https://collections.ushmm.org
Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection

This will be the second half of our interview. I'm Bernice Harel. And I'm interviewing my husband, Dr. Zev Harel, who is a Holocaust survivor and a researcher at Cleveland State University. Zev, when we stopped talking before, you were talking about life in the ghetto, about the community, and specifically whether or not there was any kind of organization. And you concluded your remarks by saying, no, there really was not any sort of organized resistance, that, for the most part, people had, I guess, didn't have time to collect their thoughts. They prayed very hard. There was a lot of hope, trust, if you will, placed in God that somehow something would save them. But you noted that they were in the ghetto just a very short time, and then people began to get deported.

Can we pick up at that point? And can you tell me something more about life in the ghetto during those few weeks that you were there and where you went to when you left the ghetto?

As I said, we were a short time in the ghetto, something like 2 and 1/2 or 3 weeks. And I recall very little about what happened during that time. The only fond recollection that I have from those days that a former neighbor of ours from the village where I lived, this woman lived about 10 miles from where the ghetto was. And every week, this woman, by foot, walked the distance to the ghetto and back and brought with her a big loaf of bread and some other foodstuff. She had a hard time feeding her kids because this was a widow with like 10 kids whose husband was killed in an accident. And so she has really taken away from herself and bringing it to share that with us. But that's the only act of positive expression that I recall.

For this one woman that was act, I guess, of a tremendous amount of giving.

Sure, it was a tremendous giving. But like we had all the neighbors that lived around us, and none of them found it appropriate to show any sign of expression. I remember that I snuck my way out of the ghetto once and to go and see what the house was like. And one of the neighbors saw me and said something like, you dirty Jew, you better get out of here or else. I'm going to call the police. And so I went back to the ghetto.

And it was hurry up and wait kind of situation. People didn't know what or what not. You didn't get anything as far as food. Or whatever you had you had. If you didn't, you didn't.

And what we lived on during those short weeks was like the bread and the other stuff that this woman was bringing us. And before they took us to the ghetto, my mother baked some dried out noodles and noodle shapes and all kinds of stuff of that sort. So that's what we lived on.

And then one day the word came that we have to get ready because they will take us to the train and they will transport us to the destination. And it was very clear from the discussions that people knew where the destination is, [NON-ENGLISH]. But yet something that you just go because that's what you have to do and that was it.

So we were placed in cattle cars, as many people as they can push in. I think something like 100 or 125 people in one cattle car. No food, no water. People could barely sit. But for the most part, there was room to stand. And by gentlemanly agreement, one of the corners was used as a toilet facility.

And from there until we reached Auschwitz, we were not let out of the cattle cars. And I remember that the ride was of several days, just heat and crowding and a lot of crying and a lot of anguish and what's going to be. And--

You said it was hot. You left the ghetto then in the summer--

The summer. This is beginning of May. But when you have 100 people in--

Right. That--

They generate a lot of hot air and a lot of heat. And it was one of the-- see, until then, kind of step by step, you had less and less living space. And from the ghetto where you had enough space to sleep and then some room to walk around because the boundaries were pretty well defined, it was unlike the ghettos that you heard about in Poland and other

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

https://collections.ushmm.org
Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection
places. Here, you didn't have room to go around. It was more of a confined, temporary living arrangement.

It was really a very temporary ghetto life.

Right. Right. So the cattle cars then were a lot more dense, a lot more crowded, and a lot less human. I think that cattle were transported in more kindly fashion than the Germans transported Jews to their destination of destruction.

So after a few days in the car, we arrived. And it was night when we arrived at Auschwitz. And I remember the picture to this day. There are the railroad tracks. And in the distance the smoke and people are forming lines.

And apparently people knew what the lines were because there wasn't any need for anyone to point people who went in the wrong direction. Mothers and children went in one direction. And the able-bodied man and the able-bodied woman went in another direction. And I remember very deliberately that I decided that I'm going to be older than my age-- I was at that time 14. I just turned 14-- and that I'll go with the able-bodied men.

I was somewhat taller for my age, than my age. I was always tall. And so I just started moving in the direction of the line. And I recall the SS officer that was pointing with his stick. And there are some who were wrong in the line that he would pull them with the stick and point them in the other direction. And no emotional parting, that was-- my mother went to the other direction because she had to go in the other direction. And--

At that point were you still with your brother and your father?

