

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:10,160

2
00:00:10,160 --> 00:00:14,180
This'll be a interview
with Esther Raab.

3
00:00:14,180 --> 00:00:17,770
It's sound roll one, camera
one, take one coming up.

4
00:00:17,770 --> 00:00:28,580

5
00:00:28,580 --> 00:00:31,340
Can you describe
for me the transport

6
00:00:31,340 --> 00:00:36,290
to Sobibor and your arrival
there, and what it was like,

7
00:00:36,290 --> 00:00:38,210
and what happened.

8
00:00:38,210 --> 00:00:40,430
I didn't come by train.

9
00:00:40,430 --> 00:00:43,970
I came by horse and
wagon because I came

10
00:00:43,970 --> 00:00:47,030
from a small, working camp.

11
00:00:47,030 --> 00:00:52,850
And we were like 800
young girls and young men,

12
00:00:52,850 --> 00:00:57,210
and we rode the

whole day to Sobibor.

13

00:00:57,210 --> 00:01:08,050

And the month, it was December,
1942, December 22, 1943, 42,

14

00:01:08,050 --> 00:01:10,390

I'm sorry.

15

00:01:10,390 --> 00:01:14,260

And after riding the
whole day in the muds,

16

00:01:14,260 --> 00:01:17,030

and the wagons got
stuck in the mud.

17

00:01:17,030 --> 00:01:20,080

And we had to go down and
pull them out and on the way

18

00:01:20,080 --> 00:01:21,803

the farmers were outside.

19

00:01:21,803 --> 00:01:23,720

And they said, do you
know where you're going?

20

00:01:23,720 --> 00:01:26,740

They're going to kill you,
and they're going to burn you.

21

00:01:26,740 --> 00:01:33,910

As much as we knew before
and as much we heard,

22

00:01:33,910 --> 00:01:36,890

we didn't believe it.

23

00:01:36,890 --> 00:01:41,000

It was very hard to
comprehend, to believe,

24

00:01:41,000 --> 00:01:44,330

why take innocent people
and just kill them

25

00:01:44,330 --> 00:01:46,590

with no reason at all.

26

00:01:46,590 --> 00:01:52,550

And as the day came to an end,
it was only 20 kilometers,

27

00:01:52,550 --> 00:01:54,320

but it took a whole day.

28

00:01:54,320 --> 00:01:59,330

Everybody of us, from us,
was so disgusted that we

29

00:01:59,330 --> 00:02:01,100

wanted to get over with.

30

00:02:01,100 --> 00:02:05,930

If that's what they're going
to do to us, let's do it fast.

31

00:02:05,930 --> 00:02:09,750

So we won't have to suffer.

32

00:02:09,750 --> 00:02:13,430

I mean, not physically
but mentally.

33

00:02:13,430 --> 00:02:17,360

You know, it was very hard
to sit there and think

34

00:02:17,360 --> 00:02:22,280

I have four hours or three and
a half hours or three hours.

35

00:02:22,280 --> 00:02:27,500

And as we came close to

Sobibor after whole day natural

36

00:02:27,500 --> 00:02:31,295
without food, without water,
but that really didn't bother.

37

00:02:31,295 --> 00:02:33,730
We were used to it.

38

00:02:33,730 --> 00:02:37,580
The SS came out with
dogs and started barking.

39

00:02:37,580 --> 00:02:39,020
I mean, they never talked.

40

00:02:39,020 --> 00:02:39,530
They barked.

41

00:02:39,530 --> 00:02:44,180
You could never make
out what they're saying.

42

00:02:44,180 --> 00:02:46,970
I spoke very well German.

43

00:02:46,970 --> 00:02:51,290
I had it in school, and I
picked up more experience

44

00:02:51,290 --> 00:02:53,700
during the time.

45

00:02:53,700 --> 00:02:56,630
They started barking,
and they told

46

00:02:56,630 --> 00:03:02,820
us to assemble on the platform,
the railroad platform,

47

00:03:02,820 --> 00:03:05,700

and we all assembled there.

48

00:03:05,700 --> 00:03:09,330

And I stood in every
way, and you felt already

49

00:03:09,330 --> 00:03:14,430

the smell there from the burning
bodies, and you saw the fire,

50

00:03:14,430 --> 00:03:16,710

but you don't believe.

51

00:03:16,710 --> 00:03:20,610

52

00:03:20,610 --> 00:03:22,020

I couldn't believe it.

53

00:03:22,020 --> 00:03:24,330

I myself and so my friends.

54

00:03:24,330 --> 00:03:27,990

And all of a sudden, I
saw that a girlfriend

55

00:03:27,990 --> 00:03:33,360

of mine with whom I came walks
by with a Kommandant from camp

56

00:03:33,360 --> 00:03:34,740

that was Wagner.

57

00:03:34,740 --> 00:03:38,550

The biggest murderer
and the biggest

58

00:03:38,550 --> 00:03:41,770

devoted Nazi that ever existed.

59

00:03:41,770 --> 00:03:48,890

He was caught later

in 1979 in Brazil,

60

00:03:48,890 --> 00:03:53,090

and she picks up one
girl and another girl.

61

00:03:53,090 --> 00:03:56,960

And I said, Mira, who
are you looking for?

62

00:03:56,960 --> 00:04:01,610

And she says, I'm looking for
girls who know how to knit.

63

00:04:01,610 --> 00:04:04,160

And I said, what
about my talent?

64

00:04:04,160 --> 00:04:06,680

And that was just
a split second,

65

00:04:06,680 --> 00:04:11,420

and she pointed out to me,
he said, raus and I came out.

66

00:04:11,420 --> 00:04:14,660

From the whole
transport, they took out

67

00:04:14,660 --> 00:04:18,560

eight girls and
two men which were

68

00:04:18,560 --> 00:04:22,520

fathers of some of the girls.

69

00:04:22,520 --> 00:04:27,260

One was a shoemaker,
and one was a tailor.

