

George Zimmerman

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Abstract

George Zimmerman was born Yurich or Yeshez (George) Gorick on October 20, 1933 in the bilingual (German/Polish) city of Katowice, Poland and was brought up in nearby Benjin (?). He was an only child and lived with his parents and grandparents. His father worked as an insurance adjuster at an Italian Company and his grandfather had a leather store in Katowice. The family had three servants: a cook, a maid, and a governess for him. George had friends he played with in the courtyard and also played cards with his grandfather's friends. Five days before the war, the family including his mother, father and grandmother, took the train to Kielce where they saw the Germans parading down the street. Soon his father returned from the Polish Army which no longer existed and they returned to Benjin. Their furniture was taken from them and the Army moved into most of the apartment so in '41 they moved to another apartment house. They were required to wear the yellow star and they could be beaten up by any Aryan they met on the street. At the end of '42 they were put into a ghetto and lost the store in Katowice. His parents and grandparents went to work for a shoe factory. Around August the Germans marched in and deported everyone. His family hid in their attic until the Germans caught them. They were brought to the Komyunka (?) factory in Schwaduler (?) which had one or two bathrooms for 1,000 people. After a month, George's father got the family Paraguayan passports and, using their hidden diamonds, bribed guards and obtained food. They escaped on the Underground Railroad in fall '43 and at the Slovak border were handed off to someone else. They reached the snowy Tatre (?) Mountains and a new person guided them up the slopes. The German left them at a tree where they were picked up by another person and were taken down to the Czech village and placed in a barn. Then they were loaded on a hay cart and taken to the railroad station where they took the train to Zilenjar (?) on the other side of the border. They went by foot to Budapest in late '43 where they found the Jewish community. They used their false papers with "Bruk" as their new name and George's hair was dyed blond. They stayed in a pension for a few weeks and went to the village of Stargard where they remained until the Germans came in March '44. They felt they would be liberated and return to Poland to live a normal life. When Budapest started getting bombed, they decided to go to Slovakia, a German Ally, which was not invaded. They started going to Bratislava, Slovakia, and were caught on the Hungarian/Slovakian border. The Hungarians caught the family and gave them over to the soldiers. The soldiers left them with a Polish POW camp who let them return to Budapest. After a week, they tried crossing again to Bratislava and were successful. They stayed there until the Germans came. They heard

that things were getting better in Hungary so tried to return but were caught on the border. They were transported to Sered Labor Camp in Slovakia. They were identified as part Jewish as the men were Jewish (as circumcised) but not the women. A guard from Benjin recognized them and in November '44 they were deported in a cattle car to Auschwitz. George caught scarlet fever and was transported to the infectious barracks where he met his uncle and they remained until January 5, 1945 when the Germans evacuated everyone from the camp. His mother and grandmother were transported before January to a labor camp and his father and grandfather went on the March and died or were killed. George saw people shot, hung and attacked in the concentration camp. George and his uncle walked with a group a few kilometers and were ordered to stop in the middle of a field where the SS left them and they continued on to Auschwitz. They got a ride to Krakow where the uncle was imprisoned for a year as a collaborator and George was placed in two foster families as he caught pneumonia. He hitched a ride to Budapest but, finding no relatives there, he was placed in an orphanage where his mother found him. The two looked for the grandmother who was left at the DP camp at Bergen-Belsen. She fell and passed away in the meantime. Then they went to the DP Camp in Kometz where they remained a year. His mother remarried and the stepfather adopted George. The three signed up to emigrate and the US came up first so they went to Bremerhaven and boarded a ship to Boston and took a train to New Haven, CT. as the Jewish Social Service Agency there sponsored them. George believes that you must take control of your life. That is how he succeeded in Yale and became a professor despite meagre education in his youth.