I was with my brother and my father. And we were looking at our mother and waving to Mother. And the lines moved on. And I recall feeling very emotional and feeling like wanting to cry, but biting my lip and deciding that I have to be strong and that I have to not show any emotions.

And I moved on with the line. And I remember when I passed by this SS officer that stood there, and inside I was shaking. But outside my face was probably as serious as I am now. And when I went by him as if I passed the greatest of examination. I was keenly aware of what was at stake there, that if I don't go through that line-- and I was 14 there. And I knew that only those who were old enough to be able to work were the ones that were likely to be saved.

And so after that line, we were taken to an open area in front of what looked like shower stalls. And there was discussion among people that if you go in and the place looks the same, that the place where the gas people and the place where the showers were that they look the same. The only difference is that if you open one, and the gas comes out, you will not get out of there. And if water comes out, then you know that you are in the right place.

So I remember the area in front of the showers. You had to undress and leave everything and just proceed naked. And then they shaved your head and they shaved your underarms and every hair and deloused you. You know the way that I sprayed the garden, they sprayed you, and proceeded into the shower.

And I remember the anxiety of what it will be here. Will it be water or will it be something else? And they expressions of joy when the water came out of the faucets.

So even though people people had some sense of, in your group anyhow, that they had made the right decision--

That they were in the right line--

By being with the work line, things were still so unsure. I gather the Germans gave no determination of what was to come next. That there--

There wasn't anyone who gave instructions or anything. You were pushed, shoved, hit. And if you didn't move fast enough, there were-- and from there, on any semblance of decency, any semblance of person-to-person relations, you just forget about it. From there and on, it was just a constant fear and the beginning of mobilization of whatever instincts of survival you had in order to get through.

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

https://collections.ushmm.org
Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection

And I remember standing on the platform there at Auschwitz and looking in the skies. And that was probably the last time that I was still thinking as a kid waiting for some miracle. And probably the miracle would be personified in the form of if the American planes came and bombed this place or something like that. And then the disappointment that indeed the miracle will not happen and just proceed with the line until I got through the detoxification and the shower.

And then I got my striped clothes. And I got my number. And from there on I was 70,235. And that was the number that I got. And there was a line where they registered you.

And when they asked for my name and for my age, I told them that I was 17 years old. And I told them that I was a carpenter. And from there on, I was a 17-year-old carpenter 70,235. You were not referred to by name in any kind of way. And--

Did they ever actually have you do carpentry work? Once you got your clothes--

No. I'm not there yet. Here in Auschwitz, it was still-- there were still selections. We were in Auschwitz for about a week before we were sent away. And that week was still a week of constant fear because the Germans would just come by if they didn't have the quota of what they were to send either to a work detail or for other purposes. They were just coming around, picking people. And since you had your number, that was it. I mean you had an identification. All they had to do is just check off in their books your number.

Let me ask you something a little more general about Auschwitz, if I may. Most people today who didn't live through the war or who were born later, were not from Europe, tend to think of Auschwitz as being only an extermination camp. But you're saying something a little different. And it was a very large facility. Can you give the little details about what actually took place there, the different things you--

Again, see, my recollections, here you have a 14-year-old kid who's going through their first selection, who's gone through and feels like is not sure whether he has his life yet or not. And you look around, you're a lot more concerned with yourself and your safety. So my impressions may be somewhat more affected by my own concern about my own safety than looking around what was happening.

But this is a tremendous size facility, where you have-- it's a place that both exterminates people and you have the crematoria that's working and all that machinery of-- there's a constant flow of transports arriving, the selection process, and people being gassed, and then people being disposed of, cremated of the ones-- and that's a machinery. That's a production. And there are people that are working in that. And the Germans are overseeing that.

And then you have the barracks where they are housing people who are there on temporary, in a transitory-- in a state of transition, where they are just being processed, being numbered, and being detailed in order to be sent to this or that place. And those that were destined to go to a work camp, they spent anywhere from a few days to a week or so in Auschwitz. But then there was also a permanent part to the Auschwitz camp where people were working there and were living there. I was in the transitory part. It was the part where they held people who were there only in state of transition until they will be sent somewhere else.

