

Good evening. My name is Toby Ticktin Back and I'm the director of the Holocaust Resource Center of Buffalo. And we are very honored this evening to have with us Rubin Literman, a survivor of three concentration camps. Rubin, would you please tell us about your childhood?

I was born in Plock, P-L-O-C-K, Poland. I have big family. I had five brothers. Altogether, we're six brothers and one sister. And as any other youth in that time, was going to school, first public school, and then high school. High school happened to be a Jewish high school. And the war started, broke out September 1, 1939.

Before you get to war, Rubin, I think we'll get a picture. We'll focus in on your family.

OK.

We'll ask for the picture to be put on the screen. And perhaps you could tell us about your family.

All right. As you see from the picture here, I have my mother, and my father, and my twin brother right underneath me there. Standing is two brothers, also another set of twins, at one end and the other.

You're one? You're a set of twins?

Right, set of twins. And then two brothers, the one is the eldest one. And the one is one year younger. And one here is my sister and my brother-in-law.

On the extreme opposite side of your sister is her husband?

Right. So we have six brothers, and one sister, and my one brother-in-law, this.

And this picture was taken in what year, approximately?

This picture was taken probably in 1930 and sent to my uncles and aunts in the United States.

In Buffalo?

In Buffalo, New York. And this way, I really do have the picture. Because we couldn't salvage anything. We didn't get anything. Everything was taken away from us, including pictures, and all the possessions.

So it's fortunate that you took that picture and sent it.

Right. Right.

So you went to school. You had a normal, happy family life and--

Normal, happy life.

--student life.

And I also-- right, student life-- we also belonged to a Zionist organization by the name Akiba. And we were all happy and doing things like normal children would do in any other country. Antisemitism was in Poland, even there, then. But we just went about our business. And while I was going to school, we were four brothers accountants. So we had also an office, an accounting office in Plock.

What did your father do?

My father was a merchant, yeah, and four brothers accountants. One brother was helping out my brother. My father and,

really, two brothers were helping out, but after school. So I really went into the accounting quite a bit still in Poland.

When my brothers went into the army, into the Polish Army, I was only then 16 years old. And I, even by going to school during the day and doing other things, I sort of substitute for him in managing the office and certain of his accounts until he'll get back from the army.

And then the war broke out September 1st.

And then the war broke out September 1, 1939. And because our city was taken into what they called Third Kingdom, or Dritte Reich, immediately, we lost all our rights and privileges. And to us it's like the world would come to an end. It happened like overnight.

Did you have to wear the--

Yes. We were taken into forced labor. And all the accounting office disappeared because it was no more. The school stopped. And everything was disrupted. And we had to wear the yellow Jude badge to identify. And we couldn't live on the same street, in the same house where I was born, and where we lived for that many years. Immediately, we were taken into a ghetto in the same city. And then this was not enough. They were taking to another part of Poland, to another ghetto.

To another city?

To another city in another part of Poland because this was Judenrein, which means, no more Jews at all. And we had to leave not only the area with the place where we were born and the house we lived in, but even the ghetto. So many people would say that we had-- were sort of the first victims of circumstances and even more than others because of the Dritte Reich, and we couldn't stay in our hometown.

How did your parents respond to this being moved?

Well, it was very, very difficult for them to move. We couldn't take nothing along because this was the German order. We were taken to a special place. They called it marketplace. We were taken to a train--

To the Umschlagplatz.

--by cattle cars and to the other part of Poland. When we arrived there-- and the trip was not that pleasant. And we didn't have enough food. And we didn't have enough clothing. But in some way, the Jewish committee, or the Judenrat, was helping us out because the Jews in the others part of Poland, the city, were still there intact. And they were helping us, and Red Cross, and so on.

The Red Cross was in the town?

Yes, yes, in some way, they were helping out.

What city was it, Rubin?

Pardon me?

What city?

The name of the city was Chmielnik. It's near Kielce. And this was a very-- OK, in other words, again, the same difficult situation. People were just dying out. They didn't have enough food. You could see they swollen and just fall apart right on the street. And whoever was stronger or whoever was more lucky and received more food through the various organizations or through private enterprises was could survive a few days longer or a few weeks.

Then this was not enough. And then from this little city, in October 1942, I'll never forget this day, happened to be on Hoshana Rabbah, was on Friday morning, all the youngsters were called in to the special marketplace. And we didn't know how things would be. But we had to go. And we had to report to.

