

Interview with Izzy Rosenblat
February 27, 1992
Rockville, Maryland

- Q: Today is February 27, 1992. I am Anthony Di Iorio and I am at the home of Izzy Rosenblat in Rockville, Maryland. I am here on behalf of the United States Holocaust Museum to interview Izzy about his experiences during the Holocaust. Good afternoon, Izzy.
- A: Thank you.
- Q: I thought we could begin by telling us your birthday. When were you born?
- A: I was born January 8, 1914.
- Q: Okay and where were you born?
- A: I was born in Warsaw.
- Q: Warsaw, Poland.
- A: Poland, yes. You want to know the street too?
- Q: Yes, you remember your street? Sure.
- A: Yeah. I was born in Warsaw, Pardia Oleeza.
- Q: Okay. And your name, your official name, your official name?
- A: My official name, Itzrek Rosenblat.
- Q: Of course you had a nickname, the nickname by which everyone called you.
- A: In Poland?
- Q: Yes.
- A: Izzak.
- Q: How many brothers and sisters did you have?
- A: I have two more brothers. We altogether, three brothers.
- Q: Three brothers. And who is the oldest?
- A: No sisters
- Q: No sisters.
- A: Eli is the oldest. I am the middle, Herschel was the youngest.

Q: Okay. Were they also born in Warsaw?

A: Warsaw, all three of us.

Q: And Eli was born, what two years before you were born?

A: We are all separated by two years.

Q: Two years. So 1912, 1914 and 1916. Your parents were Jewish, right?

A: Oh, yeah.

Q: Very Jewish. How religious were they?

A: How religious were they? They weren't orthodox.

Q: They weren't orthodox?

A: No. They were normal Jews. My father was a --okay? My father was in -- making manufacturing shoes. He manufactured shoes. He was in business.

Q: He had his own shop?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: And your mother was a housewife, raising three boys?

A: Yeah, raising three boys, right.

Q: So you observed the Jewish holidays? Did you have kosher -- kosher food?

A: We -- kosher. Kosher was in every Jewish home before the war. We went holidays with the father together to the synagogue. My father was a little --you know at the time was shtiebel, a shtiebel, not a synagogue. Was a lot of shtiebels. My father was a little cantor in the shtiebel.

Q: A cantor in the --? Okay.

A: Yeah. He davened for the chomet where you stay and daven.

Q: Above in the choir. From the balcony?

A: Yeah, he was a little cantor.

Q: Yes.

A: Not a big cantor, but a little cantor. We were going with the father to the synagogue. During the week, we didn't go. My father was not too religious. But he kept Jewishness, kosher and all kind of things. My mother was home.

Q: What language did your family speak?

A: Jewish.

Q: You spoke Yiddish?

A: Yiddish.

Q: Did you also learn Polish?

A: Yeah. In the school we learned Polish. When I went to the -- in the beginning I went to the Cheder. You know the Cheder?

Q: Yes, before the bar mitzvah?

A: Yeah. A rabbi, you know. We went to the Cheder and they were teaching us over there everything in Yiddish. But later when I went to the Polish school, we spoke only Polish.

Q: Did you know other languages as you grew up?

A: In Poland?

Q: Yes.

A: Yiddish and Polish. That's it.

Q: Your parents, your brothers all spoke Yiddish and Polish?

A: Yeah, Yiddish and Polish, yeah.

Q: How long did you live in Warsaw?

A: I was a kid. Then we moved to Radom.

Q: You were, what? Five years old, six years old, when you moved?

A: Approximately. Maybe four or five years.

Q: Very young?

A: Yeah.

Q: So okay, you moved to Radom?

A: Radom.

Q: You wouldn't know why your parents moved to Radom then? Was it for business reasons or were there any problems in Warsaw? You were too young?

A: I wouldn't know.

Q: The world wasn't too bad then. Okay, so your father continues being a manufacturer of shoes in Radom? The same business?

A: Yeah, he manufactured shoes.

Q: Yeah and your mother continued running the house?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: And you?

A: What to do in the house. No water, no ----, want some cake?

Q: Sure, sure.

A: We haven't got running water. We haven't got toilets. We haven't got anything.

Q: You're living in an apartment building?

