

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Sam Goldberg
March 8, 1992
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Sam Goldberg, conducted on March 8, 1992 in Bel Air, California 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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SAM GOLDBERG

March 8, 1992

We're rolling now everybody.

1939 when the war broke out, I lived in an apartment house. In this apartment house lived also the mayor of the city from my hometown. When he saw me he says to me, "Why don't you come up to the city hall, and I will try to give you some Aryan papers, so you're not so much problem, you can travel around, so, not as a Jew, as an Aryan." And I talked to my father, maybe he wants it, and my father and my sister they refused completely because my brother was not home anymore. He ran away to Russia. Anyway, in a few days, I finally decided, I went over to the city hall, which was very hard because ----- was actually the first ghetto ever made in Germany when the Germans came in. I came over there and they gave me a passport with the name Sigmund Kamkosky, was my name, not anymore Goldberg, -----Goldberg's, Sigmund Kamkosky. By having this in my pocket, I felt a little more confident, except I couldn't be in my city because everybody knew me as a Jew in this hometown. So I decided I'm going to leave. ----- with also Aryan papers, we went into Warsaw. In Warsaw we find out that they organize a ----- Underground, which we tried to join them. We looked around many, many times, places, and finally we came across somebody by the name, a guy by the name Charnetsky, who was connected with Underground. I was cowardly, I was afraid at first, and I always thought, I'm going to do something for my country and for myself. So I always ask him, "When you gonna give me some assignment? When we gonna go out and do something?" One day he came to me, he said, "I have for you something. You have to go to a city called Pananitzka, not far away from Warsaw, and you have to deliver this package," which two German lugers, uh guns, and some ammunition. When I took this train, small train to go to Pananitzka, every time somebody looked at me, I was pissing in my pants for, I was so afraid. Finally, they waited back in Warsaw for me before I come back, I'm going, and every stop the train made, the Germans came up on the train, and and, besides asking for papers, they robbed people, but people -----, some people was uh smuggling in food to Warsaw, bag of food, whatever it was, they always, every time, every time I looked out the window, and I saw Germans there standing, coming on the train, I thought I'm gonna die. Finally I made the trip. When I came back, they said to me, "Okay, you got it made." And we waited a few days, they gave us another assignment to go to Warsaw. Being in Warsaw all this time, I could see that the Underground was not organized enough. When we used to go out, let's say, and we did a job, let's say, somewhere where robbed a grocery stores. What, those, those days they is called Spulgenia?? We used to go, two guys got in, in German uniforms, and tried to ac, uh, to take out some food, okay? When the Germans find out, that it's the 10 or 15 Polish people, and they hang them, they kill them. So, in mine eyes, being in the Underground, every time we did something wrong, 10 or 15 innocent people died. This was not my cup of tea. I always say, "If I do something, let's do it right." They used to go around and -----ask people for money to help the underground. I didn't s--I personally didn't see any purpose in that. I say if you go out and fight, get some ammunition, go out, go after the Germans and try to do something. One day they sent me, and they said, "From now you have to go in Dobra, ----- Over there, they have some contacts, you're gonna bring back a lot of ammunition, back into Pananitzka." Why they send us to Dobra? Because when Poland was attacked from the Russian side, and the Polish army left everything there so the farmers took a lot

of guns and ammunition, they used to bury in there, in their places, and the Underground find out where those, some of the farmers, you know, they're patriots, and they will give us the ammunition to, to bring back to Warsaw. So, we went there and I was, we came to a little town called Dobra. Dobra was maybe about 50 Jewish families. Nothing but Jews. Those people even didn't know a war was going on. Quiet, nice, you nice little community, except was 3 or 4 gentiles, the mayor and a policeman, and a fireman. That's all there was in the whole city. The rest was all Jews, all the houses around the market, and there were tailors and shoemakers, and they used to do business with the Polish people twice a week, was a market place, and they used to go out...I waited, we waited for the contact to come. You know, who is going to contact us to get the ammunition. But I want to bring it up how bad it was the whole, it was early in the 40s in the beginning, was, they was not organized yet. So finally one day, I was staying, they had what they call bars. The farmers used to come and on Tuesdays stay in the bars and drink vodka and do business with the Jewish people, they were lived just like brothers. One day a guy came over, tapped me on the shoulder, he said, "Your name is Sigmund?" I said, "Yeah -----." He say, "I have something for you , you have to take back to Pananitzza." I said, "Oh, finally I have a contact, I'm here." The same night, this was on Friday, I remember exactly was on Friday, the Jewish people was praying ----- -- go to a small synagogue what they have in this little town. A truck came in with German soldiers, uh, Germans and Ukrainian soldiers in this town. And they asked the people in the town to give them, I don't know what they want from them. They wanted some flour and this and that and that, the first time, this little town actually saw Germans and Ukrainians come in to town. So this man, this farmer told us we have to leave tomorrow. It was winter, was in January, I remember, was winter, very cold. And he had a sled with one horse, and he put it three sacks, there were 3 sacks of uh, wheat. And in the wheat, we had the ammunition covered up. So, he gave us a map, how to go back to Warsaw to Pananitzza. This little poor horse were going and during the for, in the forest, travelling around in the forest, the snow. Finally, we had to cross the road. We had to cross a highway. Crossing the highway, the highway did not have any snow, and the sled had armament in it, you know. This little horse, the horse was trying to get across, he couldn't make it. So finally the horse fell down, we had to lift him up, and from afar, we saw like a truck is coming. In those days, after, everything was dark, it's a little bitty, you know, like two eyes, you could from the far. I had a friend, a friend of mine, his name was, uh, was Zelig. He stopped, and he said, I said, "Let's go, let's leave it, everything here and go because they're gonna catch us, they're gonna, you know, gonna kill us, the Germans. He said, "No." He cutted off the sack open, took out, was a machine gun there. A Polish old machine gun, probably from WWI, with 2 little sticks like this, and put it in the middle in the highway. Put it in the (laugh) the ----- was sitting there waiting for the trucks. I went down to the ditch, pulled the horse with me because I was afraid. He was not afraid, he said, "If I die, let's die with them together." He was waiting for them to come. All of the sudden, we looked around, I see that truck, the eyes disappeared, they turned around on another highway. I said, "Oh my God, thank God this happened." So we loaded everything back up, finally we came into Pananitzza to this bakery. We came into the bakery, the, we took off, there too, came out 3 guys and took off the, you know, the wheat, and the guns everything, he hid us, and told us to clean us up, and they put us on the top on the oven to dry up because we're wet, and dried out. Well, I was sitting there in the morning. Excuse mine expression, I had to take a leak. So, I went out to the forest. You know, it was, I -----forest, and I was standing across, next to a tree, and I was taking a leak. A guy by the name Julte, was his name, he came out, doing the same thing. He looked at me, he said, "Very dirty," in Polish, "You son of a bitch, you are a Jew. You are circumcised." I said, "What are you talking about?" He said, "Yeah, you're

circumcised. Show it to me." I said, "What's, what's the matter with you. Come on, go to hell." That, well, after I was eating breakfast, the owner of the bakery came over to me. He said, "Sigmund, you better take off, go to Warsaw because they already said they're gonna kill you, they find out you are a Jew." And I said to myself, "I'm fighting for their country. I tried to be a patriot. Not just for Poland itself, for my own life as a Jew, and here they don't want me there. I mean, look what I did!" He said, "No, you better take off." Matter of fact, all 3 of us, me Zelig, and David, we came into Warsaw. This was already 1941, I think, I don't know exactly the date. The Warsaw ghetto was already coming to a close already, the Warsaw ghetto. Then we came into Prague. We were in Prague, we want to go into the Warsaw ghetto. How can we get into the Warsaw ghetto? I could not get in. The only way I could get into the Warsaw ghetto is with a group of people who went out from the ghetto to work. So I can get in, in the group with people to go back into the ghetto. Here I'm carrying a gun, my two friends carry guns, we do, it's was terrible. So finally, they both of them got in and I was late. I couldn't run after the group. When we came into the gate, I was the last one. A polish policeman, polish policeman was there with Germans??? and inside were Jewish policemen. Inside in the ghetto were Jewish policeman standing there. When they open up there I was running, they said, "Where are you going?" I said, "I'm a Jew."

Okay, why don't you back up just a little bit, and tell me how you wanted to get into the Warsaw ghetto.

Okay, I want to get in there to Warsaw ghetto, the only way I could get in there is with a group of people who went out to work for the Germans, they used to take uh Jewish people every day outside the ghetto to work. My two friends got into a group, and they got into the ghetto and I was late. I was the last one. When I came into the, to the gate, they called an iron gate, I think, yeah, that's -----, iron gate, came there, the Polish policeman stopped me with the German out there, "Where are you going?" I said, "I'm a Jew." He said, "You're a Jew? So, if you're a Jew, what are you doing out," you know, even tell me that I could not, and so the Jewish policeman inside heard what I said, "Jew," he says to me in, in Yiddish, "Loid (run." So I start running, and the policeman is running after me, supposedly hitting me over the head, and he hollered to me, "Run, run, run!" So I ran, ran out, and he saved my life, otherwise they probably would kill me over there. Finally we come into the ghetto. It's too impossible. If I tell somebody, they would not believe it, hundred people all -----, people were laying on the street, dead, covered with papers. The sanitary was full, they didn't even have time to pick up the dead and to bury them. Streets were full from hunger. Children were sitting on the street begging, it was terrible scene. I said to myself, "Oh my God, why I came in here? Here why, why, why do I came into the Ghetto?" I said, "Thank God, I felt good because I'm between my own people. " The outside was dangerous. You could not be outside. If you see it, for example, I give you one example. In Warsaw, we had a bridge to go from Prague to Warsaw. On the bridge you have Germans guards watching the bridge. When the passed on the bridge, you have to take your hat off, and say to the German "-----." Means ---- -----, you know hi, whatever it is, ----- So, I have an experience, my own experience, my own experience. I went to the bridge, and I took off my hat, I said, ----- He calls me back, and he says to me, "Why you saying to me -----? You a friend of mine?" Took off his gun, and he hit me so hard, I thought he gonna kill me. "Don't you ever say that-----," I start running. Came to the other end of the bridge, I saw another German. I said to myself, "Now I'm not going to take off my hat." Sure enough, I didn't take off my hat, he calls me, "Why didn't you say hello to me?"

Grisgot. So he hit me over the head. (Laughs) Working there, it was very bad. Working the streets of Warsaw before I got into the ghetto, the Polish people looked every, not everybody, we had nice Polish people. You have an element of people who are bad. They looked everybody in the eyes, just to recognize a Jew. They recognize a Jew better than the Germans because they lived among us. They knew us, right. My friend, Zelig, he had a different policy. He had a policy, a reverse policy. If anybody looked in his eyes, he went over to him and he said, "You god damn Jew, I'm going to call the Germans." He made him as a Jew." He used a reverse psychology. And a Polock usually, when he came, he start hollering at him, like, he ran away, he left us alone. So we never walked all three of us together. He was always the first, other one was then, and I was the last one. Something happened, shooting or something, I was the coward. I was always afraid. I was short, I was little, I was very afraid. I'm going to go back when I get into the Warsaw ghetto, and I saw there what happened, the Warsaw ghetto had a, they built some walls. Around the top on the walls in the streets, where you, you know, when the ghetto was closed, had some, uh glass. In order, we were there a few days, in order for us to get out from the ghettos, only way we could go to an apartment what had the window, high enough with the , with the brick, brick wall, what they builded okay? The only way to get out, you couldn't go out in early in the morning, I mean early in the morning, you couldn't go out after in the night because you couldn't walk in the night, you know, they kill you. So one day, we decided we're going to leave the ghetto. So we find a place on the Prodova, on Prodova Street, there is -----, apartment house. We knocked on the door, was about 4 o'clock in the morning. The man got up, a Jewish fellow, let us in, he said, "What do you want?" I said, "We want to jump, get out of your window." He said, "Please don't do that, you, my family in danger, killed." Anyway, didn't help, we had guns, we said, "If you want to die, you're gonna die, we're gonna do something, we have to leave." So, early in the morning, we open up his window and well, got on the wall, and we jumped on the other side. You wouldn't believe it. Soon as we jumped on the other side, all these young people were waiting outside. They start running after us, and they hollered, "Jews, Jews, ran out from the ghetto." You know, they ran after us, the Jews ran out from the ghetto. Finally, we ran away. We got hided in a, in a big apartment house, and we, and we were there for a while until it got quiet on the streets, and we got out, and I said to my friends, "Listen, the underground is enough for me. I'm going to go back to my hometown. I'm going to find my father and my sister. I said, I don't want to be in the Polish Underground. I see what they did, they didn't do anything. They hate me as a Jew, and I want to fight with them, and you want me to stay with them?" Then he said, "Okay, we'll find some other undergrounds, and we're going to go somewhere else. You want to go home, go." I took my gun, put in my pocket, I went down to the station. I had Aryan papers with me, I can travel the train. I came to the station. A German Schutzpolizi, the call them Schutzpolizi, stopped me. -----, they said, "Ay, where are you going?" I said, "Oh, mama mia! This is it. This is my end now." Finally something hit me because I had this young polish people signing up to go to Germany to work. So, I said to them, "I'm going home to Pietkov." I'm going to pick up my brother, we're going to go to Germany to work. I hear you, you, you need some workers in Germany." He said, "Oh, you're a good, fine younger, fine younger," he says to me, "You're a nice boy." He said, "Go ahead," he let me go. So I came home to Pietkov. Took me, when I got off the train, I didn't want to walk from, from the train to go into the ghetto, uh was a long way to way to walk, and I was afraid to walk on the streets because maybe somebody will recognize me. Finally, I made it in the afternoon. Was a lot of people in the streets. I made it, I got into the ghetto, the ghetto, Pietkov ghetto did not have any gates, they have just a big sign. Everybody who walked out from here gonna be shot, everybody who walked in gonna get killed, you know big signs. So the streets were open. Finally I got it

