

RG-50.120 #0270
MOVSHOVIC, YA'AKOV

2 TAPES

I

- 1.00 He was born in Lodz in 1925 and has a younger sister. Father was in the yarn business. The family were upper middle class, traditional but not religious. Two aunts were communists and escaped to Russia. Two cousins lived in the USSR; one was a famous violinist, Kogan.
- 1.06 He went to a Polish high school and was the only Jewish kid there. Later he went to Katznelson high school and was under Zionist influence. There was emphasis on physical education and sports, which he thinks contributed to his survival.
- 1.15 He was aware of antisemitism but was not personally affected.
- 1.17 Describes father's factory and business.
- 1.19 1938, reactions to what happened in Germany. They joked about the Germans in the summer camp, which he attended. He returned home when war broke out in September. He volunteered as air warden during bombardments.
- 1.31 When the Germans entered they caught Jews and took them to work camps. He escaped. Father's factory closed and was sold to a Volksdeutsche who paid him and helped him also when they were in the ghetto. Talks about difficult living situation before they went to the ghetto.
- 1.47 Why they did not escape. Life in the ghetto which was open the first 6 months. Hans Biebow organized workshops.
- 1.56 The first 6 months in the ghetto the family did not have to work because they had money. During 1940 and 1941 he studied in high school in the ghetto, which later moved to Marichin. Describes.
- 2.06 In 1941, '42 the Germans forced them to work. Father worked in a wood shop, mother in a kitchen and he in a shoe workshop. Describes work.
- 2.14 Describes food shortages and hunger in '42. He lived near a hospital and saw Germans throwing the sick into trucks.
- 2.18 Describes 'selection' by Mengele. Later the Judenrat were ordered to provide Jews for work. Runkowski was head of the Judenrat. He was a criminal and raped women. Describes how he was selected as head and his behavior. He was later sent to Auschwitz and was killed by the Jews when he got there.
- 2.29 He was selected to go to Auschwitz in 1944 but was saved by his high school teacher. They thought that Auschwitz was another ghetto.
- 2.34 In 1941 he was in a group that tried to plan for the future. there was an underground but they were powerless. What they knew about the underground.

- 2.45 Gertler was assigned to the Lodz ghetto and was helpful.
- 2.47 Talks about Jewish informers. Suter was a Jew who worked for the Gestapo and told Germans where Jews were hiding and where valuables were buried. He later vanished.
- 2.56 Cultural life in the ghetto.
- 3.07 Describes his work as secretary to the director of the print shop.
- 3.12 Health conditions in the ghetto. Mail services until 1941.
- 3.16 Talks about gypsies who were brought into the ghetto to be killed later.
- 3.21 Shows photos of himself and his sister as young children. Talks about his family of 5 in the ghetto.
- 3.29 Describes the last period in the ghetto. The various hideouts they used. In 1944 the Germans declared that anybody found hiding would be killed so they emerged and were taken by cattle train to Auschwitz.
- 3.37 Describes arrival in Auschwitz, selection by Mengele. He was assigned to Block 13 in Birkenau. There were 300 men in the Block. Zamorsky, a Pole and also a prisoner, was head of the Block. He was extremely cruel. Describes terrible conditions in the Block.
- 3.53 After 12 days in the camp, he volunteered as a locksmith. 300 men, mostly from Lodz, were taken to work.

II

- 4.00 They were taken by train to camp Friedland located near a propeller factory. Describes training and work and life in the camp.
- 4.11 Describes being punished and other punitive actions in the camp.
- 4.16 Details about his work. Trading in the camp. Different nationals in the camp: French, Russians, Ukrainians, Italians.
- 4.23 Lack of medical treatment in camp, food supplies.
- 4.41 Escapes from camp.
- 4.45 8th of May the Russian army came and the Germans escaped. They mayor of Friedland advised them to escape so the sonderkommando would not kill them.
- 4.49 One SS man told them of a plan to march everyone to Buchenwald and kill them. They armed themselves with knives and sticks with the intention to kill the Germans. When the Russian army liberated the camp, they saved this SS officer.

- 4.56 How escapes were accomplished.
- 5.01 Towards the end of the war, 2 men were sent to the women's camp to make a list of survivors.
- 5.09 Describes his state of mind after liberation. He decided to go to Palestine and started on his journey but then returned to Friedland for 1/2 a year. Describes his life there.
- 5.23 Describes the behavior of the Russians, their drunkenness and raping of women.
- 5.30 He returned to Lodz after a pogrom of the Poles. He wanted to study medicine, studied pre-med. Describes his difficult life studying and working.
- 5.41 He stopped his studies and just worked, then became director of transportation.
- 5.43 In 1958, he went to Israel. His wife came a year later.
- 5.50 Adds about his life in Poland after the war. His child was born in Israel.