

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Selma Engel
February 12, 1992
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Selma Engel, conducted on February 12, 1992 in Bradford, Connecticut on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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SELMA ENGEL

February 12, 1992

Beep.

Why don't we start with your arrival in Westerbork and a--

Westerbork?

Yeah, and then going on the train to Sobibór.

(Clears throat) I came from um, Vught, from the concentration camp, Vught, I came to Westerbork in 194...2, 43, and, uh, uh, when I came there, I found an uncle and my mother was there with the five children, and we came together with these girls that I met, we stayed together with them, and, and a whole bunch of uh, Dutch girls, we stayed always very close together. Also, when we were in Vught, in a concentration camp. So we came in Westerbork, and we were in an uh, barrack, in an, uh only people were, were, were punished and they were hidden. In Holland, or something this, uh, this way. So we, we, had no chance to get out, and my uncle tried to get us out, and Westerbork was a very safe camp. I mean you could stay there, it was very good and uh, very good accommodations and everything. So we, we uh, we were there 8 days, 7 of 8 days, and uh, then we had to go on a transport to, we didn't know where we went, we had to go to Vught, it was the first transport that was with uh freight wagons, and, we went with 60 people in a freight wagon, and also this uncle what had 5 children, 5 little boys, he went together also in that um, in the train. I didn't see it, my, I later I found papers in Sobibór, that he went with this train, with this transport. And we went in, and the, it was very uh, organized done in Westerbork, they did everything very organized, and when we were in the uh, train, there was uh with all the people and younger people together, and, uh, there was one bottle in the middle and I think that, and that was the bathroom. I don't think that, that uh, we, uh, had uh, a way to sleep, we had to sit on the floor, and we went 3 days and 3 nights to Sobibór, uh, when we stopped sometimes the train, and every freight wagon has a little window on top, and everybody tried to look through it, so when you had chance to look through it, and you saw people was, was standing like, and they did like that, and we thought they were just an-anti-Jews, and they know we, we Jews they didn't like us, but we had no idea that they told us that we go to our death. And, every time when the train stopped, the Germans start shooting on top of the train, and with, with dogs around us, and it was very panicky, and, uh, it was very scary, and we hope, you know, we, we girls, we really stuck together, and we helped each other to stay a little bit in good mood. After 3 days and 3 nights, we thought we were in Russia, everybody

looked so poor, and, uh, we had no idea where we were, and then we come on and we see the big sign, Sobibór, and when we came in, everything looks very nice, little windows and flowers and, and uh the house were painted green and red, and, it, it looks very nice, and when they open the doors, these big doors that we had to go out in, start screaming and hitting with the whips, and uh, we had to go out and out, all, all the people, and there was a little trolley, a little wagon what uh, the coal miners use that goes, you can uh, uh rip it open that people can easy go out, so all the people that couldn't walk, they showed them in there, and all the children what got lost from the parents, they had to go in the trolley, and this trolley went straight to the gas chamber. That was a special line that went there, and we had to throw away our little suitcases what everybody took with them, the most important things were in there, and we had to throw away our suitcases, and I remember vividly that one woman throwed away also an, by accident, her child fell, and she said, "Oh, my baby!" And, a German say, and he hit her with a whip, and he said, "I will take care of this baby!" And, so we walked farther, and all the Germans were standing there on the side, all the SS was, they were always watching all of us when we passing, and so we stayed together with these young girls, and we were a bunch, I don't remember the amount, and they took us out, and they say, "Stay on the side." And all the other people went forward, one went right, and one went left, and we saw everybody going, we saw the woman going to the gas chamber, walking already, and a man was standing on the side, that's what I remember, and they spoke to them that uh, uh, we hear them speaking the German that they say, "Here's a card, and now you can write home, that everything is fine here, and now you going to have to take a shower, and we will take care, good care of you..." that we hear that he was talking to them. And then, he took us girls, and we went to Camp One. Sobibór was divided into 3 camps, one camp, 3 was the gas chamber, Camp 2 was the working camp, and Camp 1 was the camp where we slept and also where the little uh, place, little barracks, or little houses together with the buildings, and there were the tailor and the gold maker, and the uh, different people were sitting down and worked in these places and also we slept there, the man and the woman slept there, and when I came on, I saw some people from my hometown. One boy was, especially his parents were my parents' best friends. And I say, "Hi! How are?!" and uh, they didn't even look at me, and they were afraid to say anything, and was sort of strange, they have to recognize me. They were all married, uh, men, they were in their 20s, 25, 26, and their wives went already, of course, to the gas chamber. So, when they went away, and then, we went too, uh, Camp 2, and we had to sort the clothes, and I didn't know what I was doing. We had to sort the clothes for the people that went to the gas chamber. And, uh, that what was we were working. First quality, second quality, and the third quality, and uh, we, uh, in the evening, then, 5 o'clock was the appel, and the roll call, and then we had to go and went to camp One, and that same evening the, the Jew, we had to dance. There were some Jewish what came there, and they had some instrument, uh, the violin I think, remember, I don't remember exactly what instrument it

were, and they had to play the music and we had to dance, and Chaim asked me to dance. This is the first time that I met Chaim. And after that we danced, I, I saw these boys, and they told, and we had to dance when the fire was already burning and, and you could smell them here, and, and, and the bone, and, and it really lighted up the whole sky from that they were burning the bodies from the transport what we came with. I, I don't remember with how many people I came, I think it was 1500 people, and in, in 3 or 4 hours they could kill all these people from every transport. So after that we, that was just a sadism from the, from the SS's that we had to dance, and the fire was burning, and we didn't know anything what was going on and they enjoyed that, just, we know, how difficult it was for the people that were alone there, that they had to, they insisted they had to ask us. So after the dancing, I went to the barrack, where, there where we slept, and I saw these boys, and they told me what was going on. They told me that the fire was uh, all the people that were uh, went to the gas chamber, and they told me that, and that they were burning them there. And, I couldn't believe it. I, I think I, I didn't, it didn't, I couldn't believe it, and I think it took me a long, long time that I was alive and every time when I come, came in transport, that I saw people uh, that I, it was something just that uh, I couldn't believe it, and I, I, it took me really a long time to realize what was, that it was true, and, and, and that all the people what, what we saw passing by with the little window where we were assorting our clothes, that uh, half hour later they would all be dead. So, I, I, they told me that they came with their wives, and uh, that their wives all went also to the gas chamber. When we were, a, a week, or two weeks in camp, there were 72 Dutch men, and there was one German, what was a traitor. He went to the German and told things, and he told sometimes things what was not even true. And he went to one of the SS, was one of the Germans, and told them that the 72 Dutch boys want to run away. And we, of course, never found out if it was true, but we didn't believe it because nobody, everybody knows that uh, for a Dutch man to run away in Poland, so antisemitic, that there was no chance that he could stay alive anyway. So, the 72 boys, they took them aw--they had to um uh, stay on roll call, and uh, they took them away and they shot them all. That was the first thing what I saw that they, we didn't see it, but we heard the shooting. Uh, after this, uh, we, we went every day to work, and the most work what we did was assorting clothes, and

Beep.

