

RG-50.120*112
NAOR SHOSHANA
TAPE 1 OF 2

01:01:14 I was born in Berlin in 1925. My name was Susanna Sher. I lived in Berlin until I was 13 years old. I felt the difficult time for the Jews and I wanted to leave as quickly as I could.

I am from a traditional family, loving parents. I had a sister who was two years older than me.

From 1932 we felt the danger. People cold me; "Jew", what was so bad about being a Jew? I was proud to be a Jew.

When I had to get into school there was no room in the Jewish school, so my mother enrolled me to a German school. The principle was nice and told me I didn't have to pray for the Fuehrer in the morning. I could stand in quiet. I didn't stop crying, I didn't want to go to that school. Finally I was lucky: three children left Germany (on time) and there was room for me in the Jewish school.

German children from the German school had beaten me. I didn't tell my parents.

I lived in a big apartment building with a large yard. Down in the building we had a large hall where the Nazi party had assembled from time to time. The walls were covered with posters from the Anti-Semitic newspaper: "Der-Shtirmer".

01:15:16 I walked with my father in the street, a group of children shouted at us: "Dirty Jews". My father told me not to turn around; you don't want to loose your father. Then they spat on my father's back. I was shocked.

We had a plant for men cloths. Many Germans worked there. I visited the plant a lot. I remember one day that one of the workers who used to wear S.A. uniform (the brown) beat my father and threatened him.

We never talked about those things at home.

01:20:30 I went for vacation to a children camp away from home. I got very sick there and had to have an operation. I had to stay there for three months. Finally when I could go home, two nuns from the hospital carried me because I could not walk by myself. My mother walked behind us so she

would not be recognized as related to me, and so the nuns protected us from strangers.

01:29:00 I was very good in sport. I wanted to join the “BAR-KOCHBA” and “MACABI-HATZAYIR”, which were Zionist Jewish organizations. I was too young, only 10 years old and I could join them only at the age of twelve. I assembled additional young children and we opened a group for us.

01:32:45 After the “Crystal Night” I realized how many shops the Jews had. Every other shop was broken. The economical situation deteriorated rapidly. I heard that Jews are leaving for Australia, America and Eretz-Israel. I asked my mother: “Why don’t we leave too”? She said: “It will be all right”.

The discrimination laws had begun: It was forbidden for my father to run the plant. It was forbidden for us to have a Christian maid at our house.

01:37:30 In one night the Germans decided to take away all the men and children older than Bar Mitzvah. They knocked on our door. My father had an attack of Asthma. They decided not to take him since he was so ill and would die any way. On the next morning we didn’t go to school, but when we later did, I felt strange since I was one of the few that had a father at home.

My mother wrote to relatives in the USA, but it was too late.

Children groups were organized to leave Germany. I heard from my friends that “Aliyat Hanoar” helps rescue children. They fix a “Norma” for who can be rescued: above a certain weight and a certain height. I was under it. My sister was sent to Palestine. I cried and insisted to get out of Germany. There was an option to go to Denmark. We had to run from place to place, to sign many papers. My mother was shaken in front of any officer. I said I wanted to go by myself and so I did.

02:00:30 On the last morning, we sat very sad. My dad asked me to stay. I said I wanted them to leave too and if I would go I might help them to go out too. Then my mom asked me to stay. I told them they could use my egg each day. She started to cry.

It was April 1939.

We arrived to the train station. There my father cried and my mom tried to be strong. We were 16 children. I didn’t know any one of them.

02:08:00 I kept corresponding with my parents and with my sister in Palestine. One day I got a postcard from my parents telling me they are going to pass the Polish border. They also sent me a photo in which I could not recognize my mother. Then I got another postcard from Poland. My mother had two brothers in Krakow and my father had a sister in Poland. He went to see her. He never reached her. My mother was taken to a labor camp. I heard it from Rivka Libeskind, who worked with my mother in the camp.

02:14:30

The quality of the sound is very bad, so I could not continue to listen to this tape.

The sound was reconstructed into an audio tape

We arrived to Denmark 15 children. On the next day another 10 children joined us. We stayed in a hotel and they took us to visit the zoo. A journalist accompanied us and wrote about the act of saving us. Then we moved to a big house in a village for 3 months. We had guides who taught us Hebrew and Jewish history. A young Jewish lawyer subsidized it.

