

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:02,170

2

00:00:02,170 --> 00:00:05,440

This is an interview for the
US Holocaust Memorial Museum.

3

00:00:05,440 --> 00:00:07,300

We are interviewing
Frances Hirshfeld.

4

00:00:07,300 --> 00:00:08,590

My name is Esther Finder.

5

00:00:08,590 --> 00:00:12,470

Today's date is
September 30, 1996.

6

00:00:12,470 --> 00:00:21,170

This is tape one, side A. Can
you please tell me your name?

7

00:00:21,170 --> 00:00:23,750

Frances Hirshfeld.

8

00:00:23,750 --> 00:00:25,550

Was this your name at birth?

9

00:00:25,550 --> 00:00:29,490

Not exactly, because
I was born in Poland.

10

00:00:29,490 --> 00:00:35,000

And my name at birth was
Frieda Miriam Rosenbloom.

11

00:00:35,000 --> 00:00:36,260

I wasn't married.

12

00:00:36,260 --> 00:00:41,120

Now I told you my married

name when you asked me.

13

00:00:41,120 --> 00:00:44,350

When were you born?

14

00:00:44,350 --> 00:00:49,840

July 26, 1918.

15

00:00:49,840 --> 00:00:51,370

And where were you born?

16

00:00:51,370 --> 00:00:54,035

In Opatów Kielecki, Poland.

17

00:00:54,035 --> 00:00:56,970

18

00:00:56,970 --> 00:00:58,680

Is that where you grew up?

19

00:00:58,680 --> 00:01:00,710

Only five years.

20

00:01:00,710 --> 00:01:06,930

When I was five years old, I
was moved to my aunt and uncle,

21

00:01:06,930 --> 00:01:08,850

who raised me.

22

00:01:08,850 --> 00:01:14,220

My mother's sister raised
me because my father died

23

00:01:14,220 --> 00:01:16,530

three months before I was born.

24

00:01:16,530 --> 00:01:20,430

And my aunt tried
to help my mother

25

00:01:20,430 --> 00:01:23,700
because I had an older sister.

26
00:01:23,700 --> 00:01:25,740
And my mother was
a widow and had

27
00:01:25,740 --> 00:01:29,820
no way of supporting herself.

28
00:01:29,820 --> 00:01:33,240
She was living with
my grandparents.

29
00:01:33,240 --> 00:01:36,120
And I was raised
in my aunt's house

30
00:01:36,120 --> 00:01:39,105
in another town, Zawiercie.

31
00:01:39,105 --> 00:01:43,197

32
00:01:43,197 --> 00:01:45,030
Can you tell me a little
bit about that town

33
00:01:45,030 --> 00:01:45,870
where you grew up?

34
00:01:45,870 --> 00:01:46,710
Yes.

35
00:01:46,710 --> 00:01:52,680
It was a little larger town
than the one I was born in,

36
00:01:52,680 --> 00:01:56,460
perhaps about 35,000 people.

37
00:01:56,460 --> 00:02:02,830

The Jewish population,
perhaps 5,000 or 8,000.

38
00:02:02,830 --> 00:02:03,750
I'm not sure.

39
00:02:03,750 --> 00:02:07,120

40
00:02:07,120 --> 00:02:13,020
I went to grammar school
and I went to gymnasium.

41
00:02:13,020 --> 00:02:17,490
And unfortunately,
when I was 21,

42
00:02:17,490 --> 00:02:22,710
I had just begun to plan
a career of working,

43
00:02:22,710 --> 00:02:25,020
the war broke out.

44
00:02:25,020 --> 00:02:33,030
And that is exactly
in September 1945,

45
00:02:33,030 --> 00:02:39,180
which I'll never forget the
voice of the president saying,

46
00:02:39,180 --> 00:02:43,140
in the name of God,
we're going to war

47
00:02:43,140 --> 00:02:44,655
because Hitler invaded Poland.

48
00:02:44,655 --> 00:02:49,370

49

00:02:49,370 --> 00:02:52,190

Let me stay with you for your
childhood a little bit longer.

50

00:02:52,190 --> 00:02:55,160

Yeah, I know that's my problem.

51

00:02:55,160 --> 00:02:57,830

Can you tell me about
the kinds of things

52

00:02:57,830 --> 00:02:59,050

that you studied in school?

53

00:02:59,050 --> 00:03:01,960

54

00:03:01,960 --> 00:03:05,720

First of all, you had to
study reading and writing

55

00:03:05,720 --> 00:03:07,720

and arithmetic.

56

00:03:07,720 --> 00:03:10,180

And then when I
went to gymnasium,

57

00:03:10,180 --> 00:03:17,110

I studied literature,
history, mathematics.

58

00:03:17,110 --> 00:03:20,530

All the same things that
children when they are in high

59

00:03:20,530 --> 00:03:23,740

school I studied.

60

00:03:23,740 --> 00:03:28,840

I wasn't very good in
geography, I remember that.

61

00:03:28,840 --> 00:03:32,980

But I'm ashamed of it because
right now I like geography.

62

00:03:32,980 --> 00:03:39,030

63

00:03:39,030 --> 00:03:40,440

I had a lot of friends.

64

00:03:40,440 --> 00:03:47,070

We did what usually
the teenagers do.

65

00:03:47,070 --> 00:03:49,920

I had a very happy home.

66

00:03:49,920 --> 00:03:54,150

I was very fortunate
in that respect

67

00:03:54,150 --> 00:04:02,080

because my people who raised
me were very good to me.

68

00:04:02,080 --> 00:04:04,950

I saw my mother quite often.

69

00:04:04,950 --> 00:04:07,980

In fact, in the
beginning, my mother

70

00:04:07,980 --> 00:04:12,660

stayed with me for a
full year until I got

71

00:04:12,660 --> 00:04:14,730

used to the new surroundings.

72

00:04:14,730 --> 00:04:16,589

I was only five.

73

00:04:16,589 --> 00:04:18,930

Till I was six,
she went back to be

74

00:04:18,930 --> 00:04:21,779

with my sister in my
grandparents' house.

75

00:04:21,779 --> 00:04:25,290

But I used to go visiting
her for holidays,

76

00:04:25,290 --> 00:04:29,080

and my mother used
to come and visit us.

77

00:04:29,080 --> 00:04:32,310

And life was a happy life.

78

00:04:32,310 --> 00:04:35,990

79

00:04:35,990 --> 00:04:39,040

I have several questions, and
I'll ask them one at a time.

80

00:04:39,040 --> 00:04:41,260

Was your family observant?

81

00:04:41,260 --> 00:04:43,390

Very, yes.

82

00:04:43,390 --> 00:04:48,830

We were not Hasidic,
but we were observant.

83

00:04:48,830 --> 00:04:50,480

I would call it conservative.

84

00:04:50,480 --> 00:04:53,060

85

00:04:53,060 --> 00:04:53,560

Yes.

86

00:04:53,560 --> 00:04:56,470

87

00:04:56,470 --> 00:04:59,170

We kept a kosher house.

88

00:04:59,170 --> 00:05:05,350

We had to have a
cook that was Jewish.

89

00:05:05,350 --> 00:05:07,570

We had a cleaning
woman that didn't

90

00:05:07,570 --> 00:05:10,060

have to be Jewish,
but the cook had

91

00:05:10,060 --> 00:05:11,710

to be Jewish because
she had to know

92

00:05:11,710 --> 00:05:13,675

how to keep a kosher house--

93

00:05:13,675 --> 00:05:15,130

a kosher kitchen.

94

00:05:15,130 --> 00:05:18,650

95

00:05:18,650 --> 00:05:21,878

Were your friends
predominantly Jewish?

96

00:05:21,878 --> 00:05:23,180

Mostly, yes.

97

00:05:23,180 --> 00:05:29,294

I had some non-Jewish
friends, but mostly yes.

98

00:05:29,294 --> 00:05:32,170

Did you have any
religious instruction?

99

00:05:32,170 --> 00:05:33,880

Yes.

100

00:05:33,880 --> 00:05:41,080

I was taught how to pray in
Hebrew by a special tutor that

101

00:05:41,080 --> 00:05:45,730

came every day after school to
the house and instructed me.

102

00:05:45,730 --> 00:05:49,900

In the school, originally
in my grammar school years,

103

00:05:49,900 --> 00:05:52,240

we had a religious
teacher who taught

104

00:05:52,240 --> 00:05:56,230

us the history of
our Jewish religion.

105

00:05:56,230 --> 00:05:59,740

And the praying, I
always did in Hebrew.

106

00:05:59,740 --> 00:06:05,200

107

00:06:05,200 --> 00:06:06,940

The family that
raised you, can you

108

00:06:06,940 --> 00:06:09,100

tell me what they
did for a living?

109
00:06:09,100 --> 00:06:11,470
They were in business.

110
00:06:11,470 --> 00:06:20,860
We lived in a very, very busy
section of the coal mines,

111
00:06:20,860 --> 00:06:22,930
very close to it.

112
00:06:22,930 --> 00:06:29,890
And my uncle imported
every day 10--

113
00:06:29,890 --> 00:06:38,170
sometimes more--
train loads of coal

114
00:06:38,170 --> 00:06:42,730
and distributed in the city
to all the factories and all

115
00:06:42,730 --> 00:06:44,710
the homes.

116
00:06:44,710 --> 00:06:48,565
He was a very, very
successful businessman, yes.

117
00:06:48,565 --> 00:06:52,285

118
00:06:52,285 --> 00:06:54,200
Did you know much
about your father?

119
00:06:54,200 --> 00:06:56,200
You mentioned that he
died before you were born.

120

00:06:56,200 --> 00:06:58,040

Did you know what
he did for a living?

121

00:06:58,040 --> 00:07:02,290

My father, I was told,
was a traveling salesman.

122

00:07:02,290 --> 00:07:05,290

I didn't know too
much until later.

123

00:07:05,290 --> 00:07:08,650

I only remember, it
was a sad remembrance

124

00:07:08,650 --> 00:07:10,930

that my mother
took me one time--

125

00:07:10,930 --> 00:07:16,060

maybe I was three years old--
to the cemetery in town of Radom

126

00:07:16,060 --> 00:07:21,120

where my father lived and died.

127

00:07:21,120 --> 00:07:23,290

She took me to the cemetery.

128

00:07:23,290 --> 00:07:25,240

And I cried and I was afraid.

129

00:07:25,240 --> 00:07:29,230

I was a child, I was a baby, I
didn't understand where I was.

130

00:07:29,230 --> 00:07:32,920

But mother didn't tell me much.

131

00:07:32,920 --> 00:07:36,940

As I was growing up, I

used to ask questions

132

00:07:36,940 --> 00:07:41,410

and I was sorry that
I didn't have a daddy.

133

00:07:41,410 --> 00:07:48,910

I was rather very,
very well liked--

134

00:07:48,910 --> 00:07:50,710

loved rather-- by my uncle.

135

00:07:50,710 --> 00:07:54,710

So I didn't miss the father
figure in the early years.

136

00:07:54,710 --> 00:07:59,080

But as I grew older,
my friends had fathers.

137

00:07:59,080 --> 00:08:01,820

And I began to
realize that I was not

138

00:08:01,820 --> 00:08:05,110

as fortunate to
have my own father.

139

00:08:05,110 --> 00:08:10,540

And I learned little
bits here and there,

140

00:08:10,540 --> 00:08:18,250

but I think I learned more about
it since I was getting older

141

00:08:18,250 --> 00:08:21,180

and I begin to
find here and there

142

00:08:21,180 --> 00:08:24,160

some members of the family.

143
00:08:24,160 --> 00:08:26,680
In fact, there's
only one that lives

144
00:08:26,680 --> 00:08:31,720
in Australia who is a
nephew of my father's,

145
00:08:31,720 --> 00:08:37,090
who also was only 13 when my
parents, I think, got married.

146
00:08:37,090 --> 00:08:39,580
And he has some sketches.

147
00:08:39,580 --> 00:08:40,720
He doesn't remember.

148
00:08:40,720 --> 00:08:45,260
He's now 92 years
old, and I met him 10,

149
00:08:45,260 --> 00:08:48,580
12 years ago when I
went to Australia.

150
00:08:48,580 --> 00:08:52,012

151
00:08:52,012 --> 00:08:53,470
When you were
growing up in Poland,

152
00:08:53,470 --> 00:08:55,380
did you experience
any antisemitism?

153
00:08:55,380 --> 00:08:58,960

154
00:08:58,960 --> 00:09:05,240

I personally could
remember sketches of it,

155
00:09:05,240 --> 00:09:11,720
because we were living
in a predominantly

156
00:09:11,720 --> 00:09:15,080
Catholic surroundings.

157
00:09:15,080 --> 00:09:18,950
And we were going
to separate schools.

158
00:09:18,950 --> 00:09:22,100
As I said before,
the grammar schools

159
00:09:22,100 --> 00:09:25,940
was separate because
we were Jewish.

160
00:09:25,940 --> 00:09:27,200
We had Jewish teachers.

161
00:09:27,200 --> 00:09:36,390
We had Jewish-- the
director was Jewish.

162
00:09:36,390 --> 00:09:41,730
And then the gymnasium
was already a little bit

163
00:09:41,730 --> 00:09:46,050
antisemitic by selecting us.

164
00:09:46,050 --> 00:09:50,340
Not many of us could go into
the gymnasium, only those people

165
00:09:50,340 --> 00:09:52,440
who had enough to pay for it.

166

00:09:52,440 --> 00:09:58,140

It was private and you had to
pay a certain amount monthly.

167

00:09:58,140 --> 00:10:02,320

And if you couldn't afford
it, you just didn't go.

168

00:10:02,320 --> 00:10:07,800

But there were incidents
of antisemitism very much,

169

00:10:07,800 --> 00:10:13,590

but that was accepted because we
were living in a predominantly

170

00:10:13,590 --> 00:10:17,190

Catholic society.

171

00:10:17,190 --> 00:10:21,420

And you read in the
paper, but somehow we

172

00:10:21,420 --> 00:10:26,650

tried to live with it.

173

00:10:26,650 --> 00:10:28,450

Could you give me
a specific example

174

00:10:28,450 --> 00:10:31,150

of what you mean
that you saw things,

175

00:10:31,150 --> 00:10:36,190

or what did you personally
see with your own eyes?

176

00:10:36,190 --> 00:10:40,030

I didn't realize it when I
was growing up, what it is.

177

00:10:40,030 --> 00:10:44,380
But when the war
broke out, I began

178
00:10:44,380 --> 00:10:54,070
to feel it because the polls
were often telling on us.

179
00:10:54,070 --> 00:10:57,790
They were-- if, for
instance, we were

180
00:10:57,790 --> 00:11:01,300
trying to hide
from the atrocities

181
00:11:01,300 --> 00:11:07,390
of the German occupation,
we had to be careful

182
00:11:07,390 --> 00:11:10,780
not to be seen by
the Polish people

183
00:11:10,780 --> 00:11:12,880
because they would tell on us.

184
00:11:12,880 --> 00:11:23,380
But it wasn't as bad as
I learned later in life.

185
00:11:23,380 --> 00:11:25,510
I understood it different.

186
00:11:25,510 --> 00:11:29,260
I used to go around with
some non-Jewish friends,

187
00:11:29,260 --> 00:11:43,380
but it was on a very gentle
and careful acquaintances.

188
00:11:43,380 --> 00:11:49,130

A couple of them
were not very polite,

189
00:11:49,130 --> 00:11:51,980
so we had our own crowd.

190
00:11:51,980 --> 00:11:55,160
But you see, I lived
in a small town.

191
00:11:55,160 --> 00:11:58,170
Maybe in bigger cities, they
would feel it different.

192
00:11:58,170 --> 00:12:04,240
I know, for instance, my husband
was growing up in Warsaw.

193
00:12:04,240 --> 00:12:07,360
And he told me many
times that when

194
00:12:07,360 --> 00:12:11,590
he entered the university
the first year,

195
00:12:11,590 --> 00:12:13,690
he was going in for premed.

196
00:12:13,690 --> 00:12:16,660
He could not be
sitting in the benches.

197
00:12:16,660 --> 00:12:20,305
He had to stand at the
back because he was Jewish.

198
00:12:20,305 --> 00:12:22,880

199
00:12:22,880 --> 00:12:25,190
But you, yourself, did not see--

200

00:12:25,190 --> 00:12:30,260

I didn't feel it as much
as some other people did.

201

00:12:30,260 --> 00:12:37,620

202

00:12:37,620 --> 00:12:40,620

Prior to 1939 when
the war broke out,

203

00:12:40,620 --> 00:12:45,180

did you have any idea of what
was going on inside of Germany?

204

00:12:45,180 --> 00:12:46,740

We read in the papers.

205

00:12:46,740 --> 00:12:48,780

You heard it on the radio.

206

00:12:48,780 --> 00:12:51,600

And you always thought, well,
it's not going to get there.

207

00:12:51,600 --> 00:12:54,810

You try to minimize it.

208

00:12:54,810 --> 00:12:57,960

You hoped that it
wouldn't get to a war.

209

00:12:57,960 --> 00:13:01,290

But when it finally did,
we realized that there's

210

00:13:01,290 --> 00:13:03,570

nothing we could do.

211

00:13:03,570 --> 00:13:09,510

And we followed whatever
the other people--

212
00:13:09,510 --> 00:13:12,900
everybody was running
because when you finally--

213
00:13:12,900 --> 00:13:16,920
you read in the paper about
Kristallnacht in Germany.

214
00:13:16,920 --> 00:13:21,240
You couldn't help but
realize what's going on.

215
00:13:21,240 --> 00:13:25,830
And when they entered,
they took out--

216
00:13:25,830 --> 00:13:30,570
on entering a city, they would
take out predominantly the

217
00:13:30,570 --> 00:13:32,190
intelligentsia--

218
00:13:32,190 --> 00:13:37,860
the lawyers, the doctors, the
people who could eventually

219
00:13:37,860 --> 00:13:39,360
lead a revolt--

220
00:13:39,360 --> 00:13:42,450
what they would think,
they would suspect.

221
00:13:42,450 --> 00:13:45,750
And they shot them,
they killed them.

222
00:13:45,750 --> 00:13:53,000
They took Poland
with such horror

223

00:13:53,000 --> 00:13:56,870

that everybody was scared
of what might happen to us.

224

00:13:56,870 --> 00:14:00,940

225

00:14:00,940 --> 00:14:02,950

The people that
were taken and shot,

226

00:14:02,950 --> 00:14:04,930

are you talking about Jewish?

227

00:14:04,930 --> 00:14:06,490

Definitely.

228

00:14:06,490 --> 00:14:07,840

Not Polish, or also Polish?

229

00:14:07,840 --> 00:14:09,190

Only Jewish.

230

00:14:09,190 --> 00:14:10,810

Only Jewish.

231

00:14:10,810 --> 00:14:14,860

That's how they--
their main goal

232

00:14:14,860 --> 00:14:19,660

was to take care of
the Jews so that there

233

00:14:19,660 --> 00:14:20,710

would be no more Jews.

234

00:14:20,710 --> 00:14:23,950

They were trying to annihilate
us from the very start.

235

00:14:23,950 --> 00:14:29,410
And it was very, very scary.

236
00:14:29,410 --> 00:14:32,410
I'd like to go back for one
moment to Kristallnacht.

237
00:14:32,410 --> 00:14:35,890
And what do you remember
reading or hearing

238
00:14:35,890 --> 00:14:38,230
about from that event?

239
00:14:38,230 --> 00:14:42,220
That they came in the
middle of the night

240
00:14:42,220 --> 00:14:48,730
and broke into the temples,
synagogues, and to stores--

241
00:14:48,730 --> 00:14:53,770
to businesses-- and wrecked
everything, wrecked,

242
00:14:53,770 --> 00:14:58,180
and, of course, also
arrested the owners

243
00:14:58,180 --> 00:15:01,570
and only the Jewish people.

244
00:15:01,570 --> 00:15:03,190
That's why they call
it Kristallnacht,

245
00:15:03,190 --> 00:15:07,450
because so much
glass was broken.

246
00:15:07,450 --> 00:15:11,230
And that was scary,

that was very scary.

247

00:15:11,230 --> 00:15:14,770

And naturally, when
they came into Poland,

248

00:15:14,770 --> 00:15:17,770

that was after
they have entered,

249

00:15:17,770 --> 00:15:20,470

I believe, Czechoslovakia.

250

00:15:20,470 --> 00:15:26,050

The Germans have a nature
of doing everything

251

00:15:26,050 --> 00:15:27,940

according to plan.

252

00:15:27,940 --> 00:15:33,270

Everything was what they
call in German planmÅŸig.

253

00:15:33,270 --> 00:15:40,710

Whatever they did, they
probably kept records of too.

254

00:15:40,710 --> 00:15:48,410

That's why we now
have so many records.

255

00:15:48,410 --> 00:15:52,300

256

00:15:52,300 --> 00:15:58,210

How was Kristallnacht presented
in the Polish newspapers?

257

00:15:58,210 --> 00:16:03,400

As it happened just
that Germany was trying

258

00:16:03,400 --> 00:16:07,290
to eradicate the Jewish people.

259

00:16:07,290 --> 00:16:15,060
And it was always while
Poland was still Poland.

260

00:16:15,060 --> 00:16:21,150
They could tell what they have
seen, what they have heard.

261

00:16:21,150 --> 00:16:25,110
They came in with a
blast, so to speak.

262

00:16:25,110 --> 00:16:30,330
They took the German people
and the German nation

263

00:16:30,330 --> 00:16:33,960
first, naturally, because
it started in Germany.

264

00:16:33,960 --> 00:16:37,890
But we were prepared
for the worst

265

00:16:37,890 --> 00:16:40,080
when they came into Poland.

266

00:16:40,080 --> 00:16:43,890
They were flying
with bombs overhead.

267

00:16:43,890 --> 00:16:48,150
And naturally, everybody
was running for shelter.

268

00:16:48,150 --> 00:16:56,650
And also, we, as a
family, tried to run.

269

00:16:56,650 --> 00:16:59,980

We didn't have cars
like we have in America.

270

00:16:59,980 --> 00:17:06,300

But if you had a horse and
carriage, or a horse and wagon,

271

00:17:06,300 --> 00:17:11,460

you could load your family,
which my uncle did, and run.

272

00:17:11,460 --> 00:17:14,599

We thought if we crossed
the Vistula, we'll be safe.

273

00:17:14,599 --> 00:17:18,720

We'll go to grandmother's house,
which was close to the Vistula.

274

00:17:18,720 --> 00:17:22,180

But everybody was
running from there too.

275

00:17:22,180 --> 00:17:26,680

Everybody was running,
running to save their lives.

276

00:17:26,680 --> 00:17:32,220

And unfortunately, we
wound up in the Ukraina,

277

00:17:32,220 --> 00:17:34,650

which we couldn't go
any further because we

278

00:17:34,650 --> 00:17:37,020

didn't have any money.

279

00:17:37,020 --> 00:17:41,490

And we stayed there a
few months by the mercy

280

00:17:41,490 --> 00:17:42,900
of the local people.

281
00:17:42,900 --> 00:17:47,520
We were taken into
homes and given food.

282
00:17:47,520 --> 00:17:52,470
And when the little
money we had run out,

283
00:17:52,470 --> 00:17:55,470
we had to start
thinking of going back.

284
00:17:55,470 --> 00:18:00,150
And it was a very, very
difficult situation

285
00:18:00,150 --> 00:18:07,020
because you didn't know what
you will find when you go back.

286
00:18:07,020 --> 00:18:12,030
So as a young adult
in the family,

287
00:18:12,030 --> 00:18:15,390
I was delegated to
go back to Poland.

288
00:18:15,390 --> 00:18:20,040
And I had to smuggle myself
through the frozen rivers.

289
00:18:20,040 --> 00:18:23,670
It was very difficult
because I had no money.

290
00:18:23,670 --> 00:18:28,080
The only way you could
bribe a Russian guard

291

00:18:28,080 --> 00:18:30,510
if you had a watch to give them.

292
00:18:30,510 --> 00:18:32,460
They call it chasy.

293
00:18:32,460 --> 00:18:34,300
And I didn't have that.

294
00:18:34,300 --> 00:18:38,430
But somehow-- it's hard to
remember how I managed--

295
00:18:38,430 --> 00:18:41,550
I made it back to Poland
where my mother was still

296
00:18:41,550 --> 00:18:44,370
living in the nearby town.

297
00:18:44,370 --> 00:18:50,940
And another aunt, my mother's
sister, lived in another town.

298
00:18:50,940 --> 00:18:53,970
But I couldn't go
back to my family

299
00:18:53,970 --> 00:18:57,420
to report that our
house was confiscated,

300
00:18:57,420 --> 00:19:02,700
because it was on the
Main Street in our town.

301
00:19:02,700 --> 00:19:08,400
And the Germans came in and
took over the prominent homes

302
00:19:08,400 --> 00:19:12,810
and apartments and
renamed the street, even,

303

00:19:12,810 --> 00:19:19,230
to Adolf Hitler Strasse, which
we had no place to come back.

304

00:19:19,230 --> 00:19:23,400
Somehow, people kept
going in both directions

305

00:19:23,400 --> 00:19:26,730
because people were
smuggling to run again.

306

00:19:26,730 --> 00:19:32,800
And my family finally, not
knowing what happened to me,

307

00:19:32,800 --> 00:19:34,290
decided to come back.

308

00:19:34,290 --> 00:19:38,190
And they smuggled themselves
with the children--

309

00:19:38,190 --> 00:19:43,210
two young children--
and they came back.

310

00:19:43,210 --> 00:19:48,080
When they returned to our
hometown, by that time,

311

00:19:48,080 --> 00:19:53,170
they already had a Jewish
community center, so

312

00:19:53,170 --> 00:19:55,210
to speak of.

313

00:19:55,210 --> 00:20:03,160
They organized-- the Germans
tried to organize us, Jews,

314

00:20:03,160 --> 00:20:07,500

because they didn't want to
deal with each individual.

315

00:20:07,500 --> 00:20:10,270

The Kultusgemeinde,
so to speak, which

316

00:20:10,270 --> 00:20:17,320

was the office where
the Jews had to register

317

00:20:17,320 --> 00:20:21,100

and had to be
governed by the Jews.

318

00:20:21,100 --> 00:20:24,610

So we were assigned
an apartment,

319

00:20:24,610 --> 00:20:29,890

and we started from scratch
living on the third floor.

320

00:20:29,890 --> 00:20:33,490

Now that was not the
ghetto yet, that was still

321

00:20:33,490 --> 00:20:35,200

the pre-ghetto time.

322

00:20:35,200 --> 00:20:43,030

We could still go out and
try to make a living somehow.

323

00:20:43,030 --> 00:20:46,970

My uncle couldn't
reopen his business.

324

00:20:46,970 --> 00:20:49,360

It was confiscated.

325

00:20:49,360 --> 00:20:55,420

So I don't remember
what he did, but I

326

00:20:55,420 --> 00:20:57,700

couldn't go back to school.

327

00:20:57,700 --> 00:21:01,810

Schools were also-- well, by
that time, I was already 21.

328

00:21:01,810 --> 00:21:08,410

If I wanted to go to
university, I was already not

329

00:21:08,410 --> 00:21:10,900

allowed because I was Jewish.

330

00:21:10,900 --> 00:21:14,950

We had no right to
continue our education.

331

00:21:14,950 --> 00:21:22,930

So I still was trying
to work at my first job

332

00:21:22,930 --> 00:21:26,140

that I had gotten before
the war broke out.

333

00:21:26,140 --> 00:21:29,590

And gradually, I was
not allowed to travel,

334

00:21:29,590 --> 00:21:32,740

because my job
consisted of traveling

335

00:21:32,740 --> 00:21:38,410

every day 7 kilometers
to the nearby little town

336

00:21:38,410 --> 00:21:40,840

to my secretarial job.

337

00:21:40,840 --> 00:21:44,450

And Jews were not permitted
to travel on the train,

338

00:21:44,450 --> 00:21:46,420

so I had to stop working.

339

00:21:46,420 --> 00:21:53,650

And also, they had to take
us into the local factories.

340

00:21:53,650 --> 00:21:56,810

The young people had to
go and work every day.

341

00:21:56,810 --> 00:22:00,470

So I worked in a--

342

00:22:00,470 --> 00:22:07,550

we had a big plant, which was a
textile mill prior to the war.

343

00:22:07,550 --> 00:22:15,030

And they changed it
to answer their needs,

344

00:22:15,030 --> 00:22:19,260

and they were making the
uniforms for the army.

345

00:22:19,260 --> 00:22:24,340

And we were employed every
day, but we had to eventually

346

00:22:24,340 --> 00:22:27,370

been closed in a ghetto.

347

00:22:27,370 --> 00:22:32,500

And every day, we had to walk
under guards out of the ghetto

348
00:22:32,500 --> 00:22:33,190
to work.

349
00:22:33,190 --> 00:22:35,553

350
00:22:35,553 --> 00:22:36,970
Before I let you
go any further, I

351
00:22:36,970 --> 00:22:39,820
have a couple of
quick questions.

352
00:22:39,820 --> 00:22:42,880
You mentioned that at
the beginning of the war,

353
00:22:42,880 --> 00:22:47,020
you fled to the Ukraine and
you spent a few months or so.

354
00:22:47,020 --> 00:22:49,720
You're saying, then, that
the first winter of the war,

355
00:22:49,720 --> 00:22:50,920
is that where you were--

356
00:22:50,920 --> 00:22:52,660
the first winter?

357
00:22:52,660 --> 00:22:53,720
Part of it.

358
00:22:53,720 --> 00:22:57,550
Don't forget, winter in
that part of the world

359
00:22:57,550 --> 00:23:01,210
is very, very bad.

360

00:23:01,210 --> 00:23:05,530

In January, I believe, which
was the middle of the winter,

361

00:23:05,530 --> 00:23:09,160

that's when my family came back.