70

00:04:27,260 --> 00:04:31,190

And they marched

us up to the camp,

71

00:04:31,190 --> 00:04:35,600
and we figured we didn't
have no idea what's going on.

72

00:04:35,600 --> 00:04:37,820
What they're going
to do later with us.

73

00:04:37,820 --> 00:04:40,760
And the others, they marched up.

74

00:04:40,760 --> 00:04:43,310
And at that moment,
I don't think

75

00:04:43,310 --> 00:04:46,280
you're capable of thinking.

76

00:04:46,280 --> 00:04:47,300
You don't plan.

77

00:04:47,300 --> 00:04:48,350
You don't think.

78

00:04:48,350 --> 00:04:49,580
You don't argue.

79

00:04:49,580 --> 00:04:54,820
You don't-- you're just
numb, and that's how I was.

80

00:04:54,820 --> 00:04:56,120
Numb.

81

00:04:56,120 --> 00:05:00,350
And then he took us, all
the girls with the two men,

82

00:05:00,350 --> 00:05:02,900
and they marched

us in to the camp.

83

00:05:02,900 --> 00:05:05,690

84

00:05:05,690 --> 00:05:07,335

The camp, [INAUDIBLE]
of the camp

85

00:05:07,335 --> 00:05:10,350

was very small, very small.

86

00:05:10,350 --> 00:05:16,320

Because when we came in, we
made up 20 women and 100 men.

87

00:05:16,320 --> 00:05:19,200

So it was very small.

88

00:05:19,200 --> 00:05:24,120

And that smell, and I thought
to myself, what is that smell?

89

00:05:24,120 --> 00:05:29,410

That smell was-- you
couldn't take it in.

90

00:05:29,410 --> 00:05:34,030

He put us in an empty
barrack and then came in

91

00:05:34,030 --> 00:05:39,550

like the Kommandant, the Jewish
Kommandant, of the inmates.

92

00:05:39,550 --> 00:05:42,060

And he said, you
know where you are?

93

00:05:42,060 --> 00:05:46,570

And we didn't say boo because
you didn't know whom to trust.

94

00:05:46,570 --> 00:05:49,000

You didn't know what to say.

95

00:05:49,000 --> 00:05:52,810

So we had to be very careful.

96

00:05:52,810 --> 00:05:56,140

And by looking at each
other, we understood

97

00:05:56,140 --> 00:05:58,400

what we are supposed to do.

98

00:05:58,400 --> 00:06:01,570

And he explained that
either way you see the fire,

99

00:06:01,570 --> 00:06:05,740

and you see this, and then
they brought us in blankets

100

00:06:05,740 --> 00:06:08,650

and bread and coffee.

101

00:06:08,650 --> 00:06:11,980

And we figured
that's the last meal.

102

00:06:11,980 --> 00:06:16,840

And we remained there
until the morning.

103

00:06:16,840 --> 00:06:17,650

We lay down.

104

00:06:17,650 --> 00:06:18,790

We slept.

105

00:06:18,790 --> 00:06:25,900

We didn't sleep, but I cannot
explain the feeling we had.

106

00:06:25,900 --> 00:06:29,530

If to believe that all
those who were with us

107

00:06:29,530 --> 00:06:31,200

are not here anymore.

108

00:06:31,200 --> 00:06:36,130

109

00:06:36,130 --> 00:06:36,760

We didn't know.

110

00:06:36,760 --> 00:06:40,990

We were just numb to
the whole situation.

111

00:06:40,990 --> 00:06:43,810

Early in the morning,
they told us to get up,

112

00:06:43,810 --> 00:06:47,350

and they marched us
off to the sorting

113

00:06:47,350 --> 00:06:51,730

shed the next morning where
they told us to sort out

114

00:06:51,730 --> 00:06:53,830

the belongings of the people.

115

00:06:53,830 --> 00:06:58,240

And then when we found the
belongings and the pictures

116

00:06:58,240 --> 00:07:02,050

and the documents of the
girls and the young men

117

00:07:02,050 --> 00:07:05,560

that were with us, we realized.

118
00:07:05,560 --> 00:07:10,720
But it's very hard to
just put it into your head

119
00:07:10,720 --> 00:07:12,010
they are all dead.

120
00:07:12,010 --> 00:07:14,630
Why?

121
00:07:14,630 --> 00:07:18,840
It was very difficult.
It was very difficult.

122
00:07:18,840 --> 00:07:20,780
It was very hard.

123
00:07:20,780 --> 00:07:23,640
And inside, it
builds up right away

124
00:07:23,640 --> 00:07:30,380
a resentment, such a feeling
of revenge, such anger.

125
00:07:30,380 --> 00:07:35,690
If I could just kill one
for that what had happened,

126
00:07:35,690 --> 00:07:37,580
I would feel better.

127
00:07:37,580 --> 00:07:40,640
But you had to keep
your mouth shut

128
00:07:40,640 --> 00:07:42,830
and just pretend you don't see.

129
00:07:42,830 --> 00:07:44,480
You don't hear.

130
00:07:44,480 --> 00:07:45,830
No emotions.

131
00:07:45,830 --> 00:07:48,560
No emotions whatsoever.

132
00:07:48,560 --> 00:07:50,720
We didn't even cry.

133
00:07:50,720 --> 00:07:51,950
Not one of us.

134
00:07:51,950 --> 00:07:58,620

135
00:07:58,620 --> 00:08:03,740
Can you describe the
transports coming in?

136
00:08:03,740 --> 00:08:09,290
The transport when,
usually, most of them

137
00:08:09,290 --> 00:08:11,870
used to come in during
the night, but there

138
00:08:11,870 --> 00:08:14,420
were some in the daytime too.

139
00:08:14,420 --> 00:08:21,770
When you heard that whistle
from the Kommandant of the camp,

140
00:08:21,770 --> 00:08:25,910
that meant that the
transport is coming in.