Before I left Germany, my mother bought me lots of cloths for the years to come. (For example she bought me many bras from size A to E). I wanted to have bicycle for Denmark but my mother said it was too dangerous, so I went to Alfred he arranged for me to have bicycle.

One day Miss Openhiemer, who was the leader of the Women League told us we had to be split and go to live with families. On the next weekend the families came to meet us. A very short person came to me. He said that he was orthodox, so I would have kosher meals. He had six children; the oldest was 7 years old. I was 13 years. I had thought that he wanted me as a housekeeper or babysitter so I decided not to go with him. When we arrived to Copenhagen railway station, all of the children went to their “new” families. I stayed alone. Then a big woman came running towards me. She asked me if my name is Suzy Scher. She told me her name is: Scher-Maister. On our way to her home she told me she came to Denmark from England as a child. Her husband came from Russia as a child. His lucky number was 13 and he wanted a child that age. His home number and phone number was 13

also. They were very rich. I lived in heaven and loved them very much. I had every thing I could have dreamed of. I went to a Jewish school, had piano lessons. They wanted to adopt me, but I could not accept it, because I could not give up my parents.

They bought the house of Hans Christian Andersen, and I got his room.

When Hitler was about to invade Denmark my friends were sent from Copenhagen to families in villages. I was bored at the Scher-Maister's house and wanted to get some agriculture training for Palestine, so I asked to go to the village too.

I arrived to a family: mother 90 years old and two sons who lived with her. They were very primitive. We didn't have running water at home, only in the well. They cooked on open fire. (Back in Copenhagen We had elevator to bring the food from the Kitchen to the dinning room.....).

I started to work and they liked me. Then came another refugee boy. He was two years older than me, but he was lazy and the man beat him. I said that I want to move if he won't stop to beat the boy.

I moved to another family. They owned the grocery shop in the village. They didn't have children and didn't want me to work hard, so I was most of the time with the wife. I had a nice room, bath with running water, but I didn't work in agriculture, as I wanted, so I moved again. This time it was a family of a widow and three children. I worked very hard. Learned to cook, to make laundry, to slaughter a pig and to make soap from his fat. The house became a center for my friends. We still keep contact with the people of that village. After the Germans occupation I remember the king of Denmark riding his horse in Copenhagen each morning with a Yellow Star on his coat to show his sympathy to the Jews.

One day we got a message from the Danish underground to escape because the Germans were looking for us and wanted to send us to the camps. We were 20 people and we were divided into five groups. We started to walk to the seashore without knowing where we are going to. We found a small house, a summerhouse of someone, and entered it. We stayed there for two weeks without any food. I found out that Elza, the daughter of the family I was with, is a Communist and a member of the underground in Copenhagen. We made contact with her and she helped us. Each night we got food and cigarettes. One night we got a message to leave the house and to go to a city 30 KM from where we hid. From there we went to the port on a ferry to Copenhagen. The British bombed the port and we had to hide. I found

myself sitting between two nuns who covered my face with a newspaper. (Having black hair I looked very much Jewish). From there we were taken to the basement of the hospital. It was a place where the Danish underground gathered the Jews. We went again to the port and boarded on a ship, and stayed at its bottom. We were 500 people, it was dark and we were not allowed to talk. . The crew was composed of German and Danish sailors. The German sailors were given much alcoholic drinks. Being drunk they had to go off the ship. We speeded up to Sweden without then and arrived to a camp in Malmeh.

In Sweden I decided not to work in agriculture any more, but to study to become a nurse. I didn't have money for that nor any documents. I finished school in Germany at age 12. To make money I put an add in the newspaper, looking for a job as a nanny. I started to work for a family with a baby and a three-year-old child. When I had enough money I moved to a bigger city and worked in a restaurant, washing the dishes. After six months I wanted to start to study. I went to the mayor of the city (Hezinburg?). I explained to him why I wanted to study; I promised I won't take any working place from the Swedish, since my plans were to go to Palestine. I begged him to let me take the entrance examinations. I passed them and went to study in the hospital.

