

Go ahead.

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All right. Today is January 10, 1988. And we're here at the Jewish Federation. And I'm Judy Weightman. And we have with us here today Sarah Rozenberg. And we have Mr. Salzberg and Mr. Otto Orenstein and Carla and Walter Chotzen. And we have Mr. Kuba and Mr. Hirayama and Hideo Nakamine with us today. And I'm going to start again with Mr. Hirayama, if you could tell us a little bit about your feelings as a Japanese-American who was at Dachau in 1945 at the liberation of Dachau, if you could give us a little bit of your experience and feelings to the new panel.

Being that we have been in Dachau, I've always wondered to myself how the survivors are faring along now, knowing that they were in such a depressed situation, being weak and almost going into the hospital. And in that condition, I would have thought, gee, it's almost a miracle that they can live through the situation. So knowing that I'm before a few of the survivors, it seems, it looks as though they've done fairly well. And listening to Mr Hideo Nakamine, who has attended the Philadelphia convention of the Jewish survivors convention, they look all right. And hopefully I can get to talk to them and know their true experiences.

Mr. Kuba, you wanted to say something.

I feel the same as Fred. And to find out how the survivors survived the camps and escaped and what were the adverse conditions. And I think this is the day that we can hear some interesting stories from these people who escaped those camps.

And I-- maybe you wanted to tell a little bit about how you become involved with-- to the Jewish people, with the Jewish War Veterans, with some of the other experiences you've had. Fred, would you want to speak to that issue?

Well, personally, I haven't dealt much with the person-to-person kind of a dialogue. But my contact was mainly through the TV media, where I've always liked to see these pictures about these German concentration camps and places like Treblinka and Dachau and Auschwitz, and many others, which have come on TV. And thinking how they reflect with the American citizens, I've always wondered that people in the States still, maybe they know about it, but they still have to be told many times over that they have had camps like that. And not knowing who the survivors, are I haven't really have had contact except now. So I'm glad that I'm in.

And why did you think that it was important, as Japanese-Americans, to take part in this Hawaii Holocaust project?

I think we can interchange our ideas and give to the public how we feel and how the survivors feel and what they can do to maybe circumvent all these things. And although it's almost impossible to wipe these things out, human nature being as it is, there's a big question mark whether it will happen again. And so this is why I think we should always keep an eye on it and keep our minds open for these things.

And maybe we can have-- Otto, would you like to respond to something?

Well, I would like to say one thing. Just about a month ago, I saw a brand new book about the experience of the boys from Hawaii in the army in World War Two. And I read all about the 100ths and about the 442nd. But I never knew about the 522nd. And in that book, there is no mention of the word Dachau at all. So I'm very happy to meet some people who can tell me the real story because, until this very moment, I wasn't aware of it. And I'm glad that you got everybody together because we can all learn from each other.

Could it be that we have maybe the-- we are sharing a common interest in that sense. Your people had also suffered in camps. Am I wrong on that?

I think we share the same experiences in that.

Yeah. That's what I meant.

I think--

What have you heard about that, Mr. Salzberg? Being that-- I mean, I lived in New York during the war. And I did not-- we didn't know anything about this. Just like the Germans always say, we didn't know anything about concentration camps. You know? But we did not know anything about Japanese camps on the East Coast. We never heard of it. But the West Coast must have known, but I never heard of it. And then we never even heard that Japanese had-- that a submarine had been shooting at some kind of electrical work or something in California. We never heard that either till after the war.

What is your feeling about the relocation of the Japanese from the-- many of whom were American citizens, the Japanese-Americans into the internment?

I think it was unjust. I think they ought to make it good, which-- which Congress is-- was trying to do now. I think I heard there is something in the making now. They want to give everybody a \$20,000 or something. But most of the people are gone. Very few or survivors left now.

There are few left.

Same thing with us-- most people are gone. I'm already 72, you know.

