My brother, Bolack (ph). And this is his wife, Regina. Wait a second, this is Professor Rosenstein.

Q: What was Professor Rosenstein?

A: Professor? He was the publisher of the newspaper and in charge of the printing. Who else is there? Rosenblatt. This is Rosenblatt here.

Q: Did Rosenblatt survive?

A: No.

A: He went from _____ the same transfer.

Q: Did you hear any rumors or _____ about Rum-cof-ski's (ph) death?

A: Yeah, that they clubbed him.

A: Well, we know that they clubbed him to death.

Q: Who?

A: People that went in the first transport.

Q: Are you familiar with this man, A-real-hul Hein-jis-kee (ph)?

A: No.

Q: I think he is a bit younger and he wrote an article that he heard that there was a sports figure, or like maybe like underworld, a little criminal...

A: This is who clubbed Rum-cof-ski (ph), the criminal. When the Germans came to Lodz, they opened the jails and the criminals were the bosses of us. They were like the Mafia and with the first transport, he tried to send these people away...

A: He collected the first transport to leave the ghetto. There were the three "F's": Fleischer (ph), Foreman (ph) and Fisherman (ph). These were the lowest elements and they were the ones who were in Auschwitz waiting for him. And they clubbed him to death.

Q: And you heard it from?

A: I heard it after the war.

Q: Yes, I understand but...

A: People where talking!

A: From people who were in Auschwitz. I know that there somebody was waiting for me and I probably would have had the same death as Rum-cof-ski (ph) did.

Q: Do you think that everybody who had any function in the Jewish Counsel was subject to...?

A: No, I wouldn't say that.

A: Not everybody. But there were mixed opinions. He had a lot of friends but he had enemies also. Quite a few of them.

Q: You said that you met people that actually saw Rum-cof-ski (ph) being killed? Not just heard that he had been killed?

A: That's what Giertler (ph) was telling us.

Q: Giertler (ph)?

A: We found out from David Giertler (ph) because this is a very unusual case. They took him _____ out of the ghetto and we never heard about him, like he would disappear from the face of the earth.

Q: Who?

A: David Giertler (ph)! And he was the liaison with the Gestapo, between the Gestapo he was the one that brought Bert to the ghetto and everybody thought he's finished! We didn't know what happened, he disappeared.

A: Over a week.

A: What do you mean? He never came back to the ghetto.

A: Who? David Giertler (ph)?

A: Yes. He never came back. When they took him, he went to Auschwitz and all his guards was waiting for him.

A: They took him once and he came back.

A: Yeah, but the second time when they took him, he did come back. And after the war, we found out he's alive so we went to Munich to visit him. He was doing great.

Q: And he told you about Rum-cof-ski (ph)?

A: He told us everything we know because we didn't circulate. We were very withdrawn, Bert had enough with his job when he came to, when we came after work we were so exhausted. Life was tough.

Q: But, did Giertler (ph) see these people killing him?

A: Yeah. He saw everything. He took all their Auschwitz when he came, he had a lot of, they called him "Bee-alg-da-varta" (ph), "The White Brigade". Because they were the people that were...

A: This was Rum-cof-ski's (ph) wife.

A: No way, Bertie. This was Mrs. Dabby-dovich (ph). Rum-cof-ski's (ph) wife doesn't figure anywhere else.

A: Josef, not Heim.

A: I know! This is Heim's wife.

A: This was...

A: No, this was Dabby-dovich (ph), Bert. I don't see Joseph Rum-cof-ski's (ph) wife anywhere. And here, I made the sign that there was something wrong here...

Q: Better put a question mark.

A: These friends of ours in Israel, the Dr. Vied-der-nany's (ph) wife, they were there daily with these people and they know so much because we were _____. Bert was visible but they never saw us at parties and stuff like that.

Q: Who is this?

A: This is Mrs. Dabby-dovich(ph).

A: Josef Rum-cof-ski's (ph) wife.

A: Well, maybe you are right. But this is the same, what did they write here? They should know if this was his wife.

Q: No, we couldn't know.

A: Mordiah Heim(ph).

Q: Is that Josef's wife?

A: Yeah.

Q: You think it's Mrs. Dabby-dovich (ph)?

A: Yeah. And this here, she is here too.

Q: Do you think this is...?

A: This is Josef's Rum-cof-ski's (ph) wife.

Q: Do you know her name?

A: Helen, I guess. I don't know. I don't recall. But this was his wife.

A: I hardly knew the woman, or saw her.

A: This was Josef's wife. She's in that picture we had.

A: And the rest, I looked...

Q: Who is that?

A: I don't know.

Q: How observant was Rum-cof-ski (ph) of the whole administration? Like on the calendar, all the Hebrew dates are written and all the holidays are written and he was...?

A: Brilliant. He was a brilliant mind. To keep a score of people, all different backgrounds so, everything went like clockwork. Everything was very orderly, very organized.

A: I don't know, I can't identify.

Q: Was he religious?

A: I don't think so.

Q: Was tradition important for him?

A: Yes, oh yes.

A: Very much so. I will tell you, every holiday like Rush-sha-shana (ph), the New Year, he would send us a gift that the kids made. They use to make beautiful baskets, handiwork, beautiful stuff they learned in the orphanage and every contributor, everybody supporting him and all his friends he sent gifts that the kids made.

Q: Is that in the ghetto or was that before the ghetto?

A: Before.

Q: But, in the ghetto, was there observance of the holidays?

A: No. I don't see how, no there was nothing.

Q: This is, well, heavy stuff!

A: It is, it is. Especially for people that have been there.

Q: I would like to go back to the Gish-telv (ph)...

A: This is Mill-ka-tee Ma-no-skee's (ph) father. He was always with, I noticed him when we were in the ghetto. He was always there. This was my girlfriend's father.

Q: And what is this, here?

A: He worked in the kitchen. Kitchen number, I don't know, I can see '2' I think.

Q: Let me bring quickly the deportation, but in this famous speech, "Give me your children, give me your..."?

A: I never heard it.

A: That's Josef Rum-cof-ski (ph), they say it's Heim Rum-cof-ski (ph).

A: Yeah, his younger brother.

Q: What was his function?

A: He was in charge of the health department of the hospital. Wasn't he the chief of the hospital in Nwad-ya-gin-skie (ph)?

A: I think so.

A: Stefan would know, Bertie.

Q: So you never heard about this speech...?

A: Never heard it.

A: No, the first time I saw...

Q: Did you know about the official chronicle being written?

A: Yeah because Josef came to us.

A: He came to us and spent a whole Sunday with us.

Q: No, he didn't write this, this was written in the Ghetto.

A: Oh, I thought you were talking about the Lodz ghetto, the Chronicle. No I didn't know about a book written in the ghetto.

Q: Yes, because it was an official kind of diary of the activities.

A: Every activity was posted.

Q: But there's personal things there.

A: I don't know, I never heard or saw it. I thought it was Dubra-shizkies (ph) book. This I have at home.

Q: No, he just translated it and published it. I will bring the deportation folder.

A: This is Rabbi Fine.

A: This is very important because he was a wonderful guy, this Rabbi.

Q: And what was this meeting?

A: Shick-a (ph).

A: Throw up the boards, the rods, because they had from all walks of life people from every, doctors and the Rabbi was here.

A: Was it the Rabbi Finer or was it Mienster (ph)?

A: Rabbi Finer.

Q: There are a couple of people here that you don't have. This is Rabbi Finer.

A: Rabbi Finer. Dr. Shicker (ph).

Q: Which one is it, you mean in that hat?

A: Yes. From the health department.

Q: Does the name 'Frances' mean anything to you?

A: No.

A: And there's Josef again.

A: No. There were so many people.

Q: I know, I know. Sometimes we shoot in the dark.

A: As I said, if you could go to Israel and Tel Aviv there are people that lived together with Rum-cof-ski (ph). Dr. Vee-der (ph), he's still alive, Dr. Kin-la-roos (ph) is the head of the Survivor's...

A: This is not Bebof (ph). It says here that he talks with Bebof (ph), that's not Bebof (ph). Sorry.

A: Bebof (ph) was a handsome man.

Q: There's another photograph that says that.

A: Yes. We identified that yesterday. Yeah, they are identified. Geitler (ph) is identified, Yakovobitch (ph)...[named many inaudible names]

Q: Yes, we identified all those people yesterday.

A: And this was that policeman, I forgot his name.

A: He was a very quiet...

A: A very nice boy.

Q: So, you stayed in the ghetto after Rum-cof-ski (ph)...

A: We were the last transport.

A: They were one transport before us.

Q: So where did you...

A: We were suppose to be going to Auschwitz but somehow they turned around and I went to Regensburg and he went to Reichshof.

Q: But did you go first to Dresden?

A: No. We went to Sachsenhausen Regensburg.

Q: Directly?

A: Directly.

A: Yes, so they let the men go.

A: Yes, we were separated. All men out.

Q: How did you know that you were suppose to be going to Auschwitz and somebody changed their mind? Because you just said that.

A: Yes, but I don't know how we know it because everything was rumors.

Q: When are you starting, soon? okay, let's take this stuff out. Mark that.

A: [Inaudible]...and she was with me at the table to be interviewed. And they were talking about what she said to _____ for instance. Why couldn't they do in Lodz the same as in Warsaw, the uprising. So I said I'm sorry you are complaining.

A: Yeah, she was obnoxious anyhow.

A: I said first of all the people in Warsaw ghettos they had _____ with the outside. So they were able to exchange something for weapons and ammunition. We had absolutely no contact with the outside world. We were absolutely isolated and what could we do? To fight the Germans with bare fingers? It would have been suicide!

Q: You shouldn't feel defensive, it's ummm...

A: Yeah, but I mean, she said it in front of the camera.

A: She was so arrogant. She said something that I was very, very up in arms, what was it? And this young editor from the For-vert (ph)...

A: There was a Jonathon Rosen. So, he asked me, tell us what or how did you feel at that time when you had to collaborate with the Germans?

A: I could have killed him.

A: So I told him, we had to work to eat and if Rum-cof-ski (ph) would have been not able to negotiate with the Germans, to give us materials, raw materials, and we would manufacture and would deliver the completed goods to them in exchange for money and food. Whatever we needed in the ghetto and if he would have been successful in that negotiation the Lodz cater (ph) would have been liquidated in 1943 completely.

A: 1942 already...

A: In 1942, I'm sorry. I meant '42. Completely. No body would have left at that time alive. They would have had to find a solution at that time.

A: There was a young man, an editor of the For-vitz (ph), Jonathon Rosen. Very lovely young man. So he said, who are we to judge if we didn't live there?

A: And everybody had their individual experiences so who are we to tell them or to judge of what was good and what was bad.

Q: To what extent at that time, not today, but at that time were you aware that the Lodz ghetto is so different from others?

A: No. We didn't have any knowledge of that.

A: We found out after the war. We didn't know it.

A: We didn't even know that there exists other ghettos in Warsaw.

Q: You didn't know?

A: No. Because all from this, from the little villages and surrounding towns, they sent it into the Lodz ghetto. What was the two brothers that came from the Warsaw ghetto to us?

A: Cone (ph).

A: The brothers Cone (ph). They came from Warsaw to the Lodz ghetto and they told us about the Warsaw ghetto.

A: And this is when we found out. This was towards the end. And she could tell them, one of the daughters is alive in Fairlong, New Jersey.

Q: I hear that people in Lodz before the ghetto was sealed...

A: Closed.

Q: Closed. They figured that it's better to go to Warsaw because this is not going to be annexed to the Reich as opposed to Lodz which became part of the Reich and so they were afraid...

A: Who knew that they would annex the Lodz city...?

Q: Wasn't it right away announced?

A: I'm sorry. I have to butt in because I lived through it. My father, when the Germans started to invade, to come into Lodz, my father and my brother went to Warsaw because every patriotic Pole

went to defend the City of Warsaw. And my father came back must be a week later, his feet were bleeding and he looked, he was a shadow of a person, they tried to walk towards Warsaw.

End of Tape 2.

Tape 3

Q: Jumping to 1944, did you feel or know or consider yourself in some way privileged that you were in the last transport?

A: We were privileged. We were definitely privileged in the last transport.

A: You were only around 300 people?

A: Because they were already...

A: There were a few young doctors, a few doctors and people that use to work close in the administration.

A: At that time we did not know that already are other people like Alan Yakovobitch (ph) knew that we would not be staying in Sachsenhausen. That we will be going somewhere else to work, in other words, it's like slaves, like going into slave labor, okay? But we didn't know that, only when we came to Sachsenhausen we were told we are not staying here. After two weeks we went to Kern-es-woo-sen-hausen (ph) because the barracks were not ready. But in the meantime when we came in they were just about ready to be occupied. And then we got the straw mattresses and stuff like this.

A: Wasn't Stefan Vee-ter (ph) with you?

A: Sure he was with me.

A: Was he working in his profession there or what?

A: He was a doctor, but...

A: This is the Dr. Vee-ter (ph) I told you lives in Tel Aviv. He was with him on the transport.

A: He was with us and there was another doctor with us and he was also on the circus saw and he lost...

A: Oh, I know who it was. Dr. Tennenbaum.

A: Tennenbaum. He lost three fingers. He also was the same as what I did with these big plywood plates on a circus saw. And he did the same thing and he got his hand too close, the right hand, got to close to the circus saw and cut off three fingers. And he was a surgeon! So afterwards he could not operate anymore because he had lost those three fingers on his right hand.

Q: Could you describe the contrast between what you expected while on the train, on the transport...?

A: Which transport?

Q: To Sachsenhausen. And after your arrival and realizing what is going on?

A: Well, until we came to Sachsenhausen we were together with our women in the cattle cars.

A: Cattle cars, strangers, I don't know how many people in one, couldn't sit down.

A: Everybody knows already how the transport took us in the cattle cars.

A: No, not everybody, no. I don't know how many people but I know we couldn't sit down.

A: Wall to wall. Shoulder on shoulder.

A: I know they put with us a pail. You had to do something in front of everybody, you did it, strangers. Men and women.

A: It was a long trip.

Q: How long?

A: I think it was a day and a night.

A: I think it was more like two days and we didn't have windows to look out.

A: I think two days and one night, something like this. And then the train stopped. All men out!

A: I will never forget this moment, this was the worst moment in my life.

A: I didn't even say good-bye to her.