And you were there for how long?

For about a week. I think five days or--

And then where did you go from there?

From there, we were taken to Mauthausen, which is in Austria, a well-known camp. Again, the train ride in the same way, cattle cars, about 150 people. I recall the sensation that I had it was even more dense than it was in the ride to Auschwitz.

But before I got on the train, those days in Auschwitz were constant fear because the selections were a constant

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

https://collections.ushmm.org
Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection
experience. And you didn't know whether you should hide. And if you hide, then they were roaming around with their dogs and they will pick you off. Or if you are out in line, whether for one reason or another, they will not like you, they will not think that you are muscled enough, that you are strong enough, that you'll be able to work. So each Appell, that is like each time where they would assemble people was another source of fear. And you had those Appells about three or four times a day.

So finally when I was on the train to the new destination, I had a sense that I have gone through this test here and that I am through the worst of it. And I knew, since I grew up in this village and that I was not a spoiled kid, I knew how to work, I knew that I'll be able to work. And from there on, I remember having a sense of this was the worst of it. If I managed to get through and not being picked out there in the selection, that I'll get through.

So from there, we arrived at the railroad station in Mauthausen. And then from the railroad station in Mauthausen to the camp itself, that was one of the most horrifying experiences that I had during the-- for whatever reason, one of the SS looked at me. And he saw and decided that I was too young and that they sent me-- that they should have not sent me, that they should have kept me in Auschwitz.

And in German, he was bragging to his friends that he will do between here and the camp what they have not done in Auschwitz. And with the butt of his rifle started hitting over my head and over different parts of my body, and hitting me at force that I fell. And what I recall from that march, which was about six miles-- it took about three hours to get from the railroad station to the camp-- that was I black and blue all over.

And if I look back now, it just didn't make sense to be able to get up and to continue. But for whatever reason, I don't recall during all this ordeal that I had any kind of sense that I will not get up. Hit, I fell, got up, and continued, continued until I got to the camp.

And when I got to the camp, I remember that some of the people in that room made room and started attending to me. And during this time, the only thing that I remember is the instinct that I have to get up, I have to continue to go, and that I cannot not get up, even though it felt like not getting up.

And then at Mauthausen, we had about three days there. And when we left Mauthausen, I was still in pain. But, see, the food that you were getting during this time, you got something that looked like coffee, but didn't taste like coffee. It was some very weak coffee-like beverage in the morning. And you got a piece of bread. That was probably about half a pound of bread, which was supposed to last you all day.

And then for lunch you got some kind of soup. That was made of potato peels and some other garbage that they threw in. And that's where the daily and weekly routine of under nourishment of-- just any German can decide for one reason or another, didn't like the way that you look, and for you to be target of whatever they wanted to do with you.

From Mauthausen, after a few days in Mauthausen, we were sent to Ebensee. And that's the camp where I spent about a year's time because, as I mentioned to you, I was just about a week's time in Auschwitz, then a few days in Mauthausen. And I arrived to Ebensee. In Ebensee--

Excuse me, by the time you got to Ebensee, had had you recovered from your beating or--

Somewhat recovered. But it took another day until we started the work detail. So I had between arriving at Mauthausen and starting to work, there were about five days. And I felt that whatever needs done, I'll be able to do. In other words, in spirit, I never had any sense that I won't be able to do it because of this ordeal.

So I remember one of the routines that I established for myself when I got at Ebensee, that about half an hour before the time that was were waking up, I would get up and go to the place-- there were upward pointed faucets where you turned on the water, and you can wash your face. So I took off my shirt and I washed every morning my face and my upper body. And I would look, and for months I still saw the black and blue bruises. But then I had new ones later on. So I got used to that.

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

https://collections.ushmm.org
Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection

In Ebensee I started working. Immediately, I was assigned to a work detail. And I remember the name of the work detail was Kiesgrube Marien Gasthaus. Kiesgrube is a quarry. And this place was a dried out lake. And there was sand. And this sand we were loading up on trucks in order for the Germans to use in construction. And Marien Gasthaus simply a guesthouse. Marien Gasthaus, it was across the street from this guesthouse. And that's where I worked.