Otto, you were going to--

Well, I have a singular distinction. I've been in concentration camps in three different countries, in Germany, in Belgium, and in Hawaii. I was interned after the December the 7 on Sand Island. They had the internment camps for basically the haole groups, which was mostly Germans and Italians. And across the fence, there was another group, where some of the more prominent Japanese citizens were interned. As I was telling Judy on the way down, I even saw one genuine Japanese prisoner of war, one of the fellows who tried to float in on the midget submarine. And he got overcome by the fumes, and he washed the shore in Waimanalo. And the interned him in Sand Island.

As far as the other experience of the Japanese in California is concerned, I only know about it because I'm a stamp collector. And there were a number of concentration camps established for them. I know there's one at Heart Mountains. And I have some envelopes, no letters inside anymore, from some of these places where Japanese were interned, Tule Lake and so on. That really is the extent of my experience. Because it was wartime, the news was completely suppressed. Not only the East Coast didn't know about it, Hawaii didn't know about it either. So that is my personal experience of that.

And why were you interned at Sand Island. They might like to know.

Well, I was an enemy alien. This was after Pearl Harbor. I saw the attack. We were living in Kaimuki, up on Charles Street. And I went on the roof of my garage and through some looking glasses I could look straight into Pearl Harbor. And I saw all the smoke and fire. And I worked for Sears Roebuck at that time. They had opened their store just about two months earlier. And I went to work on Monday morning, and everybody was shocked of course. And when I got home that afternoon, I found the FBI was waiting for me, and I was taken, together with my parents, and first interned at the immigration station and then taken to Sand Island, where my father and I were-- they had separate camps for the men and the women.

And I spent about four months over there, until they finally found out I was harmless and let me go.

They considered to be--

Because I was traveling on a German passport, they considered me German. And I was interned for four months. But you didn't come and liberate me.

[LAUGHTER]

They liberated you. We had the experience last year of getting to talk to the Jewish War Veterans who attended the convention here in Honolulu. And I had occasion to talk to one survivor. She almost looks like her, just-- and she survived five concentration camps. And it's unbelievable. And many of them are all survivors too, you see. And you know, which for such a short time, you can't talk too much.

But you talk from one camp, and then he goes one year and he goes out because we're not too young. And we had this judge, Daniel Valk. He's a judge in New York. And he has been a good media to talk to. And he's in contact with us constantly, and especially with Hideo Nakamine. He's constantly in touch, and I'm glad that we have that contact. And he expressed to me at one time that the Japanese-Americans are in the same situation, or the Jewish-- British-Jewish citizens, who were confined in Great Britain in their, supposedly, relocation camp. And they've been mistreated too, but you don't hear about that. But he mentioned that specific instance, that they're in the same situation as the Japanese-Americans. And in that light, we're in the same boat.

Who was the judge, Fred?

Daniel Valk. We call him Dan.

Was he a Jewish judge?

Yes.

And how did you come to know him?

Well--

Maybe Hideo would like [LAUGHS].

Well, it all started when Ben Tamashiro wrote an article on the liberation of Dachau by the 522nd. And that article appeared in the Hawaii Herald. And that was circulated all over the country. And I even sent a copy to Paris, to the Dachau Survivors Association because they sent a letter to Hawaii. And they heard about the 522nd role a in liberating Dachau prisoners. And they didn't know. They found it out after over 40 years. So they were surprised.

And then what happened?

Well, in going back to this article in Hawaii Herald that circulated throughout the country and through the Jewish community, and the Jewish War Veterans of the United States were planning to hold a convention here in Hawaii. So they decided, oh there's 522nd boys in Hawaii. So we want to see this liberators, how they look like and who are they. That's how we got in touch with them.

And then where did you meet the judge that Fred was talking about?

Here in Hawaii during the convention.

And maybe you want to tell everybody about your experience in going to Philadelphia as well and how that came about.