A: Here was my father...

A: My father, her father, her brother...

A: My brother! He left the train when they took them out of the train, he never looked back. He never said good-bye to me, he never looked. This picture...

A: I remember! I didn't want to say good-bye because I didn't want to break down. I had to be strong. I knew I had to be strong.

Q: What did you know, what did you think, why...?

A: I had to be strong because...

A: We separated, that was all we knew.

A: This was the only possibility because we were separated. We were only married...

A: Few months.

A: No, we were married...

A: We married in '43 Bert and this was '44.

A: Yes, we married in June and this was '44...

A: About a year later.

A: Yes, a little over a year. So we basically were still on our honeymoon. If you can call that, you know. First of all, I was frustrated. Not knowing what happened next, okay? And second of all, I didn't want to see that I had tears in my eyes, I didn't want her to see that, so I just left out with the transport.

A: And this is when I saw the last time my father.

A: And we lost her father because...

A: He was about 40 years, not even 40 years old.

A: And I was met at Alan Yakovobitch (ph) because he was the numero uno on this transport. And one day, I was told to go outside, the outside commando, because they were always building tank traps because the Hitler youth comes always with the tanks over there were shooting against the Russian over our camp. One day, later on, I realized why he had sent me out. Because when I came back late that afternoon seventy people had left.

A: My brother and my father.

A: From our camp and amongst them her father and her brother. They were amongst the seventy that were sent out and Alan Yakovobitch (ph) knew that if I would be in the camp I would never let them go because I would have told them that if they go, I go too.

A: But he liked you and he wouldn't...

A: Well, he was like family because my sister was married, well, no, they were not married, but they went together, they were a pair. So, they were very close to each other. Aaron was ever close to Dora anyhow.

Q: So Bolic and Dora were not actually married?

A: No, they were married after the war.

A: They married in '45.

A: But he knew, Aaron knew, that I would never, ever have allowed my father-in-law and brother-in-law to go.

Q: Where did they go?

A: They went on a march to the North Sea to be put on a boat and bound out. It's Final Solution. And he couldn't walk anymore. So they shot him, all right? Was on May the 3rd, while my brother was able to escape.

A: They told my brother, too, run for his life, not to hang around. And my brother survived.

A: Since then, I was very, very mad. And as you say in Turkish, broy-gus-with-in (ph).

A: But we are in touch with his son, would you believe it?

A: His son called me. They lived in Brooklyn and he called me at that time to tell me that his father had passed away.

A: And he wanted us to go to the funeral.

A: And were we in Scranton or were we already in...

A: We were in Connecticut and the next thing we left for Europe.

A: I had to leave for Europe so I told him, I'm sorry I cannot come to the funeral. And every Christmas I get a post card...

A: Not a post card a regular letter!

A: Yeah, with their family printed on it with a long letter of what had transpired during the year of what they had done and what they had accomplished and where they go.

Q: So you felt that he is asking your forgiveness for sending your father-in-law and brother-in-law...?

A: He didn't ask forgiveness, no.

A: No, this young man, it wasn't his fault. He's not responsible for his father.

Q: No, no, no. I am saying that you felt that Alan Yakovobitch...?

A: I absolutely, absolutely. He sent me out that day because he knew that I would never allow my father-in-law and brother-in-law to leave!

Q: How did Yakovobitch know that they are going to be sent on this march?

A: He must have known because he was in touch with the German camp, with the Germans.

Q: Had he worked with Bebof before?

A: Sure! On the _____. Absolutely. Even very close, I must say.

Q: Right. So he would possibly know, people would tell him things?

A: Oh, sure, sure!

A: He would know because, as I mentioned to you, Zi-fed (ph) from the ghetto Fuf-eitel (ph), he was also with us in Kernet-woo-sure-hausen (ph), in that factory. As a German _____. And they were very close and I was very close with Zi-fed (ph). He was a nice guy. But, he did not know that that was my father or my brother-in-law.

Q: He didn't know who it was?

A: No.

Q: So he was simply trying to protect you?

A: But he didn't have to protect me. Because I was working and I was, you know.

A: So was David and Dad.

A: Yes, but I mean, I was working inside the factory on a circus saw. And this day I was told to go away, okay? And then later on it happened that I got the rifle in my back, that I told you, on one of these outside commandos.

Q: Can you describe that during this day and a night or maybe two days and a night on the train, what, and you were all from Lodz, right?

A: Yes.

Q: Was there any talk, any...?

A: It was frustration. You were so embarrassed, you know.

A: You tried to comfort each other for once. Saying to all, what will happen to us? Where will we go?

A: We had to accommodate ourselves because you have to get along in this place.

A: And you were actually occupied with yourself.

Q: Did you think you were going to die>

A: We didn't know what to think.

A: We didn't know. The possibility existed everyday.

A: We were sure that...

A: The train was stopped by the, bombs were falling. So we could have died right there. Not from the German end but from the Allied bombs. So, we didn't know whether we would survive or not.

Q: Yes, I mean in terms of this specific policy of the Germans at this point. Here, everybody's left the ghetto except these 800 people?

A: They told us we are going to be working.

A: But they told us we were going into...

Q: But did you still believe this was a real possibility?

A: No, no, we doubted it. We didn't know what to believe.

Q: No body talked about the specifics?

A: No!

A: No, because nobody knew!

Q: When Teresa asked you whether you felt privileged about being on the last transport, did you feel privileged in terms of your whole ghetto experience, given the position that you had in the ghetto?

A: That was one part. In another part, that I was Dora's brother. This definitely was a privileged.

Q: Did you get more food?

A: We got a little bit extra, yes.

A: When we were getting, I told you, the _____ of food, it was a small portion of meat, but Bert sent it to my parents. We never saw a thing of it! My father looked like a skeleton.

A: And he was a tall man.

A: Over six feet tall, six-four.

A: Tall and, he needed it, definitely more than I did.

Q: Did they other heads of the departments have a barber? They were all men, right?

A: I had my barber.

Q: Yes, I know that. Did they all have a barber?

A: Everybody had this, this fellow, this barber, he made the rounds.

A: He went, he went, he had quite...

Q: To all the heads of the department?

A: Pardon me?

Q: To all the heads of the departments?

A: To all, I wouldn't say, but he had quite the amount of privileged people to go around and shave and cut their hair.

Q: Was this in your life, prior to going to Lodz, was this a traditional male thing to do if you had a certain status to have somebody shave you?

A: You couldn't shave yourself. You went to the barber to be shaved.

A: I went everyday to the barber.

Q: When you were a kid? I mean, once you got a beard or when you grew up?

A: No, no. Before, I am talking about the general life without, I am not talking about the ghetto.

A: Everyone went to a barber.

Q: I'm curious because it's not something one necessarily sees today.

A: Yeah. They couldn't do it, cut their hair. They went to the barber everyday to shave.

A: When father had this _____ after we came back, we had a barber come here. Father and I to shave us.

Q: So this really had nothing to do with your positions in life, this was what one would expect for the male population.

A: No, no, no. But he had this circle of people around him.

Q: Did your sister have a hairdresser?

A: I don't know.

A: I don't even know.

Q: I was wondering if the women had an equivalent?

A: You know, I couldn't even answer that question because I really don't know.

A: I didn't have a hairdresser, I can assure you! We didn't take advantage...

Q: Did you ever get your hair cut?

A: No. In ghetto, I had long hair.

A: You started off with short hair, like now.

A: Yeah.

Q: But then you said before you left together you shaved your head?

A: I shaved. This is what happened. After we left the ghetto, I had the shorter hair than you, very crew cut. This is why they didn't actually...

A: I forgot to mention to you. I was honored by the SS in the camp. The little caps we wore, the cappies, right? And every time we passed a German...

A: You had to salute him!

A: We had to take our cappies off. And this guy, he was one who was in charge of us, so called, okay? And he liked the way I saluted him when I took off the cap. So he took me out, turned me around so I faced our people and he said, show them how to salute! So I took my cap off, and he said, that's the way you have to do it! And he allowed me to let my hair grow.

A: No, he was bald like now.

A: My twenty-two and a half hair, I had, you couldn't know if I had a haircut or not because there was nothing left. So he allowed me to have my hair cut, that was my reward.

Q: To have your hair cut?

A: Not cut! Everybody had shaved their hair off.

A: In the camp. They didn't want to have the lice growing all over the place.

A: And I was allowed to let my hair grow because I knew how to salute him.

A: Yeah, there were funny moments too.

Q: Did you have a lot of meeting with your staff, these forty or fifty people who were...?

A: Almost every morning.

Q: All of them together?

A: No, not all of them.

Q: Parts of them?

A: The ones who are very important to me.

Q: And who would that have been?

A: Bel-laf-sky (ph) was one. Then that girl from Hamburg. The German girl.

A: Would you believe my governess was working for him? She was with us for the...

A: Sorry, Darling, I don't remember their names.

Q: And what would the meetings be like in the morning, what would you be discussing?

A: Whatever was, had to be done.

Q: Like what?

A: Like a program. There were different occasions which I couldn't tell you the details, no. But, there was always something which we had to do. They had to report to me.

A: There were so many factories, resorts they called them.

A: They had to give a report of what they did and how it was done and so on. There was always something going on.

Q: Did you have quotas for what people had to produce in each of these...?

A: No, no.

Q: You didn't. So when you would go to a factory and look around and talk to people and, if you would criticize something, what would you criticize if something was going wrong? What would be the kind of thing that would be going wrong?

A: The cleanliness. The way, their conditions at the working places.

A: He would go to the kitchen and try the food. If they don't cheat, the workers of the food.

A: I would go to the kitchen and look at the soup, which the workers would receive, okay? Then I would make my comments, whether it was good or not good or whether there is somebody and if I found somebody, he was finished with the kitchen.

Q: You mean if they were stealing food?

A: They were stealing.

A: And we went to the factory, all right? And somebody from the factory needing a little bit repair, would send in his place to the kitchen.

Q: Did I understand correctly that you were in the first period, one of the two people that were in charge of employment or labor?

A: Yeah.

Q: And then you became the head of the labor?

Q: No, it was the other way around.

A: I was called and I was told to organize the department of labor because all people had to be registered to receive an ID card and without the ID card, nobody would get the food coupons.

Q: That was in the beginning or...?

A: That was when I came into the ghetto.

A: I have the papers still. Little pieces of paper when he was nominated to start the department. You want it? I have the original. It was lying in the little calendar.

Q: I will copy it, I will only copy it.

Q: That was November, right, of '42, of '40?

A: Yes. That was 1940. And I interviewed a lot of people for the job, for the office.

A: I went with David to you, too, and I was staying in line with Dr. Kin-ee-roos (ph), he took me to you.

A: Well, in any case, to answer your question, I wasn't nominated to organize and run the department of labor, which I did.

Q: But there was another person, right, that was like a co-director?

A: Later on. Not originally.

Q: And then, in the beginning of '44 it changed again, that you were the only one in charge of...?

A: No, no, Shin-nit-skie (ph) was with me the whole time until the end and we got in 1943 from Czechoslovakia a transport was...

A: Andres was his name.

A: A 100% gentleman.

A: Professor Cas-par-ee (ph) was, this is a proverb.

Q: I want to know about that, that's later, tell me about the _____.

A: He was a micro-biologist.

A: And he wanted the favor of Rum-cof-sky (ph) and he was given to my office to be the third man.

Q: His name was Anders?

A: No, it was Andres, A-N-D-R E-S. And he was with me also until the end.

Q: And how did you divide the duties?

A: With Andres I shared the office. Shin-nit-skie (ph) had his own office. But I put Andres in my office.

Q: Did you get along with Shin-nit-skie (ph)?

A: Yes, oh yes.

Q: Did you have to write reports directly to Rum-cof-ski (ph) or who did you report to?

A: Yes. To Rum-cof-ski (ph). Directly to him.

Q: And did he have comments?

A: Well, naturally, but in general he was satisfied with the way I handled it because in the beginning since it had to be organized we were three days and three nights, I got maybe two or three hours sleep, because I want to be with the people. I have to work sixteen and eighteen hours and then I let them go and I meet them, somebody else would work, so we registered day and night. Three days and three nights.

Q: So people stood in line?

A: Yes, stood in line.

A: There were crowds of people.

Q: To get their ken-car-ta (ph) or ous-vice (ph) or what?

A: Sure. It was like a ken-car-ta (ph) and this ken-car-ta (ph) they were getting their rations every week.

A: The ID they get later on from the archives, from Shun-dul-dom (ph), no, from Nef-tall-en (ph) who was in charge of it too, for ID cards. So he made out the ID cards afterwards but the people had to be delegated to the various factories.

Q: And how did you make the decision about the, were the factories already set up?

A: No, they were in the process of setting up. And we had to select the people to go there.

Q: And did you know how many people could go into each factory or you made an approximate?

A: Well, they gave me a demand. I can take now twenty, I can take now fifty, I can take now a hundred, I can take now five. So, whatever the demand was.

A: He's head of the workers or the factory...

A: They had to come to me and tell me of what they wanted.

A: A paper assault, we can have a hundred people working there.

Q: But, three days and three nights that you were registering people, are you at the same time as you registering them designating them for a particular factory?

A: Yes.

Q: So how long from the time that Rum-cof-ski (ph) hired you for this until you began to actually register people? A week? Two weeks? I mean, it had to take you some time to figure it out?

A: It took me about 10 days, if I remember right.

Q: To organize, to figure out how to organize?

A: Yeah, to organize my office.

Q: And your talking about 1940?

A: 1940, yes.

Q: And then, when people started there were demands for deportations and some of the people were your workers from factories, right?

A: Yes.

Q: And then people came and said, I hear there is a free space in the comb factory, or paper assault or...?

A: No.

A: There was no choice, they were assigned to where ever there was an opening and if they fit in, you had to know something.

A: You see, don't forget that a lot of people volunteered to go out of the ghetto. Forty-one, forty-two, their still volunteers. And then came the demands. We want 1500 people, we want 1000 people, whatever. And then, where were the people? Everybody had to work so naturally we had given, like old people, I had made out maybe 500 or 600 papers to go to the straw resort, for instance. They were sitting there, there was nothing to do because there was that much work and that much places but people had, that they were delegated to the straw aut-tie-lum (ph) where we had old people, sick people. I must have made a few thousand people like this, you know. So, to answer your question, it took me about ten days to organize the staff and I added as we went along and naturally after we were not through with the registries because, but three days and three nights it took to get the bulk into paperwork so they could get to the kitchen to get some food or get some, or where ever the food was distributed.