141
00:08:25,910 --> 00:08:33,440
And the men in the camp should
get ready to unload the people.

142
00:08:33,440 --> 00:08:37,730
So that whistle was like
somebody would tear out you

143
00:08:37,730 --> 00:08:39,169
insides.

144
00:08:39,169 --> 00:08:46,670
You knew here are other people,
children, older people, people

145
00:08:46,670 --> 00:08:49,610
who never did anything
wrong in their life,

146
00:08:49,610 --> 00:08:51,380
and they're going to go.

147
00:08:51,380 --> 00:08:52,730
And you cannot say.

148
00:08:52,730 --> 00:08:53,990
You cannot resist.

149
00:08:53,990 --> 00:08:57,650
You cannot-- just
inside it builded up,

150
00:08:57,650 --> 00:09:03,410
the revenge and that resentment
and that anger and that pain,

151
00:09:03,410 --> 00:09:08,640
you know that, we had
builded up inside.

152
00:09:08,640 --> 00:09:12,800
And sometimes, they
came in during the day.

153
00:09:12,800 --> 00:09:17,870

And sometimes so many came
in that they couldn't handle.

154
00:09:17,870 --> 00:09:21,320
So they would put them
behind our barbed wire

155
00:09:21,320 --> 00:09:26,400
where we were fenced in and tell
us just to walk back and forth

156
00:09:26,400 --> 00:09:27,840
and forth and back.

157
00:09:27,840 --> 00:09:31,590
So what they told them that
they were going to work

158
00:09:31,590 --> 00:09:36,470
should seem to them
to be the truth.

159
00:09:36,470 --> 00:09:38,110
And it was hard.

160
00:09:38,110 --> 00:09:38,890
It was hard.

161
00:09:38,890 --> 00:09:41,755
You walk by, and you
look at the face,

162
00:09:41,755 --> 00:09:45,100
and you know in a half
hour won't be here.

163
00:09:45,100 --> 00:09:47,200
Can't even tell.

164
00:09:47,200 --> 00:09:52,420
You just put another smile,
your best face you can.

165
00:09:52,420 --> 00:09:53,590
It hurt.

166
00:09:53,590 --> 00:09:57,100
It was very, very hard.

167
00:09:57,100 --> 00:10:01,420
And then some
transports, usually,

168
00:10:01,420 --> 00:10:06,820
when I had to work near
the railroad tracks,

169
00:10:06,820 --> 00:10:11,070
near the ramp--

170
00:10:11,070 --> 00:10:14,190
And sometimes, when
a transport came,

171
00:10:14,190 --> 00:10:18,750
they send us all to the
camp except for those

172
00:10:18,750 --> 00:10:23,430
who worked with the
unloading of the people.

173
00:10:23,430 --> 00:10:30,300
But a few times we went to
clean the houses from the SS.

174
00:10:30,300 --> 00:10:34,500
And there wasn't
enough time to run back

175
00:10:34,500 --> 00:10:36,750
so they would lock us in.

176
00:10:36,750 --> 00:10:39,450
We knew ourselves

we are not supposed

177

00:10:39,450 --> 00:10:42,540
to walk out and watch us.

178

00:10:42,540 --> 00:10:46,290
And sometimes, you
saw the people,

179

00:10:46,290 --> 00:10:50,070
the way they were driven
before they're dead.

180

00:10:50,070 --> 00:10:52,770
The torture before they're dead.

181

00:10:52,770 --> 00:10:56,220
We saw them leaving
and screaming

182

00:10:56,220 --> 00:11:01,200
and children crying
and elderly people.

183

00:11:01,200 --> 00:11:08,820
I cannot explain the feeling
that I had, and I wondered why?

184

00:11:08,820 --> 00:11:11,020
Why, just why?

185

00:11:11,020 --> 00:11:13,320
That why was such
a big question,

186

00:11:13,320 --> 00:11:15,330
and nobody could answer me.

187

00:11:15,330 --> 00:11:20,610
Like for instance, the once,
I was called to clean up the--

188

00:11:20,610 --> 00:11:21,360
Boy.

189
00:11:21,360 --> 00:11:22,470
We just ran out.

190
00:11:22,470 --> 00:11:25,760
That was--

191
00:11:25,760 --> 00:11:27,450
Camera roll two starts here.

192
00:11:27,450 --> 00:11:27,950
Camera--

193
00:11:27,950 --> 00:11:35,390

194
00:11:35,390 --> 00:11:39,770
This is an incident,
which is going to be

195
00:11:39,770 --> 00:11:43,340
with me the rest of my life.

196
00:11:43,340 --> 00:11:47,960
All the people that I saw
going and imagining what's

197
00:11:47,960 --> 00:11:49,070
going to happen.

198
00:11:49,070 --> 00:11:52,850
But once the big shot was
supposed to come to Sobibor.

199
00:11:52,850 --> 00:11:57,650
Usually, they brought even
Himmler was in Sobibor,

200
00:11:57,650 --> 00:12:02,780
to show him how efficient and

how perfect they at killing

201
00:12:02,780 --> 00:12:04,400
and how good.

202
00:12:04,400 --> 00:12:06,590
And they bought the transport.

203
00:12:06,590 --> 00:12:13,070
So they took me to clean up the
quarters, the living quarters,

204
00:12:13,070 --> 00:12:17,450
of some of the SS people which
the windows face the railroad

205
00:12:17,450 --> 00:12:19,260
track.

206
00:12:19,260 --> 00:12:24,240
And while I was there
cleaning with another girl,

207
00:12:24,240 --> 00:12:27,040
the whistle was there
that the train comes in.

208
00:12:27,040 --> 00:12:28,980
So we knew we have
to remain there.

209
00:12:28,980 --> 00:12:30,990
We cannot go out.

210
00:12:30,990 --> 00:12:36,070
And the transport came in
and went everything very fast

211
00:12:36,070 --> 00:12:38,490
unloading of the people.