The daily routine there was got up about 5:30. At 6 o'clock, you had the Appell. That is the assembly. And the assembly, each person in the block where he slept, they would count you. And where they were assured that everyone is accounted for, then you went to your work detail. And you lined up by your work detail.

And there was-- the workplace where I worked was about 4 miles from camp. So it was a march of about 4 hours. We would get there about a little after 7:00. And you worked until dark. That was the routine. So winter, the day's work was somewhat shorter. Summer, like we worked there from about 7 o'clock in the morning until 7:30 or 8 o'clock.

And they had those-- the small wagons that they are using in quarries. You can see those in mining shifts. And we would load up. And the daily norm was I had to load up 8 of those a day.

So one of the things that I learned is not to be among the first ones to stick out in one way, but never to be anywhere below the middle. I remember starting the first day I got to the work detail. And I stuck the shovel into the sand and started loading up. And I managed to do my daily quota. But I always worked in such a way not to stand out in one way or another. Because like, we had some of the cruelest SS officers that were guarding the camp.

And it was almost daily routine that we were carrying back two or three people who, in one way or another, either they were killed by an accident or if not then-- especially the guy who was the SS officer who was in charge of the work detail, he would just either ask you to take off your hat, MÃ¼tzen, throw it away. And then he would tell you go and get it. And when you bend down to pick it up, he would aim his revolver and just shoot you.

And, well, from there and on, death was all around you. You can be hit by a wagon. The wagon go over you, or just give up or being too weak to be able to carry. And that place, Ebensee, held about 12,000 inmates. But every week there was a new transport coming in.

And so the reason that there was new transport coming in is because some of those who were there before were simply dropping off. And you had to get used to the fact that death was just all around. And death was a constant threat to your life and that you will see it all around you. And from this work detail, every day with carry back sometimes as many as walked back carried others on their back back to the camp, and other times fewer. But that was almost a constant experience there.

As things got worse, I noticed you talked less and less about anyone that you related to in a positive way. Did you have any friendships in camp? Was there anyone--

Let me start first by saying that both my father and my brother were in the same camp. But we were separated. We were each in a different block. And--

How many were there in your immediate barracks or block?

I was in two different blocks during the time. I was part of the time Block 16, which were the younger-- which was a smaller block about 100. The other ones held anywhere from 300 to 500 people. And there were three bunk beds. And each bed held two. Part of the time, let's say, if there was more frequent death than anticipated, then occasionally you may have the bunk to yourself. But most of the time there were two.

And I started saying that my father and my brother were in the same camp. But you had very rare chance to get to see each other because once every three weeks you had a Sunday off. But other than that, before daybreak, your routine started. You were at the Appellplatz. And then it was late at night when you were back. And after the Appellplatz when you got to the barrack were not allowed to go anywhere. So you were restricted. So I saw my brother and my father only on rare occasions, on every third Sunday when we had a break.

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

And other than that it was a monotonous-- if you can picture the book, Ivan Denisovich, or One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich, the routine of you get up in the morning, you go to the Appellplatz, stand straight, look to the right, MÃ¼tzen off, take your hat off. And then the Blockschreiber, the guy who was the secretary of the block counting the heads and then reporting to the SS officer, all accounted for. And then you put your hat back up.

And then when everyone is accounted for, then you go to your work detail. And you start marching to your workplace. You put in your day's work. And you work and you work and you work until the day is out.

And then you reassemble. You pick up those that died during the day. You bring them back. There's a place where you dispose of those that you carried back. And they get checked off, or [GERMAN] in the German sense. They get checked off.

And you go back to the Appellplatz. And they count you again. And if one is missing, then you can stand there until midnight. Because until they find the person that's missing, they will hold you there.

So many a times you came back and you are at the Appellplatz until like past midnight. And then you go back to the barrack. You don't have a chance to even fall asleep. And you are immediately up again to start the next day's routine.

And were you at Ebensee until the end of the war?

Well, not quite. But in Ebensee, I've worked in two places. And first a little bit about the routine, the daily-- you get in the morning your hot drink, which was hot dirty drink. And then at midday, you got that beet and potato peel soup. And that was your most nourishing of your meals. And then when you got back to the barrack you got your slice of bread and either a tiny piece of margarine or a tiny piece of something, of cheese.