Q: So you registered over 100,000 people in three days and three night?

A: Yes. You cannot image what it was like.

Q: I think I'm right. 120,000 at that time? In the beginning, in 1940?

A: Oh no, it was more.

A: When the ghetto was closed we had over 200,000.

A: Over 200,000, almost a quarter of a million people we had in the ghetto.

A: But then, very shortly the first transport was organized. Where the rough element was sent out first. And then a lot of volunteers came to be out of the ghetto.

Q: Did they send a lot of very, very poor people?

A: By what do you mean, very poor people? Everybody was poor!

Q: What I am wondering is, was their a hierarchy in the ghetto in terms of the population? Some people came in wealthy, right? Some people came in with things, other people came...

A: But they had to give everything away. There was a special place. Jewelry first...

Q: But did everybody give everything away?

A: No, no, you are absolutely right. Some people came in with some valuables. Then they started later on if they needed, and everybody was trading some valuables for food.

A: Bertie, we didn't turn in our jewelry until the last day.

Q: But that's what I mean.

A: That's what I just said. That everybody who had something could bring it in because nobody, they didn't have to undress, like when they went to the camp in Auschwitz, they had to completely strip and everything was taken away from them. So, naturally, people came into the ghetto with whatever valuables they had. But they did not hide.

Q: Right, but there would be some people who might not have had anything?

A: Absolutely. Most of them. Because let's not forget that there were a lot of poor Jews in Poland.

Q: Were they more vulnerable?

A: Vulnerable in what sense?

Q: Well, vulnerable in terms of the amount of food they would get, their inability to barter or...?

A: No. They were better equipped to withstand these environments than the higher class of people because they were poor people. They were always in need for something so they could adjust to these bad circumstances and conditions much easier than like, people like my father-in-law who

was a very affluent man. He had everything he wanted because he was a big owner of a big factory, okay? So naturally, he suffered much, much more and had much more trouble adjusting to these conditions than the guy who was poor.

A: When you see the picture from my wedding, he looked like a skeleton.

A: So also, on the survivor list, when you look at the survivors today, I would say that about 80% of the surviving class were poor people.

A: Bert, be careful.

A: Today, if you talk to them, everybody was a big man with their factories and had a big working staff for themselves and everybody was rich and we know that they were eaten up by the lice. So you find that the element, or the class of people who were in that conditions before the war adjusted easier to the bad conditions in the ghetto than the better class of people, if we want to classify them.

Q: Was that true for you? You didn't come from a poor background.

Q: For me I would say that since I became right away in an upper position where I would get a little bit more than others I could easier adjust to the condition than most of them because as I said I was in terrific physical condition. Because I was a sportsman all the way through. I think that because of my physical condition I was able to survive and adjust to the conditions.

Q: In terms of your work, what was the hardest thing you had to do?

A: The hardest thing I had to do? That is a tough question.

Q: We talked about that yesterday.

A: Yes.

Q: What was it at that time that made you say, I don't want to be doing this anymore? Was there a specific incident or was it a set of incidents that happened to you?

A: No, the demands which were set forth to the _____, to the department of labor, which I could not combine with any of my philosophy and my characters. And when we actually were forced to support the committee who had to make lists of deportations, I just couldn't digest that. And that's why, also with the influence of Irene, that I finagled myself out of that and let my other partner do this job. That was the time I would not, I would have loved to get out of it, out of the position I was in.

Q: And why do you think, I know that Rum-cof-ski (ph) threatened you, but that was different. Why didn't he say to you, you've got to do it? This is part of the job, you can't do part of the job and not the other part of the job? Do you have any idea?

A: No.

Q: Was there ever any talk between Rum-cof-ski (ph) or just other heads of departments questioning or thinking about philosophy and moral aspects of the work and the choosing and...?

A: I am sure such conditions, such conferences and discussion took place.

Q: Do you recall any sense of, more theoretical conversations?

A: Certain occasions, yes. We could discuss personal things and personal ideas.

A: When the Rabbi came, he was playing chess with the Rabbi. It was then that they had some discussions. Because Bert had a dilemma you know. There was a lot of nepotism going on, there was a lot of, like, my own cousin. They came in, they wanted to bribe you and Bert would take them by the neck and throw them out. He was the heavy one. But he just couldn't believe that you could put a price on a human life.

Q: So what did you talk about with the Rabbi when you played chess?

A: Various things of what his experiences because he had much more contact with the people than I had. To him they came with all their complaints and all their headaches and conditions while they did not have, my door was not open to the general population because they had to go through

various instances before they could come to my office. You could not just walk into my office because otherwise I would have never been able to do anything.

Q: What extent did you feel as tools?

A: What?

Q: As tools, used by the Germans by how impossible your situation and position, yours and Rum-cof-ski (ph) and others?

A: Well, I must say thank heaven that I never had anything to deal with the Germans. My dealing was directly with Rum-cof-ski (ph).

Q: But in general, they built a certain structure in which the Jews in the ghetto had to do things that otherwise maybe they had to do, the Germans?

A: I couldn't think of anything they asked us to do what they should do because they just...

Q: Well, like they assign people to factories and produce thing for them?

A: For themselves, for them personally?

Q: No, not personally. For the good of the Reich?

A: Well, that was the purpose of our existence in the ghetto.

A: Of our survival.

A: We survived because of that.

Q: So you didn't see yourselves as being manipulated by them in some sense, you thought, Rum-cof-ski (ph) in some way felt he was manipulating them in order to save people?

A: No, we were just doing what was in that condition, we were put in that condition by the elders of the Jew in prolonging our lives by working for them. This doesn't make any near collaboration.

Q: No, no that's not what I meant. What I meant is to what extent you felt that the Germans forced you to be in a position which felt so uncomfortable as to the point to say to Rum-cof-ski (ph), Ok, I don't want to do that anymore.

A: The Germans did not put any demands on myself.

Q: Not personally, but in general?

A: The put demands on their own...

A: They put demands on the ghetto. And the spokesman was Rum-cof-ski (ph). Rum-cof-ski (ph) and Yakovobitch (ph), these two people. These two people were the liaison people between the ghetto and the German ghetto fo-vert (ph). They got the demands and they had to give the orders on down to the other people of what has to be done.

Q: I mean, one instance of it is the Germans could have said, we are going into the ghetto and we are going to take 1500 healthy people...

A: They did it.

Q: No, I know. But they also said, you choose them.

A: Yes.

Q: You bring the, you make the deportation decision.

A: First they did. First they said. And if the demand was not met, then they came in and did it themselves.

Q: So, one could have made the choice, we're not going to do it? That is a choice, that it could have been made, I don't know what that would have meant?

A: Yes. The result was that they did it themselves.

Q: There is a description in the chronicle again, maybe in the Polish book, in which there was a demand for 1500 healthy men in February of 1944.

A: Yes.

Q: In which Rum-cof-ski (ph) asked for the heads of the departments to come and...

A: Yes, and they had to be healthy people and they had to be examined by the doctors, you know, that they are healthy.

Q: And people tried to get out of this meeting and he said, if we don't do it then they will do it.

A: Right. And they did, they did.

Q: Now you, in the chronicle's description of that meeting, it starts saying he asked you to do something but for better or worse Clinger or some other man did it, but it doesn't say you refused. But from your description of yourselves...

A: Bert did not refuse.

Q: You refused and then it says, for better or worse this other man did it.

A: Your talking about Bert, he didn't refuse, he just manipulated Rum-cof-ski (ph) because he was sick. He couldn't go sick...

Q: No, because there's an empty space in this report where it goes from you being asked to do something and it's saying, for better or worse, so-in-so did it, it doesn't say anything about how it happened.

A: okay.

A: No, because, are you talking about Lut-sek (ph) in Lut-sek's (ph) book, Dr. W. Lut-sek-ies (ph)?

Q: Yes, the chronicles of that meeting. But he didn't write the chronicles, he translated what had been written before.

A: No, he collected all the data from the Archives.

A: Now, but, I was able to get out of it.

Q: Right, right.

A: okay. It wasn't easy. It was not easy to get out of it. And people still thought that I was involved.

Q: To what extent were you aware that there was hatred towards Rum-cof-ski (ph) and the whole Jewish Counsel and to what extent was their admiration that, yes, you saved our lives by giving us work?

A: There were I think a much smaller percentage of the ghetto people who felt favorable towards Rum-cof-ski (ph). Why, the mass, the bulk of the people hated Rum-cof-ski (ph) and put him in, thought of him in such a way that he was a demagogue, that he was a tyrant and that he did mean well for the ghetto. We know better. We who saw everything and were involved in almost everything know better. That he was the man who really manipulated the Germans at that time and was able to convince them to let us do what we had to do so that we can survive.

Q: So what did he have to offer that it was so valuable to the Germans?

A: The work.

Q: That was so valuable to them?

A: We had tremendous talents. Yes, we had talents in every phase of the human being, whatever there is to do. We had the intelligence, we had the workmen for it, we had the architects.

A: We had the brains.

A: We had everything. We had everything in the ghetto.

Q: But you also have Bebof who wanted this, right?

A: Bebof? Well, he felt that he has something, a force which he can use.

Q: Right. So, it was...

A: And he was able to convince all the leading people to have the ghetto provide _____, so what they intended to do.

Q: Because certainly you had talented people in the Warsaw ghetto and they had work shops, that they ran quite differently.

A: Absolutely, but the only thing is that they were able to communicate with our sites, able to buy weapons and arm themselves.

Q: Their work was not that valuable, it was the same work they were doing now in Warsaw or in Kov-now (ph)?

A: Yes. But what finished it? The riot. The uprising.

A: No, Bertie, before that they weren't as organized as the Lodz ghetto.

Q: No, the deportations are before the uprising.

Q: In 1942, there were 330,000 people deported.

A: So they could not satisfy the Germans as we could.

Q: So you think that it was the quality of their work or?

A: Probably. Because if they would have satisfied the Germans as we had, they probably would have also been left alive.

Q: That's very interesting.

Q: But, of course, Warsaw is not in the Reich, it's in the general government and was in a different situation.

A: It was the symbol of Poland and the Germans hated the Poles. Do you realize that we had factories, you name it and we had it. Metal, everything.

Q: Would you like to look at some of them?

A: This is the comb factory. I don't know this one.

A: The comb factory?

Q: Was there a comb factory?

A: Not that I know.

A: Not that I know of. And this _____ is indubitably the comb because he has a Bunsen burner, what we call the Bunsen burner and he has some metal here too.

Q: Do what do you think it is?

A: This definitely will be the metal resort.

A: They had a fake metal resort.

Q: How did they get combs from this?

A: You made combs in concentration camps. The Lodz ghetto paper resort is what it was, so it wasn't a comb factory, it was a paper resort.

A: These are grinding tools, grinding and sharpening the tools.

Q: So you think it was all metal resort, right?

A: Yes.

A: The same thing here.

A: Here they have, you know, combs is very easy to make.

A: Iron horns at the comb factory again, comb factory.

A: Here you see combs.

Q: Did these factories have names other than the name of the kind of work?

A: Only the kind of work, like metal resorts, clothes resorts, shoe resorts...

A: I don't even know that we had a comb factory.

A: No.

Q: And you were head of the labor department?

A: That's news to me!

A: Yeah, to me too.

A: We didn't have a comb factory.

A: Yeah, mother did my combs. Combs are very easily made, you know that?

A: Here they are grinding them, but...

A: Yeah. Jack-o-vich (ph) made for me in the concentration camp a comb from metal. He made it, it was easy.

Q: Well maybe there were metal combs to be made?

A: okay. It has to be metal comb because there was no plastic at that time.

Q: Of course. So, maybe part of a metal factory was making combs?

A: It had to be that, it had to be that because they had to be metal combs.

A: _____, he was in charge of the metal department, he lives in Cleveland.

Q: How big were these factories?

A: Big.

A: The metal factory was big.

Q: But some of them would be smaller than others?

A: Yeah. The hat factory was small.

Q: The hat factory?

A: Hat factory. They had a hat factory and lingerie and...

Q: Did people come asking for protection?

A: Oh yeah, oh yeah a lot.

Q: What did you do?

A: What Bert did? He _____, and he made enemies.

Q: They come to you to ask for protection to come back to your boyfriend or husband at that time?

A: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: How did it make you feel?

A: Awful, awful. But I had an influence on him and he always made the right judgment because he is a very honorable man, I have to say it in front of him. He had integrity, this is what drew me to him.

Q: And me, God forbid you shouldn't say it in front of him. [Laughter]

A: Yes.

Q: The rubber factory where you were working?

A: Yes.

Q: Was that large? There were two hundred women working with you. That was large?

A: Yes, it was large.

Q: Was there more going on in that factory than just the coats you were making?

A: No, coats. Rain coats, rubber coats.

A: This here, it was metal, pots and pans.

A: The same here. No, here they could dress, or tailoring.

Q: Pots and pan was part of the metal factory?

A: Yes.

A: What is this?

A: Shoeing workshop. Yes. That's correct.

A: Yeah, this is manufacturing.

A: Pop-e-nich (ph). Says there Pop-e-nich (ph). That's the scale.

A: Yeah, they weigh something.

A: Feather resort.

A: Oh, no, you know where we were collecting the feathers? In the church were I was working.

A: That's a scale and the feather resort.

A: We had the whole church, it was piled with feathers and we had to put it in containers. And it went to Germany, you know.

Q: Did everything the factories make go to Germany?

A: Everything.

Q: So nothing was made...?

A: Some was left over for the people. Like, for instance, my leather case for the ID card. Raw material from the Germans and, you know, the cigarette case.

A: There was a lot of pilfering, a lot of people, whoever was sitting by the Shisel (ph), Off-geegessen (ph), you know what I am talking about? Everybody helped himself like an asha (ph), you had to organize.

Q: Their stuffing, I think, there...

A: Their stuffing cushions.

A: Oh, this looks like the church we worked in!

A: That is the church.

A: Yeah? The last one when we were...

Q: The church was outside?

A: No, the church was right in center...

A: Mon-ee-nas-ka (ph)?

A: No, Sche-dos-ka (ph), Mon-sad-nee-marinko (ph), Sadi-e-rin-neck (ph).

