

Tell us your name, your birthplace, when you were born.

My name is Carl Ofisher. I was born in January 5, 1926. My father's name was Gershon Leib Ofisher. My mother's name was Chaya Roza Ofisher.

I had two sisters and a brother. My sister, the youngest sister, was Sura Gitel. Esther was the second sister. And Usze was my oldest brother. It was--

So what city were you--

I was born in Łódź, Poland. It's a large Polish city, and a Jewish population from 200 and some thousand Jewish people. It was a big city. Was mostly tailors, produced material. Clothing. It was very large.

And in 1939, it's now-- it will be September of 1989, it will be 50 years since the Holocaust started. It was in September 1939. I was 13 years old, happy youngster. There is a nice family, middle class.

My father was a tailor. We had our own tailor shop. People are working for us. We lived a comfortable living.

What kind of schooling did you have?

I went there just grammar school with the war. I was 13 when the war started. So I couldn't finish.

Anyway, by '39, we were playing. The children are just playing, all boys and girls together, when there was a rumor that the war started. We were kind of happy because we didn't understand what the war is. We were playing games, like a war games, pretending we were fighting.

But our parents, in the parents' eyes, in the parents' face, you could see the sorrow they felt. And they were talking about German will [INAUDIBLE], invade Poland. Anyway, in September, the war started.

Yeah, before the war started, the Polish government start to organize people to dig ditches all around the city. That's supposed to be the Polish air shelter against the bombs. The ditches were dug 6 feet deep, and they were going like this. They're topping boards on it. It's supposed to be the hiding. People go into hiding.

And they were all over, working, men, women, children digging, digging, digging, day out. The Polish army was prepared for the war. Then the war started. The German [? waide ?] invaded Poland.

I remember listening to the radio. We had a-- we were fortunate to have a radio. Not everybody could afford in Poland to have a radio. We listened to the radio, that Polish leader, Marshal [PERSONAL NAME], he had a speech. He said Poles, German army invaded Poland.

He said in Polish, [SPEAKING POLISH]. That mean, we won't give up a button from our uniform. The Jewish people were laughing. And they made a comment on it, like [SPEAKING POLISH]. That mean we won't give up the button on the uniform, but all the whole uniform with all the buttons.

Anyway, it took two weeks. The Germany marched into Poland. Before they marched in, we were-- heard the bombs falling over Łódź. We were scared. We had entered the ditches to hiding.

So after two weeks they came into Poland. And I was standing on the middle street, the main street, watching the Polish army going towards Warsaw. The Polish army was defeated, so they went towards Warsaw. We were watching the army marching, the horse, buggies, OK, pulling the horses are pulling the-- the canons. The soldiers, they exhausted because they were marching--

Germans?

Polish soldiers.

Polish.

They were marching by foot, mostly with their [INAUDIBLE]. Foot soldiers. And motorized, they didn't have a motorized army. They had horse and buggy army.

When these soldiers left Łódź, the German moved in. We were surprised. As young as we were, we were surprised. How did Poland wanted to win a war against a motorized army? The German came in tanks, big trucks with soldiers, the ammunition. Everything was motorized.

And we were looking, and said, well, it's like a fly fighting a elephant. It looks to me. And I was young, and I was thinking about it. The thought before about war disappeared from my mind already. I realized what really war is.

So as soon the German came in, the first thing, when they occupied Łódź, they made all the Jewish people wear Jew star with the name "Jude." Jude mean Jewish-- Jew. Some of them wear the star. Some of them was hiding. We're afraid to wear the star because we know if they see a "Jude" they will grab us to work.

What they did, at the beginning, they grab all the-- mostly they grabbed the Jewish people with the long beards. And it was-- 90% in Łódź was strictly Orthodox Jewish people, very Orthodox. And they grabbed those rabbis, the Jewish men with beards. The Germans start to pull their beards, with the skin, off, bleeding.

They had those men who we dig those ditches before the war cover those ditches. They did, young people, old people. Anybody they can get, as long they're Jewish.

