

Now. OK.

OK. The we see that--

[BACKGROUND NOISE]

There everybody was--

They doubled up in the towns, all the farmers and all the people living in a small town around any city. So we had people from everywhere. And a lot of the refugees remained from when there was escape from their towns and cities. They never got back and remained over there. It was a pretty good, large, good large population at that time.

And all the schools was closed up, was no education whatsoever. The Gentile and the Jews had no education, the children. And there was no prayer houses. Anybody want to pray, we had to pray hidden somewhere in somebody's private house.

And we had occasion where one time, on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, when the Jewish people pray for forgiveness for all their sins from that, from the years, and the pray for new hope, for new year, most Jewish people, that they fast and they try to say some kind of prayer. And the Jewish people tried to get it in harm's way, before the Germans occupied the town. We hide our Torahs from the shuls. In which house was a Torah was a gathering, and that was a prayer house.

And unfortunately, we find out that the Nazis come into town, everybody tried to run. Some of the praying houses in the private homes got caught in the prayer. The broke in, and the shot the whole lot of people, the one was gather together on Kiddush HaShem, in the white, in their shawls, with their prayer books in their hand, got shot. And there was a very bad occasion.

In this way the Jewish people had to pray all the time, since '39 to the liquidation. And the Jewish children couldn't get an education. And it was terrible.

(WHISPERING) Stop it now.

In '42, the Germans was already set up for liquidation of the Jews, to start emptying the ghettos and sending them to Auschwitz, Majdanek, Treblinka. You will hear all about it. And the liquidate the larger cities and the ghettos first. And the rest, the youngsters, some of youngsters they shipped out and saved them and send them to labor camps. And we had a labor camp 15 miles from Radomysl in Mielec, and was an airplane factory over there. And the camp started with liquidation of Mielec, with the population, the one, the camp was, where the airplane factory was, with protection and buying off and paying the Nazis big money to let establish them labor camps.

The first camp established over there was Mielec, a labor camps, where you could buy yourself for money. And I heard there was 200 people from Mielec got in them camp, and they worked in the [INAUDIBLE]. And the condition was not too bad. They allowed them to take their clothes and underwear and towels and a little bit something to eat when they was leaving. They put them in the camps. And the people volunteers to this because they hear that they're going to get liquidated. They get killed. So they went voluntarily over there to them camps.

And that camp-- the camp was established between then annihilation of Mielec and Radomysl was almost a year. I say maybe eight months.

Eight months till it took to annihilate--

Till it took to Radomysl, the people in Radomysl. And they saw before they liquidated Radomysl, we had the same chance, through the Judenrate and through the people, the Gestapo worked. And they let some of the--

So the young men?

Yeah-- let the police, the one who worked for them. That means the Judenrate and the Jewish police, see they organized a Judenrate, which they give the orders to do all the work they needed, to carry out the orders through them. So some of them they try. They did a good job. So they tried to save him in some of them Judenrate. So they tried to save them and send them to the camps. Or at the same time, they was going to send a truck with 25 people. And who was-- who was friends with him or who they know, they want to help. For money, you could leave.

So my father find out the Judenrate come to Radomysl from Mielec. And my father was from Mielec. And there was trains for the war. And he find out that it's going to be safe, a few people, the last people leaving the town.

So on Saturday-- I can't remember what day it was in Polish calendar. I remember it was Saturday, the fourth day of Jewish month of Av, before Tisha B'av, before we celebrate-- before we observe the destruction of the temple. In other words, it was the fourth of the Av because that was a Saturday. Thursday was Tisha B'av, so I remember the day.

So I remember, my father told me then, he can go to that labor camp.

That your father could go.

He could go, and he could take who he wants with him because the friend told him he let him go on the truck. So he told me about it to my brother. And I was-- 42-- I was 21 years old, and my brother was 19. My name was Max, but his name was Moishe. So he took us to the truck and put us on over there where the truck was parked. It was on the property from the Judenrate, was in that place.

So they took you to a labor camp.

So we got on the truck. Or one of them, people from the Judenrate, and one of the chief police of them Jewish police in the town, told me then I could take up a friend's if I went with me. So I went and got the neighbors. And I told them, I says, if you got a little bit money, you might could get to that camp. So one bought me 1700 zlotys. And I put him on the truck.

And I was going to give the money to him for this man. He says, keep it. Didn't want it. Says it's not going to do me any good. It's not doing you any good because when we get to camps they're going to take it away anyway. He said keep it. And I remember, the only thing I grab in home, everybody was crying. It's the last time I left my mother and my-- my mother and the children, the home. And my father was by the truck.