So instead of going to the temple, we had to go over to this place, to the marketplace. And I remember vividly exactly what happened. My mother thought, well, she would see us off. I was with my brother, another brother, at this particular place. And we were taken on trucks to Skarzysko-Kamienna, where my certificate will show, when I came to Buchenwald, where I came from. So my brother tried to escape right there and then. But somebody caught up with him. And they put him back on the truck.

It was this particular camp in Poland, Skarzysko, was very, very bad. Not too many really survived. Again, hard work, not enough food, no cure for us. If somebody was sick, was no cure for the sick people. If you had fever, like 102 or 103, was a problem. If you stay in the barracks, was impossible. They would find you right underneath the bunks or in the barracks. And you would be shot to death.

If some friends will take you to pretend that you are OK through the special border, special police who were watching that, was a problem because, again, he would not be able to perform and produce. And again, was a problem. So if anybody was sick, was no such thing as a hospital or a doctor. It was all finished.

This particular camp-- and then I just want to go back to the October 1942, that three days later, right after Sukkot, my parents and whoever was still left in this little town, young or old, and who was hiding from a few days before, and was caught. They were all taken, then, to Treblinka to the gas chambers. Therefore, I have Yahrzeit on Sukkot--

At the same time.

--at the same time. And I go to temple specially to observe this young Hoshana Rabbah and then Yahrzeit afterwards.

How do you know that they all died at that time?

Well, from witnesses, and from the neighbors, and from all the data which we received after the war. We ask the rabbi and other who are watching those calendars, how are we going to observe the Yahrzeit? And after we gave the report as we know and was told how it was and when they were taken to Treblinka, they said, this is probably the proper day. And keep this one day all the time. And we did. And we are still doing that.

Now, they were taken away. And where were you?

Yes. At that time, when they were taken away, I was already three or four days in Skarzysko concentration camp.

Which is in Poland?

Which is in Poland. And again, this was an ammunition factory. And any wrongdoing or anything, if you couldn't perform, was the same thing. And then we have what they call the selections to the right or to the left. If somebody did not look quite right, was taken away.

For the ladies, and the girls, and especially, we tried to, in some way, to make yourself on the outside, on the cheeks, a little rosy with some coloring paper to show, when we go through the special selection, that the German inspectors would not see or sense that the person is sick, artificially, in some way. It was not cosmetics in the way, but just for survival. Everybody, in some way, was trying to carry on and not even to commit suicide, to try, maybe, we feel-- it's always, you can call it wishful thinking, naive, but we say, well, maybe tomorrow is going to be a better day. Let's get by today. And we'll see tomorrow.

So everybody was fighting and determined. The one who was not determined and not fighting was really a problem. And they couldn't really survive. And all depends on the circumstances also.

Rubin, what kind of work did you do in this camp?

Well, I was in this [NON-ENGLISH], ammunition factory. And we had to work with a special carriage and push hard containers, like from one place to another. They were on a special track, miniature railroad track. But if something would fall out or get out of place, then it would be our fault. And we would be punished for it, penalized. It was hard work.

So you couldn't really do sabotage the activity because it would boomerang on you?

That's right. The conditions were impossible, unbelievable in this special camp and others, but where I was in.

How long did you stay in this camp?

In this camp, we were about two years. And what I want to mention is that the Germans always went ahead of us, ahead of everything not to let us be liberated. So when the Russians came in to Poland in the area where we were in, Skarzysko, around that, and till the last day were waiting. And when it was almost the last few days, they shipped us. The men went to Buchenwald. And the women went to Leipzig in Germany. Matter of fact, Luba went, my wife went to Leipzig at the same time. We were together in Skarzysko.

Did you know each other before?

Yes, we knew, but just knowing, and just met her in Skarzysko. But of course, with the conditions, in that, was impossible to make any special contact. But we knew each other, yes. And as a matter of fact, just because we knew each other and we cared for each other, when I was in Skarzysko and she was-- and then from Skarzysko went to Buchenwald. And then she was in Leipzig.

Some arrangements were made to give up a portion of bread on my side and one on her side, just to find out, through a special messenger-- I don't know how this worked, really. I couldn't believe that this would literally be-- it's true when I received the message or it's true that they will deliver that. But after the war, I found out it was delivered, that she found out that I am in Buchenwald OK. And I found out about her that she was in Leipzig OK.