Summary

- 00:00 George Zimmerman was born Yurich or Yeshez (George) Gorick on October 20, 1933 in Katowice, Poland which was German before World War I so was a bilingual city. All the cities in the area had both German and Polish names. George was brought up with both languages in addition to Yiddish that was spoken at home. Polish was the main language. He was read fairytales in both Polish and German. There were many Folk Deutch in the area. He was brought up in the smaller town of Benjin (?) which was 10 kilometers away. Many Jews lived in Benjin (?). It had a trolley-train and many relatives lived in the sister city of Sosnowiec (?).
- 05:00 He remembers at age three living with his parents and maternal grandparents in a 5-room apartment on the 2nd floor (American 3rd floor) and had three servants: a cook who was usually Jewish as they kept kosher, a maid (not Jewish) and a governess for him, an only

child. It was a relatively modern apartment with a telephone, a radio which he learned to tune as there was one station assigned for each city. When you dialed it, it lit up on a map. It was Italian-made. His father worked as an insurance adjuster at an Italian Company, Denarani. His father was born in Krakow and had three brothers. One was a musician and he emigrated before the war to Palestine and another uncle he met in Auschwitz. His father got his law degree in the Czech Republic and returned to Poland and got the job in insurance and was part of the Jewish Intelligentsia. His grandfather had a leather store in Katowice. George did not know his paternal grandfather nor many of the Gorick's. He only knew Fishers; his mother was Carola Fisher. The grandparents were Helena and Isaac Fisher.

10:00 The store was a family business – Fisher and Fishers. They were the wealthier part of the family. His mother had a sister who died before the war. He never knew her. His mother attended Gymnasium and two years at a university and came to the US and was Chief Technician of a Cytology Lab. They had an extended family. Some of his uncles inspired him. One cousin, Rutka Fisher, taught him to read during the war. Her parents were Max and Andre Fisher. He visited his old building ten years ago and it is still there. It looked almost respectable. The exterior needed a facelift. He did not go inside. As one entered his apartment, there was a long corridor and a short corridor on the right side for his grandfather's office. On the left was his room, two bedrooms, a huge living room, another bedroom and a large kitchen with hot water. It was heated by lighting the kitchen stove.

15:00 The bathroom was next door. The hot water came up through pipes and they had a shower. The toilet was inside the apartment and they had a huge bathtub. His grandparents owned several apartments in the building, about one-fourth or on/half the apartments. George does not know why his parents lived with the grandparents. Living with them was a good thing as it was not looked down. His father fit in well with the family. His father went to synagogue on the high holidays. His grandfather attended every Saturday and took him. The synagogue was in a large apartment on the second floor of an apartment building and all set up. It was the only one in town in Benjin. It was a short walk. Sometimes George had children in the building to play with and they exchanged toys. He had a traumatic day when his grandfather gave away his toy train. He does not know why. Perhaps it got old or he wanted other children to have it. His father did not want to have anything to do with him until he was 13 and that never happened. Sometimes his mother took him to Katowice but usually he was taken care of by the governess.

20:00 She fed him, took him on walks and went to the castle where he played. When they had guests, he was permitted to participate in the conversation. His mother participated in society. His grandfather had card buddies and he would join the game. His father had his own work. His parents went to dances and receptions. His mother danced once with

Count Chano, the son-in-law of Mussolini who later executed the count. It must have been a grand ball reception. It might have been connected to the insurance company. The neighborhood was mixed Christians and Jews. On the weekends, peasants came to the house selling bread. There was a big marketplace in the city where people went on Saturdays. People went to bakeries to make potato kugel (pudding) as it had a large oven. His grandmother had friends she talked to and the aunts and uncles who visited periodically and might stay with them before the war.

- 25:00 Rutka's parents had a farm with lots of land near the railroad station and they made ropes for the Polish Navy. His mother and the governess read fairytales to him in German. He was closer to his mother and grandfather. Occasionally, his mother scolded him for something trivial (he thought). He visited his grandfather at the store. His mother took him to Katowice where they had a ham sandwich at a restaurant where there was a piano player. His father's office was in Katowice. George played with friends in the courtyard. Some were not Jewish. His friends also came to his apartment to play. The family left Benjin when war broke out. The summer of '39 nothing special happened. September '39 was the beginning of the war. Five days before the war, the family including his mother, father and grandmother, took the train to Kielce. They went inland as were afraid the Germans were coming. They knew the Germans were not friendly to Jews. When the Germans came to Kielce, the armament was horse-drawn cars. They were greeted by Jews and Poles as the conquering Army as thought to be good people. The Army came in with people on each side of the street cheering.
- 30:00 They were staying at the house of their Fisher relatives and saw the event. His father was left behind as he had joined the Polish Army. The Poles thought their Air Force could repel any German attacks. His father joined them after a few days. He was bedraggled and dirty as there was no longer a Polish Army. The family returned to Benjin. In a few weeks the Germans came and locked them up in their apartment, took away their furniture and left. George's father though the Germans were honorable and went to the authorities and were told, "No German would do anything like that." Part of the apartment including his room and his grandfather's office, were overtaken by official authorities. They were pushed into a smaller area and eventually had to leave. He celebrated his sixth birthday and in '41 they moved to another apartment house and gradually forbidden to go into certain streets. They were required to wear an armband with a Zion blue symbol and later the yellow star. One indignity was that any Aryan they met could beat them up, spit at them and yell at them. 3
- 35:00 Some Poles joined the Hitler Youth Group and others with no German roots claimed to be Folk Deutsch. They lived near the slaughter house and heard screams from the pigs and cows which was very unpleasant. He learned about sex from Jewish friends playing in the courtyard. At the end of '42 they were put into a ghetto. Some of the 13 and 14-year-olds were courting. One 13-year-old tried to get him to smoke a cigarette in the

