

Good afternoon, Adele. We're very grateful for you coming down here. I would like to ask you where you were born, your family name, your maiden name, and so forth.

OK. I'm born in Zdunska Wola. That's a small town, industrial town, near Lodz.

Poland?

Yeah, in Poland. And my family consisted of my parents and four brothers more, the older ones. And then I had a sister coming and another brother and me, seven children.

Would you please state their names, each one of the sister and brothers and your parents' name also.

OK. My parents' name was-- the father was Yechiel.

Last name?

Sworinski, typical Polish. My mother was Chana. My oldest brother was Hirsch. Then Chaim, Avram, and Yaakov. Then came a sister, which is alive, thank God, now-- she is Rivka-- and my brother, Meir, and me.

Did you live in the vicinity of your grandparents? Any uncles, aunts?

Oh, yes. We have uncles, and we had the aunts. We have cousins. And my grandparents-- no, they came-- my father's side-- I hardly knew them. My mother's side-- they lived in Szczebrzeszyn near Zamosc. That's where my mother came--

Did you have contact with your grandparents?

Yes, we had contact with them, but as I say, they died before I really knew them very well. But my mother's we were more in contact, yeah.

Did they live in your town?

No, they lived in Szczebrzeszyn near Zamosc. Yeah.

What type of livelihood did your father make? What was his profession?

Well, we had the-- they used to have-- Lodz was a big town, and we had the materials to ship over. So he had that business like shipping--

Selling, selling.

--and bringing in, finishing over the-- finishing over there in Lodz and bringing it back. It was textile. Yeah.

Were you comfortable when you were growing up? Did you have a comfortable home and--

Well, comfortable as far as we were very well-cared-for from my parents but to a certain standard as Jews could live and have in Poland.

Did you attend public school or [INAUDIBLE]?

Yes, I was in public school, only for Jews. Yes, they had a public school-- other public school which we were not allowed to attend.

So you had no contact with non-Jewish children?

Yes, we did, neighbors.

Neighbors.

Neighbors.

And you had a good relationship with most of them?

We had a-- some of them, yes, we played together. Everyday living, yeah, but we had next door to us-- they were in the AK. That means they were anti-Jewish completely. They hit many times my sister, my older-- we were still younger, and we were protected, me and my brother, by our parents more. But my oldest brothers and so-- they usually had fights with them.

And usually over some derogatory remark that they would make?

Absolutely. They showed us they're ruling us, and we are Jews.

When did you feel the real oppression or the real anti-Jewish feeling?

Well, if I should go as far as the war started, and we saw that terrible antisemitism. But mostly when they closed us in the ghetto. And we were young children, so we snuck out of the ghetto, took off the band, the yellow band, and we tried to get a piece of bread, buy bread. So mostly those kids-- we played together. They pointed out, we are Jews. We were more afraid of them than of the Germans.

Prior to you going into the ghetto, was there some recrimination against the Jews? Did you feel anything-- was there a shortage of food or--

Oh, definitely from the beginning. We were like-- they say they had the-- the Third Reich-- where I lived, they wanted that part of Poland, make it as true German. We have a lot of the--

Your area did not fall into the Russian occupation.

No, no. My area was more for the German occupation right away. They took us over--

And what year approximately what this when you--

'39.

'39.

Right, '39. That was an incident. As soon the Germans came in, they found a dead German. That was said. If it's true, we don't know. And they blamed on the Jews, and they gathered all the Jews in the center of the town. And they killed a few. They cut the beards, and they took all the men to a neighboring town, and they closed them in prisons. And not all of them came back, but they told them that this has to be Judenrein. We all should disappear. And that's what started the--

Pure of Jews, clear of Jews.

Yes, "Judenrein" they call it in German. And that really started the flight for life. My older brothers ran away to Russia. My sister ran away. We were too young, so they said they'd come back for us. They'll see what's doing, they come back for us. Never happened.

That probably was not up to them. It probably was beyond their control.