So you had your own courier that went.

This was something unusual, which I couldn't believe that this will really materialize. Yes. But we sacrificed, in some way, by giving out a piece of bread, which was our livelihood. This was the thing. But because we care for each other, that's what we did on the both sides.

Were you in Buchenwald with any of your family or friends?

No. Just in Buchenwald, we were with a group of people who were also in the same camp in Skarzysko, so just friends whom I didn't know really from before the war, or from our hometown, or any family, sorry friends, just prisoners, just where we were working together. Speaking about when Buchenwald had also another commando, with a special factory, a similar ammunition factory as it was in Poland, and we were also set up in barracks to live during the night or on a shift, maybe sometimes the night shift or day shift, and we were going to the ammunition factory. And I just I say, like miracle of surviving, I just was trying to get attention to one of the German foremen, who was in Poland, and arrived also in the Buchenwald common prisoner--

Germany.

--camp, yes. And he promised me that he will take care-- because you mentioned about friends-- that he will assign to a group of the ones who were from Skarzysko. And I'll be able to work with them together. And the food, I went because of the food, and also the friends, and because this was, again, the survival. And the food supposedly was better in this particular department. And he did. What happened? I suppose to go on a shift the next morning. The same night when the arrangements were made for next morning to go, it was an explosion. And all my friends were killed.

Oh, my goodness. That's a miracle that you weren't.

It's a miracle that I would be there, I mean, it's no question about it.

If it had been some other time.

That's right. Another miracle which I can also mention, when I was in Chmielnik, before we went to Skarzysko, I was single. And my brothers, the twin brothers we showed on picture before, were married, married during the war. The Judenrat, or the Jewish committee, they received a quota from the German administration to deliver so many Jews to this labor camp. And one of my-- our name was mentioned.

And my sister-in-laws were sort of on it because they were married. And they were not sure, is it one brother or the other one? So I just very volunteered to go to this labor camp. And when I went, I was there for three or four days. Somebody called me to the office and asked me my first name. And I didn't know what it is, but I just had to go. And I gave him my name. They sent me home. And they brought one of my brothers from the twin to this particular labor camp. And three or four days later, they were all taken to Auschwitz and didn't survive.

So that's another miracle. If you had stayed there--

Yes.

But look how meticulous the Germans were, they wanted the right Literman. They didn't want--

They wanted the right Literman.

--any Literman.

Right, yeah, right. Then two brothers, the elder and the other, the accountants, they-- one of my brother was a general partner of a electric flour mill in our hometown. And the other one was the chief accountant. As the situation deteriorated, and we knew that we cannot hold on to the ownership of the flour mill, the decision was made voluntarily and with no, even, that much consideration of-- to turn over the flour mill to one of the local, happened to be a professor at the accounting school where my brothers attended, a very good friend. And they were meeting on a Saturday night in my brother's house. This was still in the beginning, the first few days.

What year are we talking?

This was still in 1939, still in the beginning. They-- because talk about miracles, I just mentioned about my family, how everything went--

Certainly.

--and so on. And the flour mill was on fire. So they were suspicious. And they were accused of that sabotage, that they burned the flour mill. The professor, really risking, in a way, his life, and his reputation, and everything else, being a false torch at the same time, to say--

So he's partially originally from Germany.

--right-- to say and make a real strong statement that this is impossible. I was with the German. At the same time when the fire was on, I was with them negotiating in that. For one reason or for another, because it was the beginning, was only the Wehrmacht and not the SS yet in in the administration.

After a few days, they just let him go. But they were afraid even to go home for overnight because somebody else will find out and will send it back. So they went to Russian-occupied Poland. This is Bialystok. And while this was on, we

thought, everything is OK. And at one point, I was trying, also with one of my brothers, to go over on their side, to the Russian side. But for some reason or another, the border was closed. It was impossible to cross the little lake, the border between Germany and Russia. And we were shipped back to our home town.

We were so sure that the two brothers were alive because they were in the Russian-occupied zone, not in Germany. But later, after the war, we found out that when the German decided to go after Russia in there, they sort of overnight overran the city, Bialystok. And it was not enough time for them to escape and to go in deeper into Moscow or other places. And again, they also perished.