Those shelters?

Yeah, they call it shelters. But to me it was like a burying ground, because the German used it for burying grounds. Because people covered those holes, those shelters.

When they were half-covered, they start to shoot anyone. They fell into the graves. Then they grab other Jewish men to cover the rest of the people, the people in the grave. And it was a horrible sight to see.

My father, they caught my father. He has to cover the holes. But he was lucky. He came home. He was beaten up. Swollen the face, blue eyes-- black eyes from beating him up. He was afraid to go out from the house [INAUDIBLE].

Then the German sort of started to grab those Jewish girls. They took them away. And they raped them, and they send them back.

Some of the girls, they were strictly Orthodox. They couldn't bear it. They commit suicide. They went up on the highest wall they could, jumped down this through the windows to commit suicide. They couldn't bear to be raped by German soldiers.

After a while, we couldn't walk on the main street. On the sidewalk was not allowed to walk, the Jewish people. Only gentiles or German. The German had any right they wanted to do whatever they wanted, grab you, hit you.

Well, we were hiding most of the time. The food was scarce already. We had to stay in lines for bread. We used to get up in the night, 4:00. It's almost in the morning, 4:00 in the morning, to stay in your line to get a loaf of bread.

Why we stay in the line? The Germany soldiers came in and picked people. They looked at the faces, picked them up, took them away, and never to return. We were afraid to go next day for the bread.

We try to hide, not to go to the bakery. But it came to the point you were hungry. You had to do-- go to the bakery. You stay in your line. You watch.

As soon as you saw the German Jeeps coming with the soldiers, we ran away, hide in corners, hide in the streets in the houses. Then, when they went away, we went back to the line to get the bread.

That's going on for a while. And my father start to work again as his trade. Make coats which for women. That was his trade, a tailor. And he tried to start to make a-- a little living so he can have enough food.

After about mid-- that was September. In May, in 1940, the German established the ghetto. What they did is took all the whole Jewish population from Łódź, and they bring them to one place, around-- put wires around. That's supposed to be the ghetto.

When they established the ghetto, there was about 180,000 Jewish living, crumpled in apartments. Used to be one family apartment. Three or four families in each apartment. They had to let them in. You want it or you don't want it.

They established factories, tailor factories, shoe factories, saddler factories. My father took these, his machines, sewing machine, went to the factory to work on German uniforms. The reason you went there, just to get a little bit more food. If you work, you get a extra bowl of soup. If you don't work you get nothing.

They called-- the ghetto really was a starvation. They wanted to starve us to death. They accomplished what they wanted. Every day you could find bodies laying in the streets from hunger, starving.

So my mother was very sick person. She couldn't go to work. But in the ghetto, if you don't work, they don't need you there. They liquidate you.

So everybody signed up to work, even my mother. She signed up for the factory. And I was young then, 14. I signed up to work in a saddler resort. They call it resort. I was making those rucksacks, ruckpack, for the German army.

No, before I went to this, I worked for the straw shoes. We used to make straw shoes for the German. They put it on on top on the boots when they were going closer to the Russian war so they weren't freeze. So we used to make those straw shoes.

After about two weeks of this work, they took me to another job, to the saddler resort. And we used to make those packs. We used to have-- had a minimum to give out so many-- so many packs a day. And everything was hand work.

I was very good at it. The place we worked was about 500, 600 people working in the whole place. We learned a trade, working together. Used to get up every 12 o'clock, go get the extra bowl of soup. That was a potatoes and water. But for us, it was a lot of food.

Because when they established the ghetto, they give you food marks. You get a 1 kilogram of bread for a week per person. A couple pounds of potatoes, we would get. Some kohls-- kohlrabi.

And it came to the point, that wasn't enough. So people start to steal. Hungry people go around. Mothers used to hide the food from their children. The children used to hide it from the mothers.

Mothers used to watch their children dying from hunger. They couldn't help it. They give-- some mothers give away their portion of bread. She died from starvation. It was a very horrible things to see.