Oh. Well, going back, my experience during World War Two, all these years I was wondering, how these survivors of these concentration camps are making out. And I heard that a lot of survivors moved to America. And they were holding a 40-year anniversary of liberating liberated in a concentration camp. And they invited veterans who took part in this liberation. So I had one invitation. That's how I attended this convention in Philadelphia.

And I had a very interesting dialogue with survivors. And I was very happy they are adjusting themselves very well in

our country.

That was in Philadelphia. When did you go?

1985, April of 1985.

I see. And then you've had some other experiences that you might want to share with the group because they haven't heard about your Yom HaShoah attendance at the Temple Emanuel and also your trips to Dachau in 1984. So just share a little bit of that.

Well, every April, I attend this service for these Jewish, those who died at the concentration camp. In memory of that, I attend the service.

What makes you do that, Hideo?

Well, the experience we had during World War Two back in Europe, our experience with Holocaust and meeting the survivors of the concentration camp. So it's something that you cannot forget. That got me interested in this.

And so you go to the services every year. And what do you do with-- what is your reason for going to those services at Temple Emanuel?

Well, just pay tribute and for the memorial service.

Thank you.

And maybe Fred can tell you about our trip to Europe in 1984.

This was back in October 1984. We were-- our itinerary was to get into Bruyeres. And through that trip, we passed through various countries and through Germany. And we've gone to Donau, where this is where we stayed for a period of time, more than six months. So somehow we like to reminisce in going back to where we stayed. And we got acquainted with a few German citizens there. And it was a heartwarming gathering, but only for a short while.

And then you were invited to Dachau?

And then from there, we went to Dachau. And to our surprise, we had people from Paris, from Berlin, from Munich, from various cities. And we had this Jewish community gathered there. And we had these, even from Japan, we had all these press coverages over there. And they heard about, I suppose, because of this liberation probably. Maybe that's one of the factors. But we had a ceremony there. And I have a few pictures to show that the rabbi performed some services at the chapel there in Dachau. And we toured the whole camp.

And later on the Jewish community in Munich invited us over to their gallery. And our schedule was tight, and many of us said I think we should forego this because we'll never make our tour. But this was one of the important points in our tour. So we attended the Munich ceremony. And we were given a certificate by the community, which is what was given at the last moment. And I think this certificate was an affidavit for Simon Rosenthal I think. He was a survivor. He attended this ceremony.

And the ambassador to Germany, I think, or relatives, he was there. He was a survivor also. So we're glad that at least they recognized us. And we all had a nice chat and gathering. And they hoped that we would come back there again. And they open their homes to us. So after that, they've always invited us to let them know that we are coming-- going over there, and they will open their homes to us.

Any response? Yes, Otto.

The ambassador, that was the American ambassador to Germany, Arthur Burns?

Arthur Burns, yeah.

Yeah. A gray-haired fella with a pipe?

Yes. He came from Cali. [CROSS TALK]

He came-- he was born, actually, was then Austria. Yeah.

He was there in the-- even the Paris Jewish association, the representative. So we had a whole slew of dignitaries there at that ceremony. So I'm glad that we've had the occasion to get together.

I heard some of you mentioning after the war-- I mean, I heard only now about maybe 10 years ago that the American Army made the German population help cleaning up with the camp. Is that true?

Well--

In Dachau. I mean, the people around, they had to help. They had to clean it up.

Well, they had the German prisoners, the German soldiers doing that, I think, because--

I heard that the population had to do it. I mean, the menfolks.

You see, strangely enough, the population there in Dachau there, you can say that they were innocent, but the SS or the Wehrmacht-- and the Wehrmacht, they're the guilty parties really. They moved the camp there, right on the outskirts of Dachau. And because of that, the citizens of Dachau don't really know much about this camp.

Of course, you could almost tell, the smoke coming up from there and things like that. You cannot be innocent of that. But they can't do anything about it. So the-- if you go to the museum, they would say that the citizens of Dachau must share the guilt, just as much as anyone else, but no less, no more. But they do share the guilt. So the government of Bavaria supported the creation of this Dachau museum over there. And if you go there, they have leaflets to explain all that.