bathroom and he never tried it again. Life went on normally as growing up though they were threatened and confined.

- 40:00 They tried to go on normally and shut out the outside. They had taken a train to Kielce but there were no trains upon their return so took a horse-drawn cart. Along the way, a Jewish lady took them in and he played with the children and their cats. The Germans conquered the place and war was going on but they had a good time. Nowadays the press extolls disasters but you can still find something to eat and whatever is happening now is minor compared to a normal life. His viewpoint is of a 6-year-old and a ten-year-old has a different viewpoint. At the concentration camp at age thirteen, he could pass as an adult but he was still a child. He saw how humans can survive in a bad situation. They might turn on each other. Not all survivors were victors and virtuous but may have something on their conscious. Some will do anything to survive, even turn on another human being.
- 45:00 George did not see violence on the streets but heard of people being beaten up and mistreated. Once the Germans came, they took over all the places of business so they lost the store in Katowice. His parents and grandparents went to work for a shoe factory that was in German hands who took over the Jewish business. The German was like Schindler as he shielded his workers so they would survive. His name was Braun. There is a history book of Benjin but he is probably not in it. He wore a uniform and looked German. He was probably in his 40s. He saved his parents and grandparents by requiring their work for his factory. George heard that Mr. Braun was shot by the Germans at the end of the war. George's father became more caring and his mother more emotional and had outbursts. He was the victim of some of them. It was general outrage taken out on him. They were transported from the apartment to the ghetto. On the way, he saw Poles jeering out of their windows as they passed by. He was with his parents and grandparents. The population diminished as many were deported to labor camps in '41. A distant cousin who is now 90 was deported to a labor camp and survived and led tourists to Auschwitz for an organization that arranges such trips. The ghetto was a village which had gardens. He lived in a cottage.
- 50:00 The village had unpaved streets. They were not surrounded by a fence but no one dared to go out as if you were seen, they could kill you, deport you or report you. From '40 on the village and the ghetto were governed by Jews. The Jewish Police and government collaborated with the Germans to try to save some Jews. His parents said special channels and bribes were needed to get anything done. He planted sunflowers and potatoes around August when the Germans marched in and deported everyone they found. His family hid in the attic of the cottage with about 40 other people. It had a false entry behind a bookcase. They stayed there until the Germans caught them.

