

RG-50.120\*0183 3 Tapes  
ARAD, DAN

IDP 1994, Tapes I, II, III

- Dan Arad was born Theodore Hirschdorfer in 1922 in Krakow. He came from an upper middle class Zionist family. Father was a doctor who studied in Vienna, had many Polish friends and was well connected. Dan had an elder sister. He shows pictures of the family, his mother's work card photo, and his home on Dietler Street in Krakow. He went to the Hebrew Gymnasium in Krakow (before 1939).
- In August 1939 the family moved to Przemsyl to avoid the approaching war. Dan went to university in Lvov.
- In 1942 family moved back to Krakow to the ghetto where the father worked as a doctor in the hospital and was somehow affiliated with the Judenrat. Dan was privileged in the ghetto and stated that he never experienced deprivations.
- After the 2 big evacuation actions in November 1942 things were quiet. He worked in repair shops. There was food, vodka, parties.
- In September 1943 he was transported again to Auschwitz. Describes in detail the arrival and the selection headed by Mengele. After six weeks he went to Birkenau.
- Describes in detail life in Birkenau. The hierarchy of Kapos and block supervisors, the hard labor and horrible conditions. He was not depressed, believed he would survive and after 6 weeks was selected to go to Buna located 6 to 7 km from Birkenau. He was glad to go there because conditions were much better there. It was a work camp. He was there in 1944. His family connections in Krakow helped him find 'good' work details, and extra food.
- He lived in block 34 and worked in commando 2 with heavy sewer pipes instead of in the coal unit which few survived.
- He organized a small laundry service for other inmates, performed extra jobs and became a 'prosperous' inmate.
- He got into the 2 month training course by I.G. Farben in the camp, 'The Builders school'. After that he worked in commando 109, building a large I.G. Farben factory near Birkenau. Conditions were good.

- On January 18, 1945, when the Russian army approached, the SS took remaining 10,000 inmates on a death march west to Gleiwitz. He and 5 friends escaped and headed east back to Krakow.
- His group met up with Russian soldiers who questioned them and fed them. He walked to Krakow, stayed there for about a month with a Polish family. Walked to Przemyśl where his family had last lived. They had all died in the camps. After about a month he rode on top of a train to Bucharest with the idea to get a certificate to Palestine. He got in touch with the Joint, received a subsidy from them and lived 'well' on this and his salary as a cobbler's assistant.
- In 1945 he joined the Abba Kovner group which made revenge plans. He was aware of a plan to poison a city, which was abandoned as impracticable. He was involved in traveling to Germany and Austria and finding SS men which were to be executed. He did not find any. Was also involved in leading a couple of groups of Jews from outlying places to Bucharest. Was involved in making money for the Joint by exchanging currencies. He went to Palestine on a Greek boat, the last to land in Atlit and resettled in Israel.