A: But it says here located on Mon-ee-nas-ka (ph).

A: No, Sadi-e-rin-neck (ph), number four.

A: You must know.

A: Oh year, I know.

Q: And that's exactly the place?

A: Yeah. A church, I was working there for a few weeks before the transport was sent out, they had us going every day to the church and to fill these feathers in containers. I don't know what happened.

Q: The feathers came from, what, from villages?

A: From, probably. Probably from people's, I don't know, from people's cushions or whatever, or comforters probably. And they cleaned it and then they sent it to Germany.

Q: Everything went to Germany.

A: Oh, there's so much Jewish wealth in Germany still.

Q: Did Bebof make a lot of money?

A: Oh! His daughter is rich.

A: He made himself a millionaire.

A: His daughter, he has two daughters, I think they live in Bremen, no? Bebof's children, Bert? Where did Bebof's daughter live, in Bremen?

A: No, that was Ribia.

A: Where does Bebof's...?

A: I don't know. [Looking at photograph] It's hard to determine it's so dark.

Q: Venhem and Celia Greenburg, they gave these photographs to...

A: Yes, I read this.

Q: Is it a familiar name?

A: No, no.

A: They probably the people that were left behind to clean the ghetto.

A: It could be. It is very hard today to identify but they probably know what their talking about. I could not, that is also a hat factory, so they must have known the Goldbergs.

Q: Do we have the originals of these?

Q: No, just Xerox copies.

A: This looks familiar.

Q: Yeah, where is it?

A: A house in the ghetto Lodz converted by Rum-cof-ski (ph) into a workshop for hat manufacturing.

A: I don't know anybody.

Q: That's a paper I found.

A: I don't know anybody. But where's Bi-gill-man (ph)?

A: A group of [inaudible].

A: This is where my little cousin was working.

Q: They called it 'resort'?

A: Da-doff-ska (ph).

A: A resort. Not factory, resort.

A: This is Da-jorst-ska (ph).

A: Mort-ray-gob-ska (ph).

A: In Yiddish, they called it Mort-ray-gar-bess (ph).

A: Number 10.

A: And we lived number 13. I lived with my parents in these place.

A: These houses, see all the balconies had to be taken down because they were so deteriorated.

A: We were a few years ago in Poland and they were taking off the balconies because they were dropping on people. I don't know who that is, what is that?

A: They are waiting for distribution of some sort.

A: This looks like Let-no-meska-chin-nash-ta (ph) but your office was like that located.

A: No, that's not my, no, no, I didn't have this here.

A: Oh, Ibo-shitz (ph). You know who, do you have Ibo-shitz Sov-na (ph)? She was the head of the...

A: Yes, I saw a picture, she's on...

Q: How do you spell it?

A: E-Y-B-U-S-Z-I-T-Z, I guess, but the spelling is in the chronicle.

A: You know, it's funny, look at this pictures. They don't look like Jews. They don't have that specific look. And the German were digging us out.

A: In the bindery, paper resort.

A: Yeah, also the same pictures.

A: Storing rolls of paper. The same. The same. Rolls of papers.

A: Fol-fo-vich (ph)? Bertie?

A: Yeah. Ibo-schitz (ph). Yeah.

Q: This one is Fol-fo-vich (ph).

A: Yeah, he was the head of the housing department.

Q: This is Ibo-schitz (ph)?

A: This one here. His sister was a big shot.

Q: In what?

A: She was giving out a buy-a-rot (ph), you know the special. She had stores where people that were getting their certificate from a doctor, they needed this or that, food or, all kinds of food, milk and stuff like that. This was her.

A: Eh, what's his name? He was Klo-ver (ph).

A: By-gil-man! (ph) He was the head of the paper department.

Q: Your a gold mine!

A: Yeah. I know so many people, but, wait a second, wait a second, wait a second! No, Ibo-schitz (ph). Him I don't know.

Q: This is Ibo-schitz (ph)? The one with the mustache?

A: Yes. He survived. There were four brothers and a sister.

Q: Would they be in the chronicle?

A: Yeah, probably. She had survived, their sister. She was a beautiful woman and met her fiancée from before the war in Tel Aviv and they got married but she passed away a few years ago.

Q: How many people survived from the Lodz ghetto?

A: Oh, a lot of people.

Q: Do you know the number?

A: No.

A: It's very hard to get because they are spewed all over the globe. You think of people there and when we find somebody...

A: We met people in the most outlandish places that survived the Holocaust.

Q: Yesterday, you thought the numbers might be 20,000, is that just a guess?

A: It's a guess.

A: It's a small number, small guess.

A: No, I don't know these people.

Q: If that was right, that would mean _____, the original _____, but who knows?

A: This is the same picture as the other one.

A: No, it's not the same, but the same office.

Q: But nobody has a census?

A: No, how could you?

A: Here again is Ibo-schitz (ph).

Q: This one?

A: Yeah.

Q: okay. I'll learn how to recognize him now.

A: He's a handsome guy.

Q: Your father lives in Israel, after...?

A: Yeah, in 1962 to 1971. He passed away in 1971. He didn't want to, this is Bi-gel-man (ph). These other people I don't know. And this is Ibo-schitz (ph).

Q: Now, I know how to recognize him now.

A: Cutting papers.

Q: Was there a regulation of wearing a star?

A: On both sides. Here and there, but on the right side and on the back left side.

Q: Was it on the left side on the back and the right side on the front?

A: No, the same side.

Q: The same side, right on both sides?

A: Right, right, right. They have all these big pictures here from the paper factory.

Q: This was one of the two photographers either Grossman or Rost that would go...?

A: Only two, yeah.

Q: That would go and, this was an assignment from like a public relations department or?

A: I know Henry Gross, he was a very close friend of ours, he was working for Professor Rosenstein, the paper publisher. I know that they went a lot on their own and hiding, they went when they brought the gypsy transport. They went and he took pictures, we knew, that he took pictures.

Q: Of the gypsy transport?

A: Yes. What was going on in the cemeteries. He took pictures, this we knew.

Q: And where did they get the film from? From the Germans?

A: Oh yeah. He was doing PR for the Germans too, you know, they were advertising what {type of} ghetto do you have and how the Jews are working for them. What is this suppose to be? Manufacturing? I see.

A: Showing workers.

Q: And doing all the factories.

A: Yeah.

A: This is my father.

A: Papa. He was instructing.

Q: Have you seen this picture before?

A: No.

Q: What is his first name?

A: M-A-T-Y-S. F-U-C-H-S.

A: Yes, this is Dad. How handsome he was!

A: He was instructing, tailoring.

Q: Would you like a copy of that?

A: Yeah, I would love to! Good looking guy, he was. My favorite.

Q: Do you have any other pictures of him?

A: We have one picture, after the war.

End of Tape 3.

Tape 4

Q: Now, most of Grossman's photographs were lost because his sister took it from Lodz and brought it to Palestine at the time.

A: Oh! She survived?

Q: Yes. And she had it in Ka-but-z-ya-no-ga-high (ph), which was taken by the Egyptians in during the Independence War and they took the negatives from Ka-but-z-ya-no-ga-high (ph) to Egypt and then they published in Egyptian papers during the six days war actually showing that there are lines of people for bread and water and Stars of David.

A: No, I didn't know that.

Q: And it was never recovered.

A: I didn't know that.

Q: Strange stories.

A: The man in the top right in this one, he survived.

Q: Who is that?

A: It says here, Jews at work in a factory at the Loch-gator (ph). The young man at the top right is Leight-mech My-a-rovich (ph) the O-may-as (ph). He was deported from the Lodz ghetto in December, 1943 to the Cosack Labor Camp and from that to Bo-ho-vack (ph). He survived the war.

A: He brought us the _____.

Q: This is probably in the church now?

A: An elderly woman sorting clothing in a resort in the Lodz ghetto.

A: This is when they were getting the Jewish clothing, I told you, they went piece by piece through everything. They found a lot in this clothing.

A: Female workers stand near a pile of large bundles probably in front of the clothing resort in the Lodz ghetto.

A: I remember [inaudible] when I wanted to run away to Russia and got married, I was wearing a green suit. My mother put in the buttons diamonds and sewed in all around dollars and all kinds of money in case I would need it I would have it.

A: [inaudible]

A: This I don't know what it is. What is that?

A: Potato peels. Here we find all sorts of waste [inaudible - reading from something].

A: Wasn't that in the summer when we were in the hospital. You remember, they took me to peel the potatoes. I was sitting outside and peeling potatoes with other women.

A: I don't know.

A: Crew portrayal of the management of the carpenter workshop. Among them the director, Mr. Rosen. I think this is Rosen, I think, I don't know. Men sewing, pressing and bundling clothing in the Lodz ghetto.

A: [Speaking in foreign language]

A: Who is that by this _____?

A: I don't know.

A: I know him. I know him but I don't know who he is.

A: Levin.

A: Oh yeah, this is Owen, or Morris.

A: Morris Levin.

A: Yeah, he lives in Cleveland. He's alive. He was the head of the metal department.

A: And his brother passed away, there were two brothers. This is Herb Levin.

A: No. Not Herb, Morris. A nice guy. He was an engineer and he was running this department. Engineer Levin they called him. Oh, I don't know anybody else, only him I know. Lives in Cleveland. I'm surprised that he...

A: [Speaking in foreign language]

Q: And he was the head of the?

A: He was the head of the shoe maker, shoe manufacturing.

A: Vagelman.

A: Right, Henry Vagelman.

Q: Which one is Schez-a-binsky (ph)?

A: This one. He was the head of the shoe...

A: This is Bagelman.

A: This was Harry, no?

A: Henry or Harry Bagelman. He's the one...

A: That played music with Bert when they gave him back the violin.

A: He played the accordion.

Q: That's him, right?

A: Yes, that's him. His brother lives in Forest Hill.

Q: And who is that?

A: I don't know.

A: I don't know, let me see here. Doesn't he look like Bernard Ko-ma-ran-son-blum (ph)?

Q: Ko-ma-ran-son-blum (ph)?

A: Yeah.

Q: Wow!

A: Now he calls himself Blume. It is, it is. But he went out of the ghetto so I don't know. But he looks like it.

Q: Ben-o?

A: Yeah.

A: No, he was in the ghetto.

A: Ben-o?

A: Yes.

A: I don't think so.

Q: Which one, this one with the glasses?

A: Yeah, no, no. Good looking guy.

A: This one here.

A: Ish-bet-sky (ph).

A: I know him, but I don't know the name.

A: I know him too but I don't know the name. Who Ish-bet-sky?

A: He was the head of the shoe department.

A: Does it say it there?

Q: Official meeting of the shoemaking department.

A: Doesn't she talk like Lala? We have a very good friend, she grew up in Poland after the war and...

A: There's Bit-skie (ph) again.

A: Humm-mmm. She is going next week as a matter of fact to Poland for a reunion, her school reunion. She's in touch with the Polish friend in...

Q: In Lodz?

A: In Krakow and Warsaw. I don't know anybody here. They provided the workers to work there. I don't know, just _____. He passed away. He was cousin, the first cousin of Eric Yakovobitch (ph). Dark pictures.

[inaudible]

Q: Your parents, your father had what kind of factory?

A: [In foreign language]

A: Oh, _____, you know what that is? Lingerie and dresses.

A: This says here, women in clothing and mechanical workshop.

A: Aults-valler (ph), this is not that.

A: Aults-valler (ph), that is when you plane pieces of wood, the plane is, you get wooden wool.

Q: Like a see-saw?

A: Something like that. [speaking in foreign language]

A: That's this here. Not what it says here. They didn't enclose it.

A: [speaking in foreign language]

A: This is women in clothing. That's the same name and place over here.

Q: I don't see any German, ah, maybe this is a German.

A: Who knows.

A: I do the same thing all the time. Take always the easier way out.

A: Now this is hard to recognize, it's stupid.

A: Can you magnify this little thing?

A: Well, it's Xeroxed...

Q: Well, these are Xeroxed and they came from...

A: From Texas.

Q: Yeah.

A: What is that picture? Somebody sorting...

A: It's also too dark to see.

Q: You want a little magnifying glass?

A: No. It's not clear enough. Rabbi Sidney...

Q: He just got it from somebody in Poland...

A: It's dark.

A: If the kids were working in factories.

A: Our only path is work.

A: This, does it look like Mam (ph)?

A: No.

A: No?

A: She was in the lingerie picture.

A: Saddle workshop. They made my ID card. Shoe factory. Yes. Woodwork, woodwork, you see? Again, too dark to identify.

A: Haunting faces, are they not? they?

A: To make leather accessories. That's again the tailor.

A: I'm surprised that glasses doesn't figure here anywhere, it's such a big place. Oh, her we know. What's her name Bertie? She has quite a few pictures taken in the ghetto. Good looking gal. I know her, we know her. A good friend of Stef-aros (ph).

Q: okay, we're going to the post office now.

A: Did you have a post office in the...?

A: Sure we had a post office.

Q: And who is that?

A: That's the meat department. That's a refrigerator.

Q: Really?

A: The refrigerator room. In front of meat storage.

A: Solimen Spirk? Her I know, oh, I know a lot of people. Solimen Spirk. She was Zara Vis-bort (ph) niece. Her I know, what's her name? Oh My God.

Q: Now what would be, why would a picture like this be taken and this a group of people working?

A: It's the post office, I guess. Yes, the post office.

Q: People working there?

A: They were working there. No, she had sisters.

A: He was _____.

A: What was his name?

A: I forgot his name. I would have to look through the archives again.

A: Her I know. They were friends of mine and I don't remember the names. And her I know quite well.

A: You'll find him also in the chronicle as heading the post office.

Q: What did they do?

A: I don't know.

A: We had mail!

A: In the beginning, we had mail.

A: We had correspondence. We got correspondence also from the working camp. From people who had left with a transport. Here again, you see, the head of the department.

Q: Would some of these people be delivering mail?

A: Yes. You saw them here. There they are delivering mail.

Q: No, here they are actually delivering bottles of milk.

A: Oh. Yes, we had a post office.

A: In the beginning. Later on no more.

Q: Do you have any idea when it stopped, when the mail stopped?

A: No, but it might be in the chronicles, they might have it there.

A: I know it stopped because I was corresponding with my cousin...

A: Here is Him-nat-ick (ph).