We was leaving. Here and I wanted to go. He could go. He had this-- he had my brother, 13 years old. His name was Shalom. He was a scholar. He was very bright. And he was so good and Talmud and everything. He was very educated he was really a genius. And he says, do you want to take Shalom with you? I says, no, let Shalom worry with you.

Oh, you're leaving. I better make it short.

No. No. No. I just want to make sure--

So I told him then, I can't take him because he's got to be 17 or 18 year old. They don't let nobody younger go to labor camps. If I take him over there, they'll going to kill him. And they're going to be shot. So we just left. It was 20-- the last 25 people live in this town. And so, soon we left.

I heard beating, and kicking, and screaming, and how they really start beating the people over there. They know that they're going to kill it. Oh. While we--

Did your father go with you?

No.

No. He decided not to.

He decided to stay with my younger brothers and sisters and with his wife and the children. What is going to happen with all of them is going to happen with him. So he no went with me. And I told him, let Shalom be with you. Shalom means peace. So I left him with him. And we left.

Next day, we find-- we know it. We find out right in the camp what has happened, next day, because they start rounding up the people in our town. They was going to make it judenfrei, free from Jews. The story was like that. One of my friends was in the selection, when they was taken out. Sunday morning, they give an ordinance that all the Jews got to come out from the house. And they can take around 50-- small-- just something to eat.

You know, everybody tried to grab something. Everybody bought a suitcase and brought it downtown. And everybody got together in the marketplace. And so over there it was already lined up, horse buggies. They give orders in the farms and in the small towns, what you call in the farm towns, to come in. The transportation-- see, there was orders.

They had to do what the German government told them. They don't got paid for that. There was a forced labor. They come in, and there was horse buggies sitting all over, everywhere. And the SS was over there, was black troops with the killing troops, from the SS, and the Polish police. The Polish police worked with them because you had to report, the police, to your duty, just like it was the person. And who no reported to duty had to go in hiding because it was a death sentence. So they were in hiding.

That's right.

So the Polish police worked with the Gestapo and the SS together. And they start make selections. They took some people this way and some people that way. The older people, they took and they put them on the buggies and sent to the cemetery. While they went to the cemetery, was already set up machine guns. And they digged-- the first people digged large graves. And they told them to take off their clothes and get closest to the graves. And they had to kneel down. They got shot down.

One of the friends jumped in alive. And later in the night, while-- and they left in the night, and they start that in the morning can get. So he got out of the grave alive between the dead. He jumped in alive before he got shot. So he got some clothes and run off. And he run in the woods. And he was hidden.

He was in the woods maybe about two months. And later they had a selection on the woods. He got caught. So they brought him to our camp. And he told me that he saw my mother--

So he saw everything.

--and my father been picked out to take to the cemetery. Or the chief of police was very good friend of ours, the Polish chief of police. So he went and took off my father and mother from the buggies and they put them to the other side, over there, the transport. They was going to send them people out of town. We didn't know it. We thought they might send them to labor camps. Or they have been sent not to labor camps. They been sent to RzeszÃ³w.

Which was what, a--

Was [GERMAN] was like Auschwitz, like Treblinka, was a gas chamber.

It was a death camp.

A death camp, dead camp. So they the sending them up with another street with the buggies to Debica. We didn't have no railroad station in the town. And the closest railway station from our town was around seven miles. And from over there, they loaded them up in cars, in the railroad carts, transportation cars. And they send them to Debica. And on Debica, when they come over there, he said then, when they were sending out to people, we brought off Gentile Poles to

go see where they've been taken.

So they come back. They come back. They've been paid for it. And they find out that's where they're going. So that's what he knew what happened. And when he went back in the night-- and he was sent out the first day. The second day he come out again, and they're not still not selected. The third day, he been selected and sent the same way, to Debica.

On the way to Debica, escaped.

Oh, so he was one of the--

So he is the one told.

--told you everything.

So, when later, he come to my camp, and that's what he told, what all everything went-- go through. They took the older people and young children. They took right to the cemetery and shot them down. And the middle age they send out to Debica.

Some of them survived, runned away, or been sent-- the youngsters been sent into other labor camps. Or more 90% of them went to the gas chambers.

Now your brother Shalom, did he go to a labor camp? Or he went--

He went with my parents. So he went with my parents. The youngest went to the cemetery.

All right, when I was in the camp, we got a-- from the beginning when I come in, was 200 people in the labor camp. And it was not too bad. The feed's pretty good. And we had facilities. And we had our beds. And we had blocks. It was not too bad in labor camps.

Later, when they start liquidating the Jews, they make-- they turned it into concentration camps. And they start to bring people from all ghettos and from different cities, from Warsaw, from L^Adz, from the Warsaw ghetto. The brought people over there. In no time, was 12,000 people over there. And in a short time, from '42 to '40-- from 42-- that camp start '41. From '41 to '44, 12,000 people got shot, killed in that camp.