And then on Sundays, you would get-- on every third Sunday where you had the day off, you would get a little bit of marmalade. So that was the nourishment that people had. And, you know, obviously, if for no other reason, but people were losing weight and you were shrinking in weight.

During this time when I was working on this work detail, one of the things that was fortunate that on the way to work and on the way back, there were trees, wild apples and grass. So you supplemented your diet with wild apples and with grass. And you sense that you were shrinking weight-wise. You sense that you were losing-- and you looked at people that you knew and you see that they are shrinking and getting weaker and weaker in this ordeal.

But the sense of have to keep on going, you have to keep on going. And so I worked in this work detail at Kiesgrube Marien Gasthaus for about five or six months because I started-- we got there, it was the end of May. And I worked there until the end of the fall.

And then I was transferred to another work detail. See, Ebensee was constructed with the purpose in mind-- they were constructing an underground factory there. And so the way that was done is that you dug tunnels into the mountain side there. And then there was supposed to be a big area where the factory was supposed to be so that they cannot be bombed.

And so at the beginning of winter, in a way, it was lucky because I got to work inside. And inside, it wasn't as cold because your clothing was just the zebra looked, striped thin cotton. And your shoes at the upper part were cotton, and the lower part was wood. And so that's what you were wearing. That's what you had to wear year round.

And so I was lucky that I got to work in this next detail, which was in the digging out and the tunnel work. And I worked with air hammers there, or with loading and unloading of cement bags. And a cement bag weighs 50 kilo, which is about 110 pounds. So we had to carry two of them.

And the work detail was that two guys lifted the bag, put it on your shoulders, two of them. And you walked with them either down or up. It depends whether you loaded or unloaded. And that was a daily routine from early morning until

https://collections.ushmm.org
Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection
dark that you carried the bags, and up and down and up and down up and down, and at as fast a tempo as the-- They were either the SS or the civil overseer, the Meister, determined that you had to. And if you were not fast enough, they would hit you. And if someone failed, that was it. So you have to keep on going.

But luckily, most of the time, I've worked with the air hammers. And that was a relatively safer operation because you dug the hole with the air hammer. And then they would insert the dynamite. And then you would move away. And when they were done with the explosion, then you would go back. And you would load up.

And I had an accident there where I banged my knee up. And I had a split in my kneecap. My knee was swollen. And it scared me.

But then I improvised. What I did is I took the bags from-- the paper from the cement bag, I wrapped my knee tight. And I tighten up above and below it. And I continue to do the same work with that predicament because I knew that if I stopped doing my work that was it, and I had to keep on going.

So you improvised some kind of splint for your knee.

Right. Because--

During all this time did was there anyone, especially when you hurt your knee, was there anyone at all who helped you in any way? Or were you strictly on your own?

During all this time, I was on my own. There were others in ways, there were others around you that you talked to, or otherwise. But I didn't have anyone that I safeguarded him or that he safeguarded me. I was on my own.

In the beginning, I had a young man, Herschel, that we worked together in the Kiesgrube work detail. And one day, they-- well, not the guy in charge, but one of the SS just called him. And there was a wagon that was standing-- there was water accumulated in it, and told him to come over there. And said to him that he is such a dirty Jew that the bullet will not go through him, and that he should wash.

And he thought that it was a joke. So he washed. And as he was washing, the German soldier just aimed at him and shot him on the spot.

Was that someone who had been from your village?

No. No. He and I shared the same bunk bed. And we were in the same work detail. And I carried him back from the work detail.

No, I was on my own all this time with the sense that I have to look out and-- look out for myself. And I was fearful-- there was some kind-- it was called Revier-- there was some kind of a medical facility there. But the word was that if you get there, you don't come back.

And like this is the time also that my father was in the same camp. But he was getting less and less. And so he went to the Revier. And he was taken to Mauthausen. And later on, I found out that that's where he died.

So I was scared ongoing today medical facility. But some of the people that saw how I was working-- see, with that knee, I kept on working, either with the air hammer or with loading and unloading the truck. And so I went to the infirmary. And the doctor knew my father. So he said to me, look, you'll be out of here tomorrow night. I'll write that you are healthy, and that's it.