It was beyond their control. As a matter of fact, my older brother was married at that time and had a young child. And he came back. That was Yaakov. He came back. He smuggled back for the wife, and so he never came-- he stayed already.

He couldn't go back.

No, no way. And he had a tragic end, very tragic. He stayed with us in the Lodzer Ghetto. I met him, and we saw once his child. And the next time was a sperre, they call it. They closed up--

A selection or what?

A selection. And they took away the kid, and they shot him, thinking that he's dead. But they shot him through the head. He lost an eye. He lost a leg, and we somehow found him in a hospital. And we noticed him. We took him together because I was at that time with my older two brothers and a cousin. So we formed a family.

and We took him in, and he was with us. He had to stay in bed all the time, but we all had to go to work. Nobody could stay with him.

What kind of work were you doing in the ghetto?

In the ghetto, I was making the straw shoes for the Germans. They called it the Strohresort. Yeah. And I determined the-- went to the director and pleaded with him. He let me for a lunch hour go in and feed him because he was helpless.

And in a very short time I had to go back. It was a long run. That's what I did. You have, even for necessities he couldn't do anything. I had to care for him.

Like to the bathroom?

Absolutely. He couldn't walk with one leg, and it was not healed at that time. Nobody could take care of him.

Can you remember when they were gathering you or how you-- when you went into the ghetto, how that took place?

Terrible thing, terrible. They just hustled us all to the cemetery, and they used to-- the Germans used to bring bread and threw it into the mass of Jews. And everybody wanted to grab it, and they were shooting at us.

That took a couple of days, and after that, they formed a-- what do you call it? The formed-- both sides were--

Barricaded?

--barricaded, yeah. On sides were the Germans with guns, and everybody had to pass through. And they picked whoever they wanted. It was a very, very small percentage who passed, and the rest they sent to Chelm. It was a little town, Chelm.

It wasn't in the ghetto?

That was not far from Zdunska Wola. And there they had the graves ready with lye. I know it exactly because my brother-- they caught him from Lodz, and they send him back to clean the town. So he knew what happened, and he saw many things.

They just pour lye on top of them and just killed them.

Not even-- they didn't even shoot the people?

Well, there was a lot of shooting and so, but it was such a mess, a big mess. I don't know exactly what happening, but that's what my brother said, that they did shoot, and they put them in lye and just bury them. Oh, they did the same thing in my town on the cemetery. They threw in live children and buried them. That I witnessed.

This was also before you were gathered into the ghetto?

That was in our town before we were sent to Lodz in '42.

What was it like in the ghetto?

In '42? Well, there were many of the selections, and we, without any reason that I can say, we stayed to the September, to the last time. And when they cleaned out the ghetto, we were hiding in a attic somewhere very high up, closed up, but my brother couldn't go. He was an invalid. He couldn't walk. We couldn't take him so high up.

So we made up that if they come for him, he should start screaming, and we all come down. And that's what had happened. We came all down, and we come down. And they sent us to Auschwitz. And that's the last time I saw my brother.

What was the living condition like in the ghetto?

Well, very bad, I should say, but as long we were organized-- like we found a family, and I, as the one girl, was the head of it. So all the rations, whatever we got, we all put together, and I was in charge. And we knew that so little what we have-- we don't need it at once. We spread it for every day a little bit, and that helped us to stay alive.

And you were able to feed your injured brother?

My injured brother has bigger privileges than everybody. We also shared a little bit more for him.

But did the other members of your little family work also?

All we had to work. All had to work.

For your rations, did you have to wait in lines or--

Yes, we did wait in lines for rations, but as I say, the family was divided. And if one waited for the rations, the other one would wash the clothes. So we shared it. It was easier that we had like our own family. We shared everything.

Approximately how long was this going on in the ghetto for you?

Well, we came in 1942, and we stayed until the--

'44?

'44, until the end, yeah. And--

What about your parents?

My parents they took away right in my town. As I say, they took away most of them.

The elderly and the children.