In that one camp alone.

Yeah. While we was in camp as a labor camp, we had a doctor. We could get-- if something happened, we could get medical help. Later, they killed the doctor, and they turned it a concentration camp. And everybody got hurt, got shot.

And they was making selections every week and every day. They was taking out people looked bad or something. Or if they had a grudged on the Jews, they had a selection. Anytime the Gestapo want to have a festival, a good time, they come in for hunting to get the Jews. They got 10, 15, 20 Jews, took them out, put them on a great big buggy himself and pulled it. They were sitting on the buggy. And they had a special squadron over there, four or five people. They ran those [INAUDIBLE] by enemy and bring back the equipment.

And they shot them down. And the people, the one bury them come back. And a lot of times, they took people, and they shot them down and nobody come back. Maybe just one come back with equipment.

You and your brother were still working on the airplane factory.

Me and my brother was still in the airplane factory. We got by. We was working with people outside, with Gentile outside the camp. They come in for labor works. There was Gentiles. And we always bought something or sold something. We was dealing.

There was clothes over there brought from the big crematorias. And the clothes, they was give us to wear to work in it. And we always find some kind of money, some kind of gold, some kind of rings. We always got a loaf of bread. We used to deal and wheel. And the Gentile brought us something.

They no could bring it big quantities. They bought it in a slice in a quarter. And we used to getting by. Or in '44, when the Russian frontier got pretty close, they evacuated us. And when they evacuated us, was only 4,000 left. They load us in cars. And you know, they put in no-- no water, no bread.

They packed in people, 200 people maybe in one car. The little window in the car was wired up with barbed wire. They had guards on the roofs and on the side of the cars, machine guns. And they took us to Auschwitz. No, they took us to Flossenburg. No-- to Flossenburg, they took us to Flossenburg.

That was a salt mine, a time from Poles. And they had people over there before, turned it into airplane factories. And they had set up already machinery to build airplanes. And they bought us as airplane specialists--

Because you were specialists, yes.

--and workers, to work over there. When we got in over there, we only was a week over there. The frontier got closer, and they had to evacuate us again. Or then they had no plans for us. They was go in the [INAUDIBLE]. They was going to send us to Auschwitz. And they no put no water and no bread in. They packed us in again, into the capacity, one by one.

We had to stand up. There was no way to breathe, one on top of another. And everybody said the last prayer. And everybody cried. And they could say that was the last prayer because we know we're going to Auschwitz. When we come they said a trip, it could take four hours. It took almost three days. And half of the people--

Died in the--

--died. And then we were sitting on the dead and praying. That's all we could do. So when we got to Auschwitz, we pulled up just in front of the camp. It was railroad lines over there. And we stopped over there. Some kind of miracle happened. And they got an order to send us to a airplane factory somewhere.

So instead of taking us into Auschwitz, they told us to ship it off.

How many of you were there?

All right, there was 4,000 people or maybe-- I say maybe about 800 or 900 was already dead. So they took out the dead, put in water and bread, and shipped us out, shipped us out to Flossenburg, to Bayern, Bayern, Flossenburg. And that was in the mountains. Before the war, used to be Malmo. Malmo is marble, marble mountains.

And they was making-- people make statues of it in Polish time. They was making monuments.

Oh, from the marble.

From the marble. And in time from the Germans, they used all that just to get the stone and built highways. They built mills to ground that stone. I don't know how you call. Is it a mill, what you ground stone? What you call it? Quarries.

Quarries, the stone quarries.

Stone quarries. And they brought refugees. They brought Jewish people over there.

To work.

Yeah. And they blow up in the mountains, the mountains. And the Jewish people had to carry the big rocks and big

stones.

This is only men, wasn't it?

Men, men. It was men. Or they had-- and we had to carry them stone. It was about 500 steps to go on the mountain. And you had to go down with them rocks, one by the other. And the people was wore out, sick, skinny. And they drop the stone one from another. I say every day was maybe about 300 or 400 dead, just from the rocks, got killed going up and down.

I was lucky then. I was only one time on the trip over there that day. And they picked me up. They had, in the same camp, airplane factory, Messerschmitt airplane. The camp when I was in Mielec was a Heinkel Werk. They was building transport airplanes and big airplanes. And they had to repair the airplanes for fighters, the one got damaged in the war. And they brought them over there, and we repaired them, build them over and send them out.

This camp was a Messerschmitt airplane factory. Was fighter airplane. And they picked out all the people that worked in the airplane factory. It took them a while to get all the people lined up, which was which because we got some other people beside airplane workers. So they put us in the airplane factories. And they put them in the airplane factories.