362

00:23:09,160 --> 00:23:15,710

I had gone back prior to that,
and I lived with my mother

363

00:23:15,710 --> 00:23:17,690

until they came back.

364

00:23:17,690 --> 00:23:19,850

That was in the middle
of the winter, yes.

365

00:23:19,850 --> 00:23:21,440

The winter is long.

366

00:23:21,440 --> 00:23:30,550

It lasts from maybe October
till sometime in May.

367

00:23:30,550 --> 00:23:32,680

We had snow May 3rd.

368

00:23:32,680 --> 00:23:36,630

369

00:23:36,630 --> 00:23:40,830

When you came back and you found
that your apartment was now

370

00:23:40,830 --> 00:23:46,500

on Adolf Hitler Strasse
and the Germans had taken--

371

00:23:46,500 --> 00:23:48,390

Everything.

372

00:23:48,390 --> 00:23:51,000

Were you still able to maintain
contact with your mother

373

00:23:51,000 --> 00:23:52,350

in the other town?

374

00:23:52,350 --> 00:23:54,420

Yeah, you had to have--

375

00:23:54,420 --> 00:23:58,770

the mail was still functioning.

376

00:23:58,770 --> 00:24:01,710

You had to be careful
what you were writing.

377

00:24:01,710 --> 00:24:04,380

And I used to go by train.

378

00:24:04,380 --> 00:24:08,220

I had to have permission to
travel to see my mother, yes.

379

00:24:08,220 --> 00:24:10,410

I used to go in the beginning.

380

00:24:10,410 --> 00:24:14,970

And don't forget, war broke
out in '39, September.

381

00:24:14,970 --> 00:24:17,340

Here, we're already
talking about the beginning

382

00:24:17,340 --> 00:24:19,560

of 1940, '41.

383

00:24:19,560 --> 00:24:23,700

And in '42, they begin
to exterminate us.

384

00:24:23,700 --> 00:24:27,120

They begin-- they built
concentration camps,

385

00:24:27,120 --> 00:24:29,700

and that's when my mother went.

386

00:24:29,700 --> 00:24:36,360

All right, let's stay a little
bit slower in our progress

387

00:24:36,360 --> 00:24:38,160

through this war.

388

00:24:38,160 --> 00:24:40,740

You had mentioned a few
moments ago that, at first, you

389

00:24:40,740 --> 00:24:42,600

were not living in a ghetto.

390

00:24:42,600 --> 00:24:44,597

But later on,
there was a ghetto.

391

00:24:44,597 --> 00:24:46,680

Can you tell me about the
formation of the ghetto?

392

00:24:46,680 --> 00:24:52,950

Yes, they moved us all
to a restricted area.

393

00:24:52,950 --> 00:25:00,520

And we had-- what do you call--

394

00:25:00,520 --> 00:25:02,680

fence.

395

00:25:02,680 --> 00:25:07,150

And only by special
permission, you

396
00:25:07,150 --> 00:25:13,810
were allowed to exit the gate.

397
00:25:13,810 --> 00:25:19,030
And the conditions were so bad.

398
00:25:19,030 --> 00:25:22,840
People lived in cramped
areas, but that's

399
00:25:22,840 --> 00:25:26,110
when they started
to eliminate us.

400
00:25:26,110 --> 00:25:27,400
It was bad.

401
00:25:27,400 --> 00:25:33,580
I remember we had moved again
from a third floor apartment

402
00:25:33,580 --> 00:25:36,070
to another street--

403
00:25:36,070 --> 00:25:41,020
somebody's former
store in one room.

404
00:25:41,020 --> 00:25:52,920
But by that time,
my family also was--

405
00:25:52,920 --> 00:25:55,920
two members of the
family were eliminated.

406
00:25:55,920 --> 00:26:01,500
My uncle's son-in-law had been
arrested early in the war.

407
00:26:01,500 --> 00:26:03,630

And when his wife,
my cousin, who

408
00:26:03,630 --> 00:26:07,740
raised me, when she went
to see him to visit him,

409
00:26:07,740 --> 00:26:09,730
she never returned.

410
00:26:09,730 --> 00:26:12,060
She simply disappeared.

411
00:26:12,060 --> 00:26:15,600
And my uncle and his two
grandchildren and myself

412
00:26:15,600 --> 00:26:18,120
lived in that one room.

413
00:26:18,120 --> 00:26:19,230
But we still had--

414
00:26:19,230 --> 00:26:24,000
I remember, we still
had a woman Jewish cook

415
00:26:24,000 --> 00:26:28,600
that kept the food,
if possible, kosher.

416
00:26:28,600 --> 00:26:31,290
We didn't have any
kosher butchers anymore.

417
00:26:31,290 --> 00:26:37,800
But somehow, she was
able to come in every day

418
00:26:37,800 --> 00:26:39,360
and cook for us.

419

00:26:39,360 --> 00:26:42,240

420

00:26:42,240 --> 00:26:46,260

The nights, we had to
block out what you call--

421

00:26:46,260 --> 00:26:48,750

the windows were covered.

422

00:26:48,750 --> 00:26:54,870

We were not allowed to have
any electricity, so to speak.

423

00:26:54,870 --> 00:26:59,070

424

00:26:59,070 --> 00:27:02,100

There were certain
members of the community

425

00:27:02,100 --> 00:27:12,450

who were prominent members
of the community center.

426

00:27:12,450 --> 00:27:15,000

So it's not a community center.

427

00:27:15,000 --> 00:27:17,120

I can't speak--
the Kultusgemeinde.

428

00:27:17,120 --> 00:27:19,140

What is the word for--

429

00:27:19,140 --> 00:27:21,720

you go here to register.

430

00:27:21,720 --> 00:27:22,860

What do you call that?

431

00:27:22,860 --> 00:27:26,615

432
00:27:26,615 --> 00:27:27,115
Gmina.

433
00:27:27,115 --> 00:27:29,830

434
00:27:29,830 --> 00:27:32,410
In Polish, it was called gmina.

435
00:27:32,410 --> 00:27:35,290
But it was the
official place where

436
00:27:35,290 --> 00:27:39,670
we had to go and get
our food rations too.

437
00:27:39,670 --> 00:27:45,070
We were given stamps
to be able to buy food.

438
00:27:45,070 --> 00:27:48,790
Was this a Jewish-run
registry that you had to go?

439
00:27:48,790 --> 00:27:52,900
Jewish-run who,
in turn, reported

440
00:27:52,900 --> 00:27:54,760
to the German authorities.

441
00:27:54,760 --> 00:27:55,890
Was it a Judenrat?

442
00:27:55,890 --> 00:27:59,510
Judenrat, exactly.

443
00:27:59,510 --> 00:28:00,010
Judenrat.

444
00:28:00,010 --> 00:28:07,270

445
00:28:07,270 --> 00:28:08,620
Can you tell me briefly--

446
00:28:08,620 --> 00:28:11,440
I forgot to ask
you this earlier.

447
00:28:11,440 --> 00:28:13,690
Your uncle's family
was raising you?

448
00:28:13,690 --> 00:28:15,280
Yeah.

449
00:28:15,280 --> 00:28:17,620
What other members of
his family were there?

450
00:28:17,620 --> 00:28:20,020
They had only one daughter.

451
00:28:20,020 --> 00:28:23,350
I was their second
daughter, except I was not

452
00:28:23,350 --> 00:28:24,880
officially adopted.

453
00:28:24,880 --> 00:28:28,390
I was not legally adopted,
but they raised me

454
00:28:28,390 --> 00:28:30,790
from the time I
was five years old.

455
00:28:30,790 --> 00:28:31,730
They had a daughter.

456

00:28:31,730 --> 00:28:36,310

She was married and
she had two children.

457

00:28:36,310 --> 00:28:38,950

And everybody perished.

458

00:28:38,950 --> 00:28:42,190

Everybody perished.

459

00:28:42,190 --> 00:28:45,700

I'd like to get back
to the ghetto situation

460

00:28:45,700 --> 00:28:48,400

and have you explain
a little bit more

461

00:28:48,400 --> 00:28:52,570

about what life was
actually like in the ghetto.

462

00:28:52,570 --> 00:28:57,220

Well, you had to
obey the orders.

463

00:28:57,220 --> 00:28:59,230

You were not allowed
out unless you

464

00:28:59,230 --> 00:29:05,320

were going to work with
permission or under guard.

465

00:29:05,320 --> 00:29:08,710

You had to wear armbands first--

466

00:29:08,710 --> 00:29:16,450

white armbands with
blue Star of David.

467

00:29:16,450 --> 00:29:19,960
That was a law.

468
00:29:19,960 --> 00:29:24,010
If you were caught without
it, you were immediately

469
00:29:24,010 --> 00:29:28,270
punished by sending you
away to either a work

470
00:29:28,270 --> 00:29:30,850
camp in the beginning.

471
00:29:30,850 --> 00:29:34,780
But nobody dared take
it off, unless they were

472
00:29:34,780 --> 00:29:37,420
going for hiding permanent.

473
00:29:37,420 --> 00:29:45,520
Later on, we had to wear
the yellow Star of David.

474
00:29:45,520 --> 00:29:52,920
And you lived your daily
life under such scrutiny

475
00:29:52,920 --> 00:29:56,550
that you couldn't possible--

476
00:29:56,550 --> 00:29:59,430
you couldn't attend any movies.

477
00:29:59,430 --> 00:30:03,450
You couldn't go to
any pleasurable places

478
00:30:03,450 --> 00:30:04,890
because you were Jewish.

479

00:30:04,890 --> 00:30:07,860
You had to stay in the ghetto.

480
00:30:07,860 --> 00:30:14,100
And some people entertained
themselves in small groups

481
00:30:14,100 --> 00:30:21,090
by playing cards, or
reading was still not--

482
00:30:21,090 --> 00:30:24,720
nobody could take
us a book away.

483
00:30:24,720 --> 00:30:26,850
I'm going to stop you now,
so I can flip the tape.

484
00:30:26,850 --> 00:30:27,350
OK.