A: They found his story. Did you hear about, do you know about Him-nat-ick (ph)? His wife, after the war, he met at a beauty salon in ghetto...

A: He's Nacht-man (ph) actually.

A: She wanted him, he had a very long nose. To shorten his nose, he didn't want to, she left him. And met a Polish diplomat in Brussels. They lived, later on she became a widow. She married another fellow, he visited her a few years ago.

Q: She divorced him because he wouldn't shorten his nose?

A: Right. He was heart broken. He was so in love with her. And he never re-married. Then he started to play around.

A: Naght-tig (ph) in Nazi, Germany...

A: Who are these people?

Q: He has such a long nose!

A: Yeah. [laughter] He has a nice nose. He still has!

A: Bert was in such a position and we were going to have to meet. So Nat-tick (ph) was working in the fly-stan-straler (ph) where they meet and he was given, I use to go there and he would give me pieces of meat that, he had a dog! For the dog, we ate it. And this kept us going.

Q: What did you do with your dog? You had a dog in, before the ghetto, right?

A: What did we do? When we were standing and waiting for the Germans when they told us to wait, the dog was with us. When we run away and somebody said, the dog will give us, you know, where we are.

A: Here he is again, delivering mail.

A: Yeah. No, Bert. They may be probably coupons or something.

A: Money, money, yeah.

Q: So then what happened?

A: So we ran. We sold the dog. We went on the other side and we had to loose our dog because we were afraid he can, they were looking for us when we left. We were suppose to be waiting. He was a nice guy, Nay-tek (ph). He is, he still is.

A: There he is again.

A: I have to tell him that, everywhere his picture is.

Q: He gave us most of these photos.

A: Mail office. Post office.

A: The police, Bert, too.

Q: Where there any police women?

A: No.

A: No.

Q: Did the police have secretaries?

A: Do we have a magnifying glass?

A: Wait a second.

Q: I have a little magnifying glass.

[Apparently showing various photographs, saying various names]

A: But this is like the police head, or something.

Q: This is not police this is the post office.

A: Yes, this is definitely Nat-tic (ph) there.

A: But Nat-tic (ph) wasn't a flash-tin-ta (ph).

A: Tula, Nat-tic was first in this post advertising there.

Q: Do you speak Polish at home?

A: I don't know what we speak, I really don't because I don't realize we go into German and English and Yiddish.

A: We don't know what to speak anymore.

A: We learned Yiddish. I can't write...

A: I love Yiddish. Whenever I have a chance I speak it.

A: But I can now talk quite fluently.

A: I fell in love with Yiddish and I love it.

Q: Rum-cof-ski (ph) didn't give lessons in Yiddish?

A: No. You know, Nat-tik (ph) Solomon's brother, older brother. There were three or four brothers, they all survived. His older brother was the head of this shoe resort. See, now you know. As a matter of fact, did you ever hear about the Rabbi Mar-mor (ph)? He was the head of the Zionist Organization. He runs the biggest congregation, reformed congregation in Toronto. You know the name of the congregation? It's like a church name, the Holy Blossom Congregation.

Honestly! And the Rabbi Mar-mor (ph) is Fredja Zo-na-vent (ph), his niece's husband. We talk to her sometimes, lives in Toronto.

Q: After liberation, did you go back to Lodz?

A: I didn't. I went a few years later, not right after the liberation because my brother was with me and my mother was with me. I had no one to go to.

Q: You didn't want to go back and live in Poland?

A: No, never.

Q: What, why?

A: The memories. The memories. We went many times back to Poland later on because Bert was working with the government, the Polish government. It was too painful.

Q: You must be married!

A: No, she's married!

A: No, you are married!

A: In front of the soup kitchen.

Q: Did you look at the deportation pictures?

A: A little. [Spoke in foreign language]

Q: Now they are wearing it on the left. He's wearing it on the left, not on the right. Unless the picture's been reversed.

Q: Yes, that happens all the time.

A: I know the name Coopermans. It was Nat-tik's (ph) wife. And her sister committed suicide in Auschwitz. She went on the fence and died. This is the...

A: Kitchen.

Q: The soup kitchen, how was it...?

A: Every resort had kitchen.

A: Every resort had a soup kitchen and people that worked there...

Q: But only for the people that worked, not for the poor that didn't have a job?

A: No, no.

A: There were kitchen workers, but they had to have a piece of paper.

A: A document. They had two or three work kitchens for everybody.

Q: So every worker got one meal?

A: Yeah, one soup.

A: And then you had to go and pick up your bread.

Q: Everyday?

A: No, once a week.

Q: So there was rations for everybody outside of the factories in which they worked? Outside of the resorts?

A: Yeah. The soap was extra.

Q: Now where did people keep their food?

A: In the kitchen.

A: They didn't have to keep it, they ate it right away.

A: If they had a kitchen?

Q: Yes, if they had a kitchen.

A: Not everybody had a kitchen.

A: I know when I was getting my ration of bread I ate it up right away.

Q: What if you only got bread once a week, would you eat it immediately?

A: Oh, I would eat it immediately.

A: It all depends.

Q: On what?

A: What kind of people are you.

Q: What did you do?

A: I ate very little.

A: Bert didn't eat much.

A: I never was a big eater or drinker. I could go without like a camel. Without drinking the whole day.

Q: Did you smoke?

A: Oh yes, three packs a day.

A: You saw in my picture there, a cigarette in my hand.

Q: Yes, I was wondering if it was for the picture or?

A: No, no, no. He was a chimney smoker, chain smoker really.

A: I smoked three packs a day.

Q: Where did you get the cigarettes?

A: In the ghetto. We were getting, you could get...

Q: The Germans were bringing it in?

A: The Germans made businesses with Jewish people. Our very dear friend exchanged everything he did. He would provide, they want jewelry and stuff like that.

Q: How many people had running water?

A: Very few. Very, you could count on one hand I guess. Nobody had, this was...

Q: But you said that each apartment had running water outside?

A: Oh, you had to go to a pump outside and bring pails of water.

A: You have the Jewish cannon there. Heim Rum-cof-ski (ph).

Q: And what was your situation?

A: And here you had the bread. And according, you know, how many people, they cut it up and...

Q: And in your situation in your apartment, did you have running water and a little kitchen? Do you remember?

A: I know to the toilet...

A: In my apartment we had...

A: But the toilet, you had to go out in your apartment. You had to go down half a staircase and everybody in the house used it.

A: But in the Va-zana (ph) we had a kitchen. It was a sink and water.

A: It was a little sink, yeah, and running water.

A: And Dora had also, in her apartment.

Q: I think you skipped that. Did it smell?

A: What?

Q: Do you remember smells in the ghetto?

A: Oh, we all kept it, we had to keep it clean. So many people used it, the toilet. The commode.

Q: No, I mean was there a smell? Because not everybody could, had enough water so that they could wash themselves?

A: No, no. Not that I remember. I never paid any attention to it. I think we got use to the conditions or they weren't because people tried to keep clean. This [was the only way] not to get sick. Typhoid was rampant.

A: This, I don't know, this could be in front of my office or not. It says a food distribution, which it probably is, I don't know.

A: Lit-man-schadt (ph).

A: Very bad.

Q: That's just a Xerox.

A: Very bad.

A: Lit-man-schadt (ph) ghetto.

A: 194-- and the rest you don't know what year it was even.

A: 1941.

Q: So how come you know how to read Yiddish?

A: He learned it.

A: Oh, I learned it. When I was a child I went to a...

A: In Hebrew, you know, it was the Hebrew letters. You can, if you strain yourself, I can read it, I really can.

A: And I write and I read Yiddish and I love to speak Yiddish. I love it! And I explain to people that Yiddish is the only positive language in the world. Because in Yiddish, nothing is bad. If somebody is sick, is good-cluke (ph). If somebody's business is bad, it's good-n-drayid (ph).

A: You understand that?

A: And if somebody has lost all his marbles, it is good-mich-ugen (ph). Everything is good! So nothing is negative, everything is positive. Right? That's why I love it!

[laughter]

A: Neat looking children.

A: Very interesting. I don't know if you know them.

Q: Tell me, whom are you reading there?

A: Oh, Shall-ho-ma-hayhm (ph), Men-del-o-hair-sfa-dem (ph), Paris (ph). Now we have a new crop of young American contemporary, right? Is very good ones. Philip wrote and so on, he is kind of controversial.

Q: So where do you take his courses?

A: In the Jewish Center. We have an adult education department and we try to learn every day something new.

Q: Did you have movies in the ghetto?

A: No. We had theater but not movies.

Q: Did you go often? To the theater and concerts?

A: Oh yes.

A: We went to every concert.

Q: The file is not there. It's not filed according to what it is...

Q: There was somebody from Lodz that I interviewed and I want, though I can't remember his real last name.

A: Oh, you don't know their name?

Q: It's Jack Moss, but his father was a furrier.

A: From Lodz?

Q: Yes.

A: Moscovitch.

Q: Might have been Moscovitch, but I was looking...

A: Tula, you see you have Josef and his wife.

A: Yeah.

A: You see that she is Josef's wife?

A: Yeah.

A: Now you are satisfied?

A: Yeah.

Q: So that's not Do-vit-ta-vich-ova (ph)?

A: No, no. This is right.

A: So, this is User Rum-cof-ski (ph) and his wife.

A: You were right.

Q: What's her name?

A: I don't know.

A: I think Helen. This is Josef's wife.

Q: Mo-zen-slo (ph).

A: Mo-zen-slo (ph)? It's a friend of ours!

A: Who?

Q: Jack?

A: Mo-zen-slo (ph)?

Q: Yeah. Jacob...

A: And he lives now in Stockholm, I mean, the friend of ours passed away, but this is the whole family. They were very, leather people.

Q: Yeah, your right. He lives, if he's still alive, in Pennsylvania.

A: So this is probably cousin of our friend.

Q: His father was Wolfe, his mother was Esther.

A: Which one is Esther?

Q: And he was in the ghetto and he was never deported out of the ghetto.

A: Pardon me?

Q: He was never deported out of the ghetto.

A: So he is...

A: There was, there were [some] left.

A: Do you remember, Man-age (ph) was telling us about his cousin?

A: Yeah.

Q: Do you didn't necessarily know him?

A: We didn't know them but we knew the whole family. The cousin...

Q: This was difficult, I mean, he's not sick and I only got part of his testimony.

A: What was _____, name, family name?

A: Goo-datz (ph).

A: I was thinking about him last night.

Q: Did Josef and his wife, did they have children?

A: No.

Q: And Rum-cof-ski (ph) had no children, even with his first wife?

A: No.

A: This fellow also figures everywhere. I don't know who he is. Looks like...

Q: He was a boy, a man who says he was adopted by Rum-cof-ski (ph). That he lived in a house with eight or ten kids.

A: Yes! Now I will tell you, now I know what your talking about. Dora adopted a boy in the ghetto. Very lovely boy, very polite, well mannered. The boy grew to be a man. He was the boy I was telling you was telling us about Mengale', he was a runner in Auschwitz. This is the boy that Dora adopted. He lived after the war, he survived. He lived in Israel, went and studied there, engineering or something like that. Became an inventor, came to Montreal, became very, very

successful. And, he lost his wife, she was an Israel girl, twenty some odd years and left him with child, 8 years old and 9 years old, boy and a girl. And he brought up his children. The girl is an international lawyer. The boy was a professor. And he lives in Montreal. If you want his address?

A: This is Grossman.

Q: Yes.

A: He's a lovely man. He never re-married. He had all kinds of acquaintances.

A: Head of the bakery department.

Q: Well maybe what I should do is call you when you get home next week and you sit with your telephone book and give me the names and addresses of people you think would be interesting to contact.

A: No, Betsy, Bertie.

A: This is Ed-lisa-ro-vich (ph) brother?

A: Yeah. This is the baker, Bert. This is the one, he passed away.

Q: What was his first name?

A: That's a good question. Head of the bakery.

A: I don't know.

Q: Why are the children wearing the hats?

A: The children were working too in resorts.

A: Electrical service.

A: Stosh-strum (ph).

A: So they were apprentices?

A: Yeah.

Q: Was the hat a sign of something?

A: Probably, but I don't know.

A: Any more?

Q: So much more. My head is exploding. I can imagine that your head is exploding too!

A: Come and visit us in Connecticut. Stay over the weekend.

Q: I would like to make sure that you will send photographs, documents that you will get them all back within a week.

A: All right.

Q: Within a week you'll get it back.

A: All right.

Q: So why don't we give them the Fed Ex?

Q: No, will you send it by Federal, please don't send it by regular mail.

A: Yes.

Q: Give them a Fed Ex...

Q: What you do is on the form, it says, bill the recipient...

Q: No, no, no, we'll give it to them.

Q: The whole envelope?

Q: Not just the envelope but the form so that we can write in...

Q: Our address and...

Q: Yes, so all they have to do is put the photographs in an envelope, so that you don't have to do anything.

Q: I never did that, I don't know. okay.

Q: Yeah, that would be easier on her.

Q: okay.

Q: Somebody gave me this, Bert. In Polish. This is from that book. It says some things about you and I'm wondering what it is you think about this.

A: Henry Grubin.

Q: Do you know who he is?

A: No.

A: Could be _____ Dem-yetz-kof (ph).

Q: He says some not nice things about you and I thought you might want to respond to it.

A: Should I read it out loud?

Q: Can you read the Polish?

A: [Speaking in foreign language - reading]

A: Oh My God!

A: [Continuing to read]

A: Oh My God!

Q: He's never seen this.

A: All distorted! If Bert was that brutal then all the...

A: [Continuing to read in foreign language]

A: Oh My God!

A: Ignore it. I want to tell you something. Do you know what it is?

Q: I know some of it.

A: [Continuing to read in foreign language]

A: Ech! What a lie! That Bert was a brutal fellow, that he was beating people in the face and that he was a floor dancer...

Q: What does that mean?

A: A floor dancer?

A: A Gigolo!

A: And that he was appointed to this position...

A: By Bebof. With a four week trying period.

A: And because of his sister. And I have to prove that he wasn't appointed by Bebof because I have the proof from Rum-cof-ski (ph), I have it at home. This is a paper. And they are all, and that he use to be from Lodz and was moved to Germany! Bert is born in Germany and educated in Germany. And then, that he came back to, how does he know? We never heard of this man. And how did he know Bert's private life? Nobody knew it because we had a very low profile. He was exposed.