In the ghetto, those-- we used to get up in the morning before you go to work, to stay in your lane to get a portion bread. So if it's a large family, one stayed for the bread in a line, one stayed for the potatoes, one stayed for the kohlrabi. Everybody had a job to do, because by 8 o'clock you had to go to work. And we stayed there, since 5 o'clock, we stay in the line.

One day, I was saying in the line, and a German soldier came over and took me out. Well, he asked me why

I'm staying here. I said, I have to go to work in the morning, so I'm staying here to get my portion of bread.

And he took me away. They had a Jewish jail over there. He put me in the jail there. And there was a line for hundreds of people. But he took me out. Put me in the jail to about 12 o'clock in the morning. We didn't go to war.

And then he took me out. He said, now you go get your food. By the time we got there, the line was gone. There was no food left.

I went to work. I missed that soup over there too, because I came late to work. I was punished for not being on time, nothing. So I didn't get the soup.

The life was very hard for me. But we tried to survive. We were together, a family.

How many were you in the room that you lived in?

We had a apartment. It was a three-room apartment. There were about four families, divided with linen. And everybody slept on the floor or on a bed. We had our own bed. But the people who moved in our apartment, they had to sleep on the floor. There was no room for furniture.

So you rented an apartment, and it was inside the ghetto?

We were living, before the war, on the place where they made the ghetto. So that was our apartment. The Jewish people who came from the other part of the city, they had to move into our apartment, whoever's apartment it was. So it was very crowded. But during the day, nobody was home. Everybody had to go to work.

Oh, at the beginning, we thought we will survive. Hunger or not, we will survive. Then they start to come in for selections, the German. I remember the day when they came in with trucks. Big trucks. And the apartment where it was, very giant [INAUDIBLE]. And on that apartment building, all around a circle, they came in with dogs and went room to room, apartment to apartment, to look for small children.

I was standing in that room. My brother, my mother and sisters, my father. And my brother had a little girl. She was about six month old.

The German soldier came in. He ripped the girl out from mine sister-in-law's arm. He used to live on the second floor. He threw her down through the window, right to the dump. And he went out. We all ran to the window looking.

When we looked down, we saw hundreds of children laying there, They lay on the ground below the wall there. They ripped out arms, feet. The women are crying, screaming. Couldn't take it. Every time I see the picture, I feel to cry. [SOB]

Then we had the largest synagogue in Łódź, one of the largest. It was only a block away from our house. The German went in, then drums of gasoline, and burned it to the ground, and made everybody come out, watching our synagogue burn.

And the people were crying. Where is God? If there is God, why does he do that to us?

So were in the ghetto until 1944. But my father, he died from starvation 1942. He died in my arms.

In the ghetto?

In the ghetto. He was a strong man before the war, in the ghetto. He never was sick. He never went to a doctor. He never had a toothache in his life. Was a very strong man.

But he couldn't pull it out because just the way the food-- not enough food. So he died in '42.

Me and my brother went to bury him. There used to be those hearses. Before the war, a hearse used to carry one person. In the ghetto, that hearse was so busy. The hearses are like a horse in a dark-- the horses, they used to pull these hearses.

When they picked up the bodies, they used to put them about 10, 20 bodies in one hearse to take them to the cemetery. We used to come there. By the time we get to the cemetery, we have to dig our own grave. There was no casket or anything. You put down. And my mother put my father down in the grave with a couple boards to cover him, make-believe casket.

And we buried him. [SOB] Went home from the funeral. There was his portion of bread left. It was like a holiday for us. We had another piece of bread to eat.

So we had to go back to work everyday. One day, my father-- and my father was dead. My brother and his sisters.

Then there came another selection, and they took my mother away. They took away overnight. They had a big camp. And I used to go there in the night with my sister, struck to the window to her. We didn't know where they're going to take her.

But we had a-- one cousin. He was a lawyer. And he wrote a petition to the German that my mother is very sick, and family. It helped. They let her go. We were surprised. She came back home. We were a family together-- until 1944.