So you got to work in the airplane--

So I got in in the airplane factory. Was not so bad. Then I had to drive us because we did precision work. When it could be driven, we had to do the work right. So they left us alone. We just go to work. We go to work and come back to work. The rations was awful bad. Was only-- was eight pieces of-- was eight portions of one-- the loaf of bread was weighing, I say, about 2 pounds, one kilo. And eight people got that for 24 hours, for 24 hours.

That's all you got.

And that's what we received when we come back from work, and a little bit coffee. And sometimes we got soup made of the left, the scraps and the peelings from the German officers. They took all the greens and all the peelings and they brought to our camps and made soup of it, throwed a little bit salt in it. And the people used to swell up. They ate that stuff, and they swell up. And they had the diarrhea. It was terrible.

So that's what was our-- that's what we got to eat. So it don't last long. The front is start to getting close again. And they had to move us again. So they decided to remove us form Flossenburg to Leitmeritz. Flossenburg was in Bayern, Germany. They moved us to Sudetengebiet. That was on the river Elbe, near Dresden. And over there before war, the camp was formed then the barracks and headquarters from the Polish army, the cavalry from Polish army used to have that before the war for their headquarters. And they made the concentration camp of it.

And we had to build buildings, what the Germans needed, and all kinds of fortifications and different works for the German government. And they put us to building work outside. It was very cold in the wintertime. Was in the winter. Maybe it was about 19 to 20 degree below zero. And we had to work in the uniforms, just like pajamas, with striped blue and white stripes. And that's all clothes we had.

And we had to get up very early in the morning. It was real dark. And we had to form in lines. And we had to be counted before we went out, took maybe about two hours to get lined up just to be counted. Every day they count on us, when we come in, when we go out, or nobody escaped, anybody escaped. And that was a torture to stay in that cold and shiver. And some people were so weak, they died. They had heart attacks. They fall down in the snow.

And so and in the morning, we had to travel by open coal-- open cars, iron cars. And it was so cold, we was freezing to death. And the conditions were so bad. They never stopped the train to still. They just breaked it down. And the train was still moving. We had to jump. And people were sick.

They're not equipped to it. They fall. They break their legs. They break their hands. And when this happened, they got shot. They never made it.

I remember one day, when I jumped, I sprained my ankle. That even I not feel so well. I feeled all right, and I received my bread because you received your bread when you come in from work. And they had to rest, the next day the same time. And if you received the bread, you had to go to work. Or if you were sick, you got to refuse the bread. Because if you use the bread, you had to work for it. If not, they shot you for it. It was sabotage.

And I received my bread. My leg was not bad yet. And when I lay down the night, I had-- our quarters where were sleeping was a great big block. The beds was made like shelves, three stories, no straw. The straw was already gone before first we got there. Was a little bit straw. We had blankets.

The people were sick. They had diarrhea. They had-- they not could hold their water. People was going-- we're supposed to go to use the bathroom in a barrel right the middle of the block. People were scared to go to the barrels, where they was filled with that water where the people went in it because cops watch for opportunities for somebody looks bad. They grab them by the feet and stuck them in that water and drown them and throw them on the pile where the dead people was piled up, where they been laid. They're hauled away to the crematorium, burn them up.

So and the people were sick. In a short while, all the blankets was covered, stiff, hard, smelling, lousy. People had no change, no clothes. We had no facilities to wash. We had to washroom where it was a great old big-- made a line with a trough.

Like a latrine.

No latrine. It was latrines and it was piped in a pipe with little holes in the pipe. And cold water was coming out. And they had a trough. We washed into it, where the water went out, the sewage. So if you go wash over there, who was well took the shirt off and tried to wash it try to keep clean.

I did. My brother did. We tried to survive. We tried to help each other. So we organized something to eat with it. We had people helped us, come in from the outside and help us. We always made something. We no really starved there. Though some people had bad. It just who had what kind of luck.

So one time, when I went in in the latrine and washed around and just walked out, runned out, here comes a whole guard of police and SS and cops. The one cops from the camp, the one did all the jobs for the Germans. They was prisoners from before, before the war. They was Nazis.

Kapos.

The kapos. And they had great old big pipes and cables. They closed the doors up. And who-- and the people trapped over there. They start to beat. They took the clothes off and slaughtered them all down on the floor. The blood was flowing. Was terrible. The screams and the hollers was going all over the camp.

When I was running away, I heard them screams. And I was only three blocks living from this. And I was scared to run to the fourth block. I runned in in there. Was friends what they come to me-- with me to my town, to this camp, through all other camps, survivors. And I got to their bed. And over there was sitting two rabbis from our town, very religious. I was very religious before. And when I got in, I lost the faith.