Even young, a lot of young. No, it was just the small percentage.

But it was just a small percentage that were--

--left, yeah.

--left in the ghetto.

Right, right. And going to the ghetto, we had another history. They put us on cargo trains, and a normal ride is about 40 minutes from our town to the Lodz. But we were riding forth and back I don't know how long, and a lot of them died. We were so congested that one-- and there was no sitting room.

We had to stay one against the other, and they didn't open the wagons until Auschwitz, but it was several days forth and back and back and forth with no food and anything. A lot of people died, suffocated.

When you departed from the train in Auschwitz, what happened there?

Well, my memory goes back-- if I have to be frank, it was like going through a-- hell is not enough saying because one went right, and one was left with screaming and shooting and all that.

Your younger sister and you-- you did not remain together at any time?

No, my older sister left for Russia.

And you had one younger--

No, my brother.

She's an older sister?

Yeah, and my brother.

So she went to Russia with your brothers?

With the older brothers, yeah, yeah. Yeah.

So what does your memory go back to in Auschwitz?

Auschwitz-- well, my first impression was when I saw the-- I was picked to survive for the ovens probably, but we went through a gate. And then it was on both sides tall gates, and people were already there from before. And the impression on me-- that I will never believe that in no time I'd be the same. Never would I believe that. I don't know-- is that what our subconscious mind works and hoping that it's not so? I don't know, but it--

What did those people look like to you?

To me, like wild animals, no hair. Tall people wore short dresses, just covering their body. Little people wore very long things, just thrown to cover their body. And it was like the eyes-- the eyes just looking at us like either warning us or just envious that we are on the outside, terrible, terrible sight.

And then they took us to a bad showers, and we wind up the same thing. We were shaved, and my head shaved all over. And they gave us also just barely to cover our bodies, and we stood-- actually, I was standing there in Auschwitz for a-- well, as my memory recalls, maybe a day or more, just huddling a bunch of-- like animals and waited next turn to the be burned, for the ovens.

Were you aware of this when you were there?

Well, we had an inkling, but we didn't know, no. We didn't believe it or we didn't know exactly what's happening. We didn't. But we were at a crematoriums, near it, and we heard the noises in beginning.

But we were watched so around that we didn't even-- couldn't even move a little or whatever, and we were one standing against the other. But apparently, the-- '44, the Russian-- they couldn't burn that many people. I don't even have a number on my hand.

You don't?

No, because they couldn't do it so fast. At that time, they were clearing out all the other ghettos in Poland from all over and send again. So they couldn't accommodate everybody of us. That's why. I was a short time in Auschwitz.

How long?

Well, at the most I was like eight days or so.

Oh, you were very fortunate.

Probably. I don't know. But we were a short time, but every day was with the appells, counting, and killings again, and we had to sit in a barrack like animals, one on top of the other. They fed us with one cup, and we had to share with the next, next, next. By the time it came to the next-- to the end, was nothing left. That's what-- but as I say, all of a sudden, they gathered us and put us in trains again.

Approximately how many?

In the train?

Yeah.

Again, it was very tight.

Congested.

Very congested, very congested. And I wind up near the Czechoslovakian border.

Do you recall the town?

Bad Kudowa. But I never met anybody from that town, no, because we were there-- I worked in the Krupp factory.

What kind?

Krupp.

Oh, that's the firm name.

Yeah, the firm name, yeah. They're making airplanes, yeah. And then they took me to make the-- dig ditches for the soldiers.

How-- so you were in an airplane manufacturing for a while?

Yes.

I know time didn't mean anything, but approximately how long were you there?

Well, I was also there a short time. They took us to dig ditches. They caught a group of us, put together, and we were digging ditches on the border. And we heard the shooting from a distance, and so-- but after that, all of a sudden, after maybe, I don't know, a few months, not too long also, maybe a couple of months, we were gathered to sit together all of a sudden. We're put in a room, and we didn't know any destiny or whatever. We thought we were going back to Auschwitz.