made. I got it into the ghetto. When I came to the ghetto, I couldn't find my father because the they made the ghetto smaller every time they made it, they the people had to move in different places. I was asking around, asking around. Finally, they told me where, where my parents live. All right. So there my father lived, my mother was not alive anymore. So I came into my house, my father was happy to see me and this and that, he had one room, my father, my sister, the other ones, another family lived there, okay. One evening, was two days later, I took up my gun, and I tried to clean 'em because you know, I was afraid, gonna get rusted. So I tried to clean it, and my father saw this gun, I thought he gonna kill me. He said, "You have to take this arms right away from my house, and you have to throw this away because if the German would catch it, you killed, all the Jews in the ghetto will die on account of you. I said, "Dad, they're all dead anyway. What is the big problem? What do you worry so much about it?" He said, "-----get out and get out and do this," so finally, I didn't want to upset him too much because he was already afraid, he didn't walk out of the house, he was sitting in the house all day long and praying, praying to God, God will help. So finally I said, "Okay," I went down in the yard and I threw it away, the gun. I -----, I still had -----. You know, it's amazing. The next day I went out to the ghetto to walk around see maybe I find somebody. Word got around in the ghetto. We figured a lot of people came in from small towns to this city. Word got around because I had a lot of friends, I was going to school there, people knew me. Now if I, -----, I was not in the ghetto for so long that they knew, somebody said that I am in the underground. Okay? Sure enough, the Jewish police arrested me. They arrested me and they put me in the cellar. In the cellar was a place what the Germans used to come every morning, take the people out and take, take put them in the forest, and shot it, you know everybody who was in the cellar. Had a friend of mine, was, I was going with him to school to get -----, he was the head of the police, and if a girlfriend of mine find out that I am arrested, and she was in the cellar, she told him. When she told him that, he came down to the cellar, he opened up the, the you know this little room, which a lot of women with children were there, and me, myself, and "Hand me a broom." And he said, "Go up and sweep the corridor." You know to sweep it. So I went out there, took it, and I start sweeping. -----I swept. Maybe ten minutes later, the head of the Gestapo, his name was Altman, he came down to take the people out to the forest. So, this guy, he ask him, this uh, this Jewish policeman said, "What, what does he do here." He said, "they arbeite here--I'm working there." So here was another luck. I was safe from to be, from being killed. So when I came into the ghetto, he let me out and here is hunger, nobody had anything to eat.

We have to reload.

When I was in Warsaw, before I got in the Warsaw, being outside the ghetto, coming from, from Dobrov, with, with ammunition, the uh, when I ran away from the underground, and I went lived in Prague, and -----was a big apartment house, maybe 400 people. When the ghetto in Warsaw was created, the gentile people who lived in Warsaw and the Jewish people had to move out from their apartment, they used to change apartment. People used to change. They had little signs on the street, if you want a room, you're in the ghetto, you contact me, and the people used to change apartments. So this apartment house had about 400 Jewish families all of the sudden had this 400 gentile families. So, we got in this apartment house, we tried to get a place where to live, so the superintendent from the apartment house, her name was Fojjahovah, and his name was Fojja. In Poland usually a man is Fojja, and this, her name was Fojjehovah. Okay this is

-----the name. And she let us stand, let us live with there. How this, it was a one big room and the room was divided, not that way, just that way in half, and the, you know, on the, you going on top there, and she gave us a place on top to live up there. And, when we came in there, we didn't know that, that she was running a bordello. She had a a whorehouse. Since she was the superintendant, she can open up the doors anytime somebody ring the bell to let them in and go in there. She was always drinking and she was always drinking and didn't talk anything but about the Jews. The Jews who did that, and the Jews did that, on account of the Jews, they suffered. My friend Zelig was sitting up there hearing all those stories, and watching those German soldiers come in with those girls, he was always holding his gun, he said, "Let me go down and kill her, kill her," I said, "Zelig, take it easy. We're not going to come out winners here, now just take it easy. Let's wait." She was, she was so hateful to the Jews, and the smugglers, and this was close to the railroad station, the people who used to smuggle food into the Warsaw ghetto used to come into this apartment house, sell their goods what they brought with them. In the morning, when they could go out, 5 o'clock, they used to go back to the train, and go back home where they came from. 90% of those people, some people used to bring eggs, some chickens, some this and that, used to be you know like a black market. Was there, a girl was coming there, and she was uh, sitting, she was selling eggs. Fojjehovah, the, the, the, the mama from the Bordel, her, from the bordello, she comes over to me, she says, "Sigmund, you're a good-looking guy. Why don't you go out there and talk to this girl, and find out, I think she is a Jew. And if she's a Jew I call the Gestapo, we're going to kill her, she doesn't want to sell me eggs." I said, "Fojjehovah, what do want (clears throat) she probably sell the eggs to somebody, she has already a customer." "Okay, well when you go out and tell, tell her, find out if she's a Jew." I said, "How can I find out she's a Jew?" "You find out, if she doesn't want to go with you to sleep, or to the bed or something, you know she's a Jew, because our girls are all -----, look at Zosha, look at this one look at this one." I said, "Oh my god, ---- what she is talking about here to me?" So I walked out there, we had a word in the ghettos. The word was called Amho. Amho was a password. Amho means one of us. If you want to find out if somebody's a Jew, you said the word, "Amho." If they answer you "Amho," then you know they're Jews. Okay? Nobody knew this word, this was created during the ----- (Clears throat) And I walked out to this girl, and I talked to her, I said, "Listen, why don't you sell some eggs to Fojjehovah," and so on and so on. In the conversation, I said the word Amho. And I talked to her some more, and she didn't answer. I said to myself, "Okay, so she's probably not Jewish." Then I said to her, talking some more, I said "If you bring some eggs tomorrow, at least leave one dozen eggs for Fojjehovah so she's not going to bother you," and I said "Amho." She said, "Amho." (Pause) When she said the word amho to me, I said, "Please, don't come here anymore because they're going to kill you." And she left. After that, a few days there, we could not take it because I said, "Look at what they're doing around. What are they doing? They don't -----, Fojjehovah adored us. She says, "You're the guys who gonna save Poland. You're the people who gonna do everything for us. Those Jews every time I find a Jew I kill him. How could you stay there and listen to all those stories. I couldn't take it, so this is the time when I went into the Warsaw, to the Warsaw ghetto. When I came into the Warsaw ghetto, and as I tell you before, when I jump, and the Polocks, then after that, and they ran away, and I got on the train, the German stopped me there, and I got on the train and I came home. When I came home, I was arrested, I told you that before, I was arrested, a Jewish police let me out. Now being in the ghetto now, you have to find a way how to make a living. Was impossible, people were dying. A typhus epidemic was going around. People were dying in the thousands. My father didn't want to move out of the house, he was afraid to move. The only way, to me, I had Aryan papers in my pocket. I'm the only

one who can go out and bring some in food to the house. So, I find out not far away was a city called Czestochowa. The Polish people admired the city because they had there like a holy place for them, they go there took pilgrims every year. I find out they have some uh -----there, you know, very important things was in the ghetto to have candles, candles was a big item. Because we didn't have no lights, ----- candles you could sell. So I used to travel in Czestochowa, and Piertkovnova, I used to bring on suitcase full of candles, used to sell in the ghetto, buy bread, and feed my brother, my, uh my father and my sister. We, uh all doing fine. One day, I came into Czestochowa, and somebody offered me to buy some salami. All right. So I bought some salami, a full suitcase of salami, about 10 or 15 sticks of long salami. Was very heavy, finally I got into the train in Czestochowa, and I said to myself, "Now, I'm going to go home. Now I made a good buy." Fine. Was sitting in the train, in the train when I opened up the compartment, you see the Polish trains are not like you see today. Every compartment has a door to open up out, you know, to go out. Some of them have you can go into another compartment. I came into ----- a girl was in, a farm girl was there, a blond girl was sitting there, she had a little uh, um basket covered up with a towel. She was sitting right there in the train, I mean, just sitting there, and I put my suitcase on top. And I was sit down there too, and I ask her, her name. She told me her name was something, -----I don't remember exactly, and I told her my name was Sigmund. "Where are you going?" She said "I'm going to Pietkov." Fine. We're travelling...I don't know how long, about 25 minutes, the stop, the train stopped for another station. The door of the compartment opens up. Two Germans walk in. Two SS men walked into the same compartment. Sitting there taking off the white gloves, and they start talking to themselves. I understood every word they're saying. I don't know if she understood. I understood every word, and said -----one guy said to the other, they smelled the salami, the garlic they smell. So he, one, one German says to the other, the Poland, "-----." You know the Polish they stink from, from uh garlic and onions, the Polocks, that we are stinking. I I don't know nothing happened. He said, "-----," the Poles look how they're stinking, they were sitting there, he was telling -----, was knocking in his hand, and he looked up there, and I said to myself, "Oh my God, what's going to happen?" At this moment, when he was looking up there, I start urinating in my pants. I was urinating from being afraid. She noticed something. She turns around, she said, "Sigmund, would you like to eat some lunch?" in Polish to me. I said, "Yeah, I'm hungry." She opened up the basket, took out a piece of salami, cutted a piece, gave it to me with a piece of bread, and she ate, start eating it. So one German says to the other, "See, I told you that the Polocks they stink, they smelling from salami." And my mind was going through, why did she do that, you know, what happened then? Then, next station, the, the two Germans walked out from this compartment, both of us were, you know, travelling, I came home with that salami, had been scared to death. I said to myself, "I'm not travelling no more, even if I have to die. I'm not travelling no more." Come to the ghetto next day, I go down to the marketplace, start to sell the stuff. Who you think I see on the street? This girl from the train. She was also a Jewish girl who was smuggler, she was smuggling. She understood what those two Germans were saying. And then, acce--you know, and they accept it, so after that, I was afraid to travel, because the danger was so great, not because as a smuggler, yourself, I was afraid of being capartmentured, and I was a coward, really a coward, I did a lot of things, and still I was a coward, I was so afraid to die. I was just hoping, I, I didn't want to do anything, so next day, a few days later, matter of fact, I said to my father, he was a brewmeister, and we used to sell, buy a lot of bottles from the glass factory. So, we used to deliver, before the war, sand to make the glass, okay, so he knew the Germans who owned the factory, were German people who owned the factory, glass factory. So he says to me, "Why

don't you go down to Mr. Fogley, tell him who you are." A lot of Jewish people already worked in this factory, in the glass factory.

We have to reload.