May I say something? About maybe, oh, about two months ago, I met a young man from Bavaria. He was kind of hippie-like, playing a guitar, really a nice fellow. I got-- I got to talking to him. And I asked him about everything, because I'm kind of inquisitive, and I come from over there. So I ask him. I says, how about the old people in upper Bavaria. He says, they are still Nazis, he says. They still believe in Hitler. The old people. Now, he's talking about the old people, not the young people. But the old, people he says they are-- you get into an argument with them, they are still-- great times they had under Hitler.

Could you illuminate. I heard recently that the American soldiers who were stationed near the camps also did not know. Would you speak to that?

I would say so, because many of the American soldiers didn't know because you have big forces going around those big camps. And even if you should drive around or near the place, that place, you wouldn't know where it is. They have signs alongside the road. If there are no signs, you wouldn't know where Dachau is for that matter. So you can say that it's placed in an inconspicuous place. Let's put it that way. Because this is what their idea. was.

It was created in 1933 now. It was way before the war.

[CROSS TALK] one of the first ones.

So you feel that the American Government definitely did not know what was going on in the camps? And if the soldiers that were stationed nearby didn't, then would it be fair to conclude that nobody knew.

Well, during the war, they knew they had concentration camps. That's for sure, even for that matter, in 1933. This is an authority way before the war now. You see, the war started in 1941.

Well, the nature of the camps with the gas chambers, was that not known to our government.

This is a speculation now. It's, I would say, it's more conjecture. They may have known, but you can't do anything about it. That's their country. And you can scream and holler, but that's their country. See? So let me give a little background on that because I just read about. It started in 1933. They started off thinking about 5,000 people to be enclosed in there. But the population grew so big, up to 200,000 or 300,000, so they had to expand.

They had the prisoners do the expansion and growing of the trees and improving the place. So it was a free labor situation, so they could do as much as they wanted to.

Fred you had mentioned, or Hideo or Mr. Kuba, I'm not quite sure, that the Stars and Stripes had articles, though, about the camps, the concentration camps. I think that came up yesterday in our--

Yes. I think Don mentioned that. But I didn't read anything in Stars and Stripes about the camp. I may have read, but I don't recall.

When was your first awareness of the camps?

When we passed the outskirts of the camp and when we saw the prisoners, the liberated prisoners roaming in that village.

So that was-- you didn't know about it before though at all, that there were camps?

I may have known, but I don't recall the seriousness of those camps until after the war. I read many articles and saw movies or on TVs. This is how I learned much about those camps.

By 1936, when I was living in Cologne-- you heard of Cologne? And a fella took me to a sort of a cabaret they called it over there, like a nightclub almost. So he took me there. And there was comedian, a stand-up comedian. He was talking also in 1936. He says, do you know why they-- he tried to be funny. Do you know why they build such high walls around Dachau, he said? He said. And the other guy says, no. He said, they don't want anybody to get in there. You know, he tried to be funny.

That's true, too.

Huh?

I would say that's true too. Because, for that matter, they can't get out, see?

That was the idea.

Because they can't get out, people like to get in there and see what.

I'm trying to bring out. the world, they knew about it. I mean, we knew about it and heard it everywhere. But in those days, they only took in enemies of the government, what they call enemies of the government, like communists and so on. Blamed-- everybody, communists who spent in there years and years, who are now the leaders in East Germany. They went all to the camps. They pulled them in there in 1933. The minute they came in, they rounded them all up.

That was the first place where they put them.

Or when they burned down the old Reichstag, they call it, in Berlin, that parliament. They rounded them all up there. I

mean, so it's known. I mean, it's not-- I mean, anybody tell you they did not know is bunch of liars.

Right.

I don't mean you guys. I mean in Germany.

Robert, let me ask you a question.

Go ahead.

I don't know much about the Jews. Do they have their own language?

Yes. Oh, it's an ancient language, one of the most ancient languages in the world.

It's different from English?

