

RG-50.120 #184 IDP 1994 258/1-2-3  
AVNON, ALEXANDER Tape 1 of 1

- Alexander Avnon was born Alexander Silberstein in March 1929 in Warsaw. He had an older sister who was at risk for TB and family moved to a health resort near Warsaw, Otwock, in 1936. Father worked in Warsaw.
- In June 1940, when the ghetto in Warsaw came into existence, the family returned to Warsaw.
- Description of life in the ghetto. Father had a relative in the Jewish police, Cherinsky, and was able to get a job as an officer in the police. They did not see themselves as collaborators but as people responsible to keep the order. They also hoped it would save their life. They first lived in the 'small' ghetto and when that was closed they moved to the 'big' ghetto, to the Nowolipcin area which was an area secured for the Jewish police and their families.
- He remembers the constant hunger, dead bodies in the streets, people stealing bread from each other. He also remembers 'crazy Rosenblum' who sang songs about the ghetto. He joined the Hashomer Hatzair, and learned Hebrew songs.
- Father arranged for his sister to work for Tebens, a German sewing workshop, to save her life. He never saw her again.
- His father, as a police officer, saved them twice from the Umschlagplatz and deportation. His father came back hysterical from actions.
- In the fall of 1942 his father smuggled him out of the ghetto, to join an uncle who lived outside with a Christian woman. When neighbors suspected him she threw him out. He tried to return to the ghetto but couldn't get back in. He was caught and escaped many times. A peasant outside of Warsaw took him in, taught him Christian prayers and mannerisms, gave him money and he started to walk east to reach his aunt in Uzbekistan. Wandered by himself for 2 years. Was taken in by peasants and later escaped. Walked through woods until he met up with Russian troops. Hitched rides to Moscow. Was in jail there for vagrancy and then sent to Polish orphanage that had mostly Jewish children. He established contact with his aunt and went to Uzbekistan. In 1945 he returned to Warsaw, worked for the Joint and then went to Palestine.