(Clears throat) Uh, when we came out, the, uh, the people had, they didn't know that we went to the con, that that we were, there was a gas chamber, nobody, from Dutch people we had no idea where we went. I thought I go to my mother and my brother's. Well, my brother and my mother were already sent to Poland, and I had chance when I was in Holland, to get away. Out of that concentration camp where I was in Holland. I didn't want to go away really. I was the youngest of 4

children, and I, I want to go to my mother, and my mother was already sent to Poland and my brothers too. So when I went in Poland, and this uncle in, in Westerbork, where we were, we met in Westerbork, he say that he can get me out, and, from the beginning when I was there, and I say, I really don't want to go out when I want to go to my brother and my mother. In Pol--I don't know where they were, I thought they were in a big camp where all the people from Holland went to. So, um, when I went to, in, in, the, in the train, and they, the transporters there, we all thought we went to a camp and we had no idea that there was such a thing as a gas chamber or a concentration camp or a, perhaps a concentration camp, but a, but a camp where we all would work, and then we also, all families together, and, uh, was a little bit childish perhaps, but that's the way we saw it, we, we had no idea. But, in Holland, first of all, the Germans took, took the people away, and took them, and sent them away to Westerbork, and later to Poland, but they were not so harsh to them, that they were in Poland. In Poland there were much harsher things what they did, with, to Jews. So, when we went on a transport, all of us girls, and all of the people thought we go to Poland. When we came out in Sobibór, when they give us this, give the people the card to write home, the people wrote home because they thought that it will be okay, when they thought they will uh, go, take a bath and take a shower and not what the Germans told them that they have to take a shower because there is a, a typhus is growing out of the, is a sickness, and they, they, uh, really thought they take a shower and go to the family, and go and work there. Because I saw myself, that the men run to the shower, it was a hot day in the camp,-----, and they say, "Come boys, come boys! We're going to take a shower!" They were Dutch people. "Come, we're going to take a shower!" And they run to the gas chamber, and, and they were already had all the clothes off, and they were nude and I saw them running to the uh showers. So, I, and I remember also vividly now that I was already a, a month or so in camp, and they give us cards that we should write home that we are in, in a camp, but we're doing well, and, and, and nobody wrote back home from the Dutch people because they know that um, in Holland they would think that it is okay to come to Poland, and not to try to hide or do something about it. And, when the Dutch transport ca-came, everything was more organized. Wha-what everything with the Jew, well the Dutch people walked to the gas chamber. They had no idea that it was what they went to. And every time when there came a Dutch, Dutch transport, they walked just, and did exactly what the Germans, sometimes even they took their hat off. Once came a whole transport with children--500 children, was in one transport, and it came from Holland, there was a Dutch transport, and all little children, they came from a home I didn't see it, they, they locked us up in a, in an, in our first, in the first camp where we slept. Things like that they didn't let us see. When the polish transports came, was a, they, a lot of Polish they didn't want to go to the gas chamber, and that was many times that they shot them, and there was shooting and screaming before, before we, uh, did anything, the assorting the clothes. Well, they let us, not, especially the Dutch people. The Polish, like my husband had sometimes to work

and take the bodies out of the trains, but, uh, they don't let us see it, they, they locked us up in the ca--often when there was something going on like that we were not allowed to see it. The Polish Jews knows what is going on. Uh, I remember once there came a whole transport from Belzec, and they made an uprising, and, uh, and I remember that uh, when we had to assort the clothes, everything was filled with blood, and they locked us up, and we thought now we will die of course too because they locked us up and we were, were not allowed to to go out of our barrack where we slept, and uh, the, the, we have shooting and screaming, and it was unbelievable, and later we had to sort the clothes, it was full with blood, and, and uh then also in the one of the pants, my husband found in Yiddish written, "Take revenge," the comment, in Jewish, "Take revenge." Uh, because, uh, we tried to run away and he told in, in uh Yiddish in uh, inside of his pocket we found that writing what I remember. It, it was, it was, hell, but, for me, I, I was, I, I, I met Chaim from the beginning, and we fell in love, and I think that softened our both lives, what I really think, that, that we closed ourselves a little bit off from really what was, what the horror things, what we didn't don't want to see. It, I remember like the Dutch people, they came, many times they came, and they found out that the wives went to the gas chamber, and they laid down and they died in a week, and also the Dutch people, when you want to eat something, they were so hungry. See, we worked with the clothes, assorting. And we assorted the clothes and what we could steal from them, for, what the Germans wouldn't get, we stole also food, and we had a little bunch of girls that we lived together with. It was one girl what was my buddy, Ula, Ursula Stern, she also survived after that camp, and everyone had a cousin there, what I met, and we shared always the food, and I was very, I was never afraid, and I remember, it was really heavy. I put all between my bra and in my uh, underpants food and, and took it with me to where we slept, and we shared it them with these girls. So, we were not that hungry when there came a transport. When there didn't come a transport we were very hungry. Sometimes we hid under our pillow, and the mou-mouse and the rats eat it up many times and found some whole nest under my pillow from these little mouse. But, uh, we, we were not that hungry as the people that worked in the woods, and then we had to eat sometimes and they just didn't let us eat, and sometimes we were hungry, Chaim always say, "You have to finish the soup," which was just water, we give it away to them because they were much more hungry than we, but they got, the people what didn't work in the, in the, uh, assorting clothes, they died very quickly, especially the Dutch people, and, the intellec-the bo-boys that came straight from the university, when they came to the camp, somehow they get sick and died in a very short time. I remember one boy, he came from a very rich family from Rotterdam, the, ah had a very big uh, business in spices, they did business with Indonesia, and his wife went to the gas chamber, and this boy, I remember, died in, in, in, in a week, just that he couldn't, that, all what he saw what was going on. Also once, and I got also later on typhus, and when you have typhus, uh, you don't remember much, you know, like you have very high fever, and, and you don't remember much

what is going around you. In that time, Chaim and my girlfriend was -----, they, they took care of it, even, you couldn't be sick in Sobibór. When you were sick, you got shot. When I remember, when I had typhus, one day, I was home, and, one of the SSs came, and he say to all the men, "Out! Raus! Raus!" and hit them with a whip, and all those sick people they were standing outside, and had to go out, and they were standing outside, and I remember boys from the Zionist Organization I belonged to whatever, camping with when I was young, I was young at that time too, it was 80,90, and I was sort of standing there, and, and all in the underpants, and they looked so terrible, and I came out, and he say to me, "You go to work!" And I went to work, and they took them away and they all shot them, all these boys they shot, and I was just lucky, it was just like a lucky star above me. Every time uh, something really, I thought 'now I'm going,' and...I, they didn't shoot me, I went back to work. Chaim took care of me when I was had typhus. I remember I couldn't eat and he brought me food, and, and um, I couldn't go walk, and he brought down into the bathroom, there was a bathroom, it was a little hole in the ground, and, so, it, it, but, see because we were together, Chaim and I, we, we held, we were not insane, and, and, I, I think that saved us a lot that we could, could just uh, be more than people what were alone. And it was, it was just, all these what going on, it was just, it was just a dream, it was like, like you live in a dream. I remember a Dutch man came where we slept.