212
00:12:38,490 --> 00:12:40,680

And a mother left a baby--

213
00:12:40,680 --> 00:12:42,750
I don't know for what reason--

214
00:12:42,750 --> 00:12:44,610
in the boxcar.

215
00:12:44,610 --> 00:12:48,120
And Frenzel, who was
at that time in charge

216
00:12:48,120 --> 00:12:51,870
of the transport,
grabbed that little baby

217
00:12:51,870 --> 00:12:56,190
and smashed the head of the
skull against the boxcar.

218
00:12:56,190 --> 00:12:59,670
And he just threw it
in like a dead rat.

219
00:12:59,670 --> 00:13:02,850
And that just I cannot forget.

220
00:13:02,850 --> 00:13:08,060
I was at this trial
about four times,

221
00:13:08,060 --> 00:13:10,050
and I told him what he did.

222
00:13:10,050 --> 00:13:13,880
He didn't deny it, but
he followed orders.

223
00:13:13,880 --> 00:13:16,880
And this I cannot forget.

224
00:13:16,880 --> 00:13:21,676

Why kill that child in
such a miserable way?

225
00:13:21,676 --> 00:13:22,176
Why?

226
00:13:22,176 --> 00:13:23,030
Why?

227
00:13:23,030 --> 00:13:24,950
It was a human being.

228
00:13:24,950 --> 00:13:28,370
I just wish that somebody
would do to his children,

229
00:13:28,370 --> 00:13:30,560
and he should have to watch.

230
00:13:30,560 --> 00:13:32,330
And this is with me.

231
00:13:32,330 --> 00:13:33,350
I cannot forget.

232
00:13:33,350 --> 00:13:41,690
All the gruesome things that
I saw, I saw a transport came,

233
00:13:41,690 --> 00:13:46,220
the people properly
resisted in the boxcars.

234
00:13:46,220 --> 00:13:47,340
I don't know.

235
00:13:47,340 --> 00:13:51,730
So they threw in chlorine
into the boxcars,

236
00:13:51,730 --> 00:13:54,210
and the whole transport came.

237

00:13:54,210 --> 00:14:00,020

So that natural all bodies were
three or four times the size,

238

00:14:00,020 --> 00:14:05,330

some even were busted open,
and they just deposit them.

239

00:14:05,330 --> 00:14:12,175

It's a really difficult to think
about it and to talk about it.

240

00:14:12,175 --> 00:14:17,460

And all those builded up in me.

241

00:14:17,460 --> 00:14:23,010

Such an anger and a
feeling of revenge.

242

00:14:23,010 --> 00:14:27,480

And I remember, after a few
days, I came to the camp

243

00:14:27,480 --> 00:14:32,760

with a pair of brown leather
boots, which not everybody had.

244

00:14:32,760 --> 00:14:34,890

Probably nobody.

245

00:14:34,890 --> 00:14:39,210

And I said to the group
that we slept together, I

246

00:14:39,210 --> 00:14:41,550

took my boots, wrapped
them up nicely,

247

00:14:41,550 --> 00:14:44,490

and put them on the
bunk bed under my head.

248

00:14:44,490 --> 00:14:46,230

They said, why you put--

249

00:14:46,230 --> 00:14:50,910

I said, with these boots, I'm
going to escape from Sobibor.

250

00:14:50,910 --> 00:14:55,990

Don't ask me why,
and don't ask me how,

251

00:14:55,990 --> 00:14:59,560

and maybe it's not-- it
doesn't even make sense,

252

00:14:59,560 --> 00:15:02,620

but I'm going to escape
with these boots.

253

00:15:02,620 --> 00:15:07,460

And I did escape with
these boots from Sobibor.

254

00:15:07,460 --> 00:15:12,320

And things like this, every
day was something new.

255

00:15:12,320 --> 00:15:14,570

Like they took all
the sick people,

256

00:15:14,570 --> 00:15:18,120

when we stood in the
sorting shed and sorted

257

00:15:18,120 --> 00:15:21,650

the things from the
people belongings,

258

00:15:21,650 --> 00:15:27,920

and you see the lorries
or the wagons go by.

259

00:15:27,920 --> 00:15:33,260

And the older people or
children who were maybe orphans

260

00:15:33,260 --> 00:15:36,710

were thrown in like cabbage.

261

00:15:36,710 --> 00:15:40,210

And then at the
end rides Gomerski,

262

00:15:40,210 --> 00:15:44,870

who was in charge of that
with the pistol and just asks,

263

00:15:44,870 --> 00:15:46,100

who is tired?

264

00:15:46,100 --> 00:15:48,920

And who cannot work,
and who is sick?

265

00:15:48,920 --> 00:15:53,720

I'm going to help you, and
then bullet, and then a bullet.

266

00:15:53,720 --> 00:15:59,540

And I cannot describe
even the feeling.

267

00:15:59,540 --> 00:16:00,890

I cannot describe.

268

00:16:00,890 --> 00:16:05,350

I don't think there are
words really to describe it.

269

00:16:05,350 --> 00:16:08,500

I was at his trial too.

270

00:16:08,500 --> 00:16:13,840

He said also he followed

orders, and I told the judges,

271

00:16:13,840 --> 00:16:21,480
if Hitler would come now and
give him orders or somebody

272

00:16:21,480 --> 00:16:25,480
else, they would do it again.

273

00:16:25,480 --> 00:16:29,830
And it was very
hard just to watch.

274

00:16:29,830 --> 00:16:35,650
Like winter, sometimes, came the
transport, and they were busy,

275

00:16:35,650 --> 00:16:38,290
and they couldn't
handle so many.

276

00:16:38,290 --> 00:16:42,130
They told the people to
undress in the snow in Poland.

277

00:16:42,130 --> 00:16:45,500
It's very cold in
the snow naked,

278

00:16:45,500 --> 00:16:49,970
and they chased
them like cattle.

279

00:16:49,970 --> 00:16:53,240
Cattle, I think, you
take better care of.