Oh, definitely.

Oh, it is.

It's called Hebrew.

Hebrew?

The Bible was written in Hebrew.

I've always wondered--

In the land of Israel, you know. You've heard of Israel? That's where Abraham and all this, Isaac and Jacob and Christian religion, the old timers, the patriarchs they call them, well they spoke Hebrew. And we still have that language. But they are modernizing now again into a living language. Am I saying it right?

Thank you. You're doing well. But you wanted to know whether they were speaking German in Germany or that they knew the--

I've heard of German Jews or Hungarian Jews and all kinds of Jews. Maybe there are Japanese Jews.

Yeah, there are.

[CROSS TALK] Yeah.

There's a Japanese chazzan, rabbi, a Jewish congregation in Tokyo.

Is that right?

Yeah.

I didn't know that.

That's for Jewish population.

There's a Jewish, a white Jewish population, but there's a Japanese Jewish population too. As a matter of fact, the emperor's brother was very interested, for some reason, in the ancient Hebrew religion.

But in answer to your question, we are Jews from Germany. We spoke German and not Hebrew, unless we were religiously engaged, like my grandfather was a rabbi. But he might have spoken Hebrew, but I, as a grandchild, did not. We thought we were German until we were told otherwise.

And you don't know Hebrew language.

Just a smattering, from visiting Israel. But I mean, it would be-- I didn't speak it as any more than the Hawaiian children, most of them, don't speak Hawaiian.

Now you know about the modern-- I mean, the modern generation, but my father used to talk to us always in Hebrew, in Hebrew words all the time. In every sentence there was a half a dozen Hebrew words in there, all the time for everything. They didn't want some other people to understand it.

It was Yiddish. Wasn't it Yiddish?

No, no, Hebrew. In Germany, they don't speak Yiddish.

No, but I thought that the Orthodox-- no? I thought the Orthodox Jews in Germany spoke Yiddish. No?

No. The old-timers used to speak it. I mean, the very old. I had an old uncle, I remember he never spoke high German, like we do now.

Did you consider yourself a Hebrew or German when you lived in Germany?

I know I was a-- I was a Jew, and I became a bar mitzvah. And we had to go to the synagogue. I mean, we were religious.

Some, but--

My father, every dinner time, every dinner time, after dinner we say the-- you know.

Grace.

Benching, yeah. I know.

I think Carla's question probably is directed to the--

No, she was more modernistic probably. She was probably raised in a very modernistic-- like in America, lots of kids don't even know anymore what-- and they're being Jewish.

But Carla's family and most of the people-- how long was your family in Austria, Otto?

Well, I don't go back very far beyond my grandparents. But they lived in the various parts. One came from Hungary, one came from Poland, one came from Czechoslovakia, one came from Austria. But they lived there for many generations.

Same with yours.

I know on the Hungarian side, I have a great-great-great-grandfather, who was the grand rabbi of all Hungary. So I know they've lived there for hundreds of years.

And Carla, how long was your family in Germany?

I don't know how many generations. That would be interesting to ask Ilse.

Your great grandfather was rabbi, you told me.

Yes, on my mother's side. But we considered-- I thought I was a German child until I was 10. And then I was told otherwise. But I knew I had a Jewish religion. But since we didn't practice it in an Orthodox way, I was just a happy German child, I thought. [LAUGHS] I did not speak Hebrew at that time.

And Otto?

In answer to your question, Hebrew is the language in which the Bible is written in Jewish. Like in the Catholic countries, it usually was written in Latin, not in German, not in English, not in French, but in Latin. So every Jew will know enough Hebrew to read the Bible. But they couldn't use it in modern conversation. It's different in modern Israel. They created, out of the old language, a modern language that everybody speaks there and understands. But it is a more modern form of Hebrew, not the ancient Hebrew that most people know. The Bible, after all, was written thousands of years ago. So that language is an old language.

The language of the day-to-day conversation would be German in Germany, and French in France, and Italian in Italy.

Mr. Kuba, I think if we could put this maybe a little bit in perspective. Remember yesterday, when we were talking about the Japanese-Americans who were feeling that they were Americans. All of you were saying-- what did you say when you found out that Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor? How did you feel as Japanese-Americans?

Well, what's going to happen to us? You know?

Yeah. Yeah.

Because my mother was worried, very worried. And although she said many times that we are lucky to be in Hawaii. There is no country like Hawaii. And told us to be good citizens, work hard, study hard, don't be afraid to work. This is a beautiful country.

But when we learned that we were bombed, she got worried because-- more so because later on she learned that our language school teacher was picked up by FBI and along with the priests or the Buddhist ministers. And she wasn't worried about herself, but more about the children. And as far as I'm concerned, I'm an American. I'm a citizen of America. This is my land, educated here, raised here.

And later on, I learned that we couldn't-- when I approached Mr. Bennett, that I wanted to volunteer for the Guard, which were composed mostly of the city and county road crew, I was turned down because of my oriental features and the fact that the soldiers who were here were mainly haoles from the mainland. So when they see an oriental carrying a gun, as Mr. Bennett says, why, they'll shoot you down, taking me for possibly an enemy. Because among the road crew, they're mostly Hawaiians.

So to answer your question, Judy, we were worried. And fortunately, later on that we were accepted in the army as a AGA combat team. Despite the things that we went through, I think we accomplished what we went out for, to prove our loyalty as Americans.

And so I think we have something in common with the Jewish people, what they went through. Of course, they went through a hell of a lot, I think worse things than what we went through for centuries, from what I read and from what I heard from some people. So I am interested in listening to Theo, possibly from others, the conditions that you folks had to go through or went through.

Sarah, can-- oh, OK. Sarah, maybe you would like to talk to him?

Well, to begin with, I would like to comment Judy on the project that she is doing, the commemoration and the lives of the survivors as well as of the liberators of the concentration camp. I'm actually here with you on this panel by accident

because I am not an American. But the American government opened their doors to us Canadians to spend the winters here on this beautiful island.

I'm a naturalized Canadian that came to Canada from Amsterdam, Holland in 1951. But I am born in Warsaw, Poland, where I spent my childhood and youth. And experienced the start of the war on September 1, 1939, when Warsaw was bombarded by the Germans. Now let me just go back to this project that you are having here, ongoing for, I understand, quite a while. And it isn't too soon to work on it very diligently and find each and every survivor of concentration camps, of even those that flew from Poland and Hungary and Czechoslovakia, Romania and other Eastern countries that are now the Eastern Bloc, that saved-- were saved by being in Russia during the Second World War. Because each and every one of us has a lot to tell, what we went through. And we are the only people that can-- are witnesses to the Holocaust.

Many books were written, and many will be written. But we are a generation that will be, in a few years, extinguished because we are aging. And by making those tapes, video tapes, and for me personally that I made tapes, unfortunately, there was no video tapes yet in the '60s for the Jewish Federation in Canada. I also made tapes for the Yad Vashem and attended the 1980 first gathering, World Gathering of the Jewry in Jerusalem. I also attended the gathering of the American Jewry in Washington.

We hope and pray that, by telling to the world through the tapes and now video tapes that are such a marvelous addition to the media, if you please, that we'll be able to tell all our unfortunate experiences and that never, never any destruction of any people will happen ever again and that this will be a documented, a monument to the millions of people, millions of Jews, men, women, and children, and people of all nations that lost their lives during the Second World War.

Now, it seems like involvement in the temple for us, my husband and I, while visiting and vacationing here in Hawaii from Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, somehow it involved me in this panel discussion of very distinguished people, people that liberated us. And I can't-- I have no enough words of praise for you men and women that went to Europe to liberate the people of Europe, because they weren't only Jews that were liberated. They were people, European people in other countries-- Holland, Belgium, France, Italy, and all others that were liberated by you people that are sitting here in front of me.