After a while, we were in the in the, working in the glass factory, after a while we heard rumors that the ghetto gonna liquidated. They're gonna make us form a ghetto, which in this time, we already moved several times to smaller apartments, smaller apartments, you know, different places. One morning, and they used to take out the Jewish people by streets. ----- And a lot of young people, like I worked in glass factory had what they called arbeitshein, means a work permit. So the first day, when they start liquidating the ghetto, I'm telling you about mine, what mine experience. I don't how what in other places what happened the streets, mine experience, they came on the yard, in the house, the Jewish policemen, they said everybody to come down. Okay, with working papers, non-working papers, everybody out, come down on, on the street. So, of course, we all went down in the yard, was standing, the Ukrainian came in, and they looked everybody who has working papers, okay? So I had a working paper, my sister did not have. She didn't want to work. My father did not have, I had a working paper. So they told us, the working people on the side, and they're gonna take us out to the, to the factory, -----have to go. In this moment, my father knew exactly what's going to happen. He walked over, he spoke perfect Russian, he went over to this Ukrainian, he says to him, "Sir, can you let me talk to my son for a few minutes." He didn't want it, I don't know, my father gave him something, whatever might be the case, I don't know, I was all mixed up, I didn't know, I was scared, and I was, didn't know what's going on. He walked over to him, and my father walked over to me, and he says to me, "Son, I want you make me a promise." Before the war I used to act, and for Jewish people acting on the stage was like a disgrace for a family. My father says to me, "Please promise me that you're never going to be an actor, professional actor. He shake hands with me. An hand, a handshake in our tradition is very holy. We call it (blows nose) ----- . I'm sorry till today what I did, oh I was never happy for what I did. I was, I'm very sorry, I should not promise. Then he says to me, "Son, I would like for you do me one favor, you don't have to shake hands on this. Pick a day in the year, one day in the year, light a candle, go to the synagogue, and say kaddish. This was the last word my father told me. And by shaking hands, I'm till today, I'm sorry I never, I could have worked professionally, I never did it. I kept my promise all those years. I still keep it till today. After that when they were liquidated, they took us all out to this factory, and were there for 8 days until they created a small ghetto, a ghetto of 2 blocks, or 3 blocks, I don't remember exactly to be specific about it, how many blocks were there, in the Jewish section of town, and the 8 days we're there outside in the factory, we slept there, and then they took us back into the small ghetto, and everybody, were 3-4 boys got up, and 4-5 families, you know, we slept there. A lot of people made bunkers, and we were hiding in bunkers, you know. After the liquidation, a lot of them came out, and a lot of them still were hiding. Matter of fact, I found a girl, the apartment they gave us was double wall, and one night I heard some noises, and we opened up the walls, there was my brother and my sister were hiding in there, you know. Anyway, was in this small ghetto for a while, and then, I don't know how long it took, 6 months, 3 months, 4 months, it's so, for me, to be exact dates, I don't remember the dates. I know it was 1942. This I remember. Finally rumors came along, they're going to liquidate the small ghetto. They had 3 factories in Pietkov, they had Hortensia, a glass factory what make bottles and all kind of crystals, they had another factory called Kada, where they make plate glass. They had third factory, where they make furniture. -----Was a lot

of Jewish people went to work for these factories, and they had places there, they lived there, they slept there, matter of fact, a lot of them, till the Russian came into Poland, I think a lot of them were safe, there was just like, Pietkov was very lucky by having those 3 places where people worked there. I did not want to stay in the, I could have stayed there because I knew the German, the directors from the factory, the problem came in, I was too privileged, and the Jewish police, some of them were very jealous, so I was afraid some of them might do something, and I gonna have to pay for it with my life, because was, jealousy was very bad. One had a little better than the other one, even with my people, still, I had to watch myself, so I went to the president of the ghetto, his name was Vorshotsky, he was a very dear friend of my fathers, and I told him, "I understand that you have tomorrow a transport going to different working camps out of the city." He said, "You're in there working in the Hutercar, what are you afraid of?" I said I want to get out of here because this policeman, Yoina Levy is his name, he died here already, he is the man, he has an eye on me, and I'm afraid he's gonna do something. He works with the Gestapo, and I don't want to be around. I want to get out. He said, "Okay, you have a transport tomorrow go to Scarshitsko, one goes to Brishiniv. Brishiniv was supposed to be a working camp, they had there, pavers, shoemakers, furniture makers, sweater makers--Germans set up factories there, and they need some professional people. So I signed myself up as a tailor. He told me to do that. And early in the morning, about 4 o'clock, they put us all to, you know, on the plaza???" and the Ukrainian came, tried to take us out to the train. Being there, a guy from the Kada, from the Glass factory, they sent a guy to looking for me because the director of the factory knew me, and I was missing at work, so he sent somebody to pick me up from the ghetto and bring me to the factory. I was hiding, and I got on the transport, and I came into Brishiniv, this work uh, concentra-uh, labor camp. Was not a concentration camp then, was a labor camp. You had shoemakers, men and women worked together. It was fairly, in the beginning was fairly good until, they, fairly good, and they gave us 3 rations a day. We work hard, 12 hours a shi--12 hour shift, no, 8 hour shift, I think because was three shifts working in this factory. And it was, it was not as bad as in the ghetto, was better than the ghetto because they fed us. Even with the guards, the Ukrainian all around every day, somebody else got shot or got killed, or still the people that worked they didn't get, you know, they didn't get in trouble, they didn't smuggle or they didn't do this, you know how they every time, even if you don't look straight in the eyes of a Ukrainian they kill you. If you look straight in his eyes or you pass by something, he just took off his gun and kill you, for no reason whatsoever. For no reason whatsoever they kill you. Until they made a concentration camps out of it. They make a concentration camp out of it, became very bad, I mean this was bad. You had to, when they went to work, they used to lock up the shops okay? When you went night time to barracks, nine o'clock you have to go into the barrack ----- . They used to count everybody up that went into the barrack. They closed the wooden barrack, in case god forbid a fire happen, everybody is dead. No way out, you know. So was very bad. Until, end of 1943 ----- . I don't know exactly but sometime in 1943, the Russian army, came, start moving in closer, whatever it was in those days. So they wouldn't, they say they're going to liquidate it, ----- . Where they gonna take us? They didn't know. Finally one day they take us all on appel ----- , they count us all up. Ukrainian soldier with us, they take us to a train, put us on train, we travel, everybody asked, "Where we going?" Nobody knows. "Where we going?" Nobody knows. We're sitting in the train. Finally after a day, I think, a day or night, -----day and night travelling in the train. One morning the trains open up, some look at people with striped suits, I have never seen that because we didn't wear striped suits in the Breshin, we didn't wear striped suits in the ghetto. See strong young boys with striped suits standing around. Open up the cars, and told us to get out. We all got out, stand

up in line. One guy, what matter of fact, later I worked in the same commando. This what they call, they call the Canada, nickname Canada. They came in, and they said to us, "You know, you're very lucky today." I said, "What you mean we're very lucky?" He said, "You're lucky Mengele is not here. Secondly you're lucky you came from a working camp." I said, "What he's talking about." You know, he just passed by and said it. I don't know what he's talking about, Mengele, Canada, who, what place is it? He said, " This is Birkenau." I never heard of Birkenau. I heard of Treblinka. I heard of Majdanek. I didn't hear about Birkenau. I heard about Auschwitz. I didn't hear about Birkenau. Birkenau was...

We have to reload.

Okay, I want you to just back up and tell me how this was Birkenau, and you hadn't heard of it, and then what you ended up doing.

Okay, I'm coming to it. I'm getting you slowly, slowly, slowly getting there. Okay? When we got off the train, they took us to Entlausung, what they call. Entausung is a place...

Wait. Stop. Let's just cut for a minute.

Take 5 is up.

Okay.

When we got off the train, they took us into the shower, what they call a Entlausung. When we got in there, the people who worked there, was also, they all were haftlings, you know, some were barbers, they used to shave the head, you look everybody and the hair, they saw something they used to shave. Well I was lucky they didn't shave my head. We went into a shower, we showered, and the guys that worked there, they told us, we are very lucky, everybody tells me I'm very lucky. What is the luck about it? I did not know. I really did not know what's going on. Lucky. So finally they hand us out clothes. This was, for all those problems, the suffering, with the need for so long, and everything else, just everybody starts laughing. A guy was tall, they gave him short pants, and a short jacket, short sleeves. A guy was short, they gave him a, a suit, we looked at each other and like we looked like comedians. We didn't get stripes, and so we get some suits they painted in the back with a -----, whatever it is. Finally they took us off, they send us in what they call quarantine. Quarantine was before you go to working camp was a quarantine. I was assigned to a Block 12, and I worked in this block, the head of the block, they call them Blockeldeste, there was a Polock, not a six, a Jew, a Pol, a Polish guy, his name was Franik, Frank. And he looked familiar to me. He looked at me, and he said, "Ay, Sigmund!" He recognized me. He was one of the guys what I met in Warsaw in the underground, he was capartmentured, and they sent him into Auschwitz. He was the Blockeldeste, I said, "Oh my God, I have a, a guy here," you know, which was very helpful because he gave me an extra piece of bread, an extra piece of soup. During the day, everybody had to stay outside, we couldn't go in, in the barracks after they count us up and the quarantine, they everybody used to, to get in with the Latrine??? we used to stay because it was warm, you know, what everybody was standing around there. I had a chance, I used to go back to the barrack. And we had to be in the quarantine, they used to

come in every day and they give numbers. Mine mind was, I don't want a number. If I have a number, I'm not going to be able to get out of here. I be a a goner. So I didn't want to get a number, I was running from barrack to barrack not to get a number. Every time they came in a place to give numbers, I ran away, I didn't want to get a number because I'm always hiding till the last minute. One evening this Frank says to me, "Sam, you better you," "Sigmund," he called me Sigmund, he knew me by the Sigmund, he didn't know I am Jewish. He finally find out, later I told him. He said, "Sigmund, if you don't have a number, you're not going to be able to go into work in the Sielager," what they call the working lager. They catch you without a number, you be in trouble. You know, this and that, crematorium. I said, "What's going on here?" He said, "Those chimneys there, you're lined up over there." I said, "What are you talking about. You're crazy." He said, "Yeah, you're lined up over there. If you, you, you, you know, this is the crematorium, they burn people here." I said, "You must be mad. I don't believe it." I didn't believe it. You smell the sweetness in nighttime, you see the, the chimney, the fire come out from the chimney, and I could not believe that something like this happened. One day, when the appel, an appel, you know when they count up the people, every morning they used to sit there, and count up. One day in the middle in the day, they call us to get out of the barracks, and everybody stay in line. And we stood in line. Two or three Germans, don't remember how many, two or three, I think about 3 of them, came and one of them stayed in the front he said, "Who is from uh, Swidding?" Swidding means a, a brother and a sister born at the same time. Twins. "Who comes from twins? Step out?" Who does this, step out, you know, ask all those questions. Then all the sudden he says, "Who had an Aryan mother and a Jewish father, or a Jewish father and an Aryan mother," you know opposites. I was ready to step out. I said, well, mine is a chance, my mother comes from Germany, her name is Hannaman, maybe it'll be something good. I tried to step out, this Frank, the Kapo was going behind me, he hit me so hard, he pushed me back in the line. I said, "Frank, what are you doing?" He said, "Stay there you son of a bitch, don't move. If you move, I, I kill you myself." Fine. After they picked up a few guys, one what had an Irish mother, one, one is this, one he had twins, one come from there. They walked away. He calls me into his room, you know, the Kapos have a little room up in the front of the barrack, he calls me in there, he said, "Sigmund, you know what I'm telling you? You're the luckiest guy I was there right behind you because right now you'd probably be in Block 10, make experiments on you from Dr. Mengele. I said, "Who is Mengele?" I even didn't know who Mengele is being there already 4 weeks, and see what's going. I did not believe it. You couldn't make me believe that people are burned there every day. Finally one day, they took me in the lager, and they took me out from the quarantine, took me to the lager, to work in the works commando. They took me in Block 24. One side of the barrack was people who supposed to work in the railroad track, and the other side, I saw a bunch of guys, fat, strong, beautiful dress, you know, the, the striped suits are nice and clean, their shoes are you know, clean, I said to myself, "Who are those people?" Oh they are working. And I used to go out to work every day, carry those barrels, and so hard work, I thought I gonna, I gonna die. So I met a guy who worked in this commando. I ask him, "What commando is this?" He said, "Transport Commando." "What is transport commando?" He said, "A transport commando, people come in, we help them get off the train." I said, "This what all you're doing here?" He said, "Yeah, that's what we're doing." The kapo from the transport commando, his name was David, he came from the town from Lodz, and I recognized, he was sent into Auschwitz in 1942, he did something wrong in the ghetto, so they sent him to Auschwitz. To

Auschwitz/Birkenau. In this day, I don't know, 4 guys got in, they took him into the gas chambers. Why and what, I don't know. The rumors were going around, I'm just telling what I heard. This I did not see. Because they talked, they, they talked to people from a transport. They wrote down their number supposedly and they sent them to the gas chamber. How true this is, I don't know, I did not see it, so I cannot tell you how true it is. I heard it. It was going around between the boys who worked, there was 200 people worked in this commando. The nickname for it was, they called Canada because they said it's an abundant of food. I saw those guys. They didn't eat the rations. They used to give it away on this side, to us. I met this guy Schlemmer, he gave me his food, and he talked to me every evening, I used to ask him what he's doing, I ask him about the ovens, he said, "Yeah, it's true." I said, "I don't believe it." He told me, said, "You better believe it." I said, "I don't believe it." He said, "You better believe it." It was going on and on for several days. One day, when those guys were missing to work, they need 4 more to replace them, so he says to me, "Go over to David, ask him to take you into this commando, you know, to this work commando." Because I saw those guys have, they have vodka, they have salami was hanging on the -----, they're, they're covered with, with down pillows they're sleeping on. They're wearing silk uh, uh shirts. I mean, they their boots, they're dressed, I'm mean I, I want to live like that too, you know. I walk over there, and I said, "David, you want to take me in this commando?" He said, "You son of a bitch," he took his stick, hit me over the head, and didn't want to talk to me. I said, "David, I know you." He said, "Okay, you know me." He hit me again, he didn't want to talk to me. The next day I talked to him again, the same story. Finally this guy, I went over to him, he said, "Ay, why don't you take in this guy, he's a friend of mine, take him in commando." He said, "Okay," come over to me, said, "You want to work in the commando?" "Yeah." "Okay." So he went out, he went to the Shreipster, Shreipster is the office, what they ever the Germans have, their bookkeeping was so precise, everybody with his name and his number was on a card, okay? The people who worked in this commando, when he came back, he said, "You want it? You can have it. You'll never see the world again." Because what they said, the people who work in the Zonder Commando means the people who burned the people after they were gassed, the Canada, the people who worked in the transport commando, they should never see the world because they is witness to the history, unlike us. And the people who worked in the, I forgot the exact name in German that they sort the clothes next to the crematorium, there are people what are sorting the clothes you know from the dead people. Next to us was a camp they called the Gypsy camp. Okay? Well, I don't know, they say, how many thousands of gypsies were there? I don't know, they were there with families. One claims were 18,000, some people claim it was 27,000, I don't know the actual figures, I cannot make a statement about it. I know was a lot of families with children. I have seen them playing there because the barbed, you could see through the wires, through the electric wires, you could see back and forth. So, one day we got up in the morning, so finally he took me in the commando, and I work with Schlemmer on the side. The first transport I remember was a transport came from Hungary. A Hungarian Transport. He told me, "When you come out there, whatever they tell you, do. Don't talk to nobody. Don't open up your mouth. If anybody ask you a question, don't say nothing. You're dumb, deaf and dumb. When the Germans give the orders to open up the cars, you just open up the cars, help the people out, put them in line, get back in the cars, take out the luggage and set them up." This...

We have to reload.

Now I can go have a cigarette too.

When I went on the first transport to work, when my friend told me what to do, this what I did, and I took out everything, and I still, I could not apprehend what's going on. I did not, with David, he in, like, taking out the luggage, I saw a lady ask the Germans soldier what, because Germans brought the people in, not Ukrainians, Germans, SS brought in people in from, from the transport, what I have seen, maybe some other transport, somebody else brought in people. -----, he said to her in German, "Don't worry about it. You have your name on your luggage? Your luggage will come after, you know, will come after you." So, I asks, this, my friend of mine, "what in -----you talking about?" He said, "Don't be silly. Don't ask so many questions. Just go to work. Just work, do your job, don't talk nothing." Meanwhile, they used, what they used to do my commando, they used to loot, people used to bring everything with them because that's all they had. Some of them brought whiskey, some of them brought diamonds, some of them brought gold, some of them brought everything, everything that people, whatever they had, they brought with them because the German suppose told them they're going to resettle them in other places, so they brought everything with them. So they find some, a lot of food, in, in the cars, and now, this the reason why this commando had so much to eat, and so much everything else. The ----- never came home, so this, we came home, I said home, we came back to the barracks after, you know when we cleaned up those trains, we had to clean them so thoroughly that like nobody was ever sitting in this car. They used to come and inspect. When the car was ready for another, to go back and bring another transport of people in. This was our job, to wash it and clean up everything in there. After this was, I think one transport I worked in Czechoslovakia, and then, for a few days, we didn't do nothing, so they sent us in to the, next to the crematorium, what was they call, I forgot the German name for it. What they used to assort the clothes. When I came in there, and they assigned me to a barrack, to assort men's clothes, children's clothes, and they told us to look in places where something hidden, diamonds, whatever take it out, they had a box for us to throw it in. One of my friends said, "If you find a diamond, swallow it. When you came home, for this, we can buy vodka, we can buy salami, whatever you find, little small, what you can swallow, swallow." When I was working there the same day, I said to myself, "Now, I see it's true what they're telling me. Why they have so much clothes? Must be from those people what they came in transp--you know, on this transport. I still couldn't apprehend this. I worked there, I came home very disgusted. I mean, back to the barracks. And I was sitting there crying. All night I was crying, and I want to commit suicide. I said, "I can't." Since I learned in ----- a lot, I said to myself, "Let me ask my god a question." We the Jewish people, every day of atonement, Rosh Hashanah, we're going to the synagogue, and we're praying for God when he makes his judgment on us, we s--and we say in the prayers who should die by fire, who should die by water, who should die by knife, who should die by this. I said, "Almighty God, tell me, all those people commit this crime, they have to be burned alive. Tell me, where are you? I'm supposed to be one of the chosen people. What are you doing to us." Should I answer. No answer. A call came, "Raus!" Somebody called the German. A kapo said a transport came. We went out to transport. We worked. I worked in the transport, the night commando, and the, the, the people from the Lodz ghetto, from Lichmenstadt, used to come, and they liquidate the Lodz ghetto, this was already 1944. I think was June or July. I don't remember exactly, I think it was July. June. The first Jewish transport from the ghetto came. In my commando where I worked, what was a man, who, he was in there from the ghetto, ----- arrived with two children, in the ghetto. Every day, a transport, he worked night shift, for that, he

want to work every shift. You know, night shift worked separate, day shift worked separate. At nighttime a transport came in, the night shift went out. The daytime, the day shift went out. So every time a transport came in from the Lodz ghetto, he want to go to work, because he was waiting for his wife and children to come, maybe he can do something. One day we're going out to work. He worked -----going on day shift. We go out to work, a transport came in from the Lodz ghetto, and the doors open up, and I see, and I open up the doors, and some uh, people I knew from Lodz, "Aye, Sigmund, you're here, what's going on here?" I could not say a word. What are you going to say? You don't say nothing. You run away like you don't hear. "Hey what's the matter with you? You don't want to talk to me -----." You can't say anything. This man noticed his wife and children. He went over to Mengele. Mengele was standing there like this. Never forget this. And I was standing in the car, trying to sweep the car, you know, afterwards, you know people going in in front of him, he's on the back the cars already, empty, we just cleaned them then. I'm standing there, he goes over to Mengele, he said, "Doctor," he said, "I'm here for so long." He said, "My wife is a strong woman, my children. You know, why don't you let them go into the camp." So Mengele puts his hand like this, I never forget this. He looks at him, he said, "You love your wife so much?" He said, "Yeah, I love my wife and my children." He said, "Why don't you go with them?" He says, "Doctor please, they can do it," and he fell on his knees. And he begged him, so he hit him to push him away. Finally, Mengele just pointed his fingers to go to the left, his wife and his children. The man ran away. He ran into a car, and a few minutes later, I walked in the car, he was sitting in the corner, and he's crying. So, a friend, a friend of mine said, "Who are we to judge? Can I judge what he did? If he go with her, he wouldn't be here, if he doesn't go with her, I don't know. How can I judge." How can we judge him, what he did. He lets all his wife and his children go to the gas chamber. That's all. What can he do? He couldn't do nothing, and I can't be the judge. After the transport, I came home, I said to myself, "No," I just could not take it. You've seen the gas chamber, the ovens burning, after every transport, took maybe a half an hour, an hour, you could see the flames coming out, you know from the, from the ovens burning. And I said to myself, "I have to finish my life. I just cannot take it." I just could not take it. I know, I knew in my heart, I probably never come out of here alive anyway because I worked in the transport commando, I see it everything what's happening. I worked in the Kleibens, I've forgotten the German name for it. I worked in a place where I sort the clothes. I worked over there. I cannot take it. I have to, I have to kill myself. Every morning, used to get up in the morning, in uh, in Birkenau, you used to see bodies hanging on the electric wire because it was very high powered electric wire, so people used to go and just grab the wire and want to die, they died themselves. The back door from the barracks was going out to the wires. I tried to commit suicide, I said the best way for me is to catch the wire. So during the day, I went out and I count the steps, how many steps is to the wire, right? So, I know in the nighttime, I close my eyes, because after all, I'm a coward, I don't want to die. I just want to die and I don't want to die. Right? So I go out and I count out was 8 steps. 1, 2, 3, to the wires and just stretch out your hand, catch the wire, that was all over. Okay? Nighttime everybody was asleep and I get up from the barracks. My friend says to me, "Sam, where you going?" I said, "I'm going to the Latrine." Yeah, I'm going to, you had a big barrel there where you urinate. And the door from the back part was open because you have guards, they are not afraid you run away, you know. I pushed the door open, I go out, and I counted, I said, close my eyes, count, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, I stretched my hand, open up my eyes, the wire is maybe 3 feet away from me. I said, "What the hell did I do?" And by the way, you get scared. You're scared right, you want to die, you're scared maybe the guard saw you up there, he's going to shoot you right, so you run back to the barrack. Run back to the barrack. Said, what did I

do wrong here. I counted right. Why the wire moved away? What is this? I said, I'm going to try it again. Next day in the morning, was no transport coming, they took me in to assort the clothes. Next to the crematorium, and next to the crematorium was the hospital. A friend of mine was very sick in this hospital, and somebody come, you know, the, between the hospital and the crematorium, in this camp, where they assort the clothes, they had some uh covers, like this, covered on the uh, oh on the wires so nobody can see, look through. Okay? Only thing is, you could holler at somebody. So somebody hollered my name, and he said to throw him over something, money or somewhat I can't find here, to throw it over to him, so maybe we can buy the German out and we can get him out from the hospital, otherwise, be on, on selection, and he gonna die, it's a friend of mine. So I find a military, you know a little military -----, what the Germans eat in it, you know, the food, what you call it, how you call this, a little container. I put some soup in it, and I found some gold pieces, and I threw it in there, close it and throw it over, over the wire. A German SS saw me, he was a Czechoslovakian. What I did. He grabbed me. Said, "What did you threw?" I said, "I didn't threw nothing." "What did you threw there?" I said, "I didn't throw nothing." He said "You did throw something." I said, "No, I did not." He said-----
----- So he took me into the barrack, they had a long oven in the barrack. You know, in middle the barrack they have an oven. The oven had an opening. -----

We have to reload.

-----, so I can go smoke a cigarette.