In 1944-- and I think it was in September-- the German came to the, again, and appealed to the people. They said, we have to eliminate the ghetto. We could send you to Germany, where you could be together, and have a lot of food. All you have to do, pack everything, take it down, and we will pick you up.

We'll take you to the train station. You will go live in a different camp. The Russian are coming. You'll be worse off.

But we didn't believe the German. We know who the Germans are. We couldn't believe it, German people, the most educated in Europe, intelligent people, can do horrible things to a human being. We couldn't believe it.

Well, we didn't believe it, what they said. We were hiding. In that apartment where we used to have three families, they all died out in starvation. Only we are left.

We had one room, divided out the room, we had a big fireplace, a stove, go like this, pushed into the wall, so keep warm both side of the [INAUDIBLE] of the rooms, and with this room and another one. And that storehouse on little legs, we stayed.

What we did, we covered the door to go into the other part, the other room, to clothing. We cover it that we don't see a door. We crawl underneath to the other room. So every day, the German used to come to yell to everybody, go down. Take you to the different camp. We were hiding there.

It was good for several weeks, till one day we were hiding there, and they came up, the German. Usually when they came up, they saw one room, it's empty, they just left. This time they were looking around in this room.

And it so happened my sister was sneezing. When then heard a sneeze. When they start to look, they find her. They ripped down the clothes. They find out the door. They found the door. They opened the door.

But we were prepared. We had our-- everything packed to go. We know sooner or later they will get us.

We took our clothes, bedding, whatever we could, and everybody was carrying down. On that street there was staying a lot of-- hundreds of people were there waiting. The German trucks were waiting. The SS

pointed their machine guns at us. Push us in the throat. Throw us in the train station.

At the train station, there were waiting boxcars, like cattle boxcars. They put them on, 50 to 100 people in a car. There was hardly any room to lay down. Just one sit next to the other. Like sardines we were sitting there, men, women, children.

What I mean children is not young children. They illuminate all the young children. Were children about 18, 17, 14 years, 19 years, together. In the middle of the boxcar there was a big drum. That was so called a toilet, to wash, nothing to cover it around or anything. You had to go to the washroom, you just stay and do your duty, and everybody looking. Men, women, the same thing, but what could you do? You couldn't do it.

They slammed the doors. They seal it. There was a small window. We looked out. And we were traveling two or three nights, two days. We didn't know where.

We'd stop mostly in the night. The train could stop in the [INAUDIBLE]. A few hours waiting. We didn't know why. We had only-- they get only you were-- we took it, the bread or whatever we have, to eat. A little bit water. After the third day we ran out of water and we didn't have any.

Then, on the third day, the train stopped. It was a beautiful day. The sun shine outside. The doors open. All we saw is wires with barracks. They keep yelling, everybody, heraus.

We went down the train. We carry everything with. We carry the belonging. The Germans told us to drop everything, to stay in line. I stay in line with my mother, two sisters. My brother was-- they didn't took my brother. He was away that day in another place. So I don't know. He came to the-- just my mother and two sisters.

We stayed in line. And there was Dr. Mengele. Was sending with the stick. He pointed that the people-- there were thousands of them, because the trains, were so many trains, he didn't realize how many people they took until we got out. And I turn around, and I look back in front of me. And in back of me I saw thousands of Jewish people.

Well, we were hugging all together, to meet here. We don't believe in what they say, because we know who the German are.

And then Dr. Mengele pointed the stick. He started on the first left and right, left and left. He came to me, and he pointed me to go to the right side. And he point my sister to the left-- to the right side, the other sister to the right side. Then he point my mother to the left

After the people on the right, they separated right away, women separated and the men separated. I was watching my mother. She was crying, screaming. Take care on yourself, he said.

My sisters were crying. I saw them far away, because they were marching them, the women away. They marched the men away. They marched the people on the left side away.