I know it's hard for you, Judy. It was very hard for me many years ago, when I first had to document on tape my experiences. And still now I get emotional. Please, forgive me, Judy. I was born in Warsaw, attended school. I'm repeating myself. I'm sorry. And then the Germans entered Warsaw and the first-- after three weeks of very big opposition from and fighting by the Polish Army. They entered Warsaw.

Warsaw was demolished practically. And to make this story short, I'd like you to know that the Warsaw ghetto was built in the fall, October 1940. And we were enclosed. Times were very hard. I hid my father in a clothes closet behind the clothes in order for him not to be taken for a day's work by the Germans because I didn't know if I will see him again.

My mother and I worked in a cosmetic factory that were making toothbrushes. Pardon me, toothpaste and shaving creams for the army. My brother was also working, and this is how we got rations. Because our food in the ghetto was rationed.

In 1942, my parents and my brother were taken by the Germans to Treblinka. Somehow the Germans weren't interested in me. I was working in a factory. And obviously, they needed a young person to produce because the war was in full swing. In 1943, we still celebrated the first night of Passover at my uncle's place on my mother's side. And there were some cousins on my father's side that amalgamated, and they were the bread producers for the ghetto.

And I used to come on a weekly basis to their home, from my little place where I lived with another friend of mine. I used to pay the Jewish policemen in order for me to go with a group of working people into that-- he was taking into the direction where the bakery was. And then with another group, I used to go home after the weekend.

I used to go out from the ghetto through the Aryan side to the other part of the ghetto on Friday and I return on Monday or Tuesday. And I used to get supplies from my relatives to last me for the week. And the second night of the Seder

Passover, we didn't observe already in 1943. We had to go into the bunkers.

On the 20-- to make the story short, on the 23rd of April 1943, on my birthday, I was marched into the camp, like you pronounce it, Majdanek. I pronounce it Majdanek. And this camp, the "museum" of it, what you, in quotation, what you call, is located near Lublin in Poland. I was in this concentration camp, separated men and women, for three months.

And then came a group of high SS officers to the camp and selected us, in the nude. Now there is nothing new to see people on the Waikiki beaches in that attire. But for us young girls, this was very embarrassing. And they selected a number of us. We didn't know where we were going. And we went to an ammunition factory to produce ammunition for the war and bullets for ourselves, with which they were killing us, even in the camps.

When in 1944, the Russian army started to come west, they moved us from Skarzysko-Kamienna, that ammunition factory, to an ammunition factory in the Holy city of Czestochowa that is located almost on the German-Polish border. Now, we worked in that camp till January 15, 1945. How appropriate it is that today, on the 10th of January 1988, I am sharing with you, the Hawaiian Federation, Jewish Federation, my experiences because in six days, will be 43 years when the Russian army liberated me.

We were actually to be deported to Germany on the 15th of January 1945. All the work ceased in the ammunition factory. We were in our-- [COUGHS] excuse me-- living quarters, if you please, the barracks. And we heard some noises in the far distant, but we didn't know what was going on. And that night, from the 15th-- on the 16th of January, the Russian Army surrounded the city, and the cattle trains that were supposed to take us out deep into Germany, didn't have that chance to come in on the train line, on the railings to. And during the night, the Germans fled, and we stayed in the camps until early morning, when the Russian army came in.

Let me just go back for a minute to the 15th. We were taken into the-- see, 43 years in a person's life is a long time. It's over four decades. And I was a young child, a young lady at the time. We were taken by roll call to the warehouses that the Germans were storing ammunition in. And we stayed there, actually, all day, till almost dark. And then they called us out. Without food we were there for the whole day, without any facilities, freezing because somehow that was a very, very cold winter.

When we friends get together and recall our experiences, we wonder often how did we survive almost naked in that bitterly cold January day in the warehouses? And the Germans were standing there in their white furs, with their guns stretched out. And we marched through between them, back into our living quarters. Afterwards, when it got really dark, they fled and left us in the camps. We didn't see anybody in the watchtowers that were surrounded our camps. And the following morning, the Russians came in and gave us some bread, some chocolates, whatever.