I come in, and they heard the screams and the hollers. And I ask him. I tell you, I ask you something. Where's God? Where is God? Where is a god if this can happen? So the answer was, when the devil is loose, when God let the angel of death lose, nobody has control. The best thing is who hides, get out of it. That was my answer.

And you hid.

So--

And you hid.

Yeah. And I hid. This was in Gusen 1. That was in the last camp, I think. That was in Mauthausen. Which camp was this, when I was telling?

This was the one in the mountains, in Sudeten.

In Sudetengebiet. Yeah. So if it's Sudetengebiet, they send us to Mauthausen.

That was also in [PLACE NAME]?

No. They send us to Austria, to Mauthausen. When we got to Mauthausen, when we come over there, they had also airplanes in the mountains that--

This was '44 already, wasn't it?

Yeah that was really-- let me see, Mauthausen. How long till-- was about six months. That was already the end-- at the end of '44. So we come in the end of '44. I will come to Mauthausen. And they was going to employ us in the airplanes factories also. And they brought us to the-- Mauthausen was an old camp, was established. Was better facilities because it was an old camp, was a prison from before the war. And it was good facilities because they didn't had to build. It was already there. And they kept it up.

And they give us the headquarters. And the blocks, they divide us up, the blocks where we're going to stay. [AUDIO OUT]

Then we are the first transport of Jews come over there being put to work. All others been annihilated those from the come. They send them to the crematorias and to gas chambers. And they used to--

Each time, your airplane, being able to work on airplanes saved you.

Yes, that saved me. Yeah. So when we got in over there, they told us then maybe a week before we come, they had a transport of Jewish girl, 15,000 from France. One time they had 5,000 girls from Hungaria. And they got all burned up. From each one transport of women used to come to that camp, they picked out the prettiest women, and they set up sex houses. They make prostitutes of them.

And the kapos and the Nazis used to go over there for sex. They used to give them once or twice a week. They took them over to get sex from the women over there. They told us that they treating the women good over there. And only time-- they no keep them very long. Every time they brought a transport, they took them and killed them, and they brought some new ones. And that was the end of the Jewish women.

That's what they did with the women. And they brought transport, Jewish people over there, men and women. And they always killed them. We was the only ones survived. And when I worked in that camp for a while--

Was this your last camp?

Yeah. That was. Mauthausen was one of my last camps. In Mauthausen was three divisions. It was Mauthausen camp, was Gusen 1 camp, and was Gusen 2 camps. Gusen 1 was built in the war time and was a little bit worse than Mauthausen or was a little bit better than Gusen 1. Gusen 1 was just been built. They was just building it when we was coming in.

There was no facilities whatever, no washing facilities, was no latrines. We was going in a hole in a little-- a tree was laying across it. And we had to go outside of there. And we had to clean that by hand to keep it clean. And they did all kind of tortures with us. They no feed us right.

And it was so hard to get to work and come out from work, back to the blocks. And people was dying every day at work

because the kapos used to beat us. And anybody they no like, or anybody they want to kill, they killed. They killed a lot of friends in front of me. They hit in the stomach. The first thing they hit him in, underneath the chin. And then they hit in the-- bend over, then they hit him in the stomach. And then they knocked him down.

And when they fell down, they put the heavy boots on the throat and choked him to death. And that's where they was killed, most of the people. With three knocks they killed him.

You still were--

And I was still working over there. And by knowing several language, and in that camp was refugees from all over the world, from all kind of nationalities. Some of them they could understand German. And the people-- the bosses and the cops used to talk to him, and then they could understand the work. And if they told him they don't know what to do, and they make the mad, and they beat him and killed him. And by me knowing the language, I started to translate and make the work a little bit easier.

I used to get by easier. And a lot of times I took the beating because if they did something wrong, I don't want him to be killed or something. And I took the-- I took the blame. I took the blame. And they beat me. And one time, one of the engineers told me, a Nazi SS, he told me, if I wouldn't need you, if you will not help me, I'll be killed you. I shot you right now, he said. Or I'll give you 25. And they put me in in a slot, where they-- just like in a hole.

And this is a hole. You put your head, like in a chair, and you lay down on two chairs. And two, three SS come, and they punished you. You take the-- they had you let your pants down, raise your shirt, and lay down. And he had to count your punishment, 20 times lick, 25 licks. They give you. You had to count.

If you made a mistake and you got mixed up, you know, you mind no work--

They would start again.

You start again from one. And nobody made it. You got kicked in your face till you knocked your teeth out. They start to beating you from both sides, and you was dead. And when they put me, in I was fortunate. I took the punishment, and they no killed me. I counted to 25. Oh, the first five knocks, it paralyzed me. I was all stiff and hard, just like in a fire oven.