I remember it. I'll tell you exactly. Okay, I put some money, I put some soup in the contain, and I find some gold pieces, you know, over there, and I saw a friend of mine, had a few pieces what they find small, I throw it in there, and I throw it across the wire, the German caught me, and he says to me, "You threw something there." I said, "No, I did not." He said, "You did." I said, "Did not." So he took me into a barrack, they had a long oven in there, and there was an opening there, they put my head in a bag??? in the oven, took my pants down, and slapped with a stick, 25 sticks. He said, "Did you threw something there?" I said, "No." He said, "You threw something there, no?" Another 25. After the first 10 or 15 I didn't felt anything anymore, he just beat the hell out of me. So finally they took me outside, was a barrel outside, put me in a barrel, and they pushed the barrel down the block to two of my prisoners, pushed the barrel back, push it back, and I was all dizzy. I couldn't so they took me outside, again. Put me back in the oven. Started hitting me again, I was already completely out. Didn't know what's going on. So I had one German, another German soldier was standing, standing there next to this guy who beat the hell out of me. He says, "You beat the hell out of him already so much, and he said that he didn't do it, he probably didn't do it, why don't you leave him alone." So he said to me, "You get out of here, you -----." He said, "Get out, you dog." He throw me outside. The boys picked me up. They find some alcohol, they put it in a big bucket, and put me in this alcohol because I was all black in the back of me, all black. And finally the...finally that went back to the barracks in the evening, and they put some alcohol all at night on the, on back of me to get out the blackness, which next day, I, if a transport come in, I have to go to work. So next, same night, two nights later, was no transport coming in. And, I said to myself, "No, I have to do it again. I have to commit, I cannot take it, I have to do it." So I go out, I count the steps again, and I wasn't, there were, if you have to live, nothing going to be in the way. Would explain like, like luck or from God, I don't know, I cannot, have a any explanation. It happened to me. How, why it happened, it happened later in another camp too

something like that. Next day I go out, same evening, I count the step again, it's again 8 steps. Okay? The night I go out, start walking, counted out 8, all of the sudden I fell down in a little hole, a hole was there and I fell down. Got up, ran back to the barracks. Next day, in the morning, I go up there, I say, "Look, now," I said, "What's going on there?" So I remembered when I was in Pietkov at home, when the typhus epidemic was going on. I was very sick, I had the typhus. I remember laying and have a lot, high fever, laying in you know, in my sleep. Because of my, my, my -----this what happened. I had a dream. Had a dream. I dreamt I see people, somebody calls into a, called me to a judgment or something, somebody, to a court. I look in the court, I see 3 people sitting in the court, and the uh one on the side was a man, what I knew, he was my teacher, was a rabbi in the city, the Rabbi Shapiro. The other man, sitting next in the corn, in the middle was a man with a long gray beard, uh, nose like this, was sitting. Next to him was another man with a --- black beard. And he said to this guy, the guy in the middle said, "Why did you brought him here?" The witness who committed, the guy who committed this crime is not even born. Send him back." And open, and I all of the sudden in this dream I open up my eyes, I see my father had the prayer shawl on, two candles on the table burning, and he says the prayer over a dead person, my father, over me, and I open up my eyes, and I said, my father, said to my sister, "Well, he is back, he is back with us." He took off the shawl, and you know, and he blow out the candles, and he wipe me off from the sweat. I was, I was here. A few days later he says to me, "Why don't you go to somebody who can translate your dream." This man, this came back to me when I was sitting there. So, I went in the city to an old Jew, they call him Percival, a guy who translate dreams, okay? And I went to him and I told him the story, what happened, so my, when I told my father, he said, "Who was there?" I told him, "Rabbi Shapiro, a man with a long beard, and another one who..." You know the guy with the long beard, this is your great, great, great grandfather, he's -----, he's a righteous man, his name is Dr. Bernard. Matter of fact, years later, now, I find in a book, the same picture, the way I saw it in my dream. I have never seen this man. He lived in the 17th Century. How could I know the man? And the other guy who is next to him, a guy with a black beard, my father tells me, "This is your grandfather, you're named after him." I said, "I have never seen my grandfather. I don't know how he looked like." So, in the moment, this came back to me. When I tried to do this, I said, "Oh my God, maybe this what it is. Maybe I have to be in this world to do something." Which, matter of fact, I'm here, I'm here to tell the story. People might not believe it, but I say, No, it happened. It actually happened. I mean, this what actually happened. And this is, this my story, this it happened. Being in Auschwitz, after that I didn't try anymore. I told my friend, Schlemmer, the story, he said, "Listen, I want to stick to you. This what you had. Matter of fact, you lived through the war too." When we were in Auschwitz, I don't know how, two little boys, maybe age of 10, got into our barracks. To our barracks. Me and my friend used to take care, took care of those two little boys. One guy was Herbie, he was from Czechoslovakia. And one guy, -----his name was Jo, Jo, Joseph. He was from Lodz. How they got into our barracks, I don't know. Every time they had a spare???, what they call it, everybody has to go in the barrack, and they have a selection. Mengele comes into the barrack, makes a selection, takes out some people. We used to hide those 2 boys under the bed so they couldn't find them because ----- didn't have no chance but to die. One day was a selection, and they came into our barracks to make a selection. Now this is another story what is, really actually, I believe in it. Mengele came in made a selection. And they take us, tell us to strip naked. Well, we strip naked. And we used to go from, around them -----in front of Mengele. Okay? He looks you over. Or you have some spots or this or that. All of the sudden I start going, my friend tells me, "Sam, you have bad spots on your shoulder." Maybe from the bedbugs or

something, you know, I had red spots. By running like this in front of him, I saw a little towel, a towel, a little rag laying there, I took the rag, just throw it over my shoulder, just like, I don't know why, I just pick it up, throw it over my shoulder. Came in front of Mengele, he tells me turn around, turn around, you go, said go. If he will notice these spots, goodbye, I'm not here. -----
---another thing. So being in Auschwitz, now finally, the Russians came in close, and we decided 1944, that was 44, we decided to make an uprising in Auschwitz. We had some people who worked in Underground. We had some people who used to buy guns and everything else from the German, from the German soldiers, whatever it is, they brought in some guns. I was not that deep involved because, I was too afraid for my life. I don't want to get involved because they capartmentured -----, and they put in the bunker, they kill them, you know, I was try to stay away from it. I was involved in a way by donating, by doing things, by telling something, you know, all the, otherwise no. One day, that the Zonder Commando blew up a crematorium. Was an hour or two late, or an hour or two early, I don't know. The sirens start coming up, out, and was very foggy, all of the sudden a fog came down, and they suppose to Czechoslovakia and the Polish Underground supposed to come in, accordingly what I heard, they're supposed to come into the camp to help us out in the uprising. Germans came in with the dogs. Everybody went into the barracks. The crematorium, one of them was blown up, no me, no, nothing happened, I don't know how many people got shot or caught, I didn't hear I didn't know. Nothing happened with the uprising. Only crematorium what was blown up, okay? A few days later, we heard they're gonna, the Germans gonna stop gassing, no transports came in. One transport came in, yeah, one transport came in from Theresienstadt, I remember, and I open up the car, this is a little short story what I tell you. I don't know, I did right thing I did the wrong thing. When I opened up the car, I saw a young lady with 2 children by, and holding in her hand, okay? By her hand. I just couldn't see her, when she goes with those 2 children, she is dead. The children are dead anyway. Don't make any difference. The children gonna die. So, I ask her, I said, "Is this, is this your children?" Just like mumbling to her, "Is this your children?" you know, just like that. She said, "No, I'm the Nana." I said, "Give the children, is the mother here?" She said, "Yeah." "Why don't you give the children to the mother." I said, she said, "Why?" I said, "It's bad here, bad." That's all I said to her. She turns around and calls, the German guard was standing there. She called the German guard, and says to him in German, "This man tells me horror stories about here. What's going on here?" Oh my God. He starts to looking for a pencil in pocket to write down my number. My number is written down, that's all forget it. The Kapo, David, saw it what's going on. What's going on from afar, he came over with his stick, start knocking me over the head. He said, "Why don't you," in German, hollers, "Why don't you go to work, you dog, you -----," beat the hell out of me, and I ran between the people, there was a lot of people there, I don't know about 2,000 people or 3,000 people came in this transport. I ran right in ...

We have to stop.

What happened now?

We just ran out.

I'm talking that much? -----

Change film to Camera Roll 8, Take 8 is up.

One day, a transport came in from Theresienstadt, and I went out to work on this transport. When they gave us the order to open up the doors, for the people to let out, I saw a young woman holding two children by her hand. I said to myself, "This is her children, she gonna, the children gonna die anyway, don't make no difference." So to save her life, I decided I'm going to tell her. So I asked the lady, I said, "Is these your children?" She said, "No, I'm the Nana." I said, "Is the mother here with you?" She said, "Yeah, the mother is here." "Why don't give the children to the mother." She said, "Why?" I said, "Something bad, bad, bad is gonna happen here. It's bad." Without even looking at me, she pointed out towards, call a German guard, was standing right there between the people, being very polite. They were so polite to people. "Don't worry, everything will be fine." You know, that's the way they used to, people asking question, they used to answer in a nice way. She said, "He tells me terrible stories are happening here." So the guy starts looking for a pencil in his big pocket what they have to write down my number. The Kapo saw it, David, and he came across running with his stick in his hand, he start beating me over the head, he said, "----- --, why don't you go to work," and you know, beat the hell out of me, and then ran after me, and I ran away in the crowd, and I jumped in the car. And I jumped in a car, I was hiding in there, and just tried to look outside for what I see it looks like the German or the guard, or he didn't want to do, because he, I don't know what happened. I got saved. Okay? After that, when we came home, this was the last transport, were sitting in the barracks already, maybe 2-3 weeks, nothing happening, they took us only to select the clothes. Make balls out of it, and they used to you know, bundles, big bundles with wiring, they used to send this to Germany. We used to work, that's all we used to do. We'd steal whatever we could in order to buy whiskey, vodka, if you wouldn't drink every day, you probably would not live, and would not be able to do what you did because this was something like taking, like narcotics people taking narcotics to make them easy, this was the only way out to work in this, in this commando. Well, a guy by the name Fritz, he was the Ka, he was the Kapo from the night shift. David was the Kapo from the day shift, which I worked. Okay? Fritz was a ----- Jew, very religious Jew. He was, when we used to work in the places, when we used to assort the clothes, he used to tell us to take a lot of like women need panty hose, need brassieres, because women didn't have brassieres, and all the girls was very hard to be without brassieres and panty hose. Silk sock, uh stockings, and all those things, he used to tell us, pack it up, when we get home, when we come back to the barracks, next day, we're going to the woman's camp, and we're gonna give it to the women. You know, this what we do. We as Canada people could go on any camp we wanted. The only thing, when we walked in, there's a, excuse mine expression, when we used to go out from the camps, said where we going, said, so he ----- it, you know, the Kapo told the guard that the, at the gate to go "We're going to the Frauenlager," to the woman's lager. "What are you going to do there?" "We're going for sex." Just like that. They said, "Okay." You paid them off whatever it is, you know, we went. ----- He told us, "If I catch one of you have anything to do with a girl because you give her clothes or give her stockings, I kill you myself. If you do something, do it from the heart, not to get paid. If I catch one of you, anything, anytime, to touch any of those girls, you're killed, I kill you." What I want to bring up, he was such a nice person. He was going around every day, he was completely under alcohol influence. Completely. Otherwise he probably commit suicide himself. He just was very, his name was Vincent, he was an Austrian Jew. Other people and I?? thought he was such a ni--I always tried to remember him, he was such a nice--my Kapo was a son of a bitch. Now good, he beat the hell out of me all the time, him was a nice guy. And he, one day, he comes in, and they didn't burn anymore people. I don't know, I cannot tell you because I don't know. Orders