So these brothers, in other words, taken to the gas chambers or the concentration camps.

Right, right. Then one of my brother who was in Skarzysko was-- is my sister-in-law, and through some fellow who was coming in from the outside, from the city into the factory, not Jewish, but he was a Pole. He was trying to help us out in some way. So one particular afternoon shift, for the night shift, we went from the barracks to the factory, my brother just slipped out, out of the group and just proceeded to the railroad station. Unfortunately, at the railroad station, he was caught and shot to death.

Oh, dear.

So I am just going over and over again. That's why I am so involved, as you know, with the Holocaust, as difficult as this-- and painful to talk about it, to recall-- but as painful as it is, the time is of the essence. Now, not only I started many years ago, as you know, but some others, the other survivors, they speak up today. They are ready to talk. And also, the people are ready to listen and not only to listen, but to be tuned in, really to understand. It is difficult to understand. Like Elie Wiesel mentioned at one presentation, professor Elie Wiesel, who was the president of the US Holocaust Council--

Holocaust Museum.

--he said that the survivors are special kind of people. Nobody can understand them. But we would like to be so much understood. I am devoting so much time because, being a survivor of the Holocaust and being the sole survivor of my family, I'm putting all my efforts and anything to do, to help, to explain, and to-- that in hopes that this should never ever happen again--

Amen.

--a tragedy as such. And it's just that today, after 50 years, or 51, since Hitler came to power, and 39 years since we were liberated, you still have today antisemitism, even in the free world, and the neo-Nazi propaganda that the Holocaust never took place, and denying that. As a matter of fact, I saw an article just last week that in Germany, they will be punished, and penalized, or in jail for three years if they'll ever deny again. But nevertheless, they are denying. So because the occurrence of the Holocaust is still being contested, we, the living survivors, the witnesses--

Must give testimony.

--to a national catastrophe, it's our duty, our responsibility to really educate, and tell, and retell our stories. I know, it's difficult to understand and that-- what we will be telling. And now, it's not only for us, but we hope that the second generation, our children, they are the next generation to carry on the legacy and the continuity.

And we expect that the children of the survivors really to carry on so this cannot be forgotten. Because this is something which we-- it's history now. But it is a situation that we hope-- we suffered, but we hope that nobody will forget, that future generation will not suffer as we did.

Of course. Of course. Rubin, let's get back to your story.

Let's, yeah.

You showed us a postcard.

Yes.

Perhaps we can have that on the screen. And you can tell us about that postcard.

All right. This postcard was written, as you see here, from the Russian-occupied Poland in Bialystok, addressed to my uncle, here, my mother's brother, Charles Silberberg at 52 Traymore, Buffalo, New York.

And what this letter is all about is my uncle gave me when I arrived here, in Polish, they describe this in this way, that as you know, we never needed any help from anybody because we were comfortable in our hometown, financially. But now, my parents are in Chmielnik, which they knew the address. We are OK. And we were always, please, do anything you can to help them out. If they ever were in need, now, they are really in need of your help.

What year was that?

This was in 1940.

And did the Silberbergs try to do anything?

They tried, but was really impossible because it wasn't a situation like with a prisoner of war or so on through the Red Cross. It was just-- everything was sealed, not even you couldn't travel, but you couldn't really send even a letter or a package.

It must have been so frustrating.

Yes, it was, very, very much so. So when I saw this letter, I thought that maybe it's-- it's a souvenir in some way. But unfortunately, it's not so pleasant to see and right.

Let's get back to you, when we left you, before you were in Germany at the concentration camp at Buchenwald. And you were in the ammunition, working with ammunition. How long did you stay in that camp?

In Buchenwald?

In Buchenwald.

It was like eight months or so, eight months.

So we're bringing you up to about 1943, I guess.

No, no, no.

'40?

No. It was-- you see, 1942 to 1944, as I mentioned, October '42, we went to Skarzysko, my parents went to the gas chambers. And I never saw my parents again. And then in 1944, we were taken to Buchenwald. So this is 1945. In '45, again, the same when the Americans came in to our area of Buchenwald, they shipped us to Theresienstadt.

Oh, Czechoslovakia.