- 55:00 At night some men went out for food and water. Sanitation was a problem. After a week, forced by the Germans, they were brought to the Komyunka (?) factory in Schwaduler (?) to be assessed. It was a small factory and many people got typhoid. There were one or two bathrooms for 1,000 people. It was a shirt factory and his grandfather got a job. George was asked to search the shoe leather for people who were hiding. He found some under the hides. They stayed there a month under terrible conditions. George's father got them passports and bribed guards. Recently he heard documents were found on the Underground Railroad. They went on the Underground Railroad in fall '43 and escaped. He was nine-years-old. He knows others like himself who did not attend school until after the war or not at all. George attended third grade in Poland for one/half year and then he had a tutor in Germany and started Gymnasium for one/half year and came to the US to complete his education.
- 60:00 George knows some professor colleagues who had no formal education and became professors. He does not know how he and the other professors did it. Perhaps you can learn from it. He had more freedom to explore by himself. In Germany he learned from the radio. George does not know if one can learn from the radio here. His friend at CCNY immigrated to Cuba before '39 and became President of the American Physical Society and still consults at his same age. Maybe a child needs curiosity and help from relatives. Most children of academia have an advantage over those born in suburbs or the ghetto. The suburbs are isolating. Children need to progress at their own pace. They had a meal card as food was always rationed and they got the luxury of bacon.
- 65:00 The household was kosher and his grandpa got disgusted when he smelled bacon. The family went to the railroad station with forged passports and met someone in a German uniform and boarded the train. Soldiers were in one compartment and he evicted them so the family could enter. He told the soldiers that the family were his prisoners. The train went south. George considered his family well-to-do but not rich. Currency used was diamonds as you could hide them since they did not take much space and kept their value. He might have seen one or two diamonds. They wore civilian clothes with no star. They were transported to the Slovak border and handed off to someone else. They reached the Tatre Mountains that were full of snow. A new person guided them up the slopes with snow up to his knees. The German left them at a tree to be picked up by someone else. After a few hours, a new person came with shpeck (lard) and vodka. He never tasted anything better than that. They were taken down to the Czech village and placed in a barn. They were loaded on a hay cart covered with hay and taken to the railroad station.
- 70:00 Children wanted to hitch a ride with them but the driver fended them off. His parents got the tickets and they took the train to Zilenjar (?) on the other side of the border. It was raining when they arrived and they could not find the indicated place but they found a Jewish family and stayed with them. They went south and the grandfather had sciatica

and could not walk. He took a train to Hungary and the rest crossed the border illegally by foot to Budapest in late '43. They found the Jewish community and they had papers. "Bruk" was their new name and George's hair was dyed blond. When he went to the barber, the barber said he was a nice Aryan child. They stayed in a pension for a few weeks and went to the village of Stargard where they remained until the Germans came in March '44. They had enough money to live on and George had learned sufficient Hungarian. It was a nice vibrant Jewish section with many stores, some were luxury and had sufficient food. They had shopping centers like Paris had before the war.

- 75:00 They took a commuter train to Chilaheads (?), a beautiful village and lived in a cottage on Kokushidis Street. They tried to avoid the police. He would take the trolley and commuter train by himself and wander around the city. Life was good. It was like paradise as no one taunted them. They had Christian identity and sanitation. Poland and Hungary were friendly and had never gone to war with each other. Harty, was the Regent who ruled Poland. There were parades which he enjoyed. In the ghetto, they propagandized for saving tin foils and metals for the German Army. He saw books about the German Olympics of '39 and '40. They led a normal life except his parents did not work and, occasionally, they went to the Jewish quarter to sell their diamonds for money. They had Paraguayan papers but did not expect to go to Paraguay. Stalingrad was defeated. They did not expect to leave Hungary.
- 80:00 They felt they would be liberated and return to Poland to live a normal li. The Battle of Stalingrad was lost by the Germans. People said, "Don't worry, the Germans will be defeated and next month the Allies will rescue us." Others who did not survive said, "Forget it, nothing will help us." Those who had hope survived. Hungary was at peace but they were Allies of Germany. There was an unarmed Jewish Corps in Hungary who fought against the Russians. They were conscripts. The family lived there several months until March when the Germans overthrew the government. The Jewish section was closed. The Germans did not declare they were destroying the Jews but first they formed a Jewish Committee. Then they formed a ghetto and the same thing that happened in Poland was happening in Hungary. The Allies started bombing the industrial parts of Budapest. George saw the bombings from their little village. Anti-aircraft lights aimed at Allied airplanes at night. During the day, the Americans bombed and at night the English bombed. There were immigrants like us who owned the restaurants before the Germans came. There were Gypsy bands and others in the café and he ate in one. Everything shut down and the situation was not good but Slovakia, a German Ally, was not invaded yet so the family decided to go there.
- 85:00 His father must have paid someone to get them to Bratislava, Slovakia, across from Vienna on the Danube. They tried to cross the border and were caught on the Hungarian/Slovakian border. The Hungarians caught them. The Hungarians caught the family consisting of two men, two women and a child on the Hungarian/Slovakian border

and did not know what to do with them. There was a German camp nearby so they gave the family over to the soldiers. They searched for a concentration camp for them and drove around and found a Polish POW camp. The Commandant of the camp was a Pole. All the soldiers were only interested in signing a document. The Pole took them in and let them return to Budapest. After a week, they tried crossing again to Bratislava and were successful. They stayed there until the Germans came. They lived in a house without electricity near a refinery. George knew German, Czech, Polish and Hungarian with no formal education. There was a German camp next to the school where they lived.