I got a letter from "Hachalutz" movement that I'm studying a profession that is not needed in Palestine and that they would expel me from the movement. After several months I got another letter telling me that they had changed their mind and they would support me. I had to buy my own uniform: 6 dresses and 24 aprons. I didn't have the money, so my friends collected the money and bought it for me.

Tape 2 Of 2

04:06:35 In Sweden I went to a nursing school and specialized as midwife.

Bernadot succeeded to rescue 16.000 Jews to Sweden. They lived in schools that were transformed into refugee camps. The 'CHALUTZ' asked me to look for people from the underground. In my uniform as a nurse I could

walk everywhere. I helped 6-7 women to leave the camp and to move to an apartment.

04:23:50 One of the women was Rivka; she met my mother in the labor camp. Her husband, Doleg, was the leader of the rebellion in Krakow. She was one of Mangle's victims.
(Shoshana tells about Rivka in Israel).

04:43:40 I worked many shifts in the hospital, in order to earn money. I heard from the "CHALUTZ" that they were organized people to go to Palestine with "ALIYAH BEIT" (illegal immigration).
The Swedish were apathetic to the refugees. In Denmark the people were friendlier.

04:47:30 I wrote to the Red Cross in Switzerland. Looking for my mother. I got a letter from them that she is alive and they would let me know where. I didn't hear from them and after several months I wrote again. They apologized that their first message was a mistake.

04:52:25 "ALIYAH BEIT" selected 100 people for going to Palestine. I was among them. I was told to be ready and leave in a short notice from one day to the next. I waited several months. It was difficult not to say anything in the hospital and to disappear. A year later another group went from Sweden to Palestine on the "Arlosora" ship and were deported to Cyprus. I came on "Theodore Herzl" and was a year on our way.
From Sweden we flew to Belgium. We were brought to a palace of Louis XIV (Château De La Bonage(?)). It was totally destroyed. People from the "HAGANA" taught us how to use guns so we could join the "PALMACH". On one day 250 people came to join us in the palace from camps in Germany.
I was the only nurse there and I asked for a doctor. The only doctor was a dentist by the name Varmush. We stayed there for a year. One of the refugees was a theater director. He wrote a play and directed it. It was so good that we performed outside our camp in Belgium.

05:17:00 We were told to get ready, because in two days we had to go to Marseilles to take the ship to Palestine. It was 1946. They ordered me to be the nurse on the ship. We were 2800 people on the ship that usually carried 500 people. I was miserable. I didn't want the responsibility. It was inhumane to do so to people, especially after the war and the camps.

It was the policy of Ben Gurion and the PALMACH carried it out. It was hell. We had 800 orphans from age 6-14, twenty babies, one was a week old and one two days old. The mothers didn't have milk. We were two weeks on our way to Haifa. Three babies died.

05:32:15 The policy of Ben Gurion and the PALMACH was to show the world how bad the British react towards the poor Jews. I always wanted to meet Ben-Gurion and tell him with all the respect to your policy, you didn't see the suffering of the people on those ships. Maybe he saw the macro: the state, and it is okay if some hundreds will die on the way to achieve the purpose.

05:37:30 When we arrived to Haifa, we were told to fight the British soldiers who did not let us disembark. We threw cans of food on them. We had some people on the ship from "BAITAR". They had guns and when they shot the British shot back. In three minutes we had three men badly wounded. We asked for a doctor. He said that nothing could save them. He asked me if I want to escort their dead bodies to the shore. There I met Danish soldiers and they suggested I would give them letters to relatives in Palestine. That how I could tell my sister about me.

05:46:30 The doctor tried to save me from going back to the ship. However, I said my place is with my people. I didn't know that I would be in Cyprus for another year. In Cyprus we were in tents, 20 women in one tent. I opened there the first nursery in Cyprus. After 1/2 year we had 60 babies.

05:58:15 From Cyprus we wanted to go to a kibbutz. We contacted kibbutz "Sdot Yam". I had to be their first nurse. When we arrived I decided to go to kibbutz "Ma'ayan Zvi", where my sister was for some time. There I met my future husband, so I stayed there till now.

06:04:20 In summary:
I think I succeeded in surviving through all of this because I was strong. I am glad I am here, and I have the feeling I did something valuable in my life.