So I wind up in a train again, and they put me in a camp, [? Rozega. ?] There was a flax factory, and probably the needed manpower. It took a long time. There was most people from Sosnowiec, Bedzin, Katowice. From there the people were.

So you were back in Poland now.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Wait a minute. No, [? Rozega ?] is Germany.

Oh, Germany.

Germany, yeah. [? Rozega ?] is Germany.

Were conditions a little better at any one of these places, or were they--

Well, in a camp like [? Rozega, ?] at least we worked very hard, but they fed us to survive. That's it. But we worked for 12 hours a day, and when we came back, we had a Judenalteste. That's the [INAUDIBLE].

Yes, a supervisor.

Our supervisor. She is from Sosnowiec, I think, from Bedzin. And she was a terrible person. Should would let us stay when we came from work for the longest time until she was ready to count us and send us off to the barracks so that we can endure.

You mean the SS didn't even intervene in this, that she took care of all of that, the counting?

Yeah. The SS was in charge, but they put her in charge of us, like to count the people if we are right-- the right amount came back. Or if-- now you're going to eat, or later, you're going to wash the toilets or whatever. She was in charge of those things, but she was really terrible. She's alive.

She survived?

Now, I didn't recognize her. Imagine an incident. I was in Stanford with my closest friend, and we played together cards. I didn't recognize her. And the next time-- listen to that incident. And the next time I went visiting there again, and her cousin was with us. And we opened the album from my friend's son's wedding, and we look at it. And I said, who is that? She said, oh, this is my cousin.

So little by little, she admitted that she was in charge of us. She was. We wrote a letter-- my sister and me-- we wrote a-- we were together, my sister and me, so we wrote a letter to Wiesenthal, and so they didn't do much about it. They had bigger thing is to take care. I understand. But she's now in Florida.

It's a sad commentary, but I want to tell you that sometimes they did it for their own survival.

Oh, I'm sure of it. Selfishness I understand, but selfish to be with somebody lives? Well, you could do it, OK, and I couldn't do it. That's what it is. All the kapos and so were just a survival manner. I understand.

There were some very kind ones. There were some--

Probably. I don't know because after that experience, I couldn't think of a kind one. Maybe.

Anyway, we were back in Germany now in this camp. What was the name? I forget.

[? Rozega. ?]

[? Rosega. ?] And what type of work were you doing here?

I was in charge to clean the machines with another girl.

In a factory?

Yeah, a big factory of the--

Was it ammunition?

No, flax.

Flax.

Yeah, flax factory. We worked about 12 hours a day, and me and another girl from-- we were in charge down low where the cleaning parts were to do.

Did you have any special privileges during this time?

Privileges? Well, I was lucky in one way. I was lucky that they have there the Russian prisoners, and they used to come in as mechanics to fix the machine. And one took a liking to me as a father. He says he left two girls home, and he used to bring me, smuggle in some food. And so I had a good-- he was so kind. He must be in his-- 40 or so, early 40s. As a matter of fact, he said, after the war, you come to my house because I have two girls. He was very kind.

But that was a big help, wasn't it?

Oh, it a big help, yes, but he also did it in-- if they would catch him, we both would wind up I don't know where, but he could be shot or whatever. He's not supposed to talk to us.

He was risking his life.

Yeah, he was risking his life. I'll never forget it. He was very, very kind. That helped, yes.

Was this for any length of period or was it just for a short time?

For a short time, short time as long he worked there because they were rotating or whatever. We don't have any contact with them, not at all. They had their own camp.

So this had to be already in the year '4-- end of '44 or '45 already?

'44, we left the ghetto first, but this was like, yeah, '45, I think, '44--

Well, '45--

--the beginning.



The war ended in '45.

Yeah. And they managed us to ship out again to Bergen-Belsen. When the Russians came nearer and nearer, they gathered us up, and we walked for days.

Was this in the winter months?

Winter months, barefoot, no food, barely any clothing, and whoever survived, we-- they got us again on a train, and-- for a few days until we reached Bergen-Belsen. And there in Bergen-Belsen, they put us in a typhoid camp.