90:00 The Allies bombed Bratislava and bombed the camp but not their house. The stove from the stove emitted a smell. At night they lit up their home with kerosene lamps. He always thought that sirens did not pertain to him but he was incorrect. When the sirens sounded they went to a bunk with 20 Nuns and a few priests who said "Hail Marys" in Slovak so he quickly learned to say that. This event took place during the invasion of France by the Allies in June '44. They heard that things were getting better in Hungary so tried to return but were caught on the border. They were transported to Sereb Labor Camp in Slovakia. They were identified as part Jewish; that the woman were not Jewish and the men were circumcised so they were Jewish. They remained a few weeks while the parents performed some labor. A German guard, Moygabam, who was at their shirt factory in Benjin was transferred to Sereb and recognized them. They were transported in a cattle car to Auschwitz in November 1944 and had a shower. They saw older prisoners turning on new prisoners in the barrack.

95:00 George saw several people beaten to death. Male and female prisoners were together. Some prisoners were taken outside and thrown against the electric wires. George got tattooed and then they separated the men and women. He was in a bunk separate from his father and grandfather. He heard scarlet fever was going around. His father gave him food as it was scarce. Until '42, George did not know anything about Auschwitz. He knew someone escaped from it and told him that people were shot and hung but did not hear of the gassing. He saw people get shot and hung. The Capos beat up the prisoners. There were all nationalities there including Jews. German prisoners were either homosexual or Communist. The most persecuted were the Jews, Gypsies and Russians. The Poles were in between. George caught scarlet fever and was transported to the disease section of the camp. He stayed in the infectious barracks until January 5, 1945 when the Germans evacuated everyone from the camp. Two weeks before George's arrival, the crematory workers had revolted. It was known that every three months, the Jews who worked in the crematory would be gassed.

100:00 The workers got arms from people working in the factory that made explosives and blew up part of the crematorium. Gassing was halted. From then on people died from hunger, disease, being shot or being hung. Every evening George saw a pile of bodies in front of

each barrack and a truck came and took the bodies—perhaps to mass graves or the crematorium. George resided in the children’s barracks and was transported to the infectious ward. There were prisoner doctors and nurses and others who knew about medicine such as barbers. Some of the staff were child abusers. There was some homosexuality going on.

105:00 His mother and grandmother were transported before January to a labor camp. His father and grandfather went on the March and died or were killed. He saw them in December before he was transferred to the Medical camp. His father found his brother who got sick and was sent to the Medical camp and George met him there. The “Paperclip” book indicates that the Germans stayed until the 23rd destroying documents and did not kill anyone. The people were afraid they would be killed by the nearby population so they did not leave when the Germans left them there. They just walked around and had access to the stores of food which they shared with the other survivors. George recovered from Scarlet Fever. Every now and then the German Commander would come and took people out and shot them. He saw piles of bodies. Some prisoners found trucks and took them away. Commanders did not come to visit them as they did not want to catch diseases. On January 17th, it was cold and the snow was piling up. The Commander and 40 or 50 men came and called them out. Two Russian prisoners were shot and their bodies were burned. 4,000 women, children and the sick were marched out. This was discussed in Martin Gilbert’s book, “Lamp of the Holocaust. They were asked who could walk 20 kilometers at night.

110:00 Those who said they could not were shot at the walls. George and his uncle walked with the group a few kilometers and were ordered to stop in the middle of a field. They stood in the cold for one or two hours and a truck came and took the SS guards away. They were left there with nothing. It was a sense of loss. Then they started marching. He thought his life was over as would be shot in a few hours. One of the prisoners knew how to get from Birkenau which had barracks to Auschwitz which had brick buildings. They saw a German patrol and thought they were going to attack the prisoners. It was the artillery battery consisting of cannons drawn by horses. The soldiers were lost and asked for directions. The soldiers were hungry so they shared their food with them and the soldiers continued along their way. The prisoners continued to Auschwitz.