A: In an apartment, yeah.

Q: And it's in Radom that you first went to school?

A: Radom, yes.

Q: You went to public school?

A: No, first I went to Cheder.

Q: Cheder?

A: And then to public school.

Q: Do you remember how old you were when you went to school?

A: I think I was seven years old.

Q: Seven years old. It's a good age to go to school. What did you want to be when you grew up? When you were seven years old, going on ten?

A: I didn't got in my mind, nothing.

Q: Nothing.

A: It's not like today when you say what you want to be. Nothing. The only thing when I stopped going to school, my brother was already -- my parents went with him to a tailor.

Q: This is Eli?

A: Eli, yeah. They give him to a doneschneider. That means a ladies' tailor. So -- okay?

Q: Yeah, sure.

Q: When I saw my brother, sometimes he comes home he brings some money.

Q: Money.

A: Because back home if you made for a customer something, you take this coat or suit or something to the customer's home in a big box. Then he went before Shabbos, Friday, then he got a tip. He goes later, nobody gives him money any more. But he brought some tips so I liked that. So I said to myself, I'm going to be a tailor. Again also.

Q: That's when you decided?

A: Huh?

Q: That's when you decided. So you stopped going to school and then you apprenticed?

A: Yeah. I went -- my father and mother -- they didn't go with me to an apprentice like with my brother. I went by myself always. I always was by myself.

Q: Did your parents have other plans for you?

A: Huh?

Q: Did they have other plans?

A: No.

Q: So they were happy that you two were going to --?

A: Before, I helped a little bit so when my father manufactured shoes, I helped a little bit home, to help my father. Then I went by myself to an apprentice, to a ladies' tailor. And I went to this ladies' tailor, you know an apprentice, you have to clean the floor, you have to go shopping with them. When they have a kid, you have to raise the kid. It wasn't so easy. So I would stay for a while and then I said it's not for me. I cannot learn too much because I have to do other housework. So I looked for somebody else. I looked for somebody else and I did find Yanka Fishman, a ladies' tailor. This was my in-law.

Q: Future father-in-law?

A: Yeah. So I went to him and I was asking if he needs somebody. He said yes and I stayed there for a while and I got to know this Hameecha, you know what --?

Q: Yes. _____.

- A: He was a ____
- Q: A cousin.
- A: Yeah, to the Fishman, to Yanka Fishman. His mother, Hameecha's mother and my mother-in-law were sisters.
- Q: Okay, so he was a nephew?
- A: Yeah. This house what I lived in was built by my mother-in-law's brother. At the time, I didn't know him. He lived in Germany, in Dusseldorf. He was at the time, in Dusseldorf, a big shot. He was the _____. You know what a payten is, wallpaper.
- Q: Yeah. In Dusseldorf, a rich city.
- A: Yeah, he was the _____. He was there and he supported two sisters in Radom. Hameecha's mother and my mother-in-law.
- Q: Future mother-in-law. Because you were still young at this time? When did you start working for the Fishmans?
- A: For Fishman?
- Q: Yes.
- A: I think I was already nine years old.
- Q: Nine years old. You liked it better there?
- A: I liked it better but the point was -- Yanka Fishman got the daughter, you know.
- Q: Yeah, yeah. You liked this daughter?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Pretty?
- A: Huh?
- Q: Pretty?
- A: First of all, she went to school at the time. We start talking -- the only thing was -- not in my in-law's home but downstairs, Hameecha's mother, she got that place, an apartment. She got also in the front, a store. So when Hameecha, my friend, I was always there, I was never home. Sometimes I slept there and together from Fishman's daughter comes down to the tanta.
- Q: The aunt?

- A: Aunt, yeah. And we met over there. Knowing or not knowing. We start loving each other. Now we didn't know at the time.
- Q: You're still young. She liked you?
- A: Yeah. I liked her and she liked--- But it wasn't known at the time.
- Q: Right.
- A: So we played around like kids.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: I was staying for I don't know how many years. Three or four years by this Fishman. You have to put this together.
- Q: Sure, oh sure.
- A: Then I did find out and we got --sometimes we got a date with mine -- the girl, my wife.
- Q: Your future wife, whose name was Hannah, right?
- