

RG 50.120 #150 2 Tapes  
SHVERZENTZ, ITZCHAK

I

01.54 Itzchak Shverzent was born in Berlin, on May 30, 1915. Father served in German army in WWI.

01.54 Jewish home life.

03.01 Elementary government school and Jewish education.

04.40 High school and Jewish education.

05.30 Youth movement and Jewish boy-scouts [Kadima].

06.55 Anti-Semitism in his childhood and youth.

15.00 Recollection of Enzo Sereni as youth leader.

16.40 Home life until 1933.

18.38 Refuge in Amsterdam, preparation to go to Israel.

25.00 Return to Germany.

30.12 Teachers seminar in Cologne.

32.10 Teaching in south of Germany.

34.01 Bacalaureate in Berlin in 1938.

35.50 Work with Alyat Hanoar[youth immigration to Israel].

38.15 Recollections of Kristallnacht.

39.40 Males deported to Zachsenhausen concentration camp.

43.45 Work in Alyat Hanoar school in 1939. Forced labor of students and teachers.

- 49.00 Berlin streets. 1933-1938 as 'yellow patch wearer'.
- 59.00 Jews did not believe things were so bad.
- 2.01.30 Different periods since 1933.
- 04.02 The Kultur Bund.
- 05.30 Contradictions.
- 11.42 Jews moved to return to their roots by going to Judaic studies classes.
- 14.00 Changes name from Hans Yoachim to Itzchak.
- 21.00 Break out of WWII and changes.
- 25.00 Illegal immigration to Israel.
- 29.00 Alyat Hanoar school in Berlin, a heaven in a mad society.
- 31.05 Beginning of deportations from the school, 1941. Letters sent ahead. Jews complied, did not flee. Round-ups happened in plain daylight.
- 33.00 Point of concentration: a synagogue that was not destroyed during Kristallnacht.  
Then, to train station.
- 38.00 Jews thought they were taken to work camps in Poland.
- 42.00 Jews prohibited from listening to short-wave radio programs. Radio receivers were confiscated.
- 42.00 When in hiding with non-Jewish families, Jews listened to the BBC.  
Summer  
1943.

- 43.35 Interview on radio with German train engineer who defected. He had taken many trains to extermination camps.
- 44.20 Goebbels, Minister of Information complained about 'misinformation' against Nazis. Jews did not believe that any systematic extermination was under way.
- 45.00 The Auschwitz orchestras. A postcard from Auschwitz.
- 49.00 The story of Edith Wolff ['Ewo'], catholic who - after Kristallnacht - decided to register as a Jew [father was indeed Jewish].
- 53.41 'Ewo's' house became a place of refuge for Jews.
- 54.00 Advice from 'Ewo' to go underground, in order to save the youth.
- 55.50 Deportation order arrived on September 28, 1942.
- 58.10 Mother's death.
- 3.04.36 Father stayed in Berlin until the end.
- 05.17 Underground plans
- 11.11 Father's deportation on Feb. 27, 1943, with the rest of Berlin's Jews.
- 11.32 The underground. Sept. '42. Posing as an Aryan.
- 21.45 Righteous gentiles. Assistance.
- 40.00 'Ewo's' deportation on June 19, 1943.
- 42.00 Educational activities in the underground for groups of 10 at a time [40 in all].
- 51.49 Above activities occurred every 3 days, also for the purpose of distributing money and assigning eating and sleeping spaces. Sometimes, 10 at a time would go to a theatre or a concert.

II

4.02.05

Russian aristocrat expatriates.

08.27 Wanzee, suburbs of Berlin. 1940- , in order to teach to grow vegetables. Alyat Hanoar school studied there a few days a week.

04.40[?] Christmas, 1943, left for a vacation in Nordhauser. 5 hrs from Berlin. Warburg family, intermarried and 'protected'. Returned to Berlin with Mrs. Warburg.

17.34 New documents issued to him.

19.25 Was 'wanted' by the police, and his description posted.

20.00 Preparationg for escape from Berlin to the border began [Switzerland]. Mrs. Mayer helped.

22.00 The 'Polish action': all Poles living in Berlin were returned forcibly to Poland in 1938.

23.00 Erta Wachsmann's story.

23.50 Army documents needed to travel to the border, [Singen] issued by an army officer, Herr Strung.

24.24 Mrs Mayer, righteous Catholic. Her story.

25.29 Falsified ID papers issued for \$6,000 DM.

27.30 Peasants at border also demanded money.

28.26 Feb. 12, 1944 escape began, despite train being air-bombed.

38.00 Arrival in Schafhausen. Then Zurich, to a refugee camp where there were also German army deserters.

42.40 Visit of Natan Dror from Israel.

- 43.10 Released from refugee camp, entered University of Zurich.
- 43.30 Founded Boy Scouts [Jewish] of Switzerland. Emigrated to Israel after 10 years there, in 1953.
- 44.10 Work with Jewish orphan group from Bergen-Belsen [ages 8-10].
- 47.51 Influence of bombings over Berlin on Jews. Couldn't hide in bomb shelters.
- 51.54 Returned to Germany only in 1973 with Ewo. After receiving yet another invitation from the mayor of Berlin.
- 55.20 Visit, in Israel, of German Boy Scouts interested in learning the history.
- 58.00 Visit in Berlin, teaching and talking to students in all kinds of schools. Beginning of annual or semi-annual visits to Germany in order to teach.
- 5.02.18.04 The underground youth group that existed. 2/27/43 until the end of WWII [5/8/45].
- 04.19.10
- 07.17.12 The anthem of the youth group.
- 11.00 Activities, outdoors.
- 12.40 Appearance [physical] of leader.
- 13.00 Oneg Shabbat, weekly.
- 14.00 Jewish calendar, unavailable, in order to observ holidays.
- 15.00 Importance of oral transmission of tradition.
- 15.30 Seder underground.
- 16.00 Yom Kippur, 1943.

- 17.00 Weekly sessions on a variety of subjects both Jewish and not; reader's theatre, singing.
- 20.00 Occupation of the youth; moving, gardening.
- 26.00 News through German press and clandestinely through BBC.
- 30.26 Fleeing Germany [on 2/12/44] to Switzerland.
- 32.00 His reaction to the neoNazism in Germany at present.