Every time they hit me, my skin broke and my body harden up in stripes, black stripes. And when they got through with me, I was lucky. I runned-- it was over there a cold water spigot. And I let the water run and let it come down on me. And that revived me, and I made it. And I couldn't lay on my back for three weeks since that time. And I got saved there. I did survive that.

And it was long--

Were you liberated there?

Yeah. In that camp it was so bad. Then we never changed the clothes since we've been over there. I think it was really nine months in that camp. And we had no-- we never change clothes. The only time I change clothes, if I saw somebody dead. I pulled his better clothes off from him, and I put it on, or a pair of shoes. I thought it's better, then I put it on. That's the only way I had to. That was all inflicted with lice, and the lice brought out the typhus.

And people start to die of typhus by the thousands. In that camp was registered 360,000. And in 11 months, I think it was left about 35,000 or 30,000. So the people was dying so bad. So they decide to bring some kind of disinfection and stop the typhus. So they decide, and they told everybody to take off their clothes and leave them, leave them in the block, and leave everything, the blankets and everything in the block and to go out outside in the camp.

And they built-- they brought some kind of machine what heated the water in the pipe, the pipe with holes. And we're supposed to take a shower under that. And we didn't have nothing to wipe off with. We stayed outside in groups to wait

for the shower. It took three days for all them people to shower. It was 21-- one day was 19 and 20 and 21 degree below zero, and was snow outside. We were standing nude and barefoot in that snow. And people who was already inflicted died there.

But that's what they wanted. They want to know who was already inflicted. They'll die there. So and that-- let me see. That day my brother, there was-- now, he got-- he died. Let me see. That was just in the time from the typhus. Yeah, he got inflicted with the lice, and he had the typhus. And he looked-- when somebody got infected with lice and got bit by lice, had that high temperature for 14 days. Then of course, they was burning up.

So instead, to keep them together, so they made a quarantine. They took two blocks, and they took the windows off. And them open shelves, they had for people to lay on them, they stripped. It was plain shelves. And they took all the infected people, took them in over there so they'll die. They don want to waste a bullet on them to kill him or instead drown them in the water. They was drowning them in the water, and it was too much work. So they took them over there and left him over there and let them starve, and let them.

So one day, when my brother was over there, and it was divided with barbed wire, and you couldn't get it. It was against the law. Was death for going there. I risked my life. And I had a Czechoslovakian man, I used to make stuff for him in the factory, used to make combs for him. I used to make different items. And he took to town, and he was trading somewhere outside for bread. And he bought me a slice of bread, a little bit of bullion. He brought me an apple or an onion, a little bit milk every day.

To give to your brother?

Yeah, he give me something. And he'd throw it in the garbage can because, if he'd been caught giving us, he may be lined up in concentration camp. So I told him what to happen to my brother. So one day he bought me an apple, an onion, a little bit milk, and a piece of bread. So I tried to take it to my brother and to see I could help him.

I went over there first day. It was a friend of mine, which I know from Warsaw. And they took him as a housekeeper for that place over there. When I got over there-- his name was David Honik. So I got over there, and I asked him, David, where is my brother. He says, wait a minute. I'll bring him to the window.

When he come to the window, he was about dead. He had a piece of bread in his hand. It was the first ration received. Already he no received no more rations. And he give it to me. And I took-- I gave him what I had, and he took it from me. And I took this little bread. And I ate that. And I don't know how I no died.

And you didn't get typhus.

And I got no typhus. I don't know how I survived. So when I come back next day, he brought me something else. And I was going to take it to my brother. When I got over there, I ask him, where's my brother. He says, I'm sorry. He's not here no more. He says, go over there and look at the pile. I think he's on top.

I went over there, and they had written-- when somebody died, they write down his number. See, he had a number, was already written down the chest because when they was going to crematorium, they used to write it down, who had been pushed into the crematorium. So when I got over there, was a little bit snow on, and I wiped it off, and here he was laying.

Your brother?

So that was the 27th of January, 1945. That was a few months before I got liberated because the 5th of May-- May-- May the 5th, I got liberated. Before we got liberated, we find out that it's getting close to the end because the people coming in working in the airplane factory with us told us then it's getting close.

So they knew?

That we might be liberated, we might make it. We might make it. We're going to get liberated. We was just hoping we'll make it. So one day, they took us out from the camp, and they took us-- we was working in mines. The airplane [INAUDIBLE] was a mine deck. They took the whole camps, all the camps, and load them in the airplane factories.

When don't went back in the night anymore to the blocks because they was going to have a vote between all the leaders of the camp, what they're going to do with the refugees. If it gets to the end, the invaders come, and they get--

Should they see you.