Did you have typhoid?

I had typhoid, yeah. There we-- also luckily, I was there with-- and I saw what's doing with all these dying people. One morning, I had a girl laying near me. She was older, so she took care of me. And she says, come with me, come.

So she took me, and we-- under a fence was a little lower part. And we snuck out from the fence, and we went to the other side where the people working, working stuff. And that took a couple of days because we had in the evening to be back, back to be counted. A few days we did that.

So you'd go out in the morning and come back in the evening?

After we were counted we were-- we ran out from the-- somehow we smuggled out. Where we got the courage through [INAUDIBLE]. And one of the days, they caught us, a German officer or whatever he was, and he took me to work.

The work was done-- they brought in German prisoners, mostly, probably, communists or what, they against regime. I don't know. And we supposed to take their things and put it in big bags and stock it.

Oh, their belongings.

Yeah.

[INAUDIBLE]

Yeah, their belongings. And there was jewelry and many expensive things, cameras and so on. So I got to admit, we stole like a ring and so on in our mouth. We hid in our mouth. So this makes us-- when we came back from work, we didn't have where to go. We couldn't go back there because it was late, so we hid in a barrack where the working people were, and we bribed the charge of the barrack, the captain. We gave her all those goodies, so she let us stay, me and the other girl.

That went on for quite a time, maybe two months or months or whatever. That went on like that, and somehow we did it. So she let us stay, and we were already counted there. That was probably why I survived. By the end, I got the typhoid, and I couldn't do that anymore. And that was the end until my liberation.

You had typhoid when you were liberated? You still had it, or you had--

Oh, I was probably finishing or whatever. I couldn't work anymore when the English people--

--liberated.

--liberated us. And that was also a scene, my God. People were like-- did you ever see like an ant when somebody steps in the middle of their house? That was-- we were afraid. They were announcing that we're liberated, but nobody wants to believe it.

So it's like wild. Everybody was moving and are afraid to stick out their heads and changing places and running until, finally, a group of them did go out and met by the English announcing that we are free. So even you couldn't walk, you crawled.

You had no strength to--

We didn't have-- I didn't have any more strength because I was with the typhoid. Yeah, they took care of us right. As I say, I couldn't eat. That was lucky. And people who were hungry and ate whatever they gave them, they didn't survive.

Yes, we know that-- we know that for a fact that--

Yeah, but they were hungry. How could you be hungry and not eat?

Yes. Of course, they didn't have the knowledge either.

No, they didn't have the knowledge. Apparently, they didn't-- they were not prepared what they saw. They were not prepared for it, not at all.

Were you hospitalized at this point?

Oh, yeah, they took me on a stretcher, and they helped us, yes, medical help and all that.

Were you taken to a city hospital?

No, it was like a military setup. They probably cleaned some houses or barracks or whatever, and there were so many that they couldn't accommodate us like that.

Were they able to be with some kind of medication at this point?

Not at that time. They had to check us out. They had to sterilize us.

A lot of people with typhoid.

Because as I say, they brought us in, and we were still able to work and walk. And they put us in a--

You were exposed to it.

Sure. They didn't have to burn us. They just put us in a typhoid barrack. That's all. But somehow we survived. I don't know how.

I remember I had very high fever, laying one near the other without any-- who cares. I don't even remember. We were in very high fever. You were delirious. And you didn't care for anything, and without doctors, without any help--

Somehow you survived.

I know, just fate the war--

But eventually, did you get some medication or--

Well, eventually, we were sent to also like portable hospitals, and they had there beds and so on, and they checked us out. Medication they gave us, yeah.

And I went to Sweden with the Bernadotte group. That was the first group, yeah. They took us. Because to Poland-- they asked me if I want to wait to go to Poland. I didn't want to go.

In Sweden, did you get good care?

Yeah, they were nice to us, yeah. In Sweden, they put up the quarantine, and they were giving us all the help we needed. And they nursed us back to strength a little bit, and then we went to work.