Theresienstadt was Czechoslovakia, is a fortress city not too far from Prague. And over there, we could find some people from Germany, German Jewish people, even second and third generation, sort of the residual left. So we were shipped four weeks before our liberation. We were liberated in Theresienstadt on May 8, 1945.

That's a date you won't forget ever.

And we'll never forget.

Tell us about liberation.

The liberation, well, it was-- when you're liberated, first of all, you are-- at least, you were liberated and hope that I'll find my family. And maybe it's all over. But to our all disappointments, and I just want to compare in a situation like when it was with the hostages in Iran, and just to see how it feels, in our situation, we didn't have a country. And as we say, we didn't have the family. We didn't have where to go and how to start. Nobody was to embrace us. And nobody was-- we didn't have a doctor to say, or a psychologist, or a psychiatrist.

You also didn't have any food.

And then the food. So we were on our own, as young as I was, start from the beginning, new families. But the real disappointment was when I start traveling and inquiring about my family, including the two brothers from Russia, and also, my little niece from my sister's daughter.

Where was this little girl?

This was not too far from our hometown in the city by the name of Gostynin. And when I found out that this brother happened, that the one who went this was taken to Auschwitz, the two brothers from Russia, and this one, and when I put this all together, oh, no, it is I am alone. Nobody survived.

And we try to work out through some-- through the Red Cross, and the Joint Distribution, and HIAS, and through the United States, and everything else, and to no avail. And as you know, I was in Jerusalem, where they have all this computers set up in order to find someone. We all hoped that we'll be able to find someone after so many years. But unfortunately, it was the same situation in Jerusalem, and last year, 1983, in Washington that I didn't find anybody out of my family or friends.

You mentioned before that your sister-in-law and brother took the little girl, took the little niece to a town in hiding.

In hiding. And I was under impression, I was at least hopeful that we will find out. But it is a possibility that she survive, but in another environment, another surroundings, not to reveal to me that she is. And she is maybe living under a different name, different thing. But through all the sources, anything available, we couldn't find.

I remember one thing, how did I get to Buffalo? And I hoped maybe they would find something is that I remember an address where my uncle and aunt were writing to our hometown. And just after so many years, not even writing out the address, just remember seeing the envelope. I just sent it out to Buffalo. And it was the right street and the right number.

Was that the Traymore?

No, this was on Voorhees. I write them. And I made my contact with my aunt. And this is the way we started.

It's another miracle, isn't it?

Another miracle, because we were really signed up and on our way to Palestine.

Oh, you were among those that were going.

And again, I don't know, it's all meant to be like this here. And we were as far as Slovakia. We went to Czechoslovakia, Slovakia, and by the-- we were ready to cross to Italy to get on the ships, something went wrong. This was what do you call the illegal immigration when we want to go to Palestine. And for some reason or another, they shipped us back to



Landsberg am Lech near Munich. And we were waiting there four years in order to get to the United States, which we arrived here May 14, 1949 in Buffalo.

I think we have a picture of you when you were liberated. Perhaps, we could have that picture. Here it is. And how old are you here?

I would say 21, probably. And this was in Prague, Czechoslovakia. I would say this is probably six or seven weeks probably after the liberation. This was my first picture after the liberation.

Who took this picture?

I don't know, maybe somebody from the Jewish committee and the administration. And they tried to make a picture and make us feel good. They tried to help us. Matter of fact, I was in Prague for about another couple of months and working. And then I found out, coincidentally, that my wife-- it was not my wife yet, but to be-- is in Łódź, in Poland.

Why did she go to Łódź?

Well, because everybody was trying to get-- they were on a march in Leipzig. In other words, they were walking--

Forced march.

--at first death march, whatever you call. And in some way, everybody was trying to get, again, to the hometown in hopes of finding somebody who is still alive. And to our disappointment, and she has a sister, yes, a sister still alive.

Who was with her?

She was together, together all the time in Skarzysko and in Leipzig. And she's here in Buffalo. Right.

That's beautiful. How did you get from Buchenwald to Theresienstadt?

Oh, from Buchenwald, also by--

Was that a march or was that a train?

Oh, no, no, cars.

Cart.

And just as long you mentioned it, all the pants-- and I know you have faith, and lucky, and determined, the one transport which left Buchenwald, where we were in this concentration camp in the ammunition factory by the name Schlieben, they left two weeks before us. On our way to Theresienstadt, they arrived one week later, maybe with half of the people. The others did not survive. They didn't have enough food in transport and so on.