280

00:16:53,240 --> 00:16:57,340
All the way to camp three
to the gas chambers.

281

00:16:57,340 --> 00:16:59,105
Let's stop for the truck.

282
00:16:59,105 --> 00:17:08,510

283
00:17:08,510 --> 00:17:11,566
Can you talk about--

284
00:17:11,566 --> 00:17:15,859
you talked once about a person
named Mitchell, and a charade

285
00:17:15,859 --> 00:17:19,099
that he had telling people
to hang up their clothes.

286
00:17:19,099 --> 00:17:20,359
Can you talk about--

287
00:17:20,359 --> 00:17:25,339
That this was in the beginning
when it first started.

288
00:17:25,339 --> 00:17:30,290
They weren't as well
organized as later on.

289
00:17:30,290 --> 00:17:35,060
So the German efficiency,
they had the yard.

290
00:17:35,060 --> 00:17:40,580
A fenced-in yard with hooks
to hang up the clothes,

291
00:17:40,580 --> 00:17:45,110
and they would assemble all
the people from the transport,

292
00:17:45,110 --> 00:17:47,030
and he would go out.

293
00:17:47,030 --> 00:17:48,800

Scharf's teacher Michel.

294
00:17:48,800 --> 00:17:52,970
We used to call them
the House Speaker.

295
00:17:52,970 --> 00:17:55,940
And he would say
in German, Jews,

296
00:17:55,940 --> 00:17:57,860
you think you're going to die.

297
00:17:57,860 --> 00:18:00,200
It won't happen.

298
00:18:00,200 --> 00:18:02,030
It won't happen to you.

299
00:18:02,030 --> 00:18:02,930
You brought here.

300
00:18:02,930 --> 00:18:06,860
You give up all your
belongings with a number.

301
00:18:06,860 --> 00:18:08,030
You'll get a number.

302
00:18:08,030 --> 00:18:11,780
And you hang up your clothes,
and you go to the showers

303
00:18:11,780 --> 00:18:14,840
because we are
afraid of sicknesses,

304
00:18:14,840 --> 00:18:17,660
and then you'll be sent to work.

305
00:18:17,660 --> 00:18:23,180
But the way he said,

in German, he said.

306
00:18:23,180 --> 00:18:24,545
[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH].

307
00:18:24,545 --> 00:18:28,850

308
00:18:28,850 --> 00:18:32,820
If the Jews would want to
die, but that won't happen.

309
00:18:32,820 --> 00:18:38,340
And I feel it was
their way of doing it.

310
00:18:38,340 --> 00:18:42,080
I mean, they were
very well organized,

311
00:18:42,080 --> 00:18:49,670
and I'm not surprised at myself
and other people that we really

312
00:18:49,670 --> 00:18:51,590
didn't--

313
00:18:51,590 --> 00:18:55,190
Not that we believed
it because we saw it,

314
00:18:55,190 --> 00:19:00,110
but we couldn't comprehend it.

315
00:19:00,110 --> 00:19:05,720
The way it was done with
such a German efficiency,

316
00:19:05,720 --> 00:19:10,040
and everything to the
minute and to the second.

317

00:19:10,040 --> 00:19:13,430
And in you always ask why, why?

318
00:19:13,430 --> 00:19:14,480
You cannot ask.

319
00:19:14,480 --> 00:19:17,320

320
00:19:17,320 --> 00:19:19,180
It wasn't easy.

321
00:19:19,180 --> 00:19:25,020
To be in Sobibor or any other
camp, I suppose, that camp,

322
00:19:25,020 --> 00:19:32,660
I don't think you could
even think straight.

323
00:19:32,660 --> 00:19:37,020
I remember once came a big--

324
00:19:37,020 --> 00:19:43,170
when Himmler came to our
camp, they brought 400 girls

325
00:19:43,170 --> 00:19:44,880
from Majdanik.

326
00:19:44,880 --> 00:19:48,750
That was also a death
camp, to show him,

327
00:19:48,750 --> 00:19:52,620
and that's when they
ordered to shave

328
00:19:52,620 --> 00:19:56,520
the heads from those victims.

329
00:19:56,520 --> 00:20:00,830

And they shaved the hair from
them, and he went and looked,

330
00:20:00,830 --> 00:20:05,370
and they got such
award that they're

331
00:20:05,370 --> 00:20:09,330
doing such a good job
that after a while

332
00:20:09,330 --> 00:20:11,170
they liquidated Treblinka.

333
00:20:11,170 --> 00:20:14,310

334
00:20:14,310 --> 00:20:18,180
And all of a sudden, when
they closed up Treblinka,

335
00:20:18,180 --> 00:20:23,730
they brought all the inmates
to Sobibor to be killed.

336
00:20:23,730 --> 00:20:25,920
They were afraid to do it there.

337
00:20:25,920 --> 00:20:30,180
So one afternoon, all of a
sudden, the whistle and they

338
00:20:30,180 --> 00:20:32,460
lock us in in our compound.

339
00:20:32,460 --> 00:20:37,710
Then we knew something
extraordinary is happening,

340
00:20:37,710 --> 00:20:41,550
and we could hear
the train coming in.

341
00:20:41,550 --> 00:20:46,350
The Ukrainians took care
of it, not our inmates,

342
00:20:46,350 --> 00:20:48,630
and we could hear shots.

343
00:20:48,630 --> 00:20:51,120
And we counted the shots.

344
00:20:51,120 --> 00:20:52,920
So much and so much.

345
00:20:52,920 --> 00:20:56,920
And after the last shot,
they came, they let us out,

346
00:20:56,920 --> 00:21:01,140
and they send us to sort
out their belongings.

347
00:21:01,140 --> 00:21:06,450
And as we started, we always
check very careful everything

348
00:21:06,450 --> 00:21:12,270
for papers, for documents,
for notes for anything.

349
00:21:12,270 --> 00:21:15,840
And we saw that they
were from Treblinka.