supposedly came from Germany, from higher up not to burn anymore people or whatever it was, no more transports. Now, we're here. Some people in the Zonder are still alive. You know, the ones who worked in the, in the crematorium. I don't know if they're still alive today or not. I know my commando, the music commando, the orchestra, the girls in the orchestra, who played orchestra, the Canada, the girls in the Scheiscommando, the people who used to go around with a barrel in every camp, and take up from the latrines, and then turn it on the fields, and the people who worked assorting the clothes. These were the 3 commandos left. I didn't know about the Zonder, they're still alive or not, I don't know. I know about my, our people. Fritz came in one morning, he said, "Everybody out! If you have some gold or something, and you know, and this, take it with you, or put it in this hat." Okay? Fritz said it, "You better, you better give it, if you have some," and so I gave him whatever I could, I found it, we had it in the straw, mattresses you know, hidden stuff.----
----- we used to steal. Put it in his hat. Ten minutes later, he comes uh back, running back, he said, "Everybody outside!" So everybody goes outside. "Stand in line! March!" We started to march, so I was going with Schlemmer, and I looked next to me, this little Herbie was next to me. This little 10 year old boy right standing next to me, holding my hand, he's going, I said, "Where you come from?" He's here. Herbie. (Clears throat) So we're going the march and I said to Schlemmer, I said, "If they tell us to go to the left, we're going to the crematorium. If they tell us to go right..." You know, I, we knew where the crematorium, "tell us to go to the right, we're going out of here." When we came to the door, to the gate, and he said, "Derechtz um," going to your right. We didn't walk, we ran! We actually ran. There was a street there they called the lagerstrasse, you know a street there that goes to the railroad tracks. We came there, we run there, we came there was about 7 or 8 cars, I don't know exactly how many cars were there. Railroad track cars standing . The cars were opened, and we jumped into the cars, there were cans, like milk cans, you know, -----milk cans with water, bread laying there, rations of bread in the car, they closed the cars, the train start moving. I said, "Oh my God! We're getting out of here." And we got out of there. Travelling back and forth, we were still did not believe that we could, were getting out of here. We came out of there, and they took us to travelling two days or three days, I don't remember exactly how many days. They took us to Sudeten Deutschland. To Germany. Or to Czechoslovakia. Sudeten--when the Germans took over, took us over there. A small camp. We came in there and this camp was in the mountain, about 60, 60 uh, I don't know how many bags were there, about 30 or 40 small bags, and they all worked in a, in a place they used to make uh, holes for the V-2 missile, the Germans built a V-2, the V-2 whatever you call them, V-2, V-2, -----
----. So, we worked there for a few weeks, and I got a job in the, where they took me in because I brought some money with me, from the camp, I paid off somebody, we paid off so we got better jobs, so I worked in the, in the, became head of the tailor shop, you know, I have a little more food, you know, and the little Herbie was with me all the time. He spoke Hungarian, he spoke Czech. And the ---- uh guy was a German, he had his own children, he find Herbie there, I thought he find him there, he you know, it's a, it's a a working camp. No, he took him into his office to clean his office. So, Herbie came back cleaning his office, so every day he used to bring old butts of cigarettes, you know, butts from the cigarettes, a whole bunch, a whole packet, every day. He used to steal potatoes, he used to bring me. So we got this, and I used to sell the tobacco, I didn't smoke in the camp. You know, everybody for a little tobacco gave you a piece of bread, you know, it was life . Life, life in that. Only thing was bad in this camp, the camp was very dirty. The lice were that big, on the body. Didn't have a place where to wash. Outside was a place we washed, and well, how much can you wash, it's cold, the wintertime. So we washed. Okay, we washed. Herbie helped me out. I helped him out. And every day we used to go to work. One day I went to work

digging ditches. Okay. Was digging ditches. Across from me, where I was standing in this hole, everybody had his hole. It was hard, winter, the, the ground was so hard you, took you how many hours to cut up a piece of ground because it was frozen. We were standing there digging, digging, digging, digging. Across the street was a house, and a woman was sitting in the window, was there like this looking out. Just like that. I worked there, I don't know how many days, 4-5 days, every day, come home, we used to wear those wooden shoes, when you used to go on the snow the wooden shoes become taller and taller and taller because the snow stick to it, and you couldn't walk, frozen legs, open wounds in the leg. Nobody paid attention. Lice, that big. Terrible! I mean, no food, hungry. One day in the morning, when they brought us to work in the morning, who can remember the time, who had the time. Winter cold. I jumped into my place where I used to work, you know, I had my uh shovel and my pick there, I look in the side of the hole, was a cut up a little ----- was a carrot there, a potato, a spool of thread and a needle. You know what a needle and thread was in the camp. Gold. You could sew up things. You could do something with it. This woman, she put it there for me. Okay. A carrot and a potato. Oh my god. It was something. The same day in the afternoon, she comes out and she says to the guard, she needs somebody to help her to chop the wood for her house.

We have to reload.

You have to leave?

Reload.

Oh they have to reload.

She show, she, uh, she told him she needs a, she needs somebody to chop her wood for her house. So she has to pick one, so she picked me. So she picked me out, I went over there to her house, we go, we go in the back to chop wood. After the guard went out from her backyard, she called me into the house. I walked into the house, she had, a tub of water, hot water. She told me to strip, she put me in the hot tub of water. She shaved me, my hair off, lice are that big on my body. She cleaned me up, washed me up. Had open wounds on my feet which I have still signs, you know, what from the freeze, open wound. She put some, something, ointment some kind on my feet, bandage it for me, and told me to sit here, not to worry about the wood. She fed me, gave me thing. When the time comes to go back to the camp, I just walked out of there like I did my day's work, she fed me, and I went back to the camp, I came home I told Fr--the guys you know, this little Herbie, and another friend of mine how lucky I am, what happened to me here. This was going on for 3 days. The happiest days, I didn't do nothing. Washed myself every day. She gave, I asked her where she, she what her husband, and she told me her husband is on the Russian front, he's from German descent, and she showed me 2 children. You see, those children not from my husband. They came they sent me to Berlin to a studhouse, and I got pregnant there from those 2 kids. She had 2 children from a studhouse in Germany. From, from soldiers. What she told me, is what I'm telling, what I'm telling you. The German soldier, the guard came in the other day, he came in after 3 days later, I don't know what they want from her, maybe he wants some sex whatever he wants from her. He got very mad, he took me out of the house, beat the hell out of me, I don't what's my fault, whatever it was there, and I got back in there, in the dump there, and I worked there another few days, whatever it was. Finally, when the Russians started come closer,

they took us out, and they send us on a transport. We walked, I don't how many days we walked. Hundreds of our people died on the road because if you don't go on line, you step out of line, they kill you, they shot you. So we had 4 guys, little Herbie, holding arms, and we used to walk together. Didn't eat for days. Some of the guards got tired themselves, so once in a while they used to tell us to stop in the forest and to lay down. Just to lay down, not to get up. Anybody gets up gets shot. So we used to lay down in the forest, at least rest a few hours. One day we came across, this was in Czechoslovakia, but I want to tell you about Flossenburg. Flossenburg was murder. They came into Czechoslovakia, to a barn on the way, okay? Big barn. And they took us all into this barn, the ones that left, maybe 600 of us was left from 2,000 or whatever, everyone was dead on the road, killed. Tired, hungry, you know, didn't eat for days, they used to throw ----- . One day we were walking was a, on the side road, the farmers took off some uh like, it was not watermelon, it's a yellow like banana, you know a yellow fruit, was mashed up, and we saw it from far out, was laying there, so everybody starts running to this pile of food, and we fell on it, and the German was there laughing, he said, "Look at those animals." We are the animals. We are the animals. Next day we pass by a little city marching, half dead, hardly could walk. People used to, children from school used to throw stones on us, and tell us "-----." We're the Jews, did it for that. We are the fault. We are the fault. I told, I, that we are the fault for them, what's happen-what's happening to them. They used to spit on us, actually spit on us. Children, men, women. When we came, when we went through there, we came to this barn. And the garliecht??? I mean the the garleicht, whoever, in the, the fuehrer from the, the, the, the head of the transport, he had orders to get rid of us, one, one way or the other, Okay? So we got into this big barn. They supposed to put us in into the barn, and put the barn on fire, okay? Since the farm belonged to a Czech, the Czech was begging this this guy, this fuehrer, not to do it, that's all he has is the barn, if he wants to kill them, kill us, let's take us out somewhere and kill us, not to kill us, okay? Herbie spoke Czechoslovakian, this little boy. The farmer took a liking to him, and he took him out, and he, Herbie was running between, finally the farmer begged the, the German guard to let him cook some potatoes for us, boiled potatoes, so at least we eat something because we didn't eat for days. They cooked up a lot of potatoes, and Herbie was running between the barn, between the house, and the shack, goes back and forth, he could go in and out, little Herbie, I wish I could find him. Herbie, so he brought me hot potatoes. You know, hurry, swallow, eat, eat, eat. So he gave it to me, he said, and, in the barn, in this barn was a place for pigs, was 3, 4 pigs in there, okay? In this barn. And was a lot of straw there, you know, this and that landing. I said, "Herbie, you're not, from here, you're not going with us anymore. You have to stay here." "-----, I cannot leave you, I want to go with you." I said, "You're not going with me." I'm just telling you I had a lot of problems with this child on the road. He got sick, I had to cut his finger off because the blood uh, going up his arm, you know, it's very bad. So he, I said, "You're not going with me." I said, "Listen Herbie, this Czechoslovakian guy, this farmer likes you. And you have a chance. Stay here." "No, I'm not going to stay here. I want to go with you," and this and that. One day being in camp, he, this little child 10 years old, he asked me, "Smulo," he calls, called me Smulo. He said, "Smulo, what is a Jew? Why am I here?" 10 year old child. I said to him, "Because you're circumcised, you're born Jewish." He said, "I'm not circumcised," and I said, "You are. You're circumcised, you're a Jew." He said, "This is the reason why I'm here? This is the reason why they killed my parents?" Ten year old child. So, the day we had to leave there, in the early in the morning, I grabbed him, and I throw him in there with the, between the pigs, and I covered him up with straw. He was hollering, "Smulo, I want to go with you." I said, "You're not going with me. You're staying right here because I gonna kill you myself. I left him there, and we walked away, and I

hope he's alive. I hope he's somewhere. From there, when I left there, we came to a camp Flossenburg, which, it's hard for me to talk about this camp, very hard. I just cannot tell you to what's going, what was going on there. This camp was so bad, and you had 3 types of people there. In some concentration camps, you walked in, the Kapos were people with the bad, you know this triangle, red triangle, that triangle was a political prisoner. Okay? A green triangle was a, a, a crime, so, if somebody was committed a crime in the concentration camp, all right? A blue triangle what they was wearing, was a homosexual, okay? The Jewish people had a red triangle with a J, with a yellow on top, means he's a Jew, political prisoner, all right? When I came into Flossenburg, the head of the camp, the Kapos and the Blockelderster wore all blue triangles, homosexuals. Was I did not know about homosexuality, all right? In Europe, we didn't hear about homosexual, we talked, used to, somebody who was like this, you ----- in the room, whatever it is, we used to call them -----, -----, something, some names. I did not understand what this all about. I had seen what's happening there, how they picked those boys up, those homosexuals, and I, matter of fact, they killed them. A guy by the name Loport, and the, the, the blockelderster, the head of the barrack was a political prisoner. When we killed him, he he gave us everybody an extra bowl of soup because we killed someone. In Flossenburg. Flossenburg was bad, I was there only 2 weeks. From there they put me on a train. Now you can imagine, they put you on a train, hundred people in a car, okay, out from Flossenburg, the, on a transport. Some went to Buchenwald, some went I don't know. I supposed to go somewhere to a camp. They take out from our camp what you don't eat for days, you don't eat for 2, 3 days, they gave you one, every evening a little bowl of soup, all day long, you are standing outside, and shivering, this was in January already, 1945 mind you. What half of the country was already liberated somewhere. We're still there. They took us in the train. It was, pulled us, and I don't know how many of us they pulled, through the, the train. We got in the train. In the evening, before we start, trains are moving, they open up the train, they throw in 6 loaves of bread. You can imagine 6 loaves of bread for 100 people, half of whom were dead before they grabbed a piece. Okay? We were travelling and travelling and travelling in this train for days. Finally we went, came in, I don't know how many people we were, we got in the train about 60, I think about 40 or 50 died, so what could one do with the, took the bodies, and put them against the wall, and were sitting on them, dead bodies. Okay? And the cars...

We have to reload.

Oh my god. I'm going to make a whole movie with you guys.

Change film, camera roll 10 is up, Sync take 10 is up.

We stacked up the bodies on the side of the train, on the walls, we were sitting on it. Finally, we came into the city of Prague. Was a lot of trains on the railroad tracks, -----, you could see German soldiers on this track, there were civilians this track, and our track was in the middle. So they gave us orders to take out the bodies from each car, and put them all of the dead bodies on that, on the last car on the train, all right? We ourselves were half dead. Everybody was black and blue and, and weak. They gave us blankets, and pack each body in a blanket and carry to the last car. So, they opened up the car because smelled badly from the bodies, and, so, you know, so we took, we start carrying the bodies, little by little, you know whatever, we got 4 people, one body, throw it in the back car, come back, take another body. All of the sudden, there was a bridge up

there you know, the train was on top of the bridge, and people were passing by there. All of the sudden a lot of people stood up there, and they start hollering in Czech, mordetza, murderers, you know, to the Germans. Mordetzi, mordetzi! They tried to throw stones, and throw, they threw oranges, potatoes, so we can grab it we start to grab it, the Germans hit it. So the Germans was afraid something might happen here. All right? So forget about the dead bodies, they load the trains up, pack us again, beat the hell out of us, and train took off. Took off, we came to a camp not far away from Munich, they called Middendorf. I got into Middendorf. Those barracks underground. Okay, was like potatoes uh shacks you know. The barracks was underground. 60 people to a barrack. We had Russians there, Jews, all the kind of people in the camp. Then, the stat, Middendorf was located not far away from Munich, all trains had to go through there, and the American had a ball there, the American and the English had a ball. The English used to bomb us at nighttime, and the Americans used to bomb us in daytime. And we had to go, every time they bomb, we had to through there, so we used to go there all the time, they took us out to repair, to repair. But this was already March, 1945. March 45. So we used to go to that place, sometimes they blew up some trains, and all of the sudden you could find the civilian people, this was a place they used to bomb time and time again, okay? In the morning, when I used to go, like to go there to work because I could find a lot of food, all right. Next to the railroad station there was a civilian kitchen, all right? The civilian kitchen, well, there you have Ukrainians there, Polish, I don't know, French people, what they work with the Germans, and they had their own kitchen. A bomb fell in, there was a big crater from a bomb, and they used this crater for a dump, they used to throw in potatoes and this and that you know, and we used to walk every time, every time, we hear the sirens, an alarm, that airplanes are coming, we used to run and hide. I used to run to this hole with 2, 3 other guys because we find a lot of food there, we had potatoes, peelings, this and that, was a good, you know, a good place to hide, the bombs were falling. One day in the morning, we used to get up 4 o'clock in the morning, they said, railroad commando. So, everybody knew about railroad commando, it's easy, we can find food there, so everybody tried to get into railroad commando. So I got in because put myself in the line, he counted up 20 people, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, you know 5, 4 people. I was in the last line, hits me over the head, he throws me, he tells me not to go. He pushes me, the German, "-----," me and my friend run back, stay back in line. Then other guys ----- finally counts up another time, beat the hell out of me again, I cannot go, so I said to my friend, "I'm not going. I don't want to get killed. -----let me go work somewhere else, -----". You know, if it's predicted, if it's written up that you're going to live, you're going to live. You know, the same day, some guys -----, the siren were blowing, a few people, 3, 3 guys got in this hole to find some food, a bomb fell in the same place and they all died. Goes to show you, if I would go there, I probably wouldn't be around.

Let me ask you, you started to talk at one point about the Gypsies.

Yeah.

And you never finished what you were going to say.

About the gypsies? One night, one night before the transport from this Lodz ghetto came in, they clean up the camp, and they burn all the gypsies in one night, the children, the wives, and the woman, children, everybody else. In one night. This is the time, I ask what happened to the Gypsies because we saw them playing with the kids, you know, across the, the, the in the barrack.

They all gone, they all were burned in one night. I don't know how many thousands of them. Several thousand. I don't know how many thousand. There some people say 20,000, 18,000, 15 --I don't know, I don't know the exact figure. I know was a lot of gypsies there. And they called it the gypsy camp because the gypsies were there. And we moved into this camp because the camp was cleaned up, they burned them all up, they killed them all. So we moved to live in this camp.

When you were in any of the camps, did you try to do any acts of sabotage.

What we tried to do was impossible. We did some sabotage, we worked in a camp, was there in a camp a few, not long, about 2 or 3 weeks, with the Russians, so the Russians did a lot of sabotage. They used to make airplanes there. So we , they used to make some holes into to put it some screws in it, so the, when he, it was marked where to make the holes. The Russians used to tell us, "Don't make the hole here, make the hole here, Don't make the hole here." This what we used to do as possible we could, nothing else. Lot of guys got killed, a lot of Germans got killed for it, because I don't know, some of the planes never took off because was all, it was, by the end of the war, I mean, you know, I think it was January or February or something like that in in uh 45 already, 1945.

What about spiritual or mental resistance. Did that play a big role?

It, it did play a big role. Spiritually, you didn't want to give them a chance to kill you. You always was thinking the moment when you're gonna liberated. And they put you in a point that you could not do anything because you was always hungry. You know what kind of dreams you have in camp? The only dreams you have to find a loaf of bread. That's all you were dreaming of. You did, didn't think about anything else. You didn't care if they used to carry the soup through the block, and you ran after it to grab a little food. You didn't care if you're gonna get killed. The only thing you care is have something to eat. Nothing else. They put you in such a state of mind that you don't think about anything else but...Then you have some religious Jews who were sitting there, ----- are praying to God. God will help. God will do this. God will do that. Don't worry. This was the life. Nothing else. How could you do anything if you're always hungry? In the ghettos, when you had a chance to do something, I give you an example, in the ghetto, then you had a whole generation that didn't allow you to do because there was always, always, they were always afraid to every Jew because you're gonna do something. If you kill, if you kill a German, let's say we did kill a German, they took out 10 or 15 other people and they killed them. You understand what they did? So the Jewish people, all the generations, like my father, he said to me, "Take out the gun from the house, if you do, you're going to bring a disaster for the whole ghetto if they catch you here." You understand the mentality. The mentality of the people, and the closeness of the families. The people were so close, big young people, some of them did leave their families, they went to Russia, they went to the Partisans, they went to the Underground, and some young people didn't want to leave their families. Was a family tie. And we were raised. Let's say, we were liberated. Give you an example liberate--how many Jewish people you find what they kill Germans after the war? Well, now, if I gonna do that, I gonna be the same like them. If I will kill Germans after the war, and I had a chance when I was liberated. Could grab a gun go around and kill every one of I see on the street. So where it puts me then? Puts me? Puts me in the same position, right? I'm a killer. It's my enemy's-----, it's not my enemy anymore, and maybe I kill somebody who is innocent. They didn't care, I shouldn't care? I'm a human being, they're

animals, I'm not. I am raised this way. I am a Jew. I am raised different. I, you should not kill. You should not murder. We live by our rules. Show me. Bring me some people what they say they killed Germans after the war. Jewish people were liberated from concentration camps. Maybe you find someone. I don't believe it. I have seen Russian did it. Who came with me. I couldn't do it. And I had a chance. They capartmentured my guard from my camp when I was liberated. They put him down on the side on a, on a house, and they had numbers on it. An American soldier gave me his gun, he said, "Kill him." I could have done it. Easy. I'm not a killer. Can't kill. Why should I? If I kill, I'm just like them. After that when I came out from Middendorf, they put us on a train. We were travelling for a few days, and all of the sudden the train stopped, and the guard, the fuehrer from the train, the, the, the, commander from the train, he said, "You all are free." Okay? Told us we're free. So, you're free, you're free, you walk out right? So we walked out. And I walked in the fields and I said to my friends who was with me all this time, I said, "Something is fishy here, we have to watch it out." He said, "What are you talking about? He told you you're free." I said, "You want to see if we're free?" I said, "Yeah, I want to see, how free are you?" A German soldier is walking this way, he walked over to him, he said, "Ay, can I have a cigarette?" He said, "Yeah," gave him a cigarette. Gave him a light, and he was wearing the striped suit. I said, "I think you're right. I still don't believe it." So we got in a little, we saw there a little shack, you know, outside a house, were lot of lumber in there. And so we got in there. I said, "Let's wait here. See what's happening." Sure enough, maybe a half an hour later, I saw a German ger--a German uh Luftwasa, uh fliers. They were capartmenturing our people, you know, from the train, they were shooting them in the back of the head, they kill them all. I saw it with my own eyes.

We have to reload.

Were you finished with your thought there?

About, the what I saw there? No. This was the time before uh I was a little, all I was saw that, don't, after that, we walked out, and we start walking because we saw it what's happening, I said, "Maybe we'll go back to the train. So we start walking back to, we start walking on the street. Some people were standing there in front of their houses and they said, "The Americans are not far away, why don't you come in and hide." So we tried to walk in, in there, so they closed the door. - ----- So I saw some guys, old Germans, I don't know how they call them. They had a name for them, they were Shutz--some kind of police, old guys with rifles walking around. And capartmenturing us, they have a, they had a trail--uh, a tractor with a trailer behind it, and they told us to go on the trailer, and I said, "Where are you taking us. They told us we're free." He said, "Don't worry about it, you're going to be free in Tyrol. Said, Tyrol, what is this about? What are you talking about we're going to be free in Tyrol. They're going to take us now to Tyrol. After that I find out they already had graves digged in Tyrol to kill us all. Okay? So we came back to the train, and a lot of people of us was already back there. A lot of them even didn't want to leave the train. You see a lot of them had the instinct, they said, "No, we're gonna stay here, see what happens." They were standing in the train. We were standing there, when we came to the train, we, I saw a machine gun standing on the sidewalk. Here a machine gun was standing right there, and a guy, an amer, a German soldier was laying there on the ground. So this guy what I was with him, Ze--uh, Walig, he says to me, he was in the army before the war he was older than me. He says to me, "If they tell you to run, run zig-zag, back and forth, and the first car you see open up,

you jump. You hear what I said?" This what he says to me. Sure enough, the German gives orders, "Lauten!" Run. So we start running and sure enough they start shooting, the first thing you know, Walig jumped into an open car, and he grabbed me by the hair, and he what he and he pulled me in there too. Okay, was already dark in the evening. We got into the car, they closed the doors, and we were laying there, this train start moving. They took a lot of, 15, 20 minutes, 30 minutes, was a lot of noise outside. Shooting outside whatever it was. So he says to me, "Can you check my body, I'm not shot." I said, "Okay," I checked him, he checked me. No, we're all right. Okay? We're fine. We're alive. The train start moving. We move I don't know how many days. Without food, they don't let us out, we urinated, and I was starting hallucinating. I was, didn't see anything already, I was halluc--had my wooden shoes, and I put them under my head. Shoes was something what you watch for at all times, put it under my head and I was laying like this, and Wallach, friend of mine was waking me up, he said, "Don't sleep. Don't sleep. You're going to die. Don't sleep." All of the sudden I hear a commotion, airplanes are coming. Two planes, American planes, they thought maybe it's a, it's a military ship, transport, whatever it is. They start shooting, we lost, I don't know how many hundreds of people. Two hours before the liberation, an hour before the liberation, they, they shot up the train. There was one railroad track, one track going, you see, so they shot it up everything. And then I, you hear commotions, and I was hallucinating, I was out. I was completely, I was, didn't know what's going on, I had dreams about my father, about my mother, my sister, came back to me situations from before the war when I was acting, when I was going to dances, and I have seen everything so, so loud so fine, everything was so close, and I said to him, "Let me sleep. Don't bother me. Let me sleep. Let me sleep." So, I heard noised, a guy said, "Why don't you put on the, the striped suit on the top of the car if you can. So through these little openings what they had, some of them took out the striped suit and throw on the top of the car. So the next time the planes made a pass, they just passed and they didn't do anything, so they knew that this is prisoners of war. So one guy was, my friend looked out, and he saw the Red Cross are here, they're try to open up the cars, they try to give food, Red Cross, who cared about it, I was dreaming about my home, dreaming about my girls, dreaming about dancing, dreaming about everything, I have seen everything what was going on. And the tra--I was laying next to the door because he told me to -----because I always had a little air coming, and you know, a little to breathe. I was laying my own vomit, my own urine, wet, diarrhea, everything what, what can happen. So laying there, they tried to open up the door, and they couldn't open up the door. My door they couldn't open up. Finally everybody I could hear talking, the everybody, oh they're giving soup, they're giving bread, they're giving this and here I'm laying, I wish oh I have a little water, why don't they let me sleep. Just let me sleep. I just don't want nothing. Let me sleep. Finally the door opens up. And I feel somebody is picking me up by my suit as they pulled me up. Okay? Then come to my mind. He said Tyrol. Tyrol, they're going to kill me. They're going to kill me, I'm not going to let them kill me. You know, my, my mind. I'm not going to let them kill me. Now after all this time, went through so much, they're going to kill me now? No way, they're not going to kill me. And I grabbed this shoe, and I felt the person who picked me up, and I hit him with this wooden shoe like this, (Pause). The guy start crying, and he said, "I'm not going to kill you. I'm an American. I came to liberate you. You're free. Immediately they setted up a hospital there, that American Red Cross woman, probably American, I don't know, and they put us in, they washed us up and, and they clean us up whatever they could, they, they, they didn't feed us, they said, if we're gonna eat, we're gonna die. We don't can eat.

I want to ask you some other questions. Tell me about how your friends and your support systems

helped you stay alive in all those years.