We have to reload.

How do you know?

Beep.

Correction, this is SR-2, but CR-3 is up, Sync take 3 is up.

Beep.

First I want you to, whatever you were going to tell me, it started "A Dutch man--."

Well, I remember, one day, in uh, uh, a Dutch man came to, the camp, uh 2, where we slept, no Camp 3 where we slept, and

Start again, Camp 1 where you slept.

One, one. Uh, a Dutchman, see we're out of the, a Dutch man came, and he walked in, and uh, and

uh, Fre., Wagner [NB: SS-Oberscharführer Gustav Wagner] was standing there in the camp, and he was one of the worst SS's what you can have, and he say, "What you doing here? And he took an an shovel, and, and, he hit him on his head, and just, his head fell in 2 pieces. It was just unbelievable. The, the crime! What was going on! It's just, I can't, I can't believe...I, I don't, I remem-, I don't remember everything because we, we didn't want to remember everything. But many times the Germans, they hit, we, the, the Dutch people, the Dutch people, they had for the punishment, they had to run around, to-the whole day, and they were never allowed to stay quiet. So, so long they had to run for punishment, and work, till they dropped dead. And that was something what they invented. All the time they invented something new--the German, and most they had it against the Dutch, what I remember, and...to, against the Dutch men. Uh, somehow, uh, a woman, they didn't punish so much, somehow, they had a softer heart for--once I got hit with an, uh, with a whip. I remember one, one in uh, uh, uh, a Jew did it, uh, a Kapo. A Jewish Kapo hit me. I, I say, uh, was in the camp where we slept, in Camp 1, we slept, and he say, uh, I say, "Oh, the, the Kapos, they show off, and go to the guy--" so I was screaming, and he heard it, and he came out and he hit me with a whip over my shoulders. I think it still hurts me now. So painful was that it, it can--and once after that I had, a, uh, but most of the time they didn't do anything to woman. But the men were all the time they uh got punished, the Dutch people, they got more punished, and, uh, it was unbelievable to see how the uh, uh, uh, really suffered.

Why did he punish you? What had you done?

I was saying something um, uh, bad words what is a international, an international, and I didn't know that he is a, a Pole, a Jewish Pole, our Kapo, that he understood it, and so I say a very bad word, and, and he came and he hit me. I say it about him, and then, he hit me with the whip. Also once, I, I, somebody, and we had to work always in the woods, and once a k-an uh, SS, hit me, and we, we didn't wear much clothes, uh, regular clothes, because the clothes from the people that went to the gas chamber, we, every day we, we took something else out and we wore. We didn't, wear uh, uh, uh clothes from people that were in like, in, in Auschwitz. We wore regular clothes. So, very, we wore very thin clothes, and when they hit you, you have nothing under it, it's very, very painful, from the whip. And, I, I, I was planning to run away, and then I remember, there's nowhere to run. And, uh, w-we had to walk uh when didn't came a transport, we were, uh, -----, we were also very happy many times when there came a transport because we know when there wouldn't come transport that we go to, we, we will be dead, they will shoot us when there wouldn't transports come to Sobibór anymore. And we know that that transport is going to, to the gas chambers, to, to, concentration camps, so every week when there didn't came transports, we were worried. And they let us do work, like cleaning a woods, the woods, big woods, where there are

from miles and miles, and we had to clean that. And they looked for work for us, or we had to uh, cut down trees, and uh, and we had to bring them uh, uh heavy tree from one place to the other. Or we have to fill up these trolleys with sand, and we had to uh, push away a bunch of women had to work, that very, that, that kind of a work, in the woods, we had to work. So, when there came a transport we know we had food, and we had, and we had clothes, and we know we stay alive because we had work. When there came no transport on the end, when there didn't come any transports anymore, we know that's the end of our um, of our, that will be the end, we didn't know what was going on, we thought there wou-wou-won't be any work camp, but we, that was very scary, so, so, when, we were always, it is unbelievable to think this way, but we were happy when there came a transport and, b-because the transport came anyway, and the Polish transport was much harder to handle than the Dutch transports what I told before.

Tell me about your work and also how you could sabotage in your work, what acts of sabotage...?

Yeah, well, we had to assort the clothes, and right away when I came, somehow Chaim worked on the same table, and we had to assort the clothes of first quality, second quality and I know everything went to Germany, and I try, every piece that I saw, I tried t-to tear it apart, the clothes, and I thought that was the only thing that I could do of sabotage. And also when I found money and jewelry, I didn't give it to the Germans, I give to Chaim. I laid it on the table in a corner, and Chaim took it most of the time--well Chaim had a friend that worked where the fire m-men, and they, they burned all the papers, so the man knows that he has to look always on the bottom of there was some money there, and he put it in the ground, for, and, and hide it in the ground. So, when, when the, the, I didn't even think for what I did it. I did, I didn't even think that we ever use it for ourselves. I was just thinking, only thinking what I thought, how can we do eh, on the sabotage against the Germans. And it was very dangerous when the Germans would see it that we do that, uh, you get shot because when you, the same thing, I, I took always food with me to the camp where we slept. And when the Germans, uh, see, saw that I would do that, they just shot you because once a boy opened a can sardines, and I remember so well, we had all to stand all out of, everybody has to come to a big whole-uh, area, and we had to stay there, and the, and the boy lay on the piece of wood, and 2 men had to carry him and he was half dead. Uh, just was full with blood, and his arm, it was just unbelievable, and he say, "When everybody ever open a sardine or anything again for food, that will happen to you," and later he, he shoot him, shot him. And, so, it was very, very dangerous. I remember once, uh, there were a bunch, there were uh, people what worked in the woods with the Germans, and some killed some Germans in the woods, and they run away. When the, when the Dutch people, they didn't know where to run to, and they were standing there, and they brought the Dutch men, they brought to us also, we had to stand on a big tre-uh, uh

place, and, I had a lot of food with me, in, in, in a coat, I remember, in a coat, and one of the girls was crying, and her husband was with, was the one that was standing there, and I know the German wouldn't ask her, and I say, "Will you hold my coat because I know when they, uh, uh looking over what I have with me, they will shoot me right away, and I know they will not shoot her because uh, they will not look at her because they know she was crying, and they have sometimes a little bit feelings with, for something like that, and uh, it, it, it's very, it was very, very dangerous to do anything what, what was not allowed. Uh, the, what I had, when these men came back, and we all, the whole camp had to also stay together, the whole camp, and there were um, 10 or 12 uh men, they put them also there together, and they, uh, they shot them each separate, uh, because, uh, that they were, that they run away from uh, uh, from Sobibor, and killed some from the uh, Oekraïners [NB: Dutch for Ukrainians]. These people, people, they run away, they made it, they made after the war, they died already. I think they died, one died for sure, and uh, they made it out of the camp. Uh, it, it was the o-the, very dangerous to do anything at all what the Germans uh, uh wouldn't allow, of course. (Sigh)

Of those people, how many escaped and then how many died from the escape?

Uh, two uh, uh run away, ----- Two, I thi-two uh, uh were escaped. When, after the war, when we had to go uh, when we were in Lublin, one of the men say to us "You can come and live with us." And, we stayed with him. And the other, I, I don't know where he is, I never heard about, I think he went to Israel. But two, and uh, it was um, eleven people were shot, and, and we had to see that, that they were shot. But, you know, I had a system, Chaim and I, we always made that we stayed next to each other, and I never looked. I saw them falling, but I didn't look on the moment that they were shooting, and I did it with all the things when shooting was very, many times they showed that they shot people, or, I, I try not to look all the time, because, I don't know, that was my s-system o-o-of surviving, of surviving, uh, not to see when, when somebody was completely almost half dead, and, and, and like the, the Dutch people that were almost half dead, and full with blood, that, that they hit them, the way you see them in the eyes, you, you, you want to help them. So, when you don't look at them...

We've got to reload.

Change film, Camera roll 4 is up, sync take 4 is up.

I'll remind you.

Mmmm.

Beep.

Why did you use your system of not looking into their eyes?

Because when I would look in their eyes, and I would their eyes, I would go to them, and help them. And would, I, you know, I would start crying over it, so when I don't look in their eyes, then, then I, don't feel, I could, you could not do anything anyway. You couldn't do anything anyway. So when I don't look in their eyes, I, I, I don't feel that I, I don't have to do anything, that I think it was just a shield for myself, to save myself, you know, excuses, or, uh, it was a sh-I just, that, that, I, I remember, I always, I, I always, I never looked at anything real, that, that's my system of, now too, I uh, we never look uh bad movies, we never see terrible things, we always, you know, that's our system, I think, we just survi--it's our way of surviving, uh, and not, not, the, also I remember that, that man what they cut his head in half, I, I saw it, and then I didn't look anymore, I just look at the ground, I don't look anymore, because uh, we had to stay once on a roll call a whole night, and uh, and, everything what happened around me, I just stayed next to Chaim, and we just both, just, don't try to see everything what is going on, and...

Tell me about Frenzel [NB: SS-Oberscharführer Karl Frenzel].

Frenzel took me out of the transport. And I don't know what it was, he was also the one that told me when I was so sick, and had typhus, and he killed all the other uh, people, say "Back to work." Frenzel...I don't know, he saved me, my life sometimes. And he was a terrible man. And, he was the one that we had to dance the evening, and, he was, he was, uh, uh, he, he, would, he'd give Chaim those 45, with the, with the whip. But when I did heavy work once, he took me out, and let me do a whole day, we had to, uh, make soap that people brought, we had to make it in little pieces, and we had to, had to do uh, work with soap, and, and um, but also I, it, I, I was afraid for him, scared to death for him, of course because the man, they can change like that, uh, with, with, with the idea, what you have, and I was afraid that uh, that Frenzel, uh, that people would, would see that, that they, that he was to me. What I remember once uh, we were standing altogether in Camp One, and one of the woman say, "Selma is a spy," because Fre-what Frenzel did to me. And Ula, my buddy [NB: Ursula Stern], say, "Are you crazy? She cannot help that Frenzel helps her with things like that." And, uh, so it's it was very dangerous that an, an, SS what kills any people sometimes took me out for, for work to do, but...that was, I don't know why, it was just my luck perhaps. When Chaim and I w-walked together always, also the SSs, they laughed about Chaim

and me. And they say, "Die Braut und Brautikum" [NB: German: Die Braut und Bräutigam - The bride and groom]. Chai-Chaim and I always worked together, and, and we were always together, and, and they always laughed about us. So it was really more a joke perhaps from the SSs when they know that we will die anyway. They didn't think that we will make it uh, uh once to freedom.

Tell me about the uprising.

I had, on the end, uh, of camp, the, I had the uh, typhus. And, I was very sick. I don't remember much about it. So, that was time also that we went out of uh, of where we slept, we went, they made, the camp got very big. Somehow, the last month of the camp, we got a lot of people from Minsk, from the, from the ghetto from Minsk, came to Sobibór. And the camp, amount of people grow, I think to 400 to 600 people, one, uh, there were only 125 people in the camp all those months, 4 or 5 months that, that before the camp was so big. So there came the transports from Minsk, a transport. Also, once I walked, and there was a girl that was in Zwolle, my hometown, in Holland, and she went back to Germany also, but she came also from the Minsk transport also to uh Sobibór, back, it was very unusual to see somebody that you met in your hometown once. And, I had, uh, and on the end, I had typhus, and the camp got very big, and we came to an, we went to a new barrack, new place where the, we all slept, and it was bigger, and, uh, I was a little, a little bit better, and one day, Chaim say to me, "Go, we, go, and..." uh, and, that was a day, two days before the uprising. He say, "Go and try to get a pair of boots, and get some warm clothes, -----, and I will tell you later. So I say, "No, I don't want to go," he say, "Go." So, I went, and I went to uh, by, a place where there was an German SS, and he was pretty good for the Jews. He got also not punished after the war. And he got me a pair of boots. And I got a leather jacket, and I got some warm clothes, and the next day, Chaim told me to come to a place where all the clothes was for, all the medicine and everything was in that big house. He said, "Come there on 4 o'clock." Chaim was the only man that told his girlfriends to go with him. He's the only man that took his girlfriend with him. All the other Polish people, Jewish people, that were already had, all girlfriends, and they all, all left them there. And, uh, they, they, some were sick, but nobody took his girlfriend. Chaim was the only one that took his girlfriend, and he say, "Come down 4 o'clock." So, I walked to that place at 4 o'clock, and I remember vividly, very well, that one of the uh, Visupski was his name, I think his name was Visupsky, he killed just a f--when I came in he killed just a few SSs already. And it was very tense, and he said, "Here's a pill for your nerves," and he put it in his mouth, and he spit it out, said, "I don't need that." So, we were in there in that, in that house, it was a big, big, house what I remember, looks, I don't remember, it was very big, perhaps it was not that big, and there were all the medicine, and, if the house ware was there from the transport, the people put, the German put it there, and Chaim and I, we were standing there talking with a young man outside,