--we get liberated, what they going to do with us? And the camps was piled up with dead people. They no couldn't burn them up enough in the crematoria. And they was afraid that it's going to be a very much uprising, and we're going to take an awful lot of revenge. Or they don't know what's going to happen. So they was voting on it. They was going to make-- and there was a vote between them. And they said, if the Russians comes, we kill them. They put mines already all over the entrances. That was going to blow us up and kill us.

And he says, if the Americans come, they'll let us loose. So--

It's interesting that they--

Yeah. They made the decision. Between time-- they no couldn't make up their mind. It was a voting going on.

But the Americans came.

Yeah. Then they had-- it was going-- one did the proposal. The one, the headman gave the proposal to vote on. He says, if the Russians come, we got to kill them. One took out a gun and shot him. He stand up and says, we're going to get them loose one way or another. And if you all want to escape, it's time to go.

Right. Things were falling apart.

So they fell apart. So they run off. And they did nothing, left us-- and left us. So we got out of the camp. We got out of it. You find out that it's getting close, we run. The cops start running away. So we got back to the camp. And that was three days before Friday. That was around Wednesday.

And then we saw it's getting close because the cops we had left. And we saw a change in the guards. What they did is, when, from Mauthausen, they went in the city and got Austrians and dressed them in their clothes. And they make them for guards to guard us. And the real Nazis and the real kapos run off because they know that we're going to take care of them when we get free.

So on Friday morning was a beautiful day. We wake up in the morning. Everybody was happy and howling and screaming. We saw the American tanks getting close to our camp. When we got to camps, we was crawling on the top the blocks to see the tanks coming. I remember, I was on the roof. Then I come down, I run to the gates.

And they open the gates, and we start-- and they start to throw us in rations. We grabbed the rations. All the people went to take revenge. They run out and tried to round up all them cops, which we had left, one who got escaped, and all the guards. We took away the guns. We liquidated.

We even took the American tanks and lined them up and destroyed them. Run them through and made hamburgers of it. And who had enough strength, run out and took revenge on the population, on the German population. They start running in the homes and get something to eat. I was weak and I couldn't get out, so I run to the kitchen where the American-- where the Germans had their officer kitchen. I thought I might find some kind of food.

And I had a lousy uniform. And I run to the-- I run to the warehouses, where they kept them clothes brought from the--

Clean clothes?

--from the concentration-- from the camps, from the gas chambers, what they took off from the people. So I thought I'll find me something civilian to put on. So people was ahead of me, was so many people that picked up anything good. All I could find as a pair shorts and a little undershirt, a undershirt with short sleeves. And I put that on and throwed away that lousy uniform.

And when I got back to the camp, a lot of friends already run out and brought some food and tried to cook something. The brunch I was with, first thing, they saw a dog. Before they got anything, they grabbed the dog and killed it and cooked the dog. And they gave me-- I no eat no meat for so long. I don't know, they must be giving me a part of the head. And I eat a couple bites of it and got sick. I vomit it up.

And when I was vomiting, the Red Cross, the American nurses or-- it was-- how you call them, them people? The doctors, the paramedics, come in and give me something to settle my stomach. And they give us something to eat. And in three days, I got on my feet.

Now did you go back to Poland?

On Sunday-- on Sunday, I thought I fill enough to leave the camp. I walked out. A whole, about 90% of people already left. They went everywhere. Oh, we know one thing. In Mauthausen, in another side of Mauthausen was the Russians. In Gusen 1 and Gusen 2 was closer to Linz. And that's where the Americans-- that was pretty close. So when I went down the right side from Gusen, going to Linz was on the right side. When I come out from the camp to the road was the highway. All of us had the idea, go the right way, and do the right thing, and do right of justice because I was in the yeshiva, and I was studying, and I also observe ethics and laws and humanity even.

So when I come out, I always said, my Daddy always told me go the right way.

Go to the right.

When I come out, I choose the right way. And I walked, and I came to the first little town. It was the name [NON-ENGLISH]. And when I got over there, I was weak. I come in front of a German home. A lady going out and cried and hollered. And she come. Come, come Here. Come here, my children. Come here. Was three of us.

And we lay down in the grass. Was May the 5th. Was wet, green, you know, kind of cold on the ground. And she run in the house, got a blanket. And she spread it out. And she says, please lay down in here. I'll go get you something to eat. And she says, I'm so sorry that you all look so bad.

We don't know what's going on. We see all the people going. My three sons is in the war. I hope God help and somebody take care of them, somebody take care of them, and I tell-- and I get to see them home. And she kept us for three days. She cooked us a real soft soup of tapioca. And then later, she gave us some bread. And she made real soft scrambled eggs, was real soft, just almost mixed up and warmed it up. Because, she said, if I make it too stiff, you might no be able to digest.