But those two days-- and what he suggested to me, he explained to me that what I was doing wrong is that I was cutting off the blood circulation, that what I should do is take like two pieces of wood and tighten it up so that there is exposure and that I tied the wood pieces and not the flow-- just the flesh. And I did that. And gradually, I came back and was through that ordeal and continued to work.

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.

And for the most part, it was uneventful. The only thing that would happen is the same routine of no food and people around you just falling off and being unable to continue, and meeting people from your hometown and hearing about this one that died and that one that died.

Do you recall in looking back, did you have any thoughts about the future then? Or were your thoughts just to get through that?

You know, that's interesting because like once every three weeks we had a day off. And I was in a block where there were a lot of Russian soldiers who were taken prisoners. But for whatever reason, they were placed in this concentration camp. And I befriended a few of them in this camp. And that's where I learned-- I speak Russian. And I picked up Russian and some of the other Slavic languages in camp.

But the Sundays, everyone would climb on the top beds. And you would have a sing along for hours, from the morning until lights were out. And both at work, you know, where you had the chance where the German wasn't on top of you and you could talk to someone, you were always talking about what's going to be at the end.

There was a finish line. I never had any other sense but this will be over. Someday, this will be over.

Not like some people had the sense-- I was too young to comprehend and understand what all of this was about at the time. But personally, I had the sense I'll get through this. I never had any thought that I will not be through this ordeal. I'll get through.

And when we were talking there were two topics that occupied much of our time. One of them was, what is it that you'll be eating? What will be your first meal when this is over? And food obviously was a very important part of life there, and all kind of creative details of what your food is going to be like and what the meal is going to be like and all that.

And the other thought was how, when the war is over, that you will have a place where you won't freeze to death, that you will have enough food to eat, and that you will not have this threat to your life. It wasn't in any kind of way realistic because what was happening there, you know, we realized more and more that even though this was championed by Hitler's Germany, but by that time we realized that it was aided in a very able fashion by all your Volksdeutsche. That's an expression for those that were of German origin, that identified with Hitler, or--

Oh, Nazi sympathizers.

Nazi sympathizers. And a lot of them were in the Ukraine. A lot of them were in Slovakia. A lot of them were in Transylvania. A lot of them were in Swabia. And those were just volunteering to the SS troops and were aiding Hitler very ably.

So it wasn't very realistic because we knew that the world converged against Jews and that there wasn't much realistic hope. But there was talk about the end. The end will come. The war will be over, and what it is that you will eat, and where it is that you will live, and what will life be there.

Did you have any more thoughts about the Americans then? Did you have any expectations as how you might be liberated? Did you think about Palestine at all?

Less and less about the Americans, because if I recall the rescue fantasies as a kid, of either getting to America or the American might kicking the hell out of the Germans and beating up on them, and then later on not just on the Germans, but also on all those who were their allies, as time went on in the concentration camp, that was less and less realistic.

Did you have any way of hearing about the invasion of Europe by the Allies?

Yes and no. See, there was a news format that was operation throughout this. And the name of that news was Hagas, which means H-A-G-A-S. And it stands for I [NON-ENGLISH], in Yiddish, which means I heard to be said that this

and this. And that was a very important part of fitting our rescue fantasies, all kinds of news were.

And so like if we heard about the invasion, yes, we heard that the Americans invaded Europe. But then we heard a lot of other news too. We heard that the Russians beat back the Germans. And we heard that a lot of other-- that the English are beating back on them.

And if all the news that we heard through this news service was true, then the war would have been over three times already. But, see, that's what fueled you, the finish line, the expectation that you will get through and you will get there. And all the news that in a sense you contributed and helped create because, see, one of the things that I recall now that people who did not have this fuel to keep them going, that is people who did not have the finish line, thinking I'm going to get through, were more likely just to drop off. So both the news service and the sense that I'm going to get through were very important.

So your news service was really an informal network.

Right.

But it gave you a lot of hope, although the things that were accurate obviously got embellished on. And, of course, the other thing was that you yourself had a sense of that you are going to survive and that you're able to get through this. And I think we have one more very important part to the interview. And that's the time at liberation and afterwards, which we'll come back to in a few moments.

OK.

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media.
It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.