115:00 They were taken in by the prisoners as there were no Germans left. They heard the whistle of cannonballs and explosions but felt safe. Before the 17th when they heard sirens, the Russians were bombing the factories in Birkenau and it was dive bombers, tanks and artillery. The prisoners thought it was outside as they did not think a prisoner camp would be attacked. They did not know about it. The cannons could be distinguished from the rifles. He remained there until January 23rd. He heard a huge explosion and saw Russian soldiers in white camouflage with a rifle on one shoulder and a ring of sausage on the other shoulder. It took two days for the Russians to organize a

command post. He saw several Russians being killed by falling off horses. Messengers were horse messengers. Money was worth nothing. You could exchange cigarettes, vodka or food. His uncle from Krakow found a truck of soldiers going to Krakow and gave them something to give a ride for the two of them to Krakow. The uncle knew a Polish family there, the Gablinksis, who lived near the Jewish section. They were poor but took them in. George and his uncle were given some money by a Jewish organization to pay the family. The family consisted of a grandmother, two children around his age and a mother. The father was away fighting or at a camp. The mother worked on the trolleys as a ticket taker or conductor and the grandmother told them ghost stories. It was a Catholic family. One day the uncle went out and did not return. It was a cold water flat with one stove and they washed in the courtyard in a cold sink.

120:00 George was alone and did not know what happened to his uncle. He was 11 and went to the police station and found out that his uncle was arrested. He had been in a camp near Krakow before he came to Auschwitz. He had arranged to get false papers and the person who made them was arrested as a collaborator. It was a local Polish administration with Russian oversight. George tried to bring his uncle food but the line snaked around the prison. He waited all day and never reached him. George developed pneumonia and the Jewish committee decided that another family should care for him. He has a photo of his new family but does not recall their name.

125:00 The new family were survivors liberated from prison who cared for him. After a few months they enrolled him in school in the 3rd grade in Krakow. He had attended 5 AM Mass and knew all the prayers and Catechisms in Polish and also the Hail Mary. He thought that some of the family in Budapest might have survived. There was someone taking Torahs to Budapest that agreed to take George. His uncle was released from prison after serving his year. He met him later in Germany. At that time, you might see someone laying in the street in the morning and was told he was a collaborator although probably a drunk Russian had shot him. In the Battle of Berlin, several people probably got shot. George had to duck into doorways to prevent getting shot. Some of his fellow students harassed him when they found out he was Jewish. He went to a priest and said he would convert but the priest replied to wait until he was 17. George is forever thankful that the priest set the delay. George traveled with the Torahs which were confiscated on the Czech/Slovak border.

130:00 He could not find anyone in Budapest so had to enter the Jewish Orphanage run by the Palestinian organization, Shomer Hatzai. Budapest was in terrible shape. People were run over by trucks and did not have enough to eat. There was hyperinflation. People traveled a lot. Someone came who knew his parents. They had a convertible like an MG and gave him a ride. He learned Hebrew in the Orphanage. In the camp, he had met people from Greece, Yugoslavia and Italy. They had instruments and sang songs. He could swear in 20 languages though communicate in only 11. George remained in the

Orphanage and they decided to go through Germany to Palestine. They stopped in Prague and toured it. They saw palaces and the airfield with bombed out airplanes. Near the end of December '45, his mother appeared. She had been liberated in Westphalia in the village of Kometz and came to Budapest as heard George was there. His grandmother had survived. George has documents from the Holocaust Museum that his mother was searching and found him in Prague. Usually she weighed 110 pounds but was 150 pounds as people compensated. They remained a month in the Orphanage and went to Caldance.

135:00 The village was flooded so they had to wade. No; they first went to Bergen-Belsen where his mother left the grandmother and was told she left. It was a DP Camp so was supplied with food, some from UNWRA, chocolate and cigarettes. The latter was used to trade the Germans for fresh food. After three weeks, they found out the grandmother had fallen down the stairs and died there. In '89 George went to her mass grave. Then they went to Kometz which was a small DP camp. George was the only child there. It was flooded and they remained a year. His mother looked for the father and grandfather. There were rumors but no one saw them. They disappeared during the evacuation. George was paraded as he was the only child. His mother traveled around Germany looking for relatives and stopped at Bamberg.

140:00 There she attended a symphony concert given by former prisoners which later became the Israel symphony. She heard about some of the Fishers in the poor segment of the family. They were Hasidic Jews with many children in Esslingen, a small town near Stuttgart in Schwabaland. She stayed with them for awhile and then she remarried. She was born in 1910 but changed her date of birth to 1914. The new stepfather had adopted George so he became George Zimmerman. George's father had become warmer towards him after the German occupation and took care of everyone – the grandparents, his mother and himself. His father was born 1904. Conversations with his father were no closer while on the run as they spoke of everyday things. The Women's camp was liberated and men started drifting in and the soldiers danced with the survivors. There were some sexual relationships but his mother did not have any as she was concerned about him. They brew wine together from grapes.