You worked in Sweden?

Oh, yeah. And it was pretty tough, too.

What type of work?

I tell you, in a textile factory they put us in. We worked very hard, and--

At least you had proper food and--

Well, whatever we earned we had to live on it.

Oh, I see.

Yeah.

Then you were in private life already.

Private life. They kept us until they nursed us back to possibly a condition that we could work and we were stronger enough, and they kept us also in a camp.

Did you have to pay for your housing too or did you--

When? When I worked?

When you were working, yes.

Absolutely, I had to find my own housing, find my own-- completely on our own.

So did you live with a family, or you had to--

No, we formed our own family. As I say, I had another girlfriend, and my sister and later become my sister-in-law. And my brother was separated. He was in all the camps of Auschwitz and so in Germany, so I tried--

Were you with your sister-in-law all the time? Or did you--

Yes, we were most of the time. I met her in the [? Rozega ?] camp, but she was on different shift. I didn't know at that time. We got together in Bergen-Belsen. We happened to wind up near each other. Yeah, and we got so acquainted that we stuck together. They sent us to Sweden together. So we wind up from then on as friends.

I see.

And we had another girl, a friend also, and we formed a family.

So you lived together and a [INAUDIBLE], some kind of an apartment?

Yeah, a furnished room.

A furnished room?

Yeah.

With a family?

Well, the family was on their own. We were on our own. They just gave them a living quarters, yeah. We paid for it, and we tried to survive on our own.

So you sort of came back to--

--private life.

--private life.

--your private life.

Yeah, private life you call it. And after a while, I got in touch with the Jewish organization in Sweden, and they tried to help me find family and so on. And funny the way I found my brother.

You did find him.

Yeah, in Germany. Imagine, I-- the Jewish organization, the Mosaiska forsamlingens, they call themselves in Sweden.

Probably the United Jewish Appeal or something.

Probably part of it, but they call themselves like Mosaiska forsamlingens, Jewish organization, and they helped us look for--

--surviving family.

--surviving family. But they couldn't find my brother, so I was so upset. And I tried all I could. So in one of the camps in Sweden was like a nurse or a helping hand or whatever. It was one of our people also, survivors, and she had the knowledge of being a nurse a little. And she helped out.

So she saw the way I looked, and I was so desperate to find somebody. So she said she has an aunt in Germany, and she's going to write her. She's in touch with her. She's going to write and ask about my brother if she saw somebody under that name. And believe me, she found him. He was living right there. Coincidence?

Yes, beautiful.

Yeah.

Did you find anyone else besides him?

Well, after a while, we got-- in Poland, my sister came back from Russia. So she was in Poland, and also through somebody we found her. And that's why in '48 I went to Poland just to see her.

They're no longer there, are they?

No, no, no, no. They're living in California now, in LA.

What did you feel when you went back to Poland?

Well, if you want to understand the way I felt is when I came there, I was only for my sister, and we lived in Sweden very poorly, making the ends meet and working very hard. But when I came there, my sister had already a home. She was in Wroclaw. Yeah, Wroclaw.

So she begged me to stay there, and I really didn't have the means, anything in Sweden. But I told her, if they give me \$10 million, any amount of money, I will not stay. And I could-- it was tempting to stay already in a home and have a sister. She was married at that time. It was very tempting, but nothing could persuade me the other way around.

I brought over four men. They smuggled to Sweden, came to our house. We fed them. We clothed them. They rested a few days, and then they went on their own. They went to police as fugitives, as an immigrant, political immigrant. But they couldn't say that they threw us. But I led such a campaign they should leave Poland for it and came.

And your sister also?

My sister was at that time waiting that we should help her out to come to Sweden, and we tried. But at that time, the Polish borders were closed for that. They could not emigrate.

So she waited until they let them to Israel, go to Israel. And they went to Israel, and from Israel I send them papers, and I took them over-- brought them over here. So we had them at least close.