Q: Well, I don't know who he is...

A: I don't know who he is either.

Q: Somebody found this here because they knew we were going to interview you and they found this. I thought you should respond to it.

A: This is, this is, you know, this is so awful.

A: Yes, it is.

A: How can you respond to anything?

A: [Reading again in foreign language]

A: Oh God!

Q: Now what is he saying there?

A: That they took away, he didn't have to, to be responsible to Rum-cof-ski (ph) but to be both. One on one. And this made him even stronger in power. He was more brutal. How do you answer people like that? It is somebody very ignorant.

Q: He apparently, in this book, is very supportive of Rum-cof-ski (ph) so, I don't know exactly what's going on in his book. I don't know what his point is.

A: I wish I could read this book, I don't have it. I never knew it existed. But, as I told you, he made enemies because when people came and wanted to bribe him he would take them by the neck and physically throw them out. He was furious! He said, he would come home and say, would you believe this?

A: Should I read this piece here?

A: Which?

A: This here.

A: [Speaking in foreign language]

Q: Can you translate for me?

A: I said it's lies! We never say, we never, that Bebof wanted to, for them to, started to, the action to send people away and that they wrote to Mrs. Bebof and she answered. We never saw her! I don't know how this woman looks!

A: We didn't know that he was married.

A: He had two daughters, Bertie, I know he had daughters but we never saw a wife. He always came with another woman.

Q: I'm sorry, I'm not so good in the bureau [to translate]...

A: [Possibly reading from, speaking in foreign language]

Q: Well, we'll do this later. Continue here. We are going over that Ruben...

A: What can I tell you! It's just, I am flabbergasted. Because all this is a lie. It never existed.

Q: And there's many other mistakes...

A: Who's he?

Q: I don't know who he is.

A: Everything here is a lie.

A: He doesn't know his head from his toe.

A: And there are people...

Q: I wonder if we have information on this book? You have this book, that was that yellow...

Q: Yes.

A: I never heard it, I never knew it existed. And you know what? There are people still alive, this is why I say you shouldn't listen to what we have to say, you should contact people that were with us and to hear their part of the story, you know? Because naturally we would like to smell like roses...

Q: No, no. I am not showing this to you because I believe it. It's just that since they found it I wanted you to...

A: It's all together, we never saw Mrs. Bebof!

Q: I wonder if Gruben (ph) knows who that is because he lives in Sweden too.

A: He lives in Sweden?

Q: Yes. Hand-ela Gruben (ph).

A: Where in Sweden? Because here Herr En-nat-tica (ph) is in Stockholm.

Q: I don't know.

A: Didn't Nat-tic (ph) mention some time ago that somebody was spreading stories about you?

A: Yes, he said something. As a matter of fact, I remember...

A: But you know it went in one ear, it went out the other because, you know, when you know you have nothing to do with it.

Q: What the difference with Sweden, five hours?

Q: Well, Brussels is six hours.

A: So it must be six hours.

Q: So, that's not too late.

Q: What, are you going to call him?

A: You call Nat-tik (ph) and you talk to him!

Q: Yeah. I'll call him.

Q: Floor dancer means gigolo.

Q: Oh really! I didn't know exactly what it means.

A: Gigolo. A dancer, floor dancer.

A: Look at me! I'm a Gigolo!

Q: I thought that it was like a professional dancer in a dance hall.

A: No, no, no, no. As it happened he is an excellent dancer.

Q: Who?

A: Bert is an excellent dancer!

[Discussing Federal express mailing and what/how to do it]

A: I have to call Nat-tic (ph) and find, he will find out. He mentioned a few years ago, this goes on for about two years. Because when he was last in New York, he went to see Lud-stick Rod-o-schit-ski-to-evil (ph)...

Q: Well, it's interesting. I mean, these things come up all the time about all sorts of people. And when you find out that there's so much wrong information...

A: Everything is wrong!

Q: But people don't know it. People who don't know...

A: How can you, how can you make it right?

Q: Well this is the question, what does one do in situations like this?

A: What does one do?

Q: I have it with all sorts of situations where people write things and...

A: Where ever we could we fought it. Like the Rabbi Stein helped us and so. Because you have to look at facts. Bertie threw people out when they came with bribery and stuff like that because he believed that everybody has to have the same right to survive. And he couldn't believe that you can die, your death time in ghetto where we were all together. But, this is unbelievable!

Q: Listen, this is half a sentence in a book of 600 pages...

A: I don't care!

Q: But then we don't know what's on the other 600 pages!

A: Teresa, don't forget one thing. Me. I am being with him almost 53 years old. He's the biggest push over and he is such a softie.

Q: Is that true?

A: He is such a softie!

Q: Would you like some orange juice? Some cold water?

A: Yeah.

A: I'm completely out of the _____ now.

A: Don't get excited about it, Bertie.

A: I am up in arms already.

A: How can people be so, you see, this is a case of jealousy. Probably was there and then...

Q: But we don't know if he was even in the ghetto.

A: We don't know.

Q: But we can look up the list of ghetto residents and see.

A: Unimportant.

A: If I would have been like he describes I wouldn't be here!

A: And we are in touch with all the Lodz survivors.

Q: They would have gotten you?

A: We are belonging to the Mes-ada (ph) which is a Zionist organization of only survivors. We meet twice a year.

A: As a matter of fact next week we are going to be with all the Lodz people from the ghetto.

Q: Where do you meet?

A: We meet in Koo-chers (ph) in the Catskills. In a hotel in the Catskills, Koo-chers (ph).

Q: And how many people come?

A: It depends. We use to be an awful lot of people but now...

Q: When are you going?

A: Pardon me?

Q: When?

A: Next week. We go next Thursday.

Q: There's another reunion of Nuremberg people then, end of May.

A: I wasn't in Nuremberg, but I know...

Q: No, right. Then we are getting another...

A: But I know people that were in Nuremberg and now live in Israel.

A: Oh, thank you so much. Thank you, Darling.

Q: You will not forget that?

Q: No, no. I'll make them remember.

A: I put it together with Bertie's pictures.

Q: And I will make a copy of your father's picture.

A: Bertie, don't get excited.

Q: Well, I'm sorry, I didn't...

A: He takes it very hard because. Don't read it even, it's not worth it, Bertie.

A: Well I want to know what I did!

Q: I'm just wondering if he, well, I don't know. It's so outlandish.

A: As I told you, the fellow that informed on Bert, he wasn't even from the ghetto.

Q: No.

A: He just heard he was a shish-ka! You know what a shish-ka is? A big shot!

Q: Yes, but he was accusing Bert not of what, being Jewish in the ghetto, but he was accusing him of being the Nazi, right? That's who they thought he was.

A: They thought that he was the Chief of the Gestapo, I guess, I don't know! As it happened, by coincidence...

Q: The same name.

A: But you have it in the chronicle so you know it.

Q: Right.

A: They didn't do anything derogatory, they didn't write about Bert because what they say...

Q: No, no, no. But if this man thought that Bert, that was obviously what the government thought. That he was going, that he changed his first name, right?

A: He didn't change his first name.

Q: No. Fuchs, the Gestapo, the SS...

A: Was Glinther (ph).

Q: Right, was Glinther (ph). So, the government, when they were questioning Bert, obviously thought that he had changed his first name, kept his last name and thought that he was just...

A: But I have his birth certificate.

Q: No, no, no. Of course!

A: Don't, don't get...

A: I don't know what this guy did that he thinks he is so, and e-tag-n-scron-ig (ph). I don't know what he's referring to!

A: London, it was in London...

Q: It was published in London?

A: Yeah, in Polish.

A: Contra, London.

A: So he couldn't, he probably didn't have a publisher he probably did it on his own because otherwise it would be in the English, in London, the English language. It doesn't matter, I am not going to...

Q: What does it say in the front there, does it say anything?

A: Wait a second, wait a second.

A: May I see it Bertie, please!

A: One moment! In 1988, copyright Henry Gruben, 1988.

A: Suddenly everyone became a painter and a writer and a poet...

A: [Speaking in foreign language]

A: [Speaking in foreign language] explain later. [Continuing to speak in foreign language]. So, she is writing about, he got a stipend to publish this in the amount of 3,000 fune-sted-ling (ph) and he returned it and when you read the book you will know why he returned it.

Q: That's all it says. So it doesn't say anything about him?

A: Yeah.

Q: As to who he is or whatever?

A: No, no. [Speaking in foreign language]. I am surprised that they don't write anything malicious about Dora! I'm surprised.

Q: Well, he doesn't write anything from, apparently, from what somebody said. I haven't read it, about Rum-cof-ski (ph). So...

A: Bem-po brut-ania (ph), he was a brutal person, he writes. To report, after he became, after he got his power, oh my God, he started to...

Q: No, I am sure nobody is reading this, but...

A: He started to beat up people in the face with a horse whip. I have to laugh! He was from Lodz, but for many years he was in Germany and he was deported in '39 and by profession he was a Gigolo. The same day that he came, Bebof sent him a nomination on this position with four weeks auck-ses-brun-dna (ph).

Q: Trial period.

A: I can't believe that.

A: Unbelievable.

A: And that Bebof gave him an order to exchange everybody that worked for him over forty years for younger people. He had old people, he had all kinds of people working there.

A: The whole thing is unbelievable.

Q: When you said, the Eidelson (ph) film, that you didn't like it at all, either one of you. What did you find troubling about his film?

A: A lot of discrepancies. I told him. He was very upset with me.

Q: Do you remember anything specific about what was bothering you?

A: No, no.

Q: It doesn't happen often that people come and say something that, did you hear it before...?

A: Oh yes, we...

Q: Because you said that if you would go to Auschwitz they would wait for you like...

A: Absolutely!

A: By the same token they waited for Rum-cof-ski (ph).

A: Don't forget there was a lot of jealousy in the ghetto.

Q: Go on.

A: Well, you see, because in my position people didn't understand and they, first of all, a lot of people thought that I am the Gestapo Fuchs. When I arrived in this country I had this in my interview that, when I arrived, before, when I asked for my first papers to be able to work they denied me the first papers and I was interrogated every single week for a year and a half.

Q: Oh my God!

A: Only to find out later on...

Q: That it was a mistake?

A: When they finally called before the last time that people accused me of being the Gestapo man. That I sent people to death and what else? And that's why I was...

A: That he was a really...

A: A war criminal!

Q: And who wants to serve Fuchs, the Gestapo man?

A: Commissioner Fuchs.

A: They got him on the street in Hannover a few years ago, after so many years, somebody caught him. Who caught him, Bertie?

A: I don't recall.

A: What is the fellow, that en-ropa (ph) en-ropa (ph), his brother told you that.

Q: Harold? Solomon Carroll?

A: Yeah. Pearl told us when we were in Israel three years ago. He was telling us that they caught him in Hannover. That Pearl caught him in Hannover.

Q: And for a year and a half he was interrogated and they made him stand up. Every time they brought him in to _____.

A: And there was over there a chair to sit down. And always the same questions. So finally, finally they say...

A: They apologized. They were very polite and...

End of Tape 4.

Tape #5

A: They will do it at the same time when they give me, when they give my first papers. So when we drove home then, Irene saw in her movie house Rhonda Fleming, she said, that's a good name.

Q: They didn't have to change their initials.

[Laughter]

A: So Bernard Fuchs became Bert Fleming.

A: And we had other incidents like that. Like this woman in Fairfield. She didn't know us in ghetto...

A: She was a _____ child.

A: Yes. And I said, how do you know somebody? After her father told her. What did he tell? When he had to lecture at the Masons, they called him, this and this happened. What was she telling them? That Bert sent, my first name was Yakovobitch (ph), my first husband. That he sent him to and let, get rid of him so he could marry me, first of all. He lived and he was in a concentration camp and he, then, what was the other one? That we changed the names because we were hiding out. You see how we hide out? And what else was the third one?

A: I don't know, three things.

A: Three things like that. And then she calls me up and tell me...

Q: Very _____.

A: Absolutely. I went immediately to my Rabbi.

A: He wanted to sue.

A: And I wanted in Torah.

A: So the Rabbi said, sue...

A: The Rabbi investigated. He even called Europe and he called the Lodz Society, the Lodz survivors, and they called a meeting and they talked. Is there somebody to talk against him? So they came back to the Rabbi and said, no, absolutely not. He is not the war criminal and he didn't do any atrocities.

A: They said if many people would be like Bert more people would have survived.

A: So, if the Rabbi called that woman and said, you better keep your mouth shut because he can sue you for everything you have. And that was it.

A: This was two weeks before my daughter's wedding. This is when Lud-zig (ph) was here, that Sunday, and two weeks later was the wedding. Then, the woman had the nerve to call me and say, oh, you have such a lovely mother. You are so lucky. I said to her, Fren-ia (ph), how could you do such a thing?

Q: Did you know her before?

A: Yes, I was working in a Department store and she was friendly with our friends. She played cards with them so once I came to her house to meet our friends and then she was calling and she wanted to be friendly and I had nothing in common with her. So, she would call me, you know, I should buy her this and that. Bert was away. I had on my lunch time to take care of my shopping and then run home to cook his. I didn't have the chance to buy for her, she wanted to be friendly. I had nothing in common with her. She passed away a year later.

Q: What did she say to you when you asked her why, what were you doing?

A: She heard it from her father. That Bert, I don't, three things. Now it's really slipped my mind what the third, it's going to bug me.

Q: But if she was...

A: She was working, going around to a lot of people and bad mouthing Bert. So we wanted to sue and the Rabbi said, a Jewish person, to sue a Jewish person and so on and he says, I want to find out

on my own and he, we didn't give him names of people where to go. He went right away to the Jewish, to the Lodz Jewish Survivor and they had an emergency meeting, they discussed this matter.

Q: Was there any statement that they wrote, the survivors of Lodz?

A: No, the Rabbi Stein, our Rabbi talked to the President at that time and he was, as a matter of fact, in Florida, he specially flew in from Florida to make an emergency meeting. And the people said it was nonsense.

Q: Has this happened to you, I mean, where other people have come up to you and accused you of things?

A: No.

Q: So their isolated incidences?

A: Yes, their isolated but painful...

A: As I said, we are belonging to the Mes-ada (ph) which are only survivors and a lot of them from Lodz, who went through the Lodz ghetto, and the best of friends and they would never have accepted me if I had been that brutal floor dancer, gigolo.