350
00:21:15,840 --> 00:21:21,480
In every pocket was almost
a note, take revenge.

351
00:21:21,480 --> 00:21:22,860
Take revenge.

352
00:21:22,860 --> 00:21:23,970
We couldn't.

353
00:21:23,970 --> 00:21:27,600
Maybe you can take the revenge.

354
00:21:27,600 --> 00:21:32,370
And in times like this and
you felt they using you

355
00:21:32,370 --> 00:21:34,320
and look at what they do to you.

356
00:21:34,320 --> 00:21:35,650
The same thing.

357
00:21:35,650 --> 00:21:37,350
So why be here?

358
00:21:37,350 --> 00:21:38,580
Why?

359
00:21:38,580 --> 00:21:41,430
Just to their convenience, why?

360
00:21:41,430 --> 00:21:44,940
And then after a while, they
brought the people from Belzec

361
00:21:44,940 --> 00:21:49,000
because they closed up
Belzec too at that time.

362
00:21:49,000 --> 00:21:52,440
And they were-- and the
same story happened there,

363
00:21:52,440 --> 00:21:58,320
and then they expanded Sobibor,
and business started booming.

364
00:21:58,320 --> 00:22:01,520
Night and day you had transport.

365

00:22:01,520 --> 00:22:06,580

We used to work 14,
16, 18 hours a day.

366

00:22:06,580 --> 00:22:08,610

I mean, into the night.

367

00:22:08,610 --> 00:22:12,360

Just the men took
care of the helping

368

00:22:12,360 --> 00:22:18,090

to unload the people
of the belongings.

369

00:22:18,090 --> 00:22:24,810

And then you had to pack up, and
they had to ship it to Germany.

370

00:22:24,810 --> 00:22:29,640

It was very difficult. I
cannot explain that feeling

371

00:22:29,640 --> 00:22:34,440

and the resentment and
the hate and the revenge.

372

00:22:34,440 --> 00:22:37,930

The revenge was so great--

373

00:22:37,930 --> 00:22:38,855

We have to reload.

374

00:22:38,855 --> 00:22:48,930

375

00:22:48,930 --> 00:22:53,250

Can you talk about the
choices that the guards

376

00:22:53,250 --> 00:22:59,170

had versus the choices that

you, the prisoners, had?

377

00:22:59,170 --> 00:23:03,130

First of all, the guards
had all the privileges.

378

00:23:03,130 --> 00:23:06,190

They could do
whatever they wanted.

379

00:23:06,190 --> 00:23:10,210

They didn't have to account
if they killed somebody or hit

380

00:23:10,210 --> 00:23:13,810

somebody or mistreated somebody.

381

00:23:13,810 --> 00:23:16,930

We didn't have no privileges.

382

00:23:16,930 --> 00:23:21,700

We were there to serve
the Germans probably as

383

00:23:21,700 --> 00:23:23,890

long as they would
have needed us,

384

00:23:23,890 --> 00:23:25,720

and then it would be the end.

385

00:23:25,720 --> 00:23:30,190

The guards could go outside,
The guards could have furlough.

386

00:23:30,190 --> 00:23:33,070

The guards had enough food.

387

00:23:33,070 --> 00:23:35,140

It's altogether a
different ball game.

388

00:23:35,140 --> 00:23:38,260

389

00:23:38,260 --> 00:23:40,090

Did you have choices?

390

00:23:40,090 --> 00:23:44,280

No, I didn't have no choice.

391

00:23:44,280 --> 00:23:46,860

Whatever I was
told, I had to do.

392

00:23:46,860 --> 00:23:51,040

And maybe better than I could.

393

00:23:51,040 --> 00:23:58,110

And whatever they gave me that
was to eat, and that's it.

394

00:23:58,110 --> 00:24:02,730

The only thing that we had
in our favor in Sobibor

395

00:24:02,730 --> 00:24:04,770

which other camps didn't have--

396

00:24:04,770 --> 00:24:07,830

I don't know about
Treblinka and Belzec--

397

00:24:07,830 --> 00:24:10,740

that they didn't shave our hair.

398

00:24:10,740 --> 00:24:15,630

The inmates, and that we
could take clean clothes

399

00:24:15,630 --> 00:24:19,380

from the transport and change.

400

00:24:19,380 --> 00:24:21,870

And we could wash us selves.

401

00:24:21,870 --> 00:24:27,460

And I think this was
keeping ourselves clean

402

00:24:27,460 --> 00:24:33,570

wasn't so dehumanizing
that people

403

00:24:33,570 --> 00:24:37,290

had in other camps with
the dirt, with the filth.

404

00:24:37,290 --> 00:24:39,750

That this is only
for one reason.

405

00:24:39,750 --> 00:24:42,810

First of all, was as propaganda.

406

00:24:42,810 --> 00:24:47,370

If some transports came in,
they should see that we still

407

00:24:47,370 --> 00:24:49,530

look like human beings.

408

00:24:49,530 --> 00:24:52,560

And second of all,
they lived so close

409

00:24:52,560 --> 00:24:55,620

to our quarters,
the German quarters,

410

00:24:55,620 --> 00:24:58,980

that they were
afraid for diseases.

411

00:24:58,980 --> 00:25:01,830

And there was enough
clothes so we could

412
00:25:01,830 --> 00:25:04,890
take and keep ourselves clean.

413
00:25:04,890 --> 00:25:10,950
This was one of the biggest
thing that kept us going.

414
00:25:10,950 --> 00:25:13,320
We were hungry, not enough.

415
00:25:13,320 --> 00:25:16,680
Sometimes we stole something
from the transport.

416
00:25:16,680 --> 00:25:20,730
The people used to
bring bread or whatever.

417
00:25:20,730 --> 00:25:25,770
But that was very risky
because most of the time

418
00:25:25,770 --> 00:25:30,120
when we walked to the barracks
from the working place,

419
00:25:30,120 --> 00:25:33,010
they used to check us.