485
00:30:27,350 --> 00:30:37,010

486
00:30:37,010 --> 00:30:41,630
This is tape one, side B. We're
interviewing Frances Hirshfeld.

487
00:30:41,630 --> 00:30:44,000
And you were telling me
about life in the ghetto.

488
00:30:44,000 --> 00:30:48,140
You said that people were still
allowed to read and play cards.

489
00:30:48,140 --> 00:30:50,540
Can you tell me
about what people

490
00:30:50,540 --> 00:30:54,530
ate, if there was any medical

care, anything like that?

491
00:30:54,530 --> 00:31:01,940
Well, we ate what
we had on rations.

492
00:31:01,940 --> 00:31:04,020
Food was rationed.

493
00:31:04,020 --> 00:31:06,980
And once in a
while, my uncle was

494
00:31:06,980 --> 00:31:10,700
able to get out of
the ghetto and bring

495
00:31:10,700 --> 00:31:14,660
in some butter or meat.

496
00:31:14,660 --> 00:31:18,260
But we didn't have
meat very often.

497
00:31:18,260 --> 00:31:24,770
We were supposed to
last on the rations.

498
00:31:24,770 --> 00:31:30,550
And food wasn't very--

499
00:31:30,550 --> 00:31:33,740

500
00:31:33,740 --> 00:31:34,850
how do I say it--

501
00:31:34,850 --> 00:31:36,380
wasn't free.

502
00:31:36,380 --> 00:31:39,770
So we had to be

careful how we managed.

503

00:31:39,770 --> 00:31:43,790

We had to get the
bread by rations.

504

00:31:43,790 --> 00:31:46,280

We'd get the milk by rations.

505

00:31:46,280 --> 00:31:51,500

We'd get whatever we had to
use to sustain ourselves.

506

00:31:51,500 --> 00:31:55,870

It was all very meager.

507

00:31:55,870 --> 00:32:02,470

And I remember, my mother was
still cooking a chicken once

508

00:32:02,470 --> 00:32:02,980

in a while.

509

00:32:02,980 --> 00:32:07,450

She would be rationing it out.

510

00:32:07,450 --> 00:32:10,480

Nobody could have
an extra helping.

511

00:32:10,480 --> 00:32:17,500

But then here, again,
I try not to jump,

512

00:32:17,500 --> 00:32:20,050

because when you were
in concentration camp,

513

00:32:20,050 --> 00:32:23,540

it was the worst.

514

00:32:23,540 --> 00:32:26,060

But in the ghetto,
we still had--

515
00:32:26,060 --> 00:32:27,110
we survived.

516
00:32:27,110 --> 00:32:29,390
We somehow survived.

517
00:32:29,390 --> 00:32:35,810
And then we had the nightly,
very frequent alerts.

518
00:32:35,810 --> 00:32:38,330
We had to be out and be counted.

519
00:32:38,330 --> 00:32:40,550
We had what they call a appell.

520
00:32:40,550 --> 00:32:42,470
We had to come out
and be counted.

521
00:32:42,470 --> 00:32:49,070
And then they would
gradually deplete us.

522
00:32:49,070 --> 00:32:51,770
They would take--
whenever they had

523
00:32:51,770 --> 00:32:57,500
a bad time on the
front fighting,

524
00:32:57,500 --> 00:33:02,010
they would take us
together in the market

525
00:33:02,010 --> 00:33:05,670
and limit us, like
taking the old people

526

00:33:05,670 --> 00:33:08,250

and the young children
and sending them away.

527

00:33:08,250 --> 00:33:11,955

They were trying to keep only
those people who could work.

528

00:33:11,955 --> 00:33:15,750

529

00:33:15,750 --> 00:33:18,305

You mentioned you remember
your mother rationing chicken.

530

00:33:18,305 --> 00:33:20,430

Were you in contact with
your mother at this point?

531

00:33:20,430 --> 00:33:23,370

In the beginning,
yes, in the beginning.

532

00:33:23,370 --> 00:33:24,090

Of the ghetto?

533

00:33:24,090 --> 00:33:25,770

Yes, in the beginning.

534

00:33:25,770 --> 00:33:29,972

Yes, until she was
deported in '42.

535

00:33:29,972 --> 00:33:30,472

Yes.

536

00:33:30,472 --> 00:33:34,088

537

00:33:34,088 --> 00:33:40,160

Did you see, during
your time in the ghetto,

538
00:33:40,160 --> 00:33:44,690
any particular tortures
or executions or anything

539
00:33:44,690 --> 00:33:45,230
like that?

540
00:33:45,230 --> 00:33:48,670

541
00:33:48,670 --> 00:33:53,320
Only when people did
something that was illegal

542
00:33:53,320 --> 00:33:56,170
according to their rules.

543
00:33:56,170 --> 00:34:05,760
They would take people out
and beat them in open street

544
00:34:05,760 --> 00:34:13,510
and make them tell whatever the
people were trying not to tell.

545
00:34:13,510 --> 00:34:16,360
And it was very,
very dramatic when

546
00:34:16,360 --> 00:34:22,840
people would finally succumb
and had to be taken away.

547
00:34:22,840 --> 00:34:24,730
Whatever they did
with them, we all

548
00:34:24,730 --> 00:34:30,000
knew that they sent them
away to a worse place.

549

00:34:30,000 --> 00:34:34,270

We didn't know much
until we begin to--

550

00:34:34,270 --> 00:34:38,380

somehow there must
have been leaks

551

00:34:38,380 --> 00:34:42,310

that the people began
to hear of Auschwitz,

552

00:34:42,310 --> 00:34:44,440

and that was the worst.

553

00:34:44,440 --> 00:34:49,929

First, they used to send
people away to workplaces--

554

00:34:49,929 --> 00:34:52,150

young people who could work.

555

00:34:52,150 --> 00:34:56,770

But the older ones and the
children, they eliminated,

556

00:34:56,770 --> 00:35:00,070

they would send directly
to Auschwitz, just

557

00:35:00,070 --> 00:35:03,580

like my cousin who went
to visit her husband

558

00:35:03,580 --> 00:35:05,320

and never came back.

559

00:35:05,320 --> 00:35:11,090

And later, we assumed that
she was sent to Auschwitz.

560

00:35:11,090 --> 00:35:16,670

And in Auschwitz, they

burned people alive.

561

00:35:16,670 --> 00:35:19,310

They killed them because
they had to make room

562

00:35:19,310 --> 00:35:20,660

for the new transport.

563

00:35:20,660 --> 00:35:25,380

564

00:35:25,380 --> 00:35:29,190

Getting back to the ghetto, how
long were you in this ghetto?

565

00:35:29,190 --> 00:35:36,930

From 1941 till I was
deported to Auschwitz--

566

00:35:36,930 --> 00:35:40,200

1943.

567

00:35:40,200 --> 00:35:44,700

Yes, about two years.

568

00:35:44,700 --> 00:35:47,070

And you were in
just the one ghetto?

569

00:35:47,070 --> 00:35:47,790

Yes.

570

00:35:47,790 --> 00:35:48,990

In the town of?

571

00:35:48,990 --> 00:35:49,993

Zawiercie.

572

00:35:49,993 --> 00:35:55,120

573

00:35:55,120 --> 00:35:56,680

Before we leave the
ghetto, is there

574

00:35:56,680 --> 00:35:59,138

anything else you want to tell
me about life in the ghetto?

575

00:35:59,138 --> 00:36:02,010

576

00:36:02,010 --> 00:36:03,580

It was miserable.

577

00:36:03,580 --> 00:36:08,910

It was-- we were living
a very limited life.

578

00:36:08,910 --> 00:36:12,990

And we couldn't-- the schools
were not open for the youngins.

579

00:36:12,990 --> 00:36:15,510

We were suffering.

580

00:36:15,510 --> 00:36:18,870

We were hoping that every
day maybe the war will end.

581

00:36:18,870 --> 00:36:20,850

But unfortunately,
the war didn't.

582

00:36:20,850 --> 00:36:24,900

583

00:36:24,900 --> 00:36:28,770

If you were caught
doing something

584

00:36:28,770 --> 00:36:34,080

that was against their

law, their rules,

585

00:36:34,080 --> 00:36:36,840

you were punished very severely.

586

00:36:36,840 --> 00:36:41,530

587

00:36:41,530 --> 00:36:46,180

It was very difficult to

live, very difficult to live.

588

00:36:46,180 --> 00:36:53,480

It's hard to describe

it because we were only

589

00:36:53,480 --> 00:36:57,530

fighting for survival in

order not to be shipped away.

590

00:36:57,530 --> 00:37:00,590

591

00:37:00,590 --> 00:37:02,310

Tell me about the transports.

592

00:37:02,310 --> 00:37:06,320

When did the transports

seriously start?

593

00:37:06,320 --> 00:37:10,850

Seriously in '42, '43.

594

00:37:10,850 --> 00:37:13,550

If you could

survive a transport,

595

00:37:13,550 --> 00:37:14,630

you were very fortunate.

596

00:37:14,630 --> 00:37:19,910

But you lived in constant fear

that you survived this one,

597

00:37:19,910 --> 00:37:21,890

you probably won't
survive the next one.

598

00:37:21,890 --> 00:37:28,100

599

00:37:28,100 --> 00:37:32,870

I was sent directly
to Auschwitz because--

600

00:37:32,870 --> 00:37:36,010

601

00:37:36,010 --> 00:37:45,490

this was already 1943 in one
of the few last transports--

602

00:37:45,490 --> 00:37:52,320

because they just had too
many people to deal with

603

00:37:52,320 --> 00:37:54,670

and they had to get rid of us.

604

00:37:54,670 --> 00:37:57,330

And when you came
to Auschwitz, they

605

00:37:57,330 --> 00:38:01,860

came in the middle of the
night, knocked on the door,

606

00:38:01,860 --> 00:38:03,750

awakened you in the
middle of your sleep.

607

00:38:03,750 --> 00:38:09,580

Even though you were afraid to
go to sleep, you fell asleep.

608

00:38:09,580 --> 00:38:12,370

And then they told us--

609

00:38:12,370 --> 00:38:15,970

they gave us only
orders that we can

610

00:38:15,970 --> 00:38:18,340

take whatever we can carry--

611

00:38:18,340 --> 00:38:19,930

the most precious possessions.