And this is 43 years ago. And how happy I am, really, to be able to share my experiences, even just briefly with you. I thank you, Judy.

That was some ordeal.

You mentioned about the white fur, fur coat that they had. Somehow, we had access to that. And we were wondering, gee, these German soldiers had lots of sophisticated equipment to fight the Russians, with the white fur coats. Because if you're going to fight in the snow, you've got to have the white. And another thing, that when we-- well, soon after the war, we noticed that each farm family had one foreign laborer in the family household. Everyone had a farm hand, so to speak.

And I was surprised. And most of them said they were Polish, you see. And because either they go in the concentration camp or maybe to a more--

They gave them a choice to work, either they go--

Right. I think they were hand-picked, I think. Probably so.

They were farmers anyhow. You know, most of the Russians were farmers. So they were too glad to work on the farm. They can eat. You know?

I wanted to ask Ms. Rozenberg, how did the Russians treat you, that came in? Were you treated nicely and warmly?

Well, this is something that we are often talking with friends, that most of my, what I call the lager schwesters, and those are concentration camp sisters, that we survived together. There were 13 of us. I'm the only black sheep that lives in Canada. All others live in Israel. Unfortunately, I lost two of them already during two illnesses. And we feel that somehow we were treated well by the Germans, in a way, as well as by the Russians. Because none of us was raped. None of us was killed or beaten.

We work. We made sure that our work is done to perfection and always clean and in order. We were beaten by the Jewish policemen in the camp because we run on the-- where the factory was, where we were working and making ammunition, they were-- there was hot water. We didn't have hot water in our barracks. So we ran to the showers, and we stole-- oh, let me see-- a special soap that the machines had to use for making the ammunition.

It's [NON-ENGLISH]?

No, [NON-ENGLISH]

Oh. [NON-ENGLISH]

And we stole that soap and washed, with it, our hair. And we used to do it on the midnight shift because we worked morning shifts and midnight shifts. And we knew, when our German supervisors, the German SS, were going for their break at night. So we used to quickly work together. One of us was looking after two machines for a few minutes in order for the other one of us to go have the hair washed, so we won't have lice.

Yeah.

And won't get sick from it and typhus from it. And when the Jewish policeman that was also working around the plant saw us with wet hair, this is when we got it. But one of them was tried in Israel and received a well-deserved punishment.

Did they shave your hair off?

No. They didn't shave my hair and those contemporaries with me that came after the uprising in Warsaw. We were taken as political prisoners because of the uprising. They didn't shave our hair in Majdanek, in Majdanek. But they shaved the hair of the Greek Jewish women that were brought a week or so or two weeks later to camp.

They were not only Jewish prisoners in Majdanek. They were also prostitutes. They were also-- sorry, the--

Gypsies.

Gypsies, right. And they were women and men from different countries, separated. But because we were-- they considered us political prisoners because of the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto. They didn't shave us. See, the political prisoners had a different status. [COUGHS] Excuse me.

The French women who fraternized the German soldiers when they occupied, they made sure the French cut all those women hair off, bald, so they'd be embarrassed.

In Holland too. In Holland too.

In Holland too. I suppose it's because the--

Those were the women that collaborated with the Germans. There were many of those. Yeah. I would think so.

I risked-- what I told you a while back, that I risked my life by hiding my father in the clothes closet behind the clothes. Well, I was alone in the house at the time. My mother was in the factory. Why I was in the house that day, I don't recall. But the German came-- two Germans or three, whoever, high-ranking officers, some in the black uniforms, some in the khaki uniforms. And they always used to go with the custodian or the manager of the building and went through the house and asked if there is any man in the house. And I said no.

If they would have found my father, they would have killed him and myself. We would have been killed on the spot.

How did you know that, Sarah? How did, at your age, to hide your father?

Well, that's an instinct.

Because--