420
00:25:33,010 --> 00:25:37,330
They used to check us if we
didn't take something or so.

421
00:25:37,330 --> 00:25:39,040
But we tried.

422
00:25:39,040 --> 00:25:42,620
Sometimes we were successful.

423
00:25:42,620 --> 00:25:46,090
But the main thing that we

could keep ourselves clean,

424
00:25:46,090 --> 00:25:49,780
and that's why we had
that courage and that

425
00:25:49,780 --> 00:25:53,170
will to do something.

426
00:25:53,170 --> 00:25:57,190
Because when you
way down physically

427
00:25:57,190 --> 00:26:02,110
and filthy and dirty
and shaven and this,

428
00:26:02,110 --> 00:26:05,290
you give up that very first.

429
00:26:05,290 --> 00:26:08,950
But I feel that kept
us going, and that's

430
00:26:08,950 --> 00:26:14,680
why we thought even if one makes
it and go out, he look normal.

431
00:26:14,680 --> 00:26:18,520
He won't be right
away suspicious.

432
00:26:18,520 --> 00:26:21,730
He has a stripe outfit.

433
00:26:21,730 --> 00:26:23,770
He doesn't have no hair.

434
00:26:23,770 --> 00:26:28,840
That was one plus that
they didn't think about

435

00:26:28,840 --> 00:26:34,480
that we had in our favor to
think about uprising, thinking

436
00:26:34,480 --> 00:26:37,420
about taking revenge
and so forth.

437
00:26:37,420 --> 00:26:44,960
Once a partisan group approached
the camp, and they wanted--

438
00:26:44,960 --> 00:26:46,680
I don't know-- liberate.

439
00:26:46,680 --> 00:26:50,000
Whatever they wanted
to do, but we knew

440
00:26:50,000 --> 00:26:52,130
it was a partisan group.

441
00:26:52,130 --> 00:26:54,140
And during the night,
the whistle came.

442
00:26:54,140 --> 00:26:59,480
We had all run out whatever
we had on and stayed

443
00:26:59,480 --> 00:27:03,860
barefooted in the snow
probably two or three hours

444
00:27:03,860 --> 00:27:08,850
or more surrounded by
machine guns and everything.

445
00:27:08,850 --> 00:27:12,650
They figured if they should
happen to go through,

446
00:27:12,650 --> 00:27:16,430

they'll kill us off, but
they left the partisans,

447
00:27:16,430 --> 00:27:18,180
and we went back.

448
00:27:18,180 --> 00:27:23,660
And at that time, they made
minefields around the camp.

449
00:27:23,660 --> 00:27:25,670
Before, there were
no minefields.

450
00:27:25,670 --> 00:27:30,680
We were so deep in the woods
that nobody could even know

451
00:27:30,680 --> 00:27:32,722
that something goes on there.

452
00:27:32,722 --> 00:27:36,420

453
00:27:36,420 --> 00:27:42,630
So we started thinking about
uprising, about revenge,

454
00:27:42,630 --> 00:27:45,150
and I think that kept us going.

455
00:27:45,150 --> 00:27:52,530
Although it was a silly
thought, but you know,

456
00:27:52,530 --> 00:27:55,935
that gave us the
courage to survive.

457
00:27:55,935 --> 00:27:58,830

458

00:27:58,830 --> 00:28:00,990
Because we planned.

459
00:28:00,990 --> 00:28:02,190
We planned.

460
00:28:02,190 --> 00:28:06,030
The plans weren't worth it
maybe in the beginning \$0.05.

461
00:28:06,030 --> 00:28:09,900
But we planned, and we
saw ourselves outside,

462
00:28:09,900 --> 00:28:12,750
and we saw all the Nazis killed.

463
00:28:12,750 --> 00:28:15,270
And this kept us going.

464
00:28:15,270 --> 00:28:23,920
And every day in 1943,
probably in February or when,

465
00:28:23,920 --> 00:28:27,910
Leon Felhendler was picked
out from a transport

466
00:28:27,910 --> 00:28:29,080
and brought in.

467
00:28:29,080 --> 00:28:34,060
We were cousins by
marriage, and after we

468
00:28:34,060 --> 00:28:38,740
told him what's going
on, everybody who came in

469
00:28:38,740 --> 00:28:42,880
or they took him out, if
they killed 10 from us,

470

00:28:42,880 --> 00:28:46,630
they picked out another 10
from the next transport.

471

00:28:46,630 --> 00:28:47,320
We told them.

472

00:28:47,320 --> 00:28:50,080
And he said, we have to escape.

473

00:28:50,080 --> 00:28:53,000
And we asked how, he
said, there must be a way,

474

00:28:53,000 --> 00:28:55,480
and we're going to escape.

475

00:28:55,480 --> 00:29:00,190
And we started
planning and going

476

00:29:00,190 --> 00:29:04,180
to a meeting, which only
a few went because you

477

00:29:04,180 --> 00:29:06,370
had to be very careful.

478

00:29:06,370 --> 00:29:12,400
And coming back, you felt
like you're doing something.

479

00:29:12,400 --> 00:29:14,950
You're planning something.

480

00:29:14,950 --> 00:29:17,080
You're trying something.

481

00:29:17,080 --> 00:29:20,630
If you'll succeed, it
would be wonderful.

482

00:29:20,630 --> 00:29:23,530

If not, you'll get a
bullet in the back.

483

00:29:23,530 --> 00:29:26,860

It's better than going
to the gas chambers.

484

00:29:26,860 --> 00:29:30,520

I promised myself I'll
never go to the gas chamber.

485

00:29:30,520 --> 00:29:32,860

I'll start running.

486

00:29:32,860 --> 00:29:37,100

They have to waste
a bullet on me.

487

00:29:37,100 --> 00:29:40,730

And we started
organizing and talking,

488

00:29:40,730 --> 00:29:46,920

and it kept us alive again.