Q: Well, life is tough, huh?

A: It's very, very painful you know, to know that you have to fight such lies. And this is for posterity, it's a book, it's a printed book.

A: He writes here on Herman Gering, on two, four, six, eight, maybe twenty pages. He writes about Gunter Fuchs.

A: What does he know about him? Most of the people in ghetto they didn't know a thing. Only a few people that were close knew, nobody knew anything that was going on.

A: Gerber Josef in two, four, six, in eight pages. What has Gerber to do with Jews after the...?

Q: Well, I don't know what the rest of the book is. It may be about policy from German...

Q: It would be interesting maybe to...

A: Herschel Greenspan, he write about Herschel Greenspan.

Q: To get a written statement, you know, and publish it?

A: You know, we should have done that right after the war. To have statements from people that Bert saved them.

Q: Well, it didn't occur to you.

A: What for?

A: Bert always felt very strong about it. He said...

A: What did I do?

A: I didn't do anything, I know I am fine. So this is why we never reached out.

A: Hannah Hovich.

A: You know who that is?

A: She _____.

A: Gi-za (ph) is Hannah Hovich.

Q: But this is also why I think your diary is important. Even if you primarily want your daughter...

A: No, this is the diary from the concentration camp...

Q: No, no, no, I understand that. I am sure it's...

A: Rudolph Hess.

A: Let's forget about it, all right?

A: Heinriech Himler. Look at it.

A: What do you care?

Q: This is just a name index, you know, whom he mentions.

A: Adolf Hitler. Look how many pages!

Q: But I am sure he's talking about policy, German policy so he has to mention the people who created policy. He's not, I mean, we don't even know if he was in the Lodz ghettos. If you doing a history...

A: I will tell you all frankly I wouldn't even attempt to read the book. It's garbage.

A: I am surprised, I would like to know whether he was in the ghetto or not.

Q: I will go and skim it now...

Q: But this may not be his name.

Q: I will skim the book which maybe he says, do you have his phone number?

A: Who's number?

Q: Nat-tik's (ph).

A: Nat-tik's? At home, yeah.

Q: Oh, at home? okay. Maybe I will have a...

A: We have Nat-tik's home number.

Q: I'll go and check, I'll go and check.

Q: Oh, you need the chronicle?

Q: No, no, no, it's just the phone number for _____ and we could, you know, call. Maybe he could, maybe he knows him or something.

A: Maybe, probably! He knows the whole world.

Q: And especially since it's in Sweden.

A: You know, Nat-kit (ph), he knows everybody. He was a good guy. He is a good guy.

Q: Did your sister write anything down?

A: No.

Q: Dora never wrote anything down afterwards?

A: No.

Q: Did she talk much to you after the war or did you just not speak very much about it? I mean, I don't want to know about the situation...

A: No, she was with me in the Cannes, she never, never. She avoided the situation because I asked her many times very intimate questions and she, we never, she would start crying. Burst out crying.

A: [Speaking in foreign language]

A: This is the same thing as before. [Speaking in foreign language].

Q: What is nien-ya-kego (ph)?

A: Somebody, someone, like you talk about a nobody.

A: That he came very irate to the central office and asked every woman that was wearing lipstick and powder on the face to come to the office.

Q: He's saying that about you?

A: No.

Q: He's saying that about who?

A: No, he said he came to the offices...

Q: This man?

A: Bebof!

Q: I will be back in a few minutes. I will skim the books and try to get the information and I will call maybe...

A: Oh, that would be nice. No, they say that he came, that Bebof came to the liaisons offices, there was a no-man's zone on a market...

A: The central office.

A: And there were German officers and the Jewish officers.

Q: They were in the same area?

A: No. Bert was someplace else.

A: No, the central office. They were special [marketplace], all right? And it was completely, you couldn't go, anybody couldn't go in there, you had to go through procedures.

A: I can't believe it!

Q: So that Rum-cof-ski's (ph) offices and your sister Dora...

A: They were in my office and in the ghetto, the ghetto _____ also had their own office also.

Q: In the same building?

A: No, separate building.

Q: But in the same marketplace?

A: Yes.

Q: So when you talked with Dora and asked her questions she began to cry all the time?

A: Yes.

Q: And she never...

A: This is why we assume that she had very personal bad experience.

Q: With Bebof, your talking about?

A: Yes, with Bebof. Right, Bertie?

A: I mean, she could have written a book, you know, with all this information, but she didn't.

Q: Oh, absolutely!

A: She wanted to forget I guess.

Q: Yeah. And no one came to try to interview her?

A: No. She passed away in '62.

Q: Yes, I know that.

A: Nobody spoke about anything until the last few years.

Q: Did she talk to you about, I keep thinking of Churn-yok-of (ph), Rum-cof-ski (ph). Did she speak to you about him?

A: She knew that he knows me.

Q: I know, but did she speak to you about what she was doing? Forget the Bebof thing because clearly there may have been some incident that was very uncomfortable.

A: No. She never said a word about her work or the conditions in which she was working. No, she never mentioned it. Even after the war, she was clamming up, she wouldn't talk.

A: It's amazing.

A: It is amazing. Because every little word here was a page, was a horse whip that he was, who had in the ghetto a horse whip and who would dare to horse whip anybody!

Q: No, I thought at least you'd want to know...

A: Well, yes.

A: Oh yes, oh yes, absolutely. It's just, I don't understand.

A: Bert?

Q: Do you think the other secretaries with whom your sister worked might still be alive?

A: Yes, as far as I know.

A: _____, she's in Israel, in Tel Aviv.

Q: So we should think when I call you, we should try to think about the different people...

A: I think I even have her address. Her sister gave it to me, Rosa.

Q: Do you think she might, I mean for all I know she's been interviewed in Israel, we've had a project there, _____ had a project, but it would be very nice if that was the case to get...

A: It's so painful, it's painful!

Q: Well, of course, it's painful but it's also really important historically because those women probably knew more than a lot of other people did.

A: Absolutely!

Q: Secretaries always know a lot.

A: Oh yeah. And so did Schel-mek-bertie-feldon (ph), he was on the Bous-kein-e-neck (ph).

A: Schel-mek-bertie (ph)? No he was not. No, he was in the _____ no? What did Schel-mek do, I don't know what he did in the ghetto?

A: How did he have the connection when we gave him the jewelry to exchange, how did he have the connection with the Germans?

A: He isn't over the hill from the Germans, I don't know where he got the stuff, but where was he working? Wasn't he working at _____?

A: Nat-tik (ph). Nat-tik (ph) was giving us the meat for the dog, don't you remember?

Q: You had a dog in the ghetto?

A: Yeah. I got it from the head of the fire department. A puppy. And then we had to give him away, I don't know what happened, Bert? With the dog?

A: I don't recall.

Q: That's the second dog you had to...

A: No, we had one dog. This is the one, the first one in my house.

A: And then at my home town I had a German Shepherd, from the border police. Very sharp dog. But he was one man dog.

A: He didn't like me.

A: When I was away, he wouldn't take food from Irene. I had to give him away when we left for the...

A: No Bertie, he became vicious when he jumped on me...

A: Wait a second, I am just going to point out. I had him until the last days since when we left on our foot to go to When-toff (ph), to the camp, before we came to this United States. So I gave him to Is-peski (ph) on the Oar-stousch (ph).

A: No, to Tren-ka (ph) you gave him...

A: To Tren-ka (ph). And when we came to say good-bye, Tren-ka's (ph) son had the dog, and we came to say good-bye and so...

A: The dog jumped me.

A: I said good-bye and we left. And then he came back and ripped her fur coat.

A: On my neck.

A: He was mad that we, he felt that we are leaving him, you know?

A: Jumped on my back.

Q: Now this is the dog you had when you...

A: In Hannover, in Germany after the war. A beautiful dog.

Q: Did you have dogs in the United States too?

A: Always.

A: But since I started traveling so we could not have a puppy because, every time to give it to a kennel, you know...

A: I don't know if I should be sad that we came or not because this really was the last straw, you know? Because it's such a lie. I wish you would meet the people...

A: If I would have really, that guy that he describes here. We are living now in 1996. Liberated in 1945. That means 50 years. You would think somebody wouldn't have come and would have done something to me?

Q: Sure.

A: If I would have really...

Q: No, of course you are right.

A: I would like to know where that guy is.

A: Nat-tik (ph) will tell you if you call him.

Q: I mean, I don't know what he's saying about other people. Apparently he's supportive of Rum-cof-ski (ph) but I haven't read it so. It sounds a little strange.

A: I don't, why? I mean, Rum-cof-ski (ph), I told you, I was objective.

Q: Yes, but in writing this way of Bert, why is he writing...?

A: There was a lot of jealousy about Bert. He was a young man, 24 years old and in such a powerful position.

Q: Right.

A: But he didn't exploit it. It's not him.

Q: Right, right.

A: You know, I know so much about him I don't want to convince you...

Q: Well you don't have to, I believe you.

A: [Speaking in foreign language].

A: He was from Lodz but...

A: He was a Lodzer, but lived a long time in Germany and then was in 1939 deported.

Q: Which is not true.

A: First of all I was born in, and I was not deported in 1939 only in 1938.

A: He writes and he takes a lot of freedom here with the writing because he doesn't know! How does he know? Nobody knew his background. I was his wife and I didn't know his background.

A: It was for _____. I was a gigolo.

Q: Yeah, right.

A: That's something. Nobody called me that.

A: So. I called you a Casanova but...

Q: That's different. That's better than a gigolo.

A: Well, it's sad. Very, very sad.

Q: Now tell me, when your children have asked you, I mean, you've said at least your older daughter has wanted more information. When she asked you questions you didn't want to speak with her or?

A: No, we did, if she asked we answered.

Q: Was she hesitant to ask you? So that's why she doesn't know so much do you think?

A: We didn't talk much about it. Such things that happened, two weeks before my daughter's wedding. Naturally they both knew it. And they know their father.

Q: No, I understand that, but you said that they didn't know the story in detail. Right?

A: Details? Nobody knows. You are the only one that knows. We never told anybody anything.

Q: But what I'm wondering about is, is it because sometimes people don't want to talk. Other times they want to talk and their waiting for someone to ask them a question. And I'm just wondering if your children, because often children with their parents, no matter what the past is, you know...

A: She never came with direct questions.

Q: That's what I mean. I think children...

A: Oh, but Bert. You know mother told her plenty. My mother was very vocal.

A: She might have talked, she might have discussed it with her grandmother.

A: And they were very, very close with their granddaughter.

A: But she never asked me direct questions about it.

Q: Was your mother more vocal about it without somebody asking questions?

A: My mother...

A: My mother lived in the past. Mother-in-law, she lived in the past.

Q: And so she would...

A: And she was telling her feelings and her thoughts she was telling my daughters. They were very, very close, very close. And they knew a lot from my mother and my mother knew a lot and she told them as it is and they looked up to her.

Q: That's interesting that children don't often, there is a shyness about asking their parents about their past. No matter what...

A: Well, you see when they were young growing up we had our life to live, she had a hard time. Because we always went somewhere else or she never had really to be able to socialize and have a circle of friends.

A: Not because we were hiding out, it's because his job took him.

A: In my profession, traveled. And at that time we did not have a chance, or it never came to an occasion that she came to ask about this. Later on when she grew up and knows and she has her own child, she came around to be interested, more interested in what happened. And some she knows, some we told her, but she would like to know more. And when we get this tape now with your interview...

A: When she didn't know everything.

A: She will know a little bit more.

Q: Has she read about the Lodz ghetto? Did she read the chronicle?

A: Yes. She has and she also has the film.

A: And you wrote your observation on the margin, remember, in the chronicle?

A: Yes, yes.

A: Because there were a lot of discrepancies also and Bert wrote...

A: Why does the chronicle of the Lodz ghetto in which I appear, why didn't they write about this like this?

Q: Bert, they don't at all.

A: They would, if it was true, they would!

A: And they researched everything, I think very carefully because this is all documented what they have in the chronicle of the Lodz ghetto, is it not?

A: Yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: So is this really, if this would be the case, it definitely would have been written.

Q: No, it's clear that it's not...right, no question.

A: Somewhere.

Q: Right. Can I ask you something? Today, in some ways, and I don't know if it's because we were going through the pictures, that you were more, and maybe Teresa's questions were better than mine, that you were able to talk more about some things? Or is it because we've now been doing it for two days?

A: No. Because it was laying still for such a long time and today we were faced with the facts, we saw the pictures so...

A: If you have orange juice from the concentrate and you let it stay. If you have everything down there and the water is up with things, and you have to shake it. And we now stirred everything up, okay? So now everything is again...

Q: Going?

A: Going, and it's full. It's all, it's not any more separated. It's solid from the shaking.

Q: So it's possible that it would have been better if we had known this, to come to the museum first and look at the pictures and then do the interview and on video? I don't know, I am trying to figure out...

A: Maybe yes, maybe no.

Q: We don't know?

A: We don't know, we don't know.

Q: I mean, I'm very glad that I decided that we would tape the conversation today because...

A: Yeah, I wanted to have it out of the way. This is the purpose we came.

Q: Because you were able, I mean, it seems that the more we talk the more comes out. But I think the pictures are very helpful because they trigger...

A: Yes, well, we were able to identify for them quite a few people.

Q: Right. Absolutely. Are you glad you did this?

A: In a way yes, in a way no.

A: Yes and no. I'm glad because we can live with ourselves. We are not the kind of people we, we would never benefit from somebody's misery. This is not the type, listen! If we went to the flast-en-tralen (ph), the ghetto, and you had a witness, and Nat-kit (ph) who was working there and he was giving us portion of meat that the dog should be having and we shared it with the dog. And I had a witness. But you see, we didn't tell the Rabbi Stein to call him, we didn't tell him to call anybody. He went to the Lodzer people and they gave him names and he spoke to some people. But, boy do we have already people that I know will really cheer us. But we never gave names. But the two survivor girls we told you about it, I want you to talk to them. They are very sharp women. Very nice.

Q: But when I was asking you about whether you are glad you came here and talked about your, is it difficult to live with it because now we've shaken up the glass?

A: This is difficult to live with because it's a big lie.

A: Well, first of all, as I said I had a very restless night and...

A: Eight o'clock, quarter after eight we were in bed already. We were so shook up.