How long were you in Sweden then, and where does it go from there?

Seven years. Seven years.

Seven years?

Oh, yeah. We worked and partially go to school and learned and--

All the time in the same place or did you improve yourself?

No, no, no. We improved ourselves. Little by little, we got a little better home, and my husband found in England--

Oh, you got married.

Yeah, I got married in Sweden.

In Sweden.

Yeah, '51.

In '51, you met your husband there in Sweden.

Yes, he came from Poland to Sweden. They brought him over as a work power. They needed him, so they sent him paper. The company sent the paper, and he started. Yeah, he came over to Sweden.

Is he also a survivor of the camps?

No, he's from Russia.

Oh, he was in Russian.

He went to Russia. Yeah, he's also life story there.

So then you got married, and you worked yourself up in Sweden somewhat.

Yes, yes.

And apparently you--

With the help also, we found-- my husband had an uncle in England, and he helped us financially. So we had already an apartment on our own.

So you went to England from Sweden?

We went to England to Sweden just to visit on our way to America.

I see.

We stopped over there. We were a few weeks there, and then we went on our own to America.

Did you come-- you came through the uncle to America? Or you--

No, actually--

--came through a quota?

We waited for a quota, right. My husband had in Pennsylvania a cousin which he sent him the papers, and he's supposed to pay for us. But then he wrote us a letter when we come to pay him back. So my husband and me-- we were very proud. We went up to the HIAS and said, give him back all the money he paid for it, and we paid our own way through, which I'm very proud of it.

That's great, yeah. When you got to the United States, were you able to speak some English, or did you--

Very little. I picked up a little in England, but it was a different accent altogether. It was very hard because at least people, as I hear, that came through the HIAS, they had a start. We had only through an acquaintance from my uncle. She picked us up at the port, and she found us a furnished apartment. And the next two days, we went to work, and from then on--

This in New York?

In New York. Ah, was it hard, no language. We didn't know where to turn. It was very tough. I found a job in a radio factory because that's-- I worked in--

--in Sweden.

--in Sweden, yeah, yeah. I was qualified at that time to an extent that they took me in. They were making radios for tanks, and that's a government work and, actually, a non-citizen not supposed to work. But they were short of labor power, and they took me in on a trial so that I know what to do. So they kept me for quite a while.

So that was fortunate for you that you did have a little bit of a knowledge of--

Yes, yes. But I used to travel three hours at least every day to work, but it helped. At that time, I was studying English on my own.

You didn't attend any classes or evening classes or any--

Well, I started, yes, but the time-consuming was I couldn't spend too much. I had my dictionary, and I tried on my own. Somehow we did it.

Did you have a family shortly after that?

Yeah, after we came here, we settled down. We worked ourself up a little bit that we could have an apartment, and I have two daughters. One is here. One is still in New York. Yeah. Thank God for that.

And is your husband still employed, or is he retired?

No, he's retired.

Retired.

He's retired.

You still do have a home in New York, though?

Oh, yes, we still have a home. It's a hard change.

All in all, being in the United States was great, wasn't it?

Absolutely. It was great. In the beginning, I didn't even want to say that I came from Poland. I said, I came from Sweden. Subconsciously, I do hate them, off the records.

You have good reason to.

Yes. You know why? Because as a younger child, going out from the ghetto and being attacked by my friends, which I play with them, my neighbors, and pointing out, [SPEAKING POLISH], that I'm a Jew-- this stays in my mind so that I don't know. We say forgive, but I don't know if this is something to forgive.

That Hitlerism only brought out their own nature.

Absolutely.

And they were not at all sorry to see the Jews go--

No, not at all.

--and be displaced.

Not at all. They were laughing and singing when they paraded us to the cemetery in '42, the beginning of '42. So they were singing-- oh, good riddance, as they say, we don't need them. They were really singing and being very happy that they're getting rid of us. So memories like that don't go away.

What are your daughters' names?

Anita and Shelly.

And they are both married?