And we arrived about two weeks later. And this was in cars, trains. It's another thing I want to mention about Professor Wiesel. You're saying that certain words have different meanings, like when we are saying train, car, it's for pleasure or a different. We will never forget the train or the cattle cars to Majdanek, and all the Auschwitz, and so on. And the same thing with the selection. Selection is a good word for that. But to us, again, to the right and to the left, those kind of things.

It has a negative connotation--

Right, right, right.

--certainly different than most people have. I think we have a paper that was given to you by the army, by the United

States Army--

Yes.

--where we have it. Perhaps you can tell us about this.

While we were in Landsberg am Lech, in Germany, near Munich, through the administration, this was, of course, occupied-- this was a displaced persons camp with the Americans in the administration. And we found out that if we want to get any information as to the whereabouts, or registration, or the certificate, like Buchenwald, where I was, it's-- and they give us an address where to write a letter. And they will send us. And they did.

And this is the certificate where it shows, and in fact, the time we arrived, when I was born, and the name exactly as I am today because I didn't change my name, everything is the same. And my number is signed, which is also on the Holocaust Memorial, my number of 68,113.

Rubin, in which camp did you get that number?

In Buchenwald.

In Buchenwald.

This is a Buchenwald number. And also, they changed even the-- in German, Plock was in Poland. And they changed to a different name our hometown in German. They changed the name, also here. And when I came, and all the details, including, if you'll see here, the reason, which I was in Buchenwald is politische Jude, which is my only crime was-- I don't know why they got politische-- that I was born Jewish.

And that's what we are always saying, again and again, we always talk about the numbers of six million Jews. But also, you have, in addition, five million non-Jews, which is a total of 11 million civilian people. And within the six million, 1.5 million innocent children perished, slain just because they were Jewish.

Rubin, after you were liberated, this paper was given to you by the United States Army?

Yes. Yeah, this was.

Now, how did they know that you were in Buchenwald?

Well, I-- oh, they found, in fact, because maybe the Germans left everything because there was not enough time.

Oh, left all the protocols.

There was all the ledgers. The registration was left intact. So when I sent the letter to the United States Army in Arolsen, they sent me back. And they found-- I didn't give them my information. I just gave them my name.

And they filled it in?

They found all the information as it was recorded and registered on the day I arrived in Buchenwald in 1944. Right.

So essentially, you were in Europe for several years in a displaced persons camp then?

Yes, I was four years in a displaced persons camp.

Were you married?

Yes. And we were waiting till May '49 to get to the United States. It was a quota. We were on one quota, displaced

persons. And then the situation of immigration changed. And finally, they speed it up. But with the speeding up, we still had to wait around four years. Yeah.

Because you came from Poland?

Right, right.

If you had come from another country, it might have been easier.

Yes. And if they would not change the law as far as the displaced persons, then that would be even longer. But in some way, was improved, and speeded up, and we arrived here.

What did you do in the DP camps?

In DP camp, I happened to be in a displaced police, a sergeant. I was on duty and a lot of things. We were watching the camp, the displaced persons camp. So everybody had to do something. And Luba was knitting, and making some sweaters, and a lot of this. Everybody had to be even that productive.

How did you live, in tents or houses?

They were army not barracks, but army kaserne, which is buildings, where there was German Army before there. Matter of fact, Hitler was in jail where he came up with this blueprint of Mein Kampf, where he wrote in Landsberg am Lech. Yeah.

But did you feel-- did you have freedom? Could you leave the camp if you wanted?

Oh, yes. In the displaced persons camp, yes, this was after the war, was no problem. But we have certain regulations. And we couldn't stay out too late. And we didn't go to the city. And we stayed within the compound of the camp. But it was freedom, yes, within. Yes, we could go out and go to the city during the day, but not at night.

Did you and your wife marry in the DP camp?

Yes, yeah.

And there were chaplains there and US personnel to help you?

Well, officially, we have the certificate, really, from Landsberg. But we were married in Poland. And we had a rabbi who was authorized to prepare all the ceremony and all the--

What was your physical condition after the war after so many years in camp?

Well, I lost that much weight and really was very-- it's the physical, and mental, and all the things, finding out about my family, that nobody survived, it was a very difficult adjustment for all of us to start a new life. And we are grateful to this country, as President Reagan mentioned-- and that's why we were in Washington-- that he was thanking us for choosing this country.