and it came so far that the one young man had to go and kill Neumann, no, not Neumann [NB: SS-Hauptscharführer Johann Niemann], uh, another name, forgot his name, had to kill him, and, he say, "I'm afraid." I said, "Chaim, are you crazy, there the, already eleven, ten or eight are dead!" Said, "You have to go!" Said he, "I'm afraid." And to Chaim, went inside, and took a knife, of -----, and took a knife, quickly a knife, put it in his pants, in his shoes because he had boots on, and went away. I didn't even see him going. And, I, I remember, I didn't see Chaim, and I didn't see Chaim, and I went looking for him, and I hear from, from a room where he was killing them, a noise, like he was killing a, a pig, when I heard, I heard, I heard sometimes a pig-killing, when we lived in Holland not far from farmers, and screaming, and I went quickly back, and we went back to the place where, where we had, where Chaim told me to be, and we had to go on roll call, and I went on roll call, and I think, "Oh God, what will I do without Chaim?" And then we walked, and then Chaim came out of this house, full with blood, and I thought, "We, we going into the world, I had no idea, I know that we would run away, but I no I-, I thought we were going wherever a lot of people, so I cleaned quickly all the blood from his face, and he had a big wound on his arm, and I took something, I don't know what, and I put it around his arm, and then we walked, and then came a truck, a big truck, but an SSer came out, and, the same Visupsky jumped on this truck, because when he would have gone to his office, and see that they killed already there an SS, where Chaim went, so he trav-uh, the, uh, Visupsky jumped, jumped on this truck, and they killed him. He never, he got, he didn't got out alive. And we went to the camp, to the first camp, Camp One, and there were all the Jews, say already, "Hurrah!" and there came a Oekraïner [NB: Dutch for: a Ukrainian] and they killed him another one on the bicycle, and we went, "Hurrah!" and they start shooting, they start shooting from all sides, and Chaim took my hand, and all the people were already there, Chaim took my hand, and there was a little house, and then we saw Frenzel had a pill or something in front of him, and start also shooting, so everybody stopped at the little house because that house was there, and then we had to go farther. Chaim took my hand, and he say, "Come!" and we run, and all the people start on running, also again, and we start run, and we run, I think to the exit, and we heard people screaming, and we heard people falling on manhole against us, and we were lucky, we just run and run and I remember, uh, I thought, oh I had a necklace around my neck, with all Jewish emblems on it, from all the people who, that went to the gas chamber, and, somehow I found it, and I think, I better take it off, and I remember taking it off, and throwing it away, and we run, and I took my coat off, and I took everything off all the warm clothes that I, that I had on, I took everything off, and we run and we run and we run and we run, till we were middle in the woods, and we saw Kurt Thomas, and Kurt Thomas say to me, "Where's Milly, his girlfriend?" You better not put it in, ----- . Anyway we run...(laughs).

(laughing) We've got to reload.

You better not put it in (laughing), you better not put it, no, no you better not put it in (laughing).

Kurtomas say, "Where's Milly, -----'s girlfriend? He left her there."

Beep.

What was I saying? Oh, were running.

You had just found Kurt Thomas in the woods...

Yeah, I met, yeah, and, and, I saw Kurt Thomas, and we saw, we came somewhere, and it was...

Let's stop. Let's just cut right away because there's -----.

Beep.

We run and run and, we came to a spot and then we saw a whole bunch of people from Sobibór, and we were happy to see some more people, and, but they were afraid for me, because they didn't that a Dutch woman, you know, that, I will be traded, or, you know, and how can I will make it. So, they want to shoot Chaim. Somebody was crazy, I don't know who it was, he was just crazy and want to shoot Chaim, and I jumped in front of Chaim, and they didn't shoot me, and so Chaim and I, we went alone, and we went away, and we went, Chaim, we had some money because, from the money where were hidden in the ground, and he had some money with him, a lot of money I think, I don't know how much. In that time we thought it was a lot of money. And he went to a farmer, and the farmer say, "Yes, you can stay overnight here." And there was, we stayed in the attic, in the farmer's house, and there was a little town, and somehow, people, the Germans went from house to house, from farm to farm, and they skipped where we were. And all the people in most houses, dragged them out, and they shot them. Because they run away a lot of people from camp, but most people got caught, so I think that not more than 40 or 50 or 30, we don't know exactly the amount, that were alive after the war. So, uh, we, we stayed there overnight, and that was the first night that I was together with my husband alone, was still my boyfriend, and there was no bathroom and it was horrible, and I had diarrhea because we have typhus, you get diarrhea, and when you're nervous you get diarrhea, and I somehow never forgot I had to go to the bathroom there, and, and years and years and years later, years and years later, I still felt awful that I had to go to the bathroom the upstairs and just left it such a mess, in these people's house there, that was just for

me, one of the things, crazy, but that was...From there, we walked, and we walked, at, at night. In daytime, we hide in the woods. And many times, uh, we walked at night, and there came a dog after us, got barking, and we didn't, we walked on the stars. Chaim wanted to go to his farmer, and we walked on the stars. And, we couldn't, we, we went the wrong side, I mean, who car-who cares, we went, and, we came in the woods, and, sometimes we saw an animal, and saw his legs, we thought it was a light that was looking for us, and we slept the whole night there, and, and, uh, once we went in a very big woods, and, and before we went in the woods we saw a body laying there, and we were scared to death to go in there, but, we didn't know where we were going really. We just walk on the stars. And, uh, we walked two weeks. We didn't have to eat, and I remember, I jumped once in water, and I took my boots off at night, and daytime when we hid, hid somewhere, and I couldn't get my boots on anymore, so I had to walk, I have, Chaim had to cut it open, and I had to walk on the side of my, of my shoe, the whole, whole time, and, and, when the shoe got small, I couldn't, the boots got smaller, I couldn't get it on anymore, and, so it was, and, and, and, we, we couldn't wash, we didn't have to eat, we, uh, we were hungry, we had little bit food what we could find in the fields, we were eating. And, we tried to find the Partisans, and we couldn't find them, and we hide daytime, sometimes we tried to get to a farmer, but never could f-find a farmer uh, where we could stay. Chaim, my husband, remembers that we could stay with farmers, but I don't remember that we ever stayed with any farmer at night. And, we hide uh, once in an hay...stack, and w-we had kids coming to it, and they say to each other in Polish, well, I didn't understand them, my husband told me, that we go jump on this haystack, and we lay under the hay, and uh, they came on top of us, and they ran off and say, "Jews! Jews!" How they know that so quick, I don't know, but they say, "Jews! Jews!" And they ran away, and we quickly went off, and there came 2 farmers with a car where we were walking in a field, and they took us, and they ask us if we want to take, go with them, and one took Chaim, and the other took uh, I with them. And when we drove away, Chaim, they didn't unders-know that Chaim spoke Polish, and they say to Cha--to each other, "Somehow, we will take the money from them," or something like that, and Chaim say to me, "Selma, jump!" and I jumped and he jumped and then we run, and we run, and we, I remember also vividly we went once, and we were so thirsty, and we went to a farmer, and we asked if we can have a little bit of water, and he say, "No." It was a very beautiful, uh, farm. Could see the sitting bay and the fireplace, and he said, "No!" and closed the door in front of us, so, uh, we hadn't, we had no -----, we didn't see Partisans, we didn't know, we, that we're hungry, we didn't have anything to eat, and we didn't know what to do, and once we came to a farm, and he took us in, and Chaim ask him if he can hide us. Slept in the barn, we always slept in, always when we slept in the haystack, and he say, "No." I cannot, I didn't understand all these things, of course, with the, with the polish, I didn't understand a word, Polish. And, he says, "You know, by my brother." So, he dressed me up like an old woman, and I was 20, (ha ha), and, with a old woman,