No, one is not married.

One is not married. Do you have grandchildren?

I have four grandchildren from the one. She lives here in Phoenix. Yeah.

And so you come you come mainly to visit your family then?

Yeah, yes. That's what brought me here.

That feeling that you have about Poland, do you think that an atrocity like this could happen again? What is your feeling?

I think yes, if they had the opportunity, yes, without even thinking. I would tell you yes because it's generation after generation. We can see all the camps were built in Poland.

Even now, how many Jews are left in Poland? A fraction. Do you think coming from Poland, not knowing a language, and starting all over in a different country-- it's a very tough time.

Did you ever have-- did you ever come across a German that was kind or that wouldn't obey his superior's command to punish--

I wouldn't say obey as-- to not obey their superior because then he risk his life, but maybe one or so left over a little soup in his plate. I had one experience, yeah. He was also in Bergen-Belsen where I worked. They caught me for work to taking away all their belongings from the Germans. He was in charge to do those things. They were under him, and I had an experience that he left purposely the plate to-- not finishing. There I had one experience but not any more.

An SS? He was an SS?

No. No, he wasn't in SS. He was also a--

An employee?

No, a convict, but one of them had to be in charge of that job.

Oh, I see.

Yeah, he was also--

A supervisor.

Yeah, he was like a supervisor. So once I had that that he left the soup for me. Otherwise, I don't have any good memories of him. He was very strict. I was beaten plenty times across my ribs there.

Yeah, those were sad times.

But sometimes we started a new life. That never goes away, but it's-- and you say only for the children.

Right. You tried to push the memories aside and go on-- go on with your life.

Yes.

--go on with it. What type of work was your husband employed in while he was in--

Well, actually, he worked as a tailor.

Tailor?

Yes. But then he went into business, sweater business. Yeah.



Did you at any time, at any point were able to quit your job and take care of your family?

Me?

Yeah.

I didn't work since I had my family.

Oh, since you got married.

My husband's motto was that woman should bring up the children, which is true. We were possessed by it that the kids should have everything we didn't have. True. I worked the beginning.

Rightfully so, yeah, rightfully so.

Yeah. When I had the children, we didn't have any families, so who should take care of them? I had to be in the house.

Were you able to give you your daughters an education, a higher education?

Oh, yeah, yeah. They all had college, and one is a computer graphics business. And the other one was also working in medical secretary, but then she had to give up having a family. She has four children, so she's busy enough.

Yeah. Do you like Phoenix at all?

Yes. Yeah, I like Phoenix. It's just the transition to an entire different way of living than New York. And I have my brother there, my friends which we are like family there. We grew up together there, I can say. The kids grew up together, so that's hard to leave also.

Yeah. But would you-- are you anticipating to make the move here, or are you--

Possible. It has to be a slow transition. I can't do it in one year because it's too much to give up also. I have a lot here, but it's a lot to give up.

Yes, it's difficult.

It's difficult.

We certainly would like to have you here as a Phoenix inhabitant.

Thank you.

And come to our few little affairs that we make during the year.

Yeah. I think you're very nicely organized here. I am from New York, and I must say that-- because there is actually more people there, but you're beautifully organized here.

Well, we try. We try. Sometimes when you're a smaller community it works better. When you have so many people to deal with [INAUDIBLE].

Yeah, my daughters belong to the Second Generation.

Wonderful.

Yeah, except my older daughter is Shomer Shabbos. You know? She's-- oh, yeah. So certain things they cannot--

She's relative to what she can do.

Yes, absolutely. Yeah.

Well, thank you very much, Anita, and we do this to--

Adele.

Adele. Excuse me.

Anita's my daughter.

Did I say Anita?

Yes.

Excuse me.

My daughter.

Adele, we made these tapes in order to prevent another tragedy like that to let the world know what happened, and thank you very much.

Oh, delightful to bring it out now because many years I kept it in me. If I only can-- and as I say, I prepare myself for it that I should bring it out.

Good. Thank you.

Thank