They took us in Birkenau, Auschwitz. Then we know then. We realize that's the camp Auschwitz. But we didn't know what Auschwitz is. We didn't know about it.

They took us in a big barrack, all the men. They make us strip, everything. After they stripped us, they shaved the hair. For every place you have hair, they shaved. You walk around naked.

Even when you walk around naked, when you selected to go on the right side, it's still there were German soldiers inside looking over you again. They still took from there out. Some of them didn't look too good. They took them back out, naked.

Where they took them, I didn't know. But later I realized, later I find out where they took them.

Anyway, I was walking around, naked there. That the soldiers walk around, women soldiers, SS. We were embarrassed, what after a couple of minutes, five minute, it didn't bother us. All we ever think about, what happened to the family.

They give us some clothes with stripes, and some shoes, like sandals, whatever shoes it is. Some people may have two left shoes. Some may have a size 6. Some may have one shoe 6 or one shoe size 11. They give you. You wear.

They marched us-- yeah, and they took us in for a shower. Gives a shower, a shave. They march us out to a barrack.

When we came to the barrack, it said 101 barrack. They tell you find a place to sit down or lay down. That's your place. You will be here.

The kapos took over there. Who are the kapos? Criminals-- Polish criminal, German criminal. They were calling the kapos supervisor, foremen, whatever you want, you can call them. They were screaming, yelling, hitting you over the head, whatever they want.

I was in that barrack for a while. Then I walked out outside. It's already dark. it was 7 o'clock or 8 o'clock in the evening. And I smell an odor.

I ask some people who were in the camp before me, I say, what's that odor? Oh, they say, you don't know? Look across. You see the wire. See the smoke over there. That is the people who went on the left side. They went to the gas chamber.

I didn't understood what they mean, the gas chamber. They said, well, you got experience. Some of them I talk, they were working at the crematorium by the gas chamber.

They say, all the people there, they made them take off their clothes, they gave them a towel and soap. They say, you're going to take a shower. You're going to take the shower. And instead of water, there come out gas.

People fighting each other, and tried to run to the door. They killed them. Some of them were gassed right away. Some of them were still breathing when they opened the doors.

When they open the doors, they had some prisoners from Auschwitz who had to take out the bodies, put them in giant carts, and wheel them to the crematorium. And the door opens. Put them in. You're alive or dead, they put you in. Because the-- they have to do it, the Germans, the SS stays and watch. You don't do your job, you're going to be in it.

After I heard this, I start to cry. I was wondering, was my mother dead? Was she alive when she went in the door?

And no matter, for two days, how hungry I was, when I suffer from hunger, starvation, I couldn't eat for two days. They give you a bowl of soup, I didn't go to this line to get it. I just lay down on the ground outside, cold. They want to go to barrack. All I do is cry. I was crying. I had a family yesterday. They're gone today. Then I had a--

When where you tattooed, Carl?

I will come to it. Then I had a friend mine age. We were together in the ghetto. We were together, the same age with me, together in the Birkenau, when we came.

While I was laying on the ground, he came over to me and woke me up. He said, Carl, they're selecting people now, young guys, to work. I said, I don't want it. I don't want it.

He said, Carl, you have a chance. Now's your chance. You've got two sisters and a brother. They may still be

alive. You have a chance to see them again.

So I got up, and I was the last to stay in the line to be selected to work. The man who selected work, he was a German, but he was in civilian clothes. He looked at me, and he said, lauf. That mean run. And I was very young. I was very fast. I ran fast. So he took me. He selected me and my friend.

So we were selected, about 600, 700 young guys to go to work. But before we went to work, before anything, we had to go down in the same barrack where we took the shower three days before, took the shower, shaved us again, make sure we clean. We stay in the line, five with the line, were several hundred. They [INAUDIBLE].

The German soldier who attacked me took me out. He said, out. And [INAUDIBLE]. He didn't want me.

I was walking towards the door. Follow me to the door. Then I turn in the back, and I went in the middle and stay in the line again, in the back.