and, uh, he brought us, uh, Chaim was uh, in a wagon, and on the, on the, and branches over him, and we were lucky, well, it was very, very dangerous what the man did. One went, a German would ask him, "What, what are you having there?" he would shoot him and he would go his farm and shoot his whole family, and burn down everything. So, he brought to a farmer, his name was Adam, and when we came there, we, he let us in a room. We had very bad scabies, and this is sickness on the skin, from dirt. Ver--I had it very bad, Chaim not so bad. And we had lice, of course, Sobibór, and, very, very bad, I had it over my whole body. And, uh, uh, when we, he, we could wash us, he let us wash, and he saw that Chaim had a lot of money, he had it under the bandage on his leg, and he saw Chaim had a lot of money, and I think, he didn't think that he wants to help Jews, he's thinking that it's for the money. Perhaps he did it also for, it's not, no, I think perhaps he did it also to help these people. Chaim say he, because he saw me, I was young, and, and he, and he, he always thought somebody from, from Holland or from New Yo--from our, America, he always wanted to go to America, the farmer. So, because of me, what Chaim thinks, he took us in. And also of the money. We give him all the money what we had, and, uh, so, we cou-were, we stayed above the cows, in, in the barn with the cows, and above they had beams, and on the beams was hay stacks, and above was, and, a hay roof, with holes in it. Thank God we could look through the holes, we didn't have anything to do the whole day, and we were not allowed to move. Once we moved, and he came down the farmer on the bottom, and he moved, and the farmer said, "What is that?" Say, "Oh," he said, "We have some rats, uh, rats, upstairs," which was true. There were rats all over. So, we were not allowed, we were there 9 months, and we were not allowed to move, we were not allowed to talk, and we had a little pail in the front of us, our toilet, and we were under the, what I said before, the lice, and he tried sometimes to burn our clothes in, in, when in the hot stove, to kill the lice, but it didn't work, and uh, we did, is a medication in Poland, and of course here too, that when you can put it on the Scabie, and it dies right away. So, we were very sick from it because I had it on my back and on my body, and it, it was, it itched, it was very, very painful, and I was, I was very sick. I was, I could almost not walk, and, and so we asked him, we have one watch, and when we give him the watch, if they want to go for us, and pay that in Helm, there was a little town not far from we lived, and want to pay us the medication. And finally once they did it where the, the, it was so in our skin, that uh, it, it, the ointment didn't help anymore, and we were very upset of course, we, we blamed this man. We didn't get much to eat. And we didn't wash ourselves, I think, just once, in all the nine months, we never washed ourselves. Well we didn't, ah we didn't care. We were not hungry, real hungry, but we got once a day we got food, and, we, we saved always the bread, and we put it between our heads, the rats came at night, and they took it away, so we didn't do that anymore, and, and we, we felt very uh, uh, miserable there because we thought that they were not good for u-us. Now, after all these years, and af-right after the war we know that they were very good for us because they really saved our

lives, but it was very dangerous because when the neighbors were all big antisemites, and I knitted sometimes for her, when she was spinning, she made, uh, weaving her own, uh, yarn from linen, and I knitted clothes for this little boy that was 2 years old or 3 years old, and the neighbors ask her how you got these nice clothes, so, that was already dangerous, when she, they know they couldn't afford to buy it. So, we, we didn't do anything the whole, there, from the beginning, we were allowed to knit. Chaim was knitting, and I was knitting, but later on we were not allowed to do anything uh, for them, so they, they were very, very poor, and it was a very uh, I go too much into that?

(Sandy says something--can't hear).

I go too much into that?

No, we have to reload.

Beep.

Okay, you were just concluding with the family, who, in a sense, rescued you and Chaim by hiding you. You were telling me they were poor, and...

Yeah, yeah, yes, we were uh, they were very poor, and they did the best that they could really, and we want, perhaps, we felt so sorry for ourselves laying there, and, uh, on the end, I remember, uh, there, there was a little boy that was running after the birds, and it was already, we heard already the Germans coming up a, uh, we hear already nearer coming the, uh, war coming, the front. We hear already bombs near, coming to us, and a little boy went after these, and uh, at once he sees us. And thank God a day later, were, were the Germans run a-we saw the Germans running away, and uh, we got freed. Uh, it was a very difficult time. Uh, uh we were, we didn't have anything to do. Also once we were watching always the storks, the storks on the chimney, and we were watching the storks when we didn't have anything else to do. And, the storks went away. And, the uh, the farmers, uh, they think that it brings some-something to them, or a fire or something is coming to them when the storks going away. So one day he say to me, "What are you doing the whole day? Are you perhaps watching the storks?" And we say, "Yes." So, so, he, when the, when the storks going away, you have to go. We cannot have you anymore because then is uh, something bad will happen to us. So, we stopped watching the storks, and thank God, the storks came back. And, I was very weak. I didn't know that I was pregnant. I didn't have, I didn't have my period all these years that I was in concentration camp, and I was very weak, I couldn't walk anymore, and I didn't get

heavier, and, I, I couldn't s-s-sit up almost anymore, and we didn't know anything that was going on, and the, the woman uh, where we were hidden say, say that I was pregnant, I said, "No, that's not true. I have, I don't grow, and well, I didn't walk, and I was just laying. And she say, "You have to go. We don't want you anymore. And later we talked that it is not so, and now, and then, in July the, July, we went down, and then I found out I was six months pregnant. And that was, we never told this in 40 years, and that was very bad of course, well, we thought, what will we do? We had nothing. We went, it was free, we were free. We had no money, we had nothing, absolutely nothing. No, no clothes, only what we had on, and that was it. So, we went to Helm, and then we found, we thought we were the only Jews alive, of course, we thought every concentration camp was really like Sobibór, but, and then we found more people alive in Helm. We came in a home in Helm, and then Chaim had to go in the army. And I was there in Poland, all alone, I didn't speak Polish, we had no money. So Chaim started working in a hospital. We saw that helps. And, I also never forget, once...they all went back to Sobibór. All the Jews went back to Sobibór because all the Jews, we put so much money in the ground, and everybody went back to Sobibór to get, take the money out of the ground, and they starting fighting there and killing each other. So I said to Chaim, "That's not worth it. You don't go." So, we didn't go back to Sobibór to get the money uh, out of the ground. But all, most Jews did it. And one Jew did, and one of the Jews, Chaim knows already a little bit around, he was always in business, and so we walked a little bit around, and one gave him a hundred dollar bill, and Chaim say, "I know a place where I can change it for you." So, perhaps I can change it for you, but of course, the number was gone, and that was not valuable. So, we put it that night under our pillow. And middle in the night, somebody stole it under our pillow out. So, the next day, Chaim told him, and he didn't believe it, of course. So, the first morning that Chaim made with, I don't know with what, with working in the hospital, not to go in the army when we saw that we get free in the army, and later this was not. Then he start selling, I think, gasoline, what he brou--I don't know what he did really exactly, I don't remember, and we paid this man off. So, so that was a ver-a very bad situation. I have to tell something that, 20 years, 15 years later we were in Israel, and we came together with all the Jews from Sobibór, and I say to the man, "Do you remember the hundred dollars that they stole under our pil-pillow?" He said, "Yeah, you still owe me the hundred dollars." And the next day, he came with somebody, and we paid him the hundred dollars because he say he nee--my husband say, "When he needs the hundred dollars so badly that he has to come to Israel, if, to our house, then he needs it very bad." So, when we went, went away from Sobibór, from this farmer, we stayed with uh, in Helm a very short time. Well, you don't want to know that.