The people what the, let's say we had a group of 3 or 4 people. Let's say we had a group in a camp. If anybody organized something, you know what I'm talking about organizing? Organizing a little food. Organizing, stealing something. We used to share this. Okay. So you had 3 or 4, let's say, my group had 3 of us. If you, if, if I could go out to work now in a potato commando and bring home some, and bring back to the barracks potatoes, I used to share. Okay? And, and we used to talk always try to support each other by telling "Don't worry about it, we're living through. ----- the hell with them. We're going to make it. We're gonna make it. They're not going to kill us." You know, always try, and what I used to do myself, I used to go around tell jokes, I used to go around the blocks and sing. I used to sing for the boys. Old songs from the home to remind them about home. I used to sing, I used to sing, they used to give me a piece of bread for it, somebody give me a little sugar for it. I used to go around from block to block and sing with another guy. You know, just sing. ----- Perform, telling jokes, make a comedy act, just to keep people going. Make them happy. We used to organize theaters of the, in the evening, reading, you know, they, just to forget about the horrors what's going on. And some people could take it and some people could not. Some people just gave it up. Majority people gave it up. They couldn't take it. People just couldn't take it. Like I told you in Auschwitz, people just went on the wires. Couldn't take it. Majority took it. They died or they took it. The dying pains????, they're dying so they took it. They got killed by Kapos, they got killed by Germans, they got killed, they got crippled, but they didn't want to give up. They want to live. I want to live. I didn't want to give up. I didn't want to give them a chance to kill me. No way. I had always this my mind. The only thing what I always used to do, watch out to be beaten up because if a Kapo caught you and beat the hell out of you, you're a dead man. You break your bones, you didn't have no hos--no place how to heal it, whatever it is. You know what I mean, you are crippled. If you are crippled, you're dead. You cannot work, what they gonna do? So this is the main thing what I always used to watch out. Not to get beating up by Kapo. Kapo. When I was liberated May the, April the 29th, 1945, the Third Army, the Tenth Division.

Describe Mengele for me. You must have seen him.

Oh yeah, I've seen him.

Tell me about him.

He was a dark haired guy. He was uh, if you see him on the street walking, Mengele, if you see Mengele on the street, and you know he's a doctor, you put your life in his hands. He was so mannered, good-looking person. Okay? One eye what I always can remember, one eye of his was going a little bit in the side, and he was limping, like limping on one leg. Not limping, he was just, I don't know, just like something, walking not normal. And he was very polite with a smile on his face, always smiling to people, always said thank you, danke sein, danke sein. When I saw him working, I didn't see him working him in hospital, I saw him working on the ramp when he made a selection. He always had 2 guys, 3 guys, never hollering, never nervous, always polite. Did his job, took off his gloves, and went, that's all. And then you could see after that, you could see the black wagon. I used to call it the black wagon. It used to come into the crematorium, used to step on a ladder, what I could see outside the ladder, was a little opening there, and throw in the -----

---, whatever it was, and this is it. When you saw this guy with this -----, you knew that people are gone. In the beginning I didn't believe it. I saw it. So, every time a transport came, after the transport, I, I saw Mengele, the head of the Lichmenstadt ghetto, a guy by the name of Runkosky, he was the head of the ghetto, all right? I was working a Lodz transport, people came in from the Lodz ghetto. Okay, I open up a car, and I saw them. Very distinguished looking people there, and I recognize him because I found in cars before, I found money with his picture, so I knew this is Runkosky, he had his own money, you know, in the ghetto, they had their own money, and his picture was on the money. So, when I cleaned cars up, I saw this pic, this man's picture, when I saw him coming out from the car, brought him out from the car, he had, I don't know how many was there, about 12 or 15 policemen, his guys, you know, with the -----, whatever, how many, it was not a big car with a lot of people. So I remember he was wearing a black hat, a round hat, and a little boy next to him, and his wife, and he went over to Mengele. He went over to Mengele, he said, looked for him, he said, "Ich bin--I am the head of the Lichmenstadt ghetto. My name is Runkosky," whatever he said to him, I didn't, couldn't hear what he said, I could see he saluted for him, took out some papers, he show him, he said, "Ja, ja, ja, ja," whatever he said, ja, he smiled, this and that.

We have to reload.

Tell me how he walked up to Mengele -----.

He walked over to Mengele with his wife and his child, he walked on in, he presented himself, he said who he is, he's the head of the Lichmenstadt ghetto, which I recognized, had a beard, I recognized from the money what I found in the car. And he said to him, say, whatever, he said, "Fine," he ask him, this I heard, he ask Mengele, " You have any more friends here, what we'd like to go with you?" And he call a truck, you know, a military truck, what you can sit in the back, a small one, I never forget that, and he told him to go on the truck, and he said,"-----: You have somebody else here what would you with you to go with you?" And he said "Yeah." So he called another of his, you know, policemen and their wives, and everybody was so happy, they go on a truck you know, a nice -----." I said, "Oh my God. Look at the way they're playing their game." Threw them out the truck to -----the first crematorium, crematorium 1 or 4, I don't remember, right by the railroad side. The doors, the gates of the crematorium open up and they drove in there. Was -----Rumkowski, the head of the Lodz ghetto, God of 200,000 Jews, a man who, who, who make you live or die, he thought he is, he is the man. See, this what happened. People. He thought Rumkowski, with the policemen, that came in those boots with those hats, the - ----- from the ghetto, they're going to make it up big. You have to go to the oven, you went to the oven, that's all. If he didn't went to the oven, he was a bad policeman for example, he did some harm in the ghetto. In the camp some people find out about him, they kill him. Because in Buchenwald, I was not there. I heard from people who were there, they had their own trials, in Buchenwald, they had their own trial. If you came into Buchenwald, they find out you are a policeman in a ghetto, like I know from my hometown people died there. They were bad policemen. They were, what do you call them, stool pigeons. They used to tell the Germans where people hide something or this or that. They kill them. They, yeah, they told them, you have to die tomorrow, you die, that's it, there's no monkey business. So what did I, what did the people accomplish by working, some of them like to work with the Germans. They didn't work with them, they try, in this time, in this day, in this year, he thought he gonna save his life. Okay, otherwise he

probably wouldn't do it. Whatever he did, a guy became a policeman, a guy became a Zonder, a guy became, in the ghettos I'm talking about, not, in camp you didn't have no choice. This is it. Back in the ghetto, people thought by doing some of those things maybe will help them and their family. Maybe they will survive. We already knew it bad things was happening.

Let's talk about choices, and you had very few choices in camp, but you made some that helped you survive. What about the guards and the Kapos and the Germans? What kind of choices did they have? Were they following orders?

The Kapos, you find a German soldier what he was very nice. He did maybe, like the guy who tried -----, he could go after me and find me, all right, he could find me, maybe he didn't want to do it. I came across German guards in Sudeten Deutschland, in Kalfaser, when I was in this camp. You have German older people, I'm not talking about the young fellow, I'm talking about the older guards, older guys, maybe they were afraid to go to the Russian front, maybe they -- -----, I don't know, I know when they came into the tailor shop, let's say he needs to put on a button for him, okay. And the tailor put on a button for him. He used to give him 5 or 6 cigarettes, or he used to bring a piece of bread, or he used to bring a little sugar or he used bring a piece of a butter, so you cannot judge. The Ukrainian were bad, for them was nothing. For them, to kill a Jew was, this is it. Between the Germans, I'm not talking about SS, I'm not talking about Gestapo, you know what I'm saying, this was the elite, this was the killers. I'm talking about the average German, who was a soldier, he was in the Wehrrmacht, they took him into the Wehrrmacht. He is a soldier, he didn't want to kill the Jew. He want to sit, he didn't, he was not interested in the Jew to kill. The SS, the Gestapo, the Shutzpolizzi, the Geheinpolicizzi, they're the ones, this was the elite who want to kill the Jew. The average German Wehrrmacht soldier? Whatever, you know. He was not interested, except that he was in the Nazi party, of course, they helped themselves, whatever might be the case. This is mine opinion, all right?

How do all your experiences make you feel about humanity?

Human people, humanity, people are still very good people. Once in a while you came across some devils, people have to watch out, this is the reason maybe God let us live, to tell the world what happened, and things like this will never happen again. Maybe this is the time to tell people. You always have evil in the world, and human, human people, human are, hell, people are good people. You cannot say everybody is bad. People do a lot of bad things for different reasons, but you cannot take the whole world and say everybody is bad. People are good.

Now tell me about age and the selection. Tell me how selections affected the families, how they affected the children, as though I don't know. I don't know about the holocaust, I don't know about the transports.

In camp? If you walk into a camp as a mother with children, you 100% sure you going to the, to the gas chamber. Okay? If you pick, if you look at you, you're young enough, all right, with no children, you're going to the camp to work, all right. If you survive there, we don't know, or you went to camp, you have a chance to survive. If you're older than let's say, 50, forget it, you're a goner, no chance. All right? So these little children, 1 and a half million Jewish children died. 1 and a half million! You know how many -----, how many musicians, how many engineers, how

many doctors, how many physicians, how many big people died, 1500, 1 and a half million for nothing. A whole generation. 6 million Jews alone and 20 million other people not just Jews. You have 15 million other nationalities died. I'm not talking from war. I'm not talking about fighting. I'm not talking about soldiers. I'm talking about civilians, died for no reason whatsoever. One was a Catholic, one was a Jew, one, one was this, whatever might be the case, got killed. So you talking how I feel about humanity. People are nice people. You have plenty of bad people, you have people what they used to hide other people. You have people who would hide people as long the people had the money. If they didn't have the money, they throw them out. So you have all the kinds of animals in the world. To take the humanity as a whole, the people are bad, no, I cannot say that. People are people, people are very nice. If you treat them nice of course. They treat me bad, and I will be, become an animal. So? I could be as bad. And now today if you find people like my people, like take people what they say, "No, we're not going to allow this ever happen, we do some things what we don't want it to happen." It's, listen this is our way of life, we can't, we have to protect ourselves, we cannot allow things like this ever happen again. That's all there is to it. This is not just for the Jews. For every nationality. Everybody in the world have the right to live. Nobody has the right to kill, annihilate other people because they are a different religion or different race, or they look different, or they talk different. Nobody has this right. We all have the right to be here. Heil Hitler came. This is the biggest thing ever happen ----- world exist. We had pogroms, the Jewish people. We had all the kind of Nazism in the century, ----- in England?? in the ghettos, people, ghettos existed, first ghettos was in England. Had big ghettos. People lived in ghettos. Ev-Everybody hated the Jews. Oh this what he did! You know how many of all the Jews they killed? Nobody does what he did. Nobody in the history. People died. Nobody did what Hitler did. The Juden frager, they called, the Jewish question, what are you going to do with the Jews. What are the Jews a pain in his back? What is it. Why, because the Jew had a beard? The Jew believed in God? The Jew didn't bother nobody. The Jew were happy if you leave them alone, that's all. It was going his way. Ah, the Jew were a little smarter in Europe, he made a little bit better living maybe some of them did? The majority people had hunger. Was a tough life. 3 million Jewish people died from Poland alone. Poland had 33 and a half million Jews. 3 million Jews died in Poland. For nothing. For what reason? Because they're Jews? Because they went, they, they were wearing their long clothes. They were businessmen, people. Who made the business, they made it, they didn't allow us to have land, we couldn't work in mental, in, in governmental offices. Couldn't. We couldn't work on the railroad, we couldn't work on the streetcar. So we had to do something. Right? So, -----small business people. Little Pop and Mama stores, we used to tailors, we shoemakers and, and roofers, and all kind of professions to in order to survive. They blame us? For their mishap? Why? Why? It's not our fault. Is it my fault they don't let you work the land? Because I'm a Jew, I cannot own land. Some Jewish people want land. How many? More than a thousand. How many? If they own a little piece of land in the house where you lived, so what, what are they gonna do with it? But to be a actually a farmer, do something, no. So they blame the Jews. No, but thanks. Blame the Jews, the Jew is the first one to go. Everybody blames the Jews because the Jews this the Jews that, a Jew doesn't look good to them so what can you do? -----your face, they want to put on a new face? Because you don't like my face? What did I do to you? What did I do to anybody? I hope this is the end.

Yes, thank you.

This is it? How did I do?

The following is 30 seconds of room tone for interview with Sam Goldberg.