Meanwhile, they started to count. The one line only-- every line is supposed to be five. There's six. So they took the one in front, they took away. And they were lucky they selected me. I didn't know I was like a [? nag ?] at that time. I didn't know what going to happen.

They give us different clothes, with stripes, clean clothes, and they marched us to Auschwitz-Birkenau. It was a camp, like a transition camp. They marched, I think it's about 2 or 3 miles away, because I can't remember exactly. I didn't count how many it is. I know we were walking, marching.

We came there. There were buildings, red buildings, bricks three stories high. They-- we went in by several hundred in this building. They call it the Maurerschule. That mean a school for bricklayers. All young boys.

Over there we had bunks. Everybody got their bunk, to stay on it. We started to get food in the morning, three times a day. In the morning, you got a slice of bread, a bowl of soup in the evening, during lunch, and another bowl of soup in the evening.

Yeah, before I went to the camp, they put a tattoo. My name-- my number was B8047. The reason the B8047 is when they started to give the tattoo, they started from 1 to 100,000. Then they started A to 100,000. And in '44, when I came to Auschwitz, they started B from 1 to 100,000. Maybe later on C. I don't know. So we was called only by the numbers.

They took us out in a block, in the row, in that place, and they show us where we're going to stay. We went up on the third floor to show us. There was an empty room, a lot of bricks, cement, and some instructors to teach us how to build. It was a bricklaying.

So it was good. We were fine. Then, in the morning we have to get out for Appell every morning. That mean they have to count every morning. We stayed five people. They stay in a whole line, several hundred.

Get up in sun up, you stay there. Sometimes you stay for an hour, sometimes 15 minutes. Sometime you may stay all day. Why? They count.

Let's see if our block's supposed to be 500 people in it. There's one missing. They're looking for you. And you stay until they find him, dead or alive. If they find him dead, you go back in the barrack. You get you portion of food, and you go to the school.

But if they find him hiding, what they did in our barrack, one boy, he denied. He was sick. He couldn't get up. He was, like, unconscious already. They found him. After about several hours, we were standing here to stay in attention.

They took all our boys in to the block inside a big room. We had to drop our pants. And they took, a big hose, a black hose, inside a steel spring. And we-- I have 50 lashes on our behind, every one of them. That is a punishment for everyone. If this is going to ever happen again, we won't give you 50. You'll be dead,



they said.

So don't hide. If you're sick, you can come down. Make sure you tell somebody that you came down. So we know you don't have to stay and wait for you dirty Jews all day long. That [? I was told. ?]

After the beating, I couldn't sit down for 10 days. Not only me-- the rest of us. But we have to work.

And the whole work, they at least they'll teach us to build, bricklayer. We find out, that school they have all the time in Auschwitz. They always select young people to build. Those young people, they're building the crematoriums.

By the time we did it, they had all the crematoriums built. We didn't have anything to do. But after two weeks teaching us how to be a bricklayer, they start to take us out to work every day.

What kind of work? Marching out to camp. They opened the door. The orchestra was playing in music, like happy. We're marching about I think about 5 or 6 miles every morning, in a place.

They were weighing tons of tons of cement, bags of cement, 80-pounds bags. We have to pick up a bag of cement, carry it on there to 200 feet away, piling up there, in another place. We were piling it all day long. During the night, we go back.

The next day, we go back to the pile of cement, pick it up, carried it from where you took it, just to torture us. They didn't do anything else to do for us. But every day, you'd see 500 go out, some young guys couldn't take it. Maybe only, by everyday, about 50 or 60 died. We have to carry them back for the Appell, to stay. Like you say in the morning, the Appell, when you come back, they come again.

I remember one night, one evening, we came back. We stayed in line. One man was about a couple inches out in the line. He wasn't even staying even with the line. The SS took him out and he made him lay down on his back. And he took a big 2 by 4 board over his throat. He made a few of our people stay till he died. So that's the lesson, what you go there. When you there, you obey, if you like it or you don't like it.