145:00 The water was not drinkable so they drank wine and beer. They boiled the water. His mother took him on the trips looking for relatives. She was highly regarded and respected by the entire family. His stepfather thought the world of her and felt privileged to marry her. His father was Hasidic and had ten children. There is a photo of them. They married in '47 or '48. Esslingen had about ten Jews where they lived in a house owned by a former Nazi who was de-Nazified. He would read the books in the house including tales about Bavaria. Genower, a cousin, remained in Esslingen and established a textile store. She traveled all over Germany to get fabric and was successful but wanted to emigrate. George's mother did not want to return to Poland as it was too traumatic as

the Poles were anti-Semitic. Durka, a member of the family, remained there. He has a photo of her. Stuttgart was a big city with a DP camp and a Jewish committee. There were many people who wanted to immigrate – to Brazil, Canada, US and Israel. Zimmerman put down their names on all the lists and the US came up first.

150:00 George learned how to ride a bicycle and he had an uncle in his 20s who would ride back and forth to Stuttgart and they were pals. George was Bar Mitzvah with seven Jews and two others who claimed they were Jewish. He was still attending the public Gymnasium and already knew German. He has a photo of his class. He was in a third grade class with German children. After that one either goes into trades or higher education. The family's papers arrived after a few months in April and they sold their store to their cousin and went to the US. The Family Service of New Haven brought them to the US. They did not know what Connecticut or New Haven were. They saw Temple Street and thought it safe to go there but it was not a Temple but the Jewish Social Service. They had packed up and went to Bremerhaven and took a ship and in seven days reached Boston.

155:00 It took days to get through customs and they were met by a representative who gave them the tickets to New Haven. They took the train to get there. His war experiences probably taught him to some degree several things. First, that you are the one who should take charge of your life. Second, that people are people as some are ogres (could be Jewish, Poles, German) as each wanted to have a comfortable life if they could. Third, people in bad circumstances can be driven to terrible deeds. He saw the desire for life when people do anything, even kill each other to survive. He saw this in the camp. The second instinct of survival is food. If you don't have food according to Eli Wiesel in "Night", sons may take food from their father. The veneer of civilization vanishes. His experiences taught him that this veneer is so thin and easily lost especially without the comforts of civilization. You also need safety for your life, a supply of food and the fundamental desire of shelter is necessary for survival. Without it, civilization breaks down. People want their desires satisfied first and then they can have civilization.

160:00 People like to do what they like. If you are a boss and your workers do several tasks, you should assign them what they like to do and they will do it well. George has a few more things to say. At Auschwitz, they went into the shower and for the first time he saw his father and grandfather naked. He realized that underneath the clothing, we are all naked. It is hard for George to form attachments as people in his life appear and disappear. He is still aware of that. Some people who he had good contacts with dissolved. Yesterday he got an email from the son of the Rabbi who helped him when he arrived in the US. He is still in contact about every ten years. It is hard as both his father and grandfather disappeared but you cannot do anything about it. His colleagues are of an age that they are dying. He attended some of their Memorial Services. They were here and now they are gone. George learned a few things. One, he thinks there should be

some lesson learned that there are quite a few people who had similar experiences with little education until they older. George came to the US and attended 9th grade and received a city of New Haven scholarship and did well.

165:00 In his first year at Yale, he was in the top 10 of 900 students. One of the people who got the Nobel Prize for discovering the Hix particle was brought up in France and his education was interrupted for a year. There is Francoise in Belgium. It is a question as to how you get educated without having formal education. The second thing George learned was that you have to take charge of your life. An analogy is to a cell which he learned while writing his thesis. A college professor tried to steer his car which was skidding and he had no control in the direction the car was going. When he came to something, he could maneuver a little so he does not collide into it. In the same way, you should take advantage of opportunity where you have very little control to take the overall direction of your life but you may see opportunities. George probably survived as when he was standing before the barracks to be counted and it was cold, he was never out front but in the middle where it was warmer and sheltered. You should never be in the front firing line.

169:00