Q: Yes.

A: I was exhausted. Mentally. And for some reason I was very restless and I couldn't sleep well. I napped then I was awake and I napped.

A: Cat napping. I don't know, I feel so much shame that such a thing can surface now. I can't believe it.

A: Somebody says something, is something different but written down in a book and, I don't know what kind of, how many books are printed or in how many books were sold and how many books were read, right?

A: Anybody that reads it, it's just awful.

A: Somebody who really doesn't know reads this. My God, what kind of monster was this guy? _____ says you become such a powerful guy.

Q: But does it become important to you even in light of that, that you were able to tell part of your story? And that it is documented?

A: Certainly, certainly it's important.

A: But listen, when we talk about ourselves, we want to smell like roses, right?

A: Yeah but we still state only facts.

A: It wasn't a thing that we wanted to defend ourselves because there is nothing to defend.

Q: No, I didn't bring you here to defend yourselves. I brought you here to tell your story.

A: But we said it as it is and there are still living people that can witness.

A: Mmmm, interesting.

A: Yeah. So many _____ should have taken testimonies from all these people but this should be going back 40 years ago when everybody was alive because Bert had a lot of people that called him and thanked him. That they are alive. He's responsible for it.

A: Well. You know that I mentioned it to you that I made an enemy and a friend at the same time.

A: Maybe he's one of them?

Q: No, but you were in a situation where you couldn't do for everybody. It was impossible. Nobody could. So, there's...

A: Nobody could. I am only human.

A: Do you think if he could do something, he wouldn't do it for my father? That my father would be alive if he would have the power?

Q: Right. But what I'm saying is that in situations of, even not situations of distress. All kinds of situations where people have some power, some authority. They can't do everything for everybody.

A: No.

Q: So, you cannot ever satisfy people.

A: I'm guilty.

Q: And in this situation it's particularly difficult. It was difficult for you. You didn't even want to do it in some ways but it...

A: okay. Then you can say I wanted something from him and he denied it. He didn't do it. okay? All right, so he disappointed me. But bring up lies? Make such statements?

A: Bertie, do you remember a fellow that use to be your family some distant relation and you were so helpful to him?

A: Yes.

A: He was always in your office whenever I came.

A: A cousin.

A: Some distant cousin and he had a wife.

A: No, you remind me, yes.

A: I don't know his name anymore. And whenever I came to, happen to come over to his office this was, he was always asking Bert for something and I said to Bert, my God, he's always asking you for things. He survived and his wife survived. And you know where we met him? After the war in Hamburg it was a Schmelling match, boxing match. And he said to him, yes you are a good guy. And turned away. A fellow that had always, always asked for things and always, whenever Bert could he always did it. Probably once he had to deny him, he couldn't.

Q: You know it can also be people sometimes get very angry at people who have control.

A: Absolutely.

Q: Even if they do good things for them. Because it means...

A: Jealousy.

Q: Well it's not, I don't, it's sometimes more complicated than jealousy. Sometimes it's because you don't have power yourself. And you have to rely on someone else. And that's not an easy, human situation.

A: But still to make such statements.

Q: Well this is different. We don't know what, you know.

A: And you know, now it dawns on me. When I started to read it I remember that Nat-tik (ph) told us somebody's bad mouthing him. But we didn't pay any attention. We did not ask who it is and where it is. Now...

A: I couldn't care less.

A: Now it came to...

Q: You mean you think this is it?

A: Could be. Because he lives in Queens and in Sweden too. And Stockholm.

A: Probably.

Q: Well, we'll see what Teresa comes up with.

A: It's unbelievable.

Q: Well, it's a very complicated set of circumstances. And it brings out the best and it brings out the worst, right? I mean, I'm sure you saw it there?

A: Yeah. But I just, I just, can't digest it. Can I have this?

Q: Yes.

A: Thank you. Put it together with the envelope. Is the Federal Express, does it have room in the envelope. No? In there. Try it now.

Q: Now, do you want to go and see the permanent exhibition for a little bit or are you too tired?

A: I am tired. I'm tired and I'm exhausted mentally. Very upset.

Q: That's what I thought, that if you didn't go earlier.

A: I'm very upset because this is unbelievable.

Q: Well, now I feel terrible, I...

A: No, don't feel terrible. I'm glad that I learned something.

A: We didn't have an inkling about it.

Q: Well I had no idea yesterday. Amy said that somebody had found this just this morning so, I thought, you know, that we would show it to you.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah. No, it's very interesting because otherwise how would I know that something like this exists. All right. You will excuse me?

Q: Absolutely. You want more water?

A: No, that's why I take the candy now so, I get a little bit more saliva action.

A: I'm just, right now it bugs me what fry-ana (ph), you know, the third thing that she said to the Rabbi.

A: Yeah. One was that I sent Men-tak (ph), that I sent him on to the ghetto so that I can marry you?

A: No, that you got rid of him.

A: Oh yeah. That I got rid of him. So that I could marry you.

A: Then we changed our names because we were hiding out.

A: Yeah.

A: And the third one, I don't know. It was three things, I remember.

A: Yeah.

A: I don't know.

Q: Did...

A: Yes?

Q: I was just thinking about your temper and I was wondering if you thought that, in a way it's a stupid question. If you had every had to have dealings with the Germans that you actually could have survived? Would you have been furious with them?

A: I didn't understand the question.

A: I don't either.

Q: Because it's a conditional question, it has no reality. I was wondering that if you could have, remember we talked about your being a hot head?

A: Yes.

Q: And that with Rum-cof-ski (ph), you held your temper because he was also a hot head so it would have been impossible.

A: Yes.

Q: And I was wondering if you had dealing with the Germans whether you could have, not that nice guy, but Bebof.

A: No, the nice guy had nothing to do with it.

Q: Right. Whether you could have kept your temper?

A: He would have to control his temper I guess. Because he never blew his top with Rum-cof-ski (ph) just out of respect for an old man. Bert knew when to loose his temper...

Q: Did you every loose your temper? Either alone or with someone, I mean, out of frustration?

A: I'm sure I did.

A: I know with Sche-bit-ski (ph) when they came and wanted...

A: I almost killed the guy.

Q: What? When they wanted to bribe you?

A: Yes.

A: Nobody buys me.

A: Then I wish Abrom-ic Kud-meric (ph) would be available, Bert?

A: Well, Eddie Kline?

A: No, Eddie was living with Dora so he doesn't know how it conditions.

A: He came, every time he came to me he played something on his harp.

A: You want to call him? He's the adopted son of his sister. Whenever he had problems, he was a little boy, he would come to me...

Q: It would be very interesting to talk with him, sure.

A: He always came to me, he said, you are the only one I could talk to.

Q: How old was he then?

A: He was a boy of 14.

A: No, 12 or 13.

A: Or something like this.

A: I know about, a young boy. Very lovely young boy.

A: Today he's in his fifties, close to sixty, huh?

A: Yeah, I think that he must be in his sixties, Bert.

A: In his sixties, yes.

Q: Do you see him?

A: Oh yeah, whenever we have a chance.

A: Yes, oh yes.

Q: And where does he live?

A: In Montreal.

A: Yeah. I told you that his daughter is an international lawyer and his son is a professor.

A: And he himself made himself a fortune by inventing and customizing sanding machines, like for pig pens? The automatic assembly machines where certain parts are coming together and out comes the end, the fixed product, the finished product. So, he made a lot of money with that. And he is an ardent surfer rider. And he lived now for four month...

A: A surfer.

A: A surfer for four month or five months in a lot.
A: So he can surf. A few years ago he was surfing in Australia, on a surfing trip.
Q: Do you think he remembers a good deal about the ghetto?
A: I'm sure he did, I'm sure he did.
Q: Well, when I call you, include that in one of the names.
A: He lives next to Pierre Trudeau. Your looking from his window your looking to...
A: On the balcony of Trudeau. Not that I need witnesses, okay?
Q: No, I wouldn't, I'm not doing it because of that.
A: I'm just saying.
Q: But it's always very interesting when you can have a group of people...
A: To hear two sides?
Q: It's not two sides. But to hear different people talking about the same situation. And people who had relationships with each other because it makes it a much richer view because what...
A: You can average it out.
Q: Yeah, but you learn a great deal from having, when a friend of mine did interviews with four or five women who were in the hospital in Auschwitz...
A: Talking about this Rabbi Stein, he even called Kin-roos (ph) in Israel.
A: Dr. Kin-roos (ph) was the president of the Lodz survivors.
A: And he wrote us a letter telling us.
A: Yeah, I too write the letter.
A: Yeah but I mean, he wrote us a letter telling us that Robert Stein contacted him. So, he met, not just throughout Europe but he went to Israel.
A: He called Israel, he didn't go there.
Q: Now, you see, you were in such a unique position and you probably are, I don't know if there's anyone else who was in, I don't mean in the job you had, but in a similarly high administrative position anymore that can talk with the survivors...
A: Well, no one else is alive.
Q: No one has survived, no one is alive. So, it's a very special set of understanding that we can get from you. And to then have people who knew you, and also talk about their own lives and their relationship with you, it simply makes the story, it's like talking with all members of the family not just with one member of the family.
A: Bertie, let Joan call Mala Ordner (ph). She knew a lot. She was a doctor in one of the resorts, in one of the factories. She lives in Spring Valley.
A: No, what for.
Q: Are any of the doctors from the hospital alive?
A: Dr. Ved-ger (ph) in Tel Aviv. Dr. Kin-e-roos (ph).
A: Oh, no, he wasn't in ghetto. Dr. Jin-ski (ph), he wasn't in ghetto, no?
A: He wasn't in ghetto.
Q: What happened to Rum-cof-ski's (ph) wife, second wife?
A: They killed her too.
A: They finished in Auschwitz too.
A: The whole family.
Q: But, the Germans, they went to the gas chamber or that they were killed.
A: They went to the gas chamber.
A: No, Bertie, they were killed when they arrived in Auschwitz.
A: Heim and Josef, but I don't think the women.

Q: They separated the men from the women?

A: I don't know, I can't tell you because...

A: I don't think the women.

A: This is what we heard, we don't know details.

Q: That they separated them so if he had gone to a barrack and was killed she would have not been there?

A: We don't know details.

A: Many people told me that they know that there was a girl...

A: Oh, your talking about Lucia Szymanowicz.

A: She went to so many men from hand to hand.

A: She was working in Bert's office.

A: And she couldn't, you couldn't stand it, that I did not, that I ignored her. That I didn't make a pass at her or something like this.

A: Bertie, but she was stealing cards. She was stealing people's food cards.

Q: In the ghetto.

A: She was in his office. And Rum-cof-ski (ph) sent her out, they caught her and he sent her out on a transport. She went to Auschwitz and became a madam there. She was walking, while others were working, she was walking around in negligees and robes and stuff like that.

A: And she was waiting for me.

A: And we found out.

Q: In Auschwitz?

A: Yeah. She had a lot of pull, she had a lot of men that she had, she survived. But nobody knows where she is, where she lives.

A: She had something to give.

A: And she said it.

A: Yeah. She didn't make anything of it, on the contrary.

Q: I don't know how she did that in Auschwitz.

A: Oh yeah. In Auschwitz? There was a lot of it going on. What are you talking about.

Q: Well, there was some but you had to be in special places. It was not so easy.

A: She was there. People did what she wanted to do. What she wanted them to do. And I was told she was waiting for me.

Q: To do what?

A: To kill me. Or to have me killed.

A: Yeah. She was a very vindictive person and Bert had nothing...

Q: What was her name?

A: Lucia Szymanowicz.

Q: And when did she go to Auschwitz.

A: I don't know the date.

Q: Well, I don't mean the exact date.

A: 1942, 1943? 1942.

Q: Shim-a-no-vich?

A: S-z-y-m-a-n-o-w-i-c-z.

A: They said she was a kappo, you know what a kappo is?

Q: Yeah, but what I don't understand is those early transports, I thought they went to Helm-no (ph)?

A: Not all. Maybe this was afterwards, I don't know.

A: I don't know where they went. I really don't know.

A: I don't know when they started to send the troops to, the transport to Hel-no and I remember...

Q: As far as I know all the 1942 transports went to Hel-no (ph), not to Auschwitz.

A: I doubt that.

A: I don't know, so how could he survive...

A: There were people that went to working camps.

A: And they live. They are alive.

A: And they live. From that period.

Q: From those 1942 transports?

A: Yes.

A: So not all of them went to Hel-no (ph). And I don't know when they started transporting them to Auschwitz.

Q: As far as I know it was later. It was very late from Lodz to Auschwitz.

A: We don't know because we had no contact.

A: I have no idea.

Q: And Giertler is alive?

A: Was. He died in Munich a few years ago.

A: He died in Munich.

Q: Did he ever write notes about what he was doing or was he ever interviewed, do you think, by anybody?

A: No.

A: I don't think he would divulge anything because he was a little bit shady. He was working with the Gestapo.

Q: Right. But for that reason...

A: And what he did with them I don't know but that was not kosher that he would admit to it in an interview.

A: But he had a big following of people that really would do anything for him. He was a good guy by nature.

A: He helped a lot of people.

Q: Then why do you think he went back to Germany? He lived in Germany after the war the whole time?

A: Munich.

A: He never was in Germany before he was...

A: After the war.

A: After the war he went to Germany.

A: He married. A very nice woman and has a child, a son with her. He's a lawyer. We saw him a few times when we came to Munich.

Q: And he never divulged things to you?

A: Nobody ever talked anymore about it. It was a chapter in your life that you didn't want to talk about it.

A: It was like a pack or an agreement amongst the people not to discuss it for one or another reason. It was a period you really liked to forget. The only reason you talked about it is to give the message to the children.

A: But lately when we get together, lately, we always wind up talking about it. Before we never did.

A: Because we are so much involved in teaching the young people not to forget because, after all, slowly we are leaving. Nobody left to be a witness for it. So now we have to take the last few years we have to live to make sure that it is being spread out.

A: I want to tell about it to Rabbi Stein. To show him that, to read it to him.

Q: Does he read Polish?

A: No, I will translate it for him.

Q: Well, what would you like to do? Would you like to go back to your hotel, do you want to walk around at least the first floor of the museum?

A: Don't we want to wait on what Teresa comes up with?

Q: Oh, yes, sure. Why don't I call her.

Conclusion of interview.