One day they told us to show the hands so we have clean hands. I picked up my hands. He looked. For no reason, the German soldier took my finger. He just broke it. It was a circle. I couldn't scream. I was afraid. He walked away.

I put my hand down and straighten the finger out. But I still got a bump on it. And he said, leave it. It's a reminder.

It was going on in Auschwitz to work, carrying. One day, they took us in a different place to work. And it's a funny thing to talk about it. They took us a place where we had to carry bricks, carry five, six bricks from one place to the other, and put them there. They put them down.

What we realize is that we can't take it to work anymore. So we organize a few guys who work on it [INAUDIBLE]. Let's do it different. Let's pile them up, and make a hole in the middle, so once in a while, somebody could sneak behind and he's taking a rest at 15, 20 minutes. And we did it. And it worked. It worked for a while.

Three, four days, it was working good. Everybody had a rest. Until we had one guy. He was a Jewish boy too, from Germany. He was born in Germany. He didn't know he was Jewish. His grandparents were Jewish. And we told him to go rest. He said, no, I work for my Fatherland. He work for his county.

And he went to tell the German what happened. We didn't know. And it so happened, I was walking with the bricks, while the German told him to find a few guys sitting there resting. They shot them, all of them.

See, then we learned our lesson. We didn't talk to this guy again. We were afraid. After all, he said he's not Jewish. He's German.

But he died there in Auschwitz from starvation. The German didn't care who he are, who he is. He was tortured for something we don't know. He died. Maybe he was complaining of what he is doing here because he's a German, not Jewish. I know he was tortured. When they bringed him out back to the camp, he was swoll in the face, black, blue. Every color you could see on his body. I don't know how long it took, but they would torture you.

Is it possible that his ancestors were Jewish?

Yeah, his grandparents were Jewish, he said. But he said, I don't know. I know I'm German. What my grandparents did, I don't care. And I'm not Jewish. He was complaining about it all the time.

But the German, they-- anybody who has a-- anybody who was Jewish, the grandparents or parents, they consider you Jewish too.

We had in that block, why the reason we survived, our young people survived that building, across from us was another building. There were Jewish women, beautiful women. Every time where a transport came in, the SS select the most beautiful girls, the youngest girls. And they put them in this building.

The reason they put them is for their needs, for their pleasure, for the pleasure of the kapos. And those women, they had a lot of food. They had the best food. They did what they have to do because they didn't have a choice. Either be dead. They'd have a chance to survive.

And they saw us every day, day to day, and so much food that they couldn't eat it. And so they threw it through the windows, to us, throwing this down, a lot of food. And we had plenty of food to eat.

Because I was six months in Auschwitz. According from the ghetto, from Auschwitz, I gained weight in Auschwitz because of the women.

And we had a block leader. And I'm not ashamed to say it. He was Polish. He was one of the best men-- from the-- all the Polish people I knew who were bad.

Polish Christian.

Yeah, a Polish Christian. He was a diamond of a person. Because the next block was the same Polish, luckily a leader. And he was like a murderer. He killed people. There was another-- a few more blocks what young people.

But this man, he had-- I don't know. It looked like God send down an angel. He made sure we get enough food, double or triple food for us. He used to play guitar for us overnight, sing songs.

To me, it was something like I said, like a angel's [INAUDIBLE], because I remember in Poland, when I used to go to school, how the Polish people used to throw stones around the children. We were afraid to go. We had to go in the woods. How the Polish people used to tell the German, who has money from the Jewish people who don't. And there was that man a different person.

I used to hate to see, every time they told me the leader's Polish, I was afraid, because from childhood I know I suffer a lot from the Polish population. There, the Angel from Death.

Anyway, in '44 they took us. They said we're going to a different camp. They took us into the shower place, took away the clothes, given us different clothes. And they give everybody a loaf of bread, and some jug of water. They said, you will go to a different camp.

They marched us out. There were several hundred of us. We marched and we marched slowly. And we saw the gas chamber.

They stopped us there. They say, everybody sit down. Sit down on the ground. It was in the morning.