612

00:38:19,930 --> 00:38:23,650

So mothers took
children, others carried

613

00:38:23,650 --> 00:38:26,980

a few little possessions
in their hands.

614

00:38:26,980 --> 00:38:31,840

And when we came to the
market to the assembly place,

615

00:38:31,840 --> 00:38:34,030

we were selected--

616

00:38:34,030 --> 00:38:36,790

they took us to a train.

617

00:38:36,790 --> 00:38:42,280

And my town was not too far
away, maybe two, three hours

618

00:38:42,280 --> 00:38:44,620

by train from Auschwitz.

619

00:38:44,620 --> 00:38:51,850

So we are loaded on the cattle
cars just like sardines.

620

00:38:51,850 --> 00:38:56,620

We were pushed in those
cars standing as many

621

00:38:56,620 --> 00:39:00,610

as they could pack us in.

622

00:39:00,610 --> 00:39:05,020

And when we arrived,
they told us

623

00:39:05,020 --> 00:39:07,100

to leave all our possessions.

624

00:39:07,100 --> 00:39:12,190

They just took us as
we were into a place

625

00:39:12,190 --> 00:39:17,470

where we were told again
to strip all our clothes.

626

00:39:17,470 --> 00:39:21,130

And stark naked, they
shaved our heads off.

627

00:39:21,130 --> 00:39:26,370

They shaved every hair
that you had on your body

628

00:39:26,370 --> 00:39:28,740

and gave us the number.

629

00:39:28,740 --> 00:39:32,460

They tattooed a number
on us because that's

630

00:39:32,460 --> 00:39:34,500

how they dehumanized us.

631

00:39:34,500 --> 00:39:36,310

We stopped being human.

632
00:39:36,310 --> 00:39:39,690
We begin to be a number.

633
00:39:39,690 --> 00:39:45,230
And they started
rationing out clothing.

634
00:39:45,230 --> 00:39:50,810
They put us in front of
piles that people had left.

635
00:39:50,810 --> 00:39:53,660
And they were full of
lice, but they told us

636
00:39:53,660 --> 00:39:57,020
that we had to strip
because we brought in lice.

637
00:39:57,020 --> 00:40:02,270
But here, we picked up clothes
from the dirt, from the ground,

638
00:40:02,270 --> 00:40:03,830
and they were dirty.

639
00:40:03,830 --> 00:40:09,710
If you complained that you
took something that didn't fit,

640
00:40:09,710 --> 00:40:14,150
I was smacked in my
face that my teeth

641
00:40:14,150 --> 00:40:17,330
shook because I
complained my dress was

642
00:40:17,330 --> 00:40:19,430
too tight or too long.

643

00:40:19,430 --> 00:40:24,920

And it was a dress that was made
out of the striped material.

644

00:40:24,920 --> 00:40:30,030

And then you had to put
a number on your sleeve.

645

00:40:30,030 --> 00:40:33,170

It was a white piece
of cloth with a printed

646

00:40:33,170 --> 00:40:37,080

number, the same one
that you had on your arm,

647

00:40:37,080 --> 00:40:40,620

because you covered
the arm and they

648

00:40:40,620 --> 00:40:46,470

had to know who you are when
you entered the so-called work

649

00:40:46,470 --> 00:40:47,610

camp.

650

00:40:47,610 --> 00:40:52,860

But also, in the winter--

651

00:40:52,860 --> 00:40:56,370

I entered the camp,
which was still August.

652

00:40:56,370 --> 00:41:02,840

But when winter came and
we had to have overcoats,

653

00:41:02,840 --> 00:41:07,340

I had to cut out in
the back of my coat

654

00:41:07,340 --> 00:41:12,650

because they didn't have
enough striped clothing.

655
00:41:12,650 --> 00:41:16,400
So they gave us
somebody else's coat

656
00:41:16,400 --> 00:41:19,490
that somebody else
had brought into camp.

657
00:41:19,490 --> 00:41:22,160
And it was from
regular material,

658
00:41:22,160 --> 00:41:28,710
but you had to cut out a
window in the back about 20

659
00:41:28,710 --> 00:41:30,890
by 30 inches.

660
00:41:30,890 --> 00:41:33,960
It practically covered
the whole back.

661
00:41:33,960 --> 00:41:38,280
And you had to patch it
with the striped material,

662
00:41:38,280 --> 00:41:42,690
so that particular
person could never

663
00:41:42,690 --> 00:41:48,790
try to flee from the camp.

664
00:41:48,790 --> 00:41:51,070
And on top of that, you had to--

665
00:41:51,070 --> 00:41:55,210
they put a white
paint across my back,

666
00:41:55,210 --> 00:42:01,550
so that I was definitely marked
not to be able to escape.

667
00:42:01,550 --> 00:42:03,750
I have two questions for you.

668
00:42:03,750 --> 00:42:08,570
The first one is, what was
your very first impression

669
00:42:08,570 --> 00:42:12,960
of Auschwitz when they opened
up the cattle car doors?

670
00:42:12,960 --> 00:42:19,850
Hell, because they
open up and they tell

671
00:42:19,850 --> 00:42:22,310
you to jump down the ground.

672
00:42:22,310 --> 00:42:28,960
And there were Nazis,
Gestapo with dogs,

673
00:42:28,960 --> 00:42:33,090
telling you that you
have to leave everything.

674
00:42:33,090 --> 00:42:39,690
And with one finger, a
young Nazi Gestapo man

675
00:42:39,690 --> 00:42:43,320
would determine whether you're
going to live or to die.

676
00:42:43,320 --> 00:42:46,920
With one finger, he pointed
which direction you had to go.

677

00:42:46,920 --> 00:42:49,110

And I remember at
that time, that's

678

00:42:49,110 --> 00:42:54,210

the last time I saw my uncle
and his grandson, who was,

679

00:42:54,210 --> 00:42:57,120

at the time, six years old.

680

00:42:57,120 --> 00:43:01,470

The little girl
was nine years old.

681

00:43:01,470 --> 00:43:03,750

She went with me because
she was a big girl.

682

00:43:03,750 --> 00:43:06,390

She looked older.

683

00:43:06,390 --> 00:43:09,450

But unfortunately,
I couldn't keep her

684

00:43:09,450 --> 00:43:14,190

too long because she was
taken away soon after.

685

00:43:14,190 --> 00:43:15,300

She couldn't go to work.

686

00:43:15,300 --> 00:43:17,430

She was too young for work.

687

00:43:17,430 --> 00:43:26,850

And I was sent to work in
a hospital zone at first.

688

00:43:26,850 --> 00:43:34,650

And the hospital zone

was really, really awful

689

00:43:34,650 --> 00:43:37,860

because you are in the
middle of Auschwitz

690

00:43:37,860 --> 00:43:45,360

where you see the chimney
smoke and fire rising

691

00:43:45,360 --> 00:43:48,960

every day of the week.

692

00:43:48,960 --> 00:43:51,510

And you smell the flesh
being-- by that time,

693

00:43:51,510 --> 00:43:55,470

you already know that
you came into hell.

694

00:43:55,470 --> 00:44:05,330

And while I was in the hospital
area, I contacted typhoid fever

695

00:44:05,330 --> 00:44:06,390

and I survived.

696

00:44:06,390 --> 00:44:08,100

I don't know how,
I don't know why.

697

00:44:08,100 --> 00:44:09,890

I never had any medication.

698

00:44:09,890 --> 00:44:12,020

I never had an aspirin.

699

00:44:12,020 --> 00:44:13,640

I survived it.

700

00:44:13,640 --> 00:44:19,160

But this was-- don't
forget, Auschwitz consisted

701
00:44:19,160 --> 00:44:26,000
of Birkenau, which I'm talking
about my first few months

702
00:44:26,000 --> 00:44:28,820
of life.

703
00:44:28,820 --> 00:44:33,710
Later on when they transferred
us to work in a munition

704
00:44:33,710 --> 00:44:37,220
factory, we were moved
to the Auschwitz area

705
00:44:37,220 --> 00:44:41,270
where we had brick buildings.

706
00:44:41,270 --> 00:44:45,920
But you have been
to visit Auschwitz,

707
00:44:45,920 --> 00:44:47,970
so you have a slight idea.

708
00:44:47,970 --> 00:44:53,280
You can't possibly
describe what took place.

709
00:44:53,280 --> 00:44:54,715
So let me make
sure I understood.

710
00:44:54,715 --> 00:44:56,090
First, you were
sent to Birkenau,

711
00:44:56,090 --> 00:44:58,190
and later you were
transferred to Lager One.

712
00:44:58,190 --> 00:44:58,910
Auschwitz, yeah.

713
00:44:58,910 --> 00:45:02,600
My other question that I had
was, what is your number?

714
00:45:02,600 --> 00:45:10,120
56,362.

715
00:45:10,120 --> 00:45:13,240
Can you tell me about the
actual living conditions--

716
00:45:13,240 --> 00:45:15,100
where you slept, what you ate.

717
00:45:15,100 --> 00:45:18,130
We were sleeping on planks--

718
00:45:18,130 --> 00:45:24,310
on wooden planks that
were three stories.

719
00:45:24,310 --> 00:45:30,640
And I forgot to tell you, in
the beginning, also in Birkenau,

720
00:45:30,640 --> 00:45:38,890
I developed scabies, which
is the worst skin disease you

721
00:45:38,890 --> 00:45:43,140
can ever, ever experience.

722
00:45:43,140 --> 00:45:45,390
And there was no
medication for it,

723
00:45:45,390 --> 00:45:48,060
and nobody would allow me to

sleep with them because it

724

00:45:48,060 --> 00:45:49,470
was highly contagious.

725

00:45:49,470 --> 00:45:52,470

726

00:45:52,470 --> 00:45:59,450
But some Hungarian inmate,
she was a female doctor,

727

00:45:59,450 --> 00:46:06,250
she said to use your own
urine to wash yourself with,

728

00:46:06,250 --> 00:46:07,970
which I did.

729

00:46:07,970 --> 00:46:11,620
And it helped starting to heal.