And this was really-- it is now our homeland. We appreciate everything, the opportunity given us, and also, that we are happy that we can also contribute. But it was a start. And we got a chance at new life, to start a new life, really. We start a new family. It was a difficult adjustment, but we did.

Now, your children are raised without grandparents, aunts, and uncles, and cousins.

Yes, my oldest daughter was born in Munich.

Oh--

Yes.

--in a DP camp?

No, in Munich, we had to go to another hospital to the city in Munich, to one of the hospitals in Munich because was a different type of situation that she couldn't have the baby in the DP camp hospital. So we had to go out of town, yes.

Do you tell your children these stories?

Yes. With children, not all are taken the same way. But some are more silent. And some will show. But I believe that with all the interviews, and to be on tape or videotape, and tell the children your own way, and leave something so they - and tell them, really, what happened. It was difficult in the beginning. Many did not.

We starting up now again. And no matter how it hurts, and we pledged, we really-- in Jerusalem, we pledged to do so and for the children to carry on. And in Washington, we confirmed again. And it is no-- we have to do it.

Survivors conference and gatherings.

That's right. The children are really the next one, which we rely and we hope that they will carry on and they will. Because for us, all right, we had the time, 15-20 years. Then what? We have to-- now, we'll have books, and biographical, and autobiographical, and all the kind of films, and everything else. But we still need the generations. I think President Reagan even mentioned that. We remember, we know. But the next generation should carry on and should continue.

I think you have a picture here of the gathering in Jerusalem. Perhaps you can explain what's happening.

Yes, yes, yeah. OK. This picture was taken in Jerusalem at the Wailing Wall in June '81. We brought a rock from Buffalo, New York, from Buffalo, New York. On this rock, I marked the names of my parents, and my brothers, and sister who perished. And later on, this rock was delivered to the Yad Vashem, the museum in Jerusalem. And this, with all other stones from all other survivors will be a monument built in Jerusalem.

Could you tell us what those names are? It's not very clear. Perhaps you can read the names.

One name is Binem which is my father, Sarah, my mother. Chana is my sister, Mendel is my brother, Josek, my brother, Monek, another brother, and Yitzhak, brother, and Kuba, yes.

I presume some of your children are named after these--

Yes, the children--

--family.

--are named after the family, yes. Yeah.

So there will be a monument at Yad Vashem.

Right. And I see that the generations continue. We understand that your daughter is in line for twins, that she's carrying twins.

Yes.

And you were one of a twin. And you had twin brothers.

It skips a generation, yes, yes. Yeah.

So life goes on. And we're thankful for that and a free country.

I just want to also say that even today, after so many years, we still have nightmares. And many times, Luba would have to wake me up, says, OK, OK. Still going to somebody's chasing us. For us, it's different than anybody else, even when they hear a siren or a policeman, in some way, this will never be able to square that way.

Eradicated.

Yes, yes.

Have you ever been back to Germany?

No.

Do you intend going to Germany?

No, no. No.

When you tell your story very frequently, what kind of reactions do you get to the story when you tell it?

My reaction?

Your reaction and reactions of others.

Yes. Well, so many people were-- like I say, I lecture at the University of Buffalo, or Hilbert College, or others, or in high schools, or any other presentation I make, and people or they heard for the first time or even the second, they cannot-- just unbelievable as to our experiences, my personal and in general, that what we went through. Because I want to just mention, also, it is important that this is not just a group of people what happened to us. It was the official government of Germany who did this here to a civilization, a civilization collapsed. And they wiped out the-- the Dritte Reich was even successful to wipe out 1,000 years of Jewish history in Eastern Europe.

And it was a determination of them, of the planning, and the so-called Final Solution worked in advance, always with the Mein Kampf or the others, and with their propaganda, and the way they worked, and the way they did. It was the government decided to do so. And this is something which it's unparalleled to any others. If anybody mentions the Holocaust, this cannot be compared to anything else. This is different.

It was a well-thought out plan. It wasn't accidental is what you're saying.

Right, right, right. Rubin, thank you very much. We know it's hard for you to tell the story. But as you mentioned before, you have to tell the story. And we're very grateful. Thank you very much.

Yeah, yeah.