We know our fate there, right there. We know what going to happen to us. Nobody in the world can imagine the feeling in your heart when you know that's the last day of your life, that now is the time you're going to the gas chamber. You don't know if you will come out dead, you will come out alive, when they put you in the crematorium.

We were sitting there all day long. About 5 o'clock we realized what the hell. We going to die today. What we holding the bread? We ate the whole bread up. Everybody. Let's die happy. We hug each other, and we kiss each other, when we were together [INAUDIBLE], that the last day we ate the bread, drink the water. And we waited.

And now later a train came. It was cattles box cars. And they told us, go on the boxcars. There we were sitting for 12 hours on the ground, worrying what happened. Then we go on the boxcars-- no food, no water. Pile us in. The train started to roll.

For two nights and three days I don't know where we went around. But we didn't have food. We didn't have any water. Well, 10% of the people on this train died in the train. Hot. Too many people in the train. No food, no water.

How do we know they died? When they opened it, on the third day, the train, they went to carry out the dead people. Every box car had some dead people.

We came to camp Sachsenhausen in Germany. They took us out. We went in that camp. We stay in the line all day long, no food, just to give us-- they were nice. They give us some water to drink.

And it was cold. In the night, they took us in, give us a cold shower. After the shower, they said, everyone out-- naked. It was freezing temperature. It was everyone out, because when the train picked us up, I don't know. Even on the way, he must have picked up some from someplace else. There was so many people we never saw in my life.

We stay in the line. They start to hit us over the head with sticks, the German. And we were freezing. Why they hit us over the head, we ran one direction. We came to the other end, the German, they hit you over that day. You run back, forth and back. I was lucky. They never shot. So I didn't got hit.

Now before I go farther, I want to mention something from Auschwitz, what happened. In Auschwitz, I got sick one day, and I had 105 temperature-- 104, 105. There was a doctor, French doctor. He try everything, to give me whatever. He used to sell his bread for a medicine, for aspirin to help the people. So after three days, I couldn't go to work.

Was he an inmate?

He was an inmate, French Jew. After three days, he couldn't help it. He said, you have to go to work. Either they going to take you away.

They took me-- he said go to the hospital. I went to that hospital. They took the temperature. I didn't have any temperature. They send me back. I came back, the doctor said, what happened? I said, I don't have any temperature. He checked the temperature. There is no temperature.

What I mean, why I mentioned this, the same night, when they came in, they liquidated the whole hospital. All those people they took to the gas chamber. They had selections that night.

And another night, they had selections-- also in Auschwitz you always had selections during the night. One day, we went down and do selection. We had to jump over. They had two [INAUDIBLE] with a board on top. You had jump over it. Whoever jumped made it. Go back to the barrack, to the block.

I jumped, but the guy in front of me, she jumped too. But by the time he came back to that barrack, to the block, he was all gray. His hair turned white like a sheep. We used to call him [NON-ENGLISH]. Well, that, I forgot to mention before that I come back to Auschwitz.

So now I'm in Sachsenhausen. We were-- like, they were hitting us over the head back and forth [INAUDIBLE]. It was for an hour. After an hour a day, we go back to the shower.

Meanwhile, there is some prisoners already there picking up the dead bodies laying there, frozen or beaten up. They're taking them away. We're going in the shower again, cold showers. Out again.

That was going on all night. The reason they did it, they didn't have room for us. The barracks were full. But during the night a couple of thousand died, freezing, beaten up, exhaustion. Several hundred died in the barracks, and so on. Whoever was left had the room to go in the barracks.

Then they give us clothes. It was winter. We get summer clothes and summer shoes. And they put us on bunks. The bunks was from one end to the other, boards. Three tiers.

And we lay there like sardines squeezed together. No blanket, col. We shivering, everybody pushing together, flesh to flesh, to keep you warm. But our bodies were cold anyway. We didn't have any hot body in us.

In the morning, we got up. They give us brand new army shoes to wear. Brand new--