730

00:46:11,620 --> 00:46:16,180
I was-- to this day, I
still have a white mark

731

00:46:16,180 --> 00:46:17,830
from one of them.

732

00:46:17,830 --> 00:46:21,910
It is the most horrible
itching disease.

733

00:46:21,910 --> 00:46:23,950
I don't wish it on anybody.

734

00:46:23,950 --> 00:46:28,270
It's only where it's moisture--

735

00:46:28,270 --> 00:46:33,160
in the wrists, under the
arms, near the groin.

736
00:46:33,160 --> 00:46:34,930
It is the worst--

737
00:46:34,930 --> 00:46:36,880
the worst.

738
00:46:36,880 --> 00:46:38,740
And I survived,
I don't know how.

739
00:46:38,740 --> 00:46:41,750

740
00:46:41,750 --> 00:46:49,790
I also would like to mention a
terrible, terrible experience

741
00:46:49,790 --> 00:46:55,370
where they get at us one
rainy, miserable, cold day

742
00:46:55,370 --> 00:47:02,450
and told us we're going
back to the camp for a show.

743
00:47:02,450 --> 00:47:08,840
What they did is they
captured a young woman who

744
00:47:08,840 --> 00:47:14,000
dared to escape, and she
was out for two weeks.

745
00:47:14,000 --> 00:47:17,210
She was out in the freedom.

746
00:47:17,210 --> 00:47:24,050
She and a male inmate, who was--
she was a girl from Belgium.

747
00:47:24,050 --> 00:47:27,410

Her name was Marla.

748
00:47:27,410 --> 00:47:31,700
And the reason she
was able to escape,

749
00:47:31,700 --> 00:47:38,690
she was somebody that is
sent around from one camp

750
00:47:38,690 --> 00:47:39,530
to the other.

751
00:47:39,530 --> 00:47:40,550
What do you call it?

752
00:47:40,550 --> 00:47:41,540
A Laufer

753
00:47:41,540 --> 00:47:44,120
A Laufer, that's a German word.

754
00:47:44,120 --> 00:47:46,220
What do you call
it in an English?

755
00:47:46,220 --> 00:47:49,580

756
00:47:49,580 --> 00:47:50,340
A messenger?

757
00:47:50,340 --> 00:47:51,930
Messenger.

758
00:47:51,930 --> 00:47:54,210
That's the word, a messenger.

759
00:47:54,210 --> 00:48:01,350
And she had been very well liked
by the Gestapo authorities.

760

00:48:01,350 --> 00:48:07,710

Because she was a
messenger, she was speaking

761

00:48:07,710 --> 00:48:08,910

two or three languages.

762

00:48:08,910 --> 00:48:13,170

She was speaking French,
she was speaking German.

763

00:48:13,170 --> 00:48:22,540

Somehow she was able to get
a female guard's uniform.

764

00:48:22,540 --> 00:48:29,570

And the male guard with
her was able to escape.

765

00:48:29,570 --> 00:48:31,850

For two weeks, they
were out in freedom.

766

00:48:31,850 --> 00:48:33,410

And they got caught.

767

00:48:33,410 --> 00:48:37,460

When they got caught, they
were brought back to Auschwitz.

768

00:48:37,460 --> 00:48:40,070

And we were told that we
were going to see a show,

769

00:48:40,070 --> 00:48:42,740

but they actually
brought them back

770

00:48:42,740 --> 00:48:48,430

to hang them in
front of all of us.

771

00:48:48,430 --> 00:48:53,950

And the tragedy is that she
is-- she didn't survive,

772

00:48:53,950 --> 00:48:58,000

but I'll never know
who passed her.

773

00:48:58,000 --> 00:49:00,310

We didn't know it at the time.

774

00:49:00,310 --> 00:49:07,900

Somebody managed to get
a razor blade to her

775

00:49:07,900 --> 00:49:12,160

and she cut both her
wrists, which prevented them

776

00:49:12,160 --> 00:49:14,470

from hanging her because she
was dead before they were

777

00:49:14,470 --> 00:49:18,700

going to perform the hanging.

778

00:49:18,700 --> 00:49:24,870

And then they put her
body on a wheelbarrow

779

00:49:24,870 --> 00:49:30,360

and made the inmates
push her around among us

780

00:49:30,360 --> 00:49:34,710

to show what escape
can do to a person,

781

00:49:34,710 --> 00:49:37,660

that a person is being
killed because of escape.

782

00:49:37,660 --> 00:49:39,480

We wouldn't dare to escape.

783

00:49:39,480 --> 00:49:47,130

And the male-- the man that
she ran away with did get hung.

784

00:49:47,130 --> 00:49:50,160

He was hanged, unfortunately.

785

00:49:50,160 --> 00:49:52,230

So go ahead.

786

00:49:52,230 --> 00:49:55,500

Do you have any idea
when that execution was?

787

00:49:55,500 --> 00:50:02,730

788

00:50:02,730 --> 00:50:11,440

Sometime in early
'44, maybe late '43--

789

00:50:11,440 --> 00:50:14,650

no, it was early '44, I think.

790

00:50:14,650 --> 00:50:17,500

In Birkenau?

791

00:50:17,500 --> 00:50:21,810

History books have
it all written.

792

00:50:21,810 --> 00:50:25,610

I saw it myself, yes.

793

00:50:25,610 --> 00:50:26,700

In Birkenau?

794

00:50:26,700 --> 00:50:27,200

Yes.

795

00:50:27,200 --> 00:50:30,950

796

00:50:30,950 --> 00:50:33,410

That's something
you never forget--

797

00:50:33,410 --> 00:50:33,950

never.

798

00:50:33,950 --> 00:50:36,170

And you can't describe it.

799

00:50:36,170 --> 00:50:38,360

You would like to
open your heart

800

00:50:38,360 --> 00:50:42,590

and tell you all
what a horror it was,

801

00:50:42,590 --> 00:50:44,450

but you can't describe it.

802

00:50:44,450 --> 00:50:51,730

803

00:50:51,730 --> 00:50:55,060

I wanted to ask if you had
witnessed any other suicides

804

00:50:55,060 --> 00:50:56,920

or executions while
you were in Birkenau.

805

00:50:56,920 --> 00:51:03,370

Yes, I saw a woman
go in desperation

806

00:51:03,370 --> 00:51:06,010

through the barbed wire.

807

00:51:06,010 --> 00:51:07,870

She touched it.

808

00:51:07,870 --> 00:51:13,840

And a guard shot her while she
was trying to kill herself.

809

00:51:13,840 --> 00:51:19,030

The guard spotted her and
killed her with a gunshot.

810

00:51:19,030 --> 00:51:22,960

But she apparently
was so desperate,

811

00:51:22,960 --> 00:51:24,770

she didn't want to go through.

812

00:51:24,770 --> 00:51:29,260

She had lost two children and
a husband and her parents.

813

00:51:29,260 --> 00:51:31,870

And she was absolutely--

814

00:51:31,870 --> 00:51:33,085

she didn't want to survive.

815

00:51:33,085 --> 00:51:39,908

816

00:51:39,908 --> 00:51:40,900

[INAUDIBLE]

817

00:51:40,900 --> 00:51:48,360

818

00:51:48,360 --> 00:51:50,840

I wanted you to take a moment
and tell me a little bit more

819

00:51:50,840 --> 00:51:54,530
about the work that you
did in the hospital zone.

820
00:51:54,530 --> 00:52:02,010
Well, I tried to be with the
patients who were very ill.

821
00:52:02,010 --> 00:52:08,660
That was before they were
sent away to the gas chambers.

822
00:52:08,660 --> 00:52:11,750
Some of them-- very few--

823
00:52:11,750 --> 00:52:12,650
survived.

824
00:52:12,650 --> 00:52:17,930
But I helped them wash them
up and bring them the food--

825
00:52:17,930 --> 00:52:20,720
the rationed food that we had.

826
00:52:20,720 --> 00:52:23,870
One woman, in particular,
I'll never forget.

827
00:52:23,870 --> 00:52:30,890
She was really
eaten up by vermin.

828
00:52:30,890 --> 00:52:32,000
She was eaten up.

829
00:52:32,000 --> 00:52:35,570
Her flesh was-- oh, it was
the most horrible sight

830
00:52:35,570 --> 00:52:36,530
I have ever seen.

831

00:52:36,530 --> 00:52:39,900

And she was begging to die.

832

00:52:39,900 --> 00:52:41,750

She was finally sent away--

833

00:52:41,750 --> 00:52:45,650

still alive-- to the ovens.

834

00:52:45,650 --> 00:52:51,800

And I myself got sick with,
as I said, typhoid fever,

835

00:52:51,800 --> 00:52:53,060

but I survived.

836

00:52:53,060 --> 00:52:57,710

I don't understand
how, but I survived.

837

00:52:57,710 --> 00:53:02,330

You saw people with pneumonia,
people with cholera.

838

00:53:02,330 --> 00:53:05,150

839

00:53:05,150 --> 00:53:09,780

That's a horrible thing.

840

00:53:09,780 --> 00:53:15,360

People-- when they had cholera,
it was so highly contagious.

841

00:53:15,360 --> 00:53:18,330

They couldn't hold
back the diarrhea.

842

00:53:18,330 --> 00:53:22,780

That was awful.

843

00:53:22,780 --> 00:53:25,210
And we could not--

844
00:53:25,210 --> 00:53:30,790
we did not have a bathroom
in our own building.

845
00:53:30,790 --> 00:53:36,140
It was a wooden stable.

846
00:53:36,140 --> 00:53:39,200
They called it that this stable
holds a thousand horses was

847
00:53:39,200 --> 00:53:40,650
written on the doors.

848
00:53:40,650 --> 00:53:43,790
We lived in stables.

849
00:53:43,790 --> 00:53:51,410
But we had to go out of that
building, go to another one,

850
00:53:51,410 --> 00:53:57,110
to use the bathroom or use the
washroom to wash ourselves up.

851
00:53:57,110 --> 00:54:00,230

852
00:54:00,230 --> 00:54:05,820
Conditions were so inhuman
that when I think back,

853
00:54:05,820 --> 00:54:08,990
I can't believe
that I survived it.