489

00:29:46,920 --> 00:29:51,600

You know, that maybe we'll
be able to take the revenge

490

00:29:51,600 --> 00:29:53,554

for all those who cannot.

491

00:29:53,554 --> 00:29:58,180

Who are already burned dead.

492

00:29:58,180 --> 00:30:03,580

We promised ourselves it didn't
matter if we'll survive or not,

493

00:30:03,580 --> 00:30:06,070

but to do something.

494

00:30:06,070 --> 00:30:09,310

Not that the world
shouldn't say the Jews

495

00:30:09,310 --> 00:30:12,340

went like sheep
to the slaughter.

496

00:30:12,340 --> 00:30:14,180

It's not true.

497

00:30:14,180 --> 00:30:17,890

We saw a lot of
incidents in camp

498

00:30:17,890 --> 00:30:20,920

where women hit the SS people.

499

00:30:20,920 --> 00:30:24,340

They hit once the
Untersturmführer [? Neumann. ?]

500

00:30:24,340 --> 00:30:27,260

They almost popped out an eye.

501

00:30:27,260 --> 00:30:29,500

He was all bandaged up.

502

00:30:29,500 --> 00:30:30,460

They did.

503

00:30:30,460 --> 00:30:31,300

They did.

504

00:30:31,300 --> 00:30:33,545

But they're not here
to tell the story.

505

00:30:33,545 --> 00:30:36,730

506

00:30:36,730 --> 00:30:41,740

And I feel that the
resistance in general--

507

00:30:41,740 --> 00:30:45,340

not talking about
Sobibor which Sobibor

508

00:30:45,340 --> 00:30:48,790

had a successful revolt.

509

00:30:48,790 --> 00:30:51,790

The others tried
and didn't succeed.

510

00:30:51,790 --> 00:30:55,720

You know, this was the
only successful revolt,

511

00:30:55,720 --> 00:30:57,760

but people fought back.

512

00:30:57,760 --> 00:31:00,490

They fought back in the woods.

513

00:31:00,490 --> 00:31:02,950

They fought back on
the train stations.

514

00:31:02,950 --> 00:31:05,950

They fought every
step of the way,

515

00:31:05,950 --> 00:31:10,190

but they're not here
to tell and that hurts.

516

00:31:10,190 --> 00:31:13,300

It hurts.

517

00:31:13,300 --> 00:31:16,300

And time runs out and

the survivors too.

518
00:31:16,300 --> 00:31:20,590

519
00:31:20,590 --> 00:31:24,510
Tell me what a death camp is.

520
00:31:24,510 --> 00:31:25,740
Assume that I don't know.

521
00:31:25,740 --> 00:31:29,145
Just define it as opposed
to other kinds of camps.

522
00:31:29,145 --> 00:31:35,400
You see, the other camps
were half slave labor camp

523
00:31:35,400 --> 00:31:37,350
and half death camp.

524
00:31:37,350 --> 00:31:40,530
Sobibor was only a death camp.

525
00:31:40,530 --> 00:31:45,000
There was no such thing
as slave labor camp.

526
00:31:45,000 --> 00:31:48,840
That was only
strictly the inmates

527
00:31:48,840 --> 00:31:54,490
that were picked out from the
trans- they just took care

528
00:31:54,490 --> 00:31:56,810
of the killings of the people.

529
00:31:56,810 --> 00:31:59,920
I mean, they didn't kill

them, but they helped.

530
00:31:59,920 --> 00:32:01,570
You know, they had to.

531
00:32:01,570 --> 00:32:07,900
And of the work in the camp of
taking care of the SS people,

532
00:32:07,900 --> 00:32:13,510
that's the difference from
Sobibor to Auschwitz lets say.

533
00:32:13,510 --> 00:32:18,070
Auschwitz was a half slave
labor camp and a death camp.

534
00:32:18,070 --> 00:32:20,732
Sobibor was just a death camp.

535
00:32:20,732 --> 00:32:23,200
No slave there.

536
00:32:23,200 --> 00:32:27,065
No work, no producing,
no doing, nothing.

537
00:32:27,065 --> 00:32:33,490

538
00:32:33,490 --> 00:32:37,870
Can you tell me about the
seamstress and her baby?

539
00:32:37,870 --> 00:32:41,460
Yeah, she was there.

540
00:32:41,460 --> 00:32:44,760
She came with the
transport in my time

541
00:32:44,760 --> 00:32:46,980

already with her husband.

542
00:32:46,980 --> 00:32:50,190
She was a seamstress,
and he was a tailor.

543
00:32:50,190 --> 00:32:52,500
Although, in the
film, she says that he

544
00:32:52,500 --> 00:32:58,560
was in the partisan group,
but she came with the husband.

545
00:32:58,560 --> 00:33:04,100
And she had that baby, I
would say, about two weeks.

546
00:33:04,100 --> 00:33:08,030
And then they finally
found it because they

547
00:33:08,030 --> 00:33:21,490
used to come in unannounced,
and they walked in,

548
00:33:21,490 --> 00:33:23,380
and they saw the baby.

549
00:33:23,380 --> 00:33:25,330
They gave her a choice.

550
00:33:25,330 --> 00:33:26,470
It's true.

551
00:33:26,470 --> 00:33:29,590
They have her a choice that
they're going to take the baby,

552
00:33:29,590 --> 00:33:35,410
and she can remain because
she was very good seamstress.

553

00:33:35,410 --> 00:33:41,290

They used to wear underwear only
from silk from the parachutes.

554

00:33:41,290 --> 00:33:45,340

They didn't use plain
materials the SS.

555

00:33:45,340 --> 00:33:47,910

She was excellent.

556

00:33:47,910 --> 00:33:52,525

Shirts and underwear to
make from those parachutes.

557

00:33:52,525 --> 00:33:54,480

We have to reload.

558

00:33:54,480 --> 00:33:57,786

We have to do this--

559

00:33:57,786 --> 00:33:59,756

This will be--

560

00:33:59,756 --> 00:34:00,256