I want to ask you a couple things. I want you to talk about how you lived for one minute to the next when you were in the camp. I want you to go back, and tell me how you feel you survived.

Okay, I don't remember. Uh, I, I, how, we survived in Sobibór was most because we had each other. I don't think that, I would have been like all the Dutch people who died very quickly after that, that, I think that we had each other, and also we were very close, and uh, I found a cousin there, a first cousin. And, and, and a girl where they came from Holland, Ula, Ursula Stern was there. We stick together, and we helped each other very much because, uh, I got typhus, and she took care of me, and I took care of her when she was sick, and we took care of each other. And the, the, the tense atmosphere in Sobibór was so bad that I, I, I don't want even to think back on that, how, how bad it was. Because every minute of the day, we were called to do something else. Like, when, even when we walked from Camp 2 to Camp 1, we had to, we never could walk regular, we had to sl, uh, uh, "Hinlegen, Aufstehen!" [NB: German for: Lie down, Get up!], throw ourselves on the floor, and we had to go up, and the man with the whip on the back of us that we had to do that till we almost not could walk anymore. Uh, when we came on, we had to stand in line for food. Sometimes there was no food. And sometimes, the, the, the once I remember the coo-the cook, they, they killed him almost when he was sitting middle of, of the place in the middle from where we, were sleeping, and, uh, we, we, uh, we couldn't get food on that day, and I remember once, an, a young man, he was 16 years old, and he was the favorite of one of the SSs really, and he was sleeping, and one of Wagner came into his room, and he said, "Go, Aufstehen! Aufstehen!" and he hit a little bit some with his whip when he had this whip laying next to him. And the, the SS took him out and shot him. And, that, that was, every minute of the day was a, was, a such a, in, in danger, in danger about your own life that, I, I, that we tried not to think about it at all because I remember that we had to go in the woods once, and, and pick uh, blueberries. And on the end of the day they had to show our tongue of we, had a, if we eat one of the blueberries. And we would have eaten all of the blueberries, they would have punished us with 40 whips or 80 whips, but they didn't shoot so much woman, the more the men. Uh, and it it, everything that you did was, what was, was scary, and was dangerous. Also we had uh, uh, to pick, uh mushrooms in the woods, I remember. And, I put it in my underpants all over. And they ask us, "Did you hide something?" I was very heavy from the water, -----, in camp, so they didn't see it that I had it, was full with mushrooms, but when they would have looked at it, they would have should, they would have done something to punish me. Uh, but-----, every time you saw somebody else got punished and got hit, and we have to look all the time when they give 45 whips or uh, the, all the time we had to look that they did things like that, and I think that we didn't get insane, it was because we had each other, Chaim and I. We were always together, we try, not when we work most of the time, in daytime when we had to go in the woods, but then I was worry if I was here. Once we were, uh, on a roll call, and, uh, there was and, uh somebody ran away, so, they took ten, every ten people they took out, out of the roll call, and Chaim was #9, and I was standing there, you know, it was, you

were always, always uh, uh in danger. Many times we had to stay the whole night on roll call uh, because there was an a dog or a cat or some one of the mines, and they thought that we run away. And, and, Chaim and I, we al-always stayed together, and, and I think that that made me uh, that made us that we are we stayed uh, I think, I really think that saved our lives.

Before the war, tell me about...

Beep.

I want you to tell me about the choices that you think the Germans and Ukrainians had as guards.

How you mean?

Did they do things of their own free will, or was it all ordered, and then what choices did the Jews have?

The, the Germans could do with us what they want. They had no orders whatsoever. They could kill us, they could harm us, they could punish us, they could do anything they want. The Ukrainians, I don't know much about because they, I, I don't know much about because they, I didn't speak Polish, and I couldn't talk with them at all, and they were always more on the outside-- I really don't remember much about it. But, uh, they were such, also such antisemites, they, they were there of free will, and the Germans were in, in Sobibór for, because of the free will, they didn't have to come. They didn't have to go in the, in the war, fighting on the front when they went to a concentration camp, so they went by themselves to the SS. Uh, the Germans, they had free will and they could do anything, and they did. They had, that was there biggest pleasure, to tell each other, uh, that we killed, uh, one of the SSs called, uh, told once that he could kill, he had a very big whip made, that he could kill a Jew in 10 whips, instead of 40 for somebody else, or 50. Uh, once he had uh, Frenzel telling that he uh, that he throws babies in the fire, uh, what, from the transports, what he came on, what was too much work to put them perhaps uh, in the gas chamber. Uh, they could do anything they want. There was not such a thing--humanity--what were in these Germans, uh, at all. Perhaps one, one, what was, what give me the boots, but uh, like Frenzel and, and Wagner, and Wolf [NB: SS-Unterscharführer Franz Wolf] was, what, what was sometimes nice to us, my, also he was eating bread, and he said, "Here, would you like to have a piece?" and we said, "No," most of the time, and they let us singing and dancing all the time when the fire was there, we had to do, no, I don't think there was one decency in these people's bloods whatsoever, uh what I don't uh, uh, in the Ukraine, uh, they, they, I don't know much about it. The Polish Jews, they know

more about that because they could talk their language, but, uh...

What about the Jews, did they have choices? Talk about the choice to leave or not to leave.

No, it was no choice. We had no choice for anything. We had no choice. I remember, once, I walked, I don't know how come, I walked by myself, and I saw people from my home town sitting there on the side, the, the cantor from our temple, and then I saw -----, and I said, "Hi" to them, and then I remember I better don't say anything when I, when he say Hi to me, then he, then they will say uh, "Oh, you want to sit there too?" and that's the end o-of me. We didn't have, we didn't have anything. We just were like a, a herd of, herd of sheep, and we had to everything what they say, and God forbid we, we did. We tried to everything what the Germans say, I remember, once, uh, out of the window that I saw a whole family from my hometown, uh, walking, whole family, father, mother and children, and I, I just, I, uh, uh, was maybe sure that they wouldn't see me, but when they would have seen me, wh-what would I have said? Uh, and, and I know that uh, I see them still walking, and, and, after the years I forgot the names, but many times I saw people that I know from, well, from face, uh, walking to the death, to the death. But we didn't have anything to say in camp. Nothing. We just made sure that we were always in the background, and that we didn't, uh, especially Chaim always told me, "Be in the background. Don't let them know who you are," and we tried that so much as possible, and I think that was of the things that uh, (clears throat) that saved, that we were saved, that we were not martyred to death, because, uh, a lot of them were martyred to death, uh, especially Dutch people. But somehow the, the, they saved a lot, the, the Dutch uh, woman, the woman, I saw how uh, the men was more, more uh, in danger of it, and Chaim always tried to push me, when I am already quickly go in the front and do things, and come up for people. No, he always told me, "Stay out of it, stay out of it. Leave it alone." And you couldn't do anything anyway. There was nothing that you could do. Uh, you could nothing do. Was nothing, nothing. You had to just take care of yourself. And, to sabotage to, against the Germans, both of us do sabotage. Where we once, where, in the camp where we slept, that that was the only thing we could do, stay in the background, and, and don't show yourself so much in the front. That's all.