854
00:54:08,990 --> 00:54:11,570
But I guess when
you're young, you can

855

00:54:11,570 --> 00:54:13,385
survive more than you realize.

856

00:54:13,385 --> 00:54:18,180

857

00:54:18,180 --> 00:54:21,840
The bathroom
facilities, they were--

858

00:54:21,840 --> 00:54:27,510
the male camp used to be
responsible for cleaning out

859

00:54:27,510 --> 00:54:31,290
the latrines with
their bare hands.

860

00:54:31,290 --> 00:54:34,500
I know it because my
husband used to tell me.

861

00:54:34,500 --> 00:54:39,630
He was, himself, a survivor
of Auschwitz and Buchenwald.

862

00:54:39,630 --> 00:54:44,910
And he used to talk about it how
he had to, with his bare hands,

863

00:54:44,910 --> 00:54:46,425
clean out the latrines.

864

00:54:46,425 --> 00:54:49,610

865

00:54:49,610 --> 00:55:03,470
And people were dying like
flies from malnutrition,

866

00:55:03,470 --> 00:55:11,870
from hunger, from not being able

to get any proper medical care.

867

00:55:11,870 --> 00:55:15,050

We didn't have any aspirins.

868

00:55:15,050 --> 00:55:20,420

If we had fever, we still had
to go out and work in order

869

00:55:20,420 --> 00:55:23,360

to hide our sickness.

870

00:55:23,360 --> 00:55:28,760

And that's when people got
pneumonia and got worse,

871

00:55:28,760 --> 00:55:33,890

because the winter is
so cruel in Poland.

872

00:55:33,890 --> 00:55:37,130

Don't forget, this was
on the Polish territory--

873

00:55:37,130 --> 00:55:37,880

Auschwitz.

874

00:55:37,880 --> 00:55:41,000

They had apparently
hundreds of camps.

875

00:55:41,000 --> 00:55:41,720

They had Dachau.

876

00:55:41,720 --> 00:55:44,630

They had Ravensbruck.

877

00:55:44,630 --> 00:55:50,900

They had hundreds of them, but
I think Auschwitz was the worst.

878

00:55:50,900 --> 00:55:57,580

879
00:55:57,580 --> 00:56:01,180
Was there any camaraderie
among the prisoners?

880
00:56:01,180 --> 00:56:02,990
Did you have any companion?

881
00:56:02,990 --> 00:56:05,110
Yes, yes.

882
00:56:05,110 --> 00:56:13,500
I sort of-- there was somebody
who we slept together.

883
00:56:13,500 --> 00:56:15,630
We ate together.

884
00:56:15,630 --> 00:56:21,980
We kept ourselves-- yes,
we did, because, otherwise,

885
00:56:21,980 --> 00:56:23,870
how could you survive?

886
00:56:23,870 --> 00:56:26,180
If it wouldn't be
for my friend--

887
00:56:26,180 --> 00:56:30,560
I was selected once--
with my skin disease,

888
00:56:30,560 --> 00:56:33,380
I was selected to
go to the ovens.

889
00:56:33,380 --> 00:56:37,820
And my friend saved my
life by simply noticing

890

00:56:37,820 --> 00:56:43,890
that the Nazi Gestapo
men turned away,

891
00:56:43,890 --> 00:56:46,110
and she pulled me
over to her side.

892
00:56:46,110 --> 00:56:51,000
They selected us
almost daily if they,

893
00:56:51,000 --> 00:56:56,910
as I said before, when, on
the front, they were losing.

894
00:56:56,910 --> 00:57:01,530
I believe that was during
the Russian situation,

895
00:57:01,530 --> 00:57:04,950
when they tried to enter
Russia and they couldn't.

896
00:57:04,950 --> 00:57:07,950
That's when they took out on us.

897
00:57:07,950 --> 00:57:11,010
They were coming in and
sending in new transports

898
00:57:11,010 --> 00:57:16,290
from Hungary, from Romania
in the end of the '44

899
00:57:16,290 --> 00:57:18,660
and had to make room
for the newcomers,

900
00:57:18,660 --> 00:57:19,920
for the new transports.

901
00:57:19,920 --> 00:57:22,290

So they sent us away.

902
00:57:22,290 --> 00:57:25,140
But somehow, I'm here.

903
00:57:25,140 --> 00:57:26,430
I don't know.

904
00:57:26,430 --> 00:57:30,060
Fate had, apparently,
a lot to do with it.

905
00:57:30,060 --> 00:57:34,480

906
00:57:34,480 --> 00:57:37,300
Tell me about the other work
that you did in the camps.

907
00:57:37,300 --> 00:57:42,550
In munition factory,
we were selecting--

908
00:57:42,550 --> 00:57:46,150
apparently, they were
parts of hand grenades.

909
00:57:46,150 --> 00:57:49,360
We didn't know what
these parts were.

910
00:57:49,360 --> 00:57:54,010
But we had-- we sat around.

911
00:57:54,010 --> 00:57:57,250
It was a three shift job.

912
00:57:57,250 --> 00:58:00,260
I could never, never
survive the night shift.

913
00:58:00,260 --> 00:58:02,350

I was always so sleepy.

914
00:58:02,350 --> 00:58:06,370
And we had little,
tiny parts that we

915
00:58:06,370 --> 00:58:10,150
were told that was
part of a hand grenade.

916
00:58:10,150 --> 00:58:13,780
They were going to another
camp to be assembled.

917
00:58:13,780 --> 00:58:16,540
We had-- they manufactured
them in one place,

918
00:58:16,540 --> 00:58:20,140
and they selected them
and sorted them out.

919
00:58:20,140 --> 00:58:24,640
And they kept us busy with
whatever they could in order

920
00:58:24,640 --> 00:58:30,610
to wear us out,
starve us to death,

921
00:58:30,610 --> 00:58:33,820
send the others in,
and get rid of us.

922
00:58:33,820 --> 00:58:38,240
But that's what I
did, just handwork.

923
00:58:38,240 --> 00:58:41,030
And one night-- it
was in the spring

924
00:58:41,030 --> 00:58:46,110

when the bombing was
during the daytime.

925
00:58:46,110 --> 00:58:49,830
They bombed during the daytime.

926
00:58:49,830 --> 00:58:51,030
I tried to--

927
00:58:51,030 --> 00:58:54,000
I was so scared when
the bombs were arriving.

928
00:58:54,000 --> 00:58:55,620
You heard those heavy--

929
00:58:55,620 --> 00:58:57,915
to this day, I don't like
the sound of the airplane.

930
00:58:57,915 --> 00:59:00,750

931
00:59:00,750 --> 00:59:04,330
We hid under the table because
we were working on the outside.

932
00:59:04,330 --> 00:59:06,990
Now how stupid can you be
to hide under the table?

933
00:59:06,990 --> 00:59:09,960
If a bomb would fall, we would
be killed no matter what.

934
00:59:09,960 --> 00:59:15,090
But that's how you
intuitively ran for life.

935
00:59:15,090 --> 00:59:17,595
You were trying to
hide no matter what.

936

00:59:17,595 --> 00:59:20,710

937

00:59:20,710 --> 00:59:25,090

And then when the bombs
fell someplace else,

938

00:59:25,090 --> 00:59:29,020

we were returning to
work, back to work.

939

00:59:29,020 --> 00:59:32,470

They were fussing, fighting,
yelling at us that we

940

00:59:32,470 --> 00:59:33,630

had no right to be hiding.

941

00:59:33,630 --> 00:59:36,560

942

00:59:36,560 --> 00:59:39,350

It was sheer hell.

943

00:59:39,350 --> 00:59:43,310

In every instant of life
in camp, it was hell.

944

00:59:43,310 --> 00:59:48,880

945

00:59:48,880 --> 00:59:51,400

You mentioned that you could
tell when the war effort was

946

00:59:51,400 --> 00:59:54,550

not going well because the
Germans treated you differently

947

00:59:54,550 --> 00:59:55,900

when they were losing.

948

00:59:55,900 --> 01:00:00,520

Did you have any other
kind of information

949

01:00:00,520 --> 01:00:01,760

from the outside world?

950

01:00:01,760 --> 01:00:04,570

No, no, no.

951

01:00:04,570 --> 01:00:07,560

952

01:00:07,560 --> 01:00:10,650

So you had no contact with any--

953

01:00:10,650 --> 01:00:16,910

For instance, when the Warsaw
Ghetto uprising took place--

954

01:00:16,910 --> 01:00:23,570

uprising-- we didn't know
until some of the people

955

01:00:23,570 --> 01:00:26,210

were arriving to the camp.

956

01:00:26,210 --> 01:00:31,550

That's when they told us that
there was a ghetto uprising

957

01:00:31,550 --> 01:00:34,100

and that so many
people were killed.

958

01:00:34,100 --> 01:00:38,060

And those that were alive,
they sent them to Auschwitz.

959

01:00:38,060 --> 01:00:41,360

That's when we learned about it.

960

01:00:41,360 --> 01:00:43,700

Do you remember
what they told you?

961

01:00:43,700 --> 01:00:48,940

That was what you have
read in your history books,

962

01:00:48,940 --> 01:00:52,420

that the people were
dying in the sewers.

963

01:00:52,420 --> 01:00:58,240

They were trying to survive,
and they were dying one by one.

964

01:00:58,240 --> 01:01:07,600

And it was horrible when the
Germans raided the ghetto

965

01:01:07,600 --> 01:01:09,250

and when they
caught somebody who

966

01:01:09,250 --> 01:01:13,750

was trying to steal something
from the other person.

967

01:01:13,750 --> 01:01:19,540

It was unbelievable what
took place in the ghettos.

968

01:01:19,540 --> 01:01:26,320

The people who have survived--
and few of them did--

969

01:01:26,320 --> 01:01:32,980

wrote in their live's history
that it was absolutely awful.

970

01:01:32,980 --> 01:01:35,770

It was awful.

971

01:01:35,770 --> 01:01:38,610

I'm going to stop you
now and flip the tape.

972

01:01:38,610 --> 01:01:40,000