So she says, I'll give you a little bit water. You break your bread and eat. And in the night she took us in. She didn't want to take us in the house because we was-- maybe she was afraid we're infected with lice. She give us a space in the outhouses and made us a place to stay. We stayed over there.

And on the third day, we already feel good. So-- I-- oh, I'm sorry.

No, that's OK. Just--

So we start we start to go to Linz. Linz was the big city. We know Linz. We find somebody to warn. We're going to get some kind of help, some kind of instructions. We got to know what we been do. Because in that area, it was awful lot of camps. Maybe it was about 20 or 30 camps, was POWs from all nations. It was working camps and concentration camps, and everything got loose.

So everybody was coming to Linz.

So everybody was grabbing from the Germans anything they could. I was so silly then, I lined up trucks and cars and bicycles. I took away the guns. I took away the jewelry. I took away the-- I took the way the watches. All no did me no good. I don't need it. I was just-- I had just that hate because they robbed the Jews from everything and took away everything. And I thought this, what they got, belongs to us. So I just, I took it away.

And so when I got to Sankt Georgen before I come to Linz, around in the town was a beautiful house, and I walked the front of it, and I saw it's a backerei. It's a bakery.

So I walked into it. It was a beautiful home, a beautiful family. They was very nice people. Looked like they was pretty well-off, and they had Polish servants, the one the German sent over there for labor work. They worked for the Germans for nothing, just to eat. And they was from Poland. And I asked them, I find out, where is the man? What is the bakery not working?

They said in there was Nazis. They run off. We don't know where they are. And if they wasn't here, they would have been long time killed. They run off before the Americans come in.

So when I got in over there, I say just wait a minute. I'm going to take over this bakery. And I put it to work. And I get-- yeah. And I get-- you help me. And she was working for the people over there. They know pretty good to help in the bakery. So I says, let's go get the people to eat. Everybody was starving. All the people come out from the camps had nothing to eat.

Take a [INAUDIBLE] in my life, and any type of situation I was, I was always trying to help and feed people and help as much I could. Even I never went to bed for eight days. I always tried to feed them. And even after I got liberated and I had to do it, I still did it. And my aim in the concentration was-- the only aim and the only prayer I had in the concentration camp is all I want to see is Hitler dead, when I get liberated, and have a-- eat a piece of bread all by myself so nobody have to give it to me. And here then Hitler's dead, and the Germans capitulated, and I wanted to die. And I had no bigger desire.

And the only thing right now I have to finish with my story because it's long-- the only thing come out from all the destruction and all everything, one thing come out good with the Jewish people was waiting for 2,000 year, they was waiting for Shivat Zion, to come back to Israel. And the state-- we lived to see the building of the Jewish state. And we lived to see Shivat Zion, to see then the Jewish people build the state, and they come back to Jerusalem. And that was my biggest aim.

And then I come out from the concentration camp, I worked with the Bricha and helped to bring all the refugees to Israel, with the illegal before the Jewish state got independent, the--

Did you go back to Germany?

-- American Legion-- the Israel legion in the English army, come to Italy, and we tried to bring all the Jews we could to Israel before the independence. And later, I was in a UNRRA camp working. Yeah, I find an uncle when I was in Italy in the UNRRA camps. I find an uncle, one survivor from all my family in the world. He was in the United States. And when I find him through a new Jewish newspaper, he was a reader of the newspaper. And I wrote to him. And they sent me his address. And when I wrote him, he wrote to me. And I asked him to bring me to United States.

When I come to United States, I got united with him and stayed with him. And I was very happy. When I was in Italy, before I come to the United States, I was over there to witness the United Nations, the proclamation of the Jewish state. And I was going to be going to Israel. While I got united with my uncle, and it was so many refugees in the kibbutzim, and it took so long, and it was so bad to get them established and work in the economy, I thought I'd be a while in the United States and then go to Israel because all my friends was in Israel. And my aim was to go to Israel.

So while I was in the United States between time, I find me a girlfriend and got married and built a family and got involved in a living in the United States. And it was awful hard to leave. I put it off from time to time, for time to time. And here lined up after 41 years, I'm still in the States. And--

But you had a good life.

Thank the Lord, I had a good life. I brought up three children and gave them an education. And they all-- and I brought them up in the Jewish faith. And we got a kosher home. And they're good Jews. And they're going to follow my way of the tradition in [NON-ENGLISH] I mean, I hop the Jewish people live and they build, in they never have another destruction. And I tried to do all I can to tell the people to watch out so we have a democratic and a free government. We'll be free and nothing happen again.

We got to look out for all kinds of lies and antisemitism and racist movements. And we're going to stay on guards. And so long I live, I'll spend my life to look out so nothing happen again. And thank you very much for your interview. I could say a whole lot more, or it's getting late. And thank you very much.

Thank you very much.