Before the war, can you tell me about the J on passports, and how the underground removed yours, and then -----.

I don't remember much what they did. When I was home, and, and there came a Catholic priest what lived on our street, and he came to me and he say, um, "What do you, how do you think you can save your life?" And I say to him, "The only way is that I uh, wo-be, be as a non-Jew, and that

somebody picks me up." And he, and somebody else came to pick me up early in the morning, that was coincident, my English teacher, and he pick me up early in the morning at 5 o'clock and went with the bicycle, and that was the last time that I saw my mother and my, and my brothers, my family, I never saw them again. And, I think I came to a nurse from my hometown. Darot was the name. And she, through her, they, they, she knows what, she was in the underground, and through her, they took the J from my passport because that's the only way that I, that I was, by a woman that was, say, where I was, she was good. Because she, I went after 3 months, waiting, hiding with her, she took a whole family in, and I had to go to another family, and the other family were traitors, what I found out after the war, I didn't know. And I was hidden there 3 months, and, and they, uh, had 28 Jews hidden there, and they all got caught, and they didn't do anything to them, and so and, and, uh, you want me to tell you about how I was caught? Caught. Uh, I, uh, when I was hidden there, I was all alone always in the house, and I was, uh, 19 years old, and I was very depressed, and very, I had to clean the house, I was the maid there, and I was a spoiled brat from home, I never had to do anything, and I had to do everything there, and they went away the whole day, and we didn't, I didn't get anything to eat. Well, there was not much food in Holland. There was, it was very, it was a ver-a really starting to get ve-uh, no food, and uh, where the people were very hungry, and I uh was alone, and there was in the street where a lawyer, there were Jewish people hidden. And after that, it was a few months, they say I could go there, and visit them. And when the minute I come in, the Germans come, so there was it, somebody told the Germans. And, the Germans, and the police, the Ho--the Dutch Police came, and they, and when I was there, I say to them, the, the, they ask me the passport, and I show my port, uh, passport, and I say, "Oh, but I'm a nurse, and I come here to help these people, and they loo-hold my passport to the light, and they right away saw there was a, there was the J, from Jew, was in there, and so there was nothing what they could do. So, so uh, they right away took me, and also the family that was there, there was a father and mother and 2 children, and they all had asthma, I remember they were so sick from--asthma comes up when they, when you're nervous, and they were so sick, and the woman where they were hidden, uh, was an older lady from 80 years old, so the Germans asked me where I was hidden, and I didn't want to tell them. Because the, uh, the day bef-uh, before I was, came another Jewish family living upstairs, and I thought when they find out that I was caught, that perhaps they have a chance to get away, and that was happened, and, uh, they uh, somehow got the note that I was, that the German took us, of, of the police, and, uh, see they had time to get run away. But they, after the war, they sent me a letter that, of, of thanks, And, but the woman where, what they, were, or the lady where they were caught, she told the Germans where I was hidden, and they went later over there, and they took uh, what it was, I don't know exactly, but I went down to Utza in the police station, and I stayed there 8 days, and I had a chance to get away, but somehow, I didn't. I didn't want to go away. First of all, I had no money. And I thought, I didn't know the underground

was already that strong, and I uh, didn't want to go in, in or out if the Ger-the police give me little notice here. We probably like to take you out, we probably like to take you out. And, I didn't get along with my sister-in-law, she's still alive, I didn't get along with my sister-in-law, and I visit once my brother, and they were locked up in the little room with the 2 kids, and it was dirty, and it was miserable, and I say, I rather go to my mother in Poland than go to my brother when I get out, I have to go to my brother, and be hidden there, and, and help him with the little kids--I didn't know that there was a gas chamber or something like this, so I go rather to my mother in Poland, than I be locked up in there, with my brother there, so I didn't get out of the, uh, out of the, uh, police station. After that, they sent me, we were in, in an um, in, in Amsterdam in jail. In 3 months I was in jail. And (clears throat), the, we were 10 woman in a little room, and it was very interesting because everybody tells the life story, and they were all, well, there was a professor's wife, one was a girl from the street, and one was deaf?? And, uh, and, we, it wasn't, we didn't feel any danger, and, and, and anyway, I didn't, I thought we go to, I had, I didn't think anything. And we got, my family from Amsterdam where we were sent me sometimes packages, and one of the g-guards that opened the door recognized somehow that I wa-that my brother was in hotel school, and that uh, she knows him, and from that time out we get double food, all of us in the cell got extra food. So, we didn't have it that bad in, in the, in the jail, jail. Uh, it was uh, we had to walk every morning so like a, like you see in the Sing-Sing, where there always some-sometimes movies from, and we stayed there, or, I stayed there 3 months. And then I went out of there, and we went to a concentration camp, and in the office, I met a whole bunch of Dutch girls. I met these Dutch girls, we stayed together till Sobibór. We, and, we from there, we went to uh, Vught, we were in a concentration camp in Holland 3 months, and uh, I was also very lucky, there comes a man to me, and he say, "Are you not the daughter from the ho-from the Weinberg-from the hotel in Zwolle, and I say, "yes." Said he, "I have a job for you." And he was the big shot already. It was, the camp was just opened, and he uh, give me a job assorting clothes in the, in the laundromat, and I worked in the laundromat, and it was very good because I was that, uh, uh, big, I had that uh, to tell people what they had to do. And, I could get away from there too. I could have gone in the laundry, in the basket sit in, very easy, but, I didn't know that there was an underground in Holland, and I didn't have money. When I would have had some money in my pocket, I would have done it. But, I thought, when I come out of here, where do I go? They can right away see I'm Jewish, and, and, and, and, I don't know why I thought this way that they right away could have seen that I was Jewish, that's what I thought because in my hometown, was a not so big town, they would have right away seen, had, uh, recognized me, and, so, I went, from there, I went to uh, after 3 months, I went to Westerbork, and in Westerbork...

Thank you.

Your welcome.

30 seconds of room tone for ----- with the sound roll--Engel.

Can you not take the noise out?

End of room tone.

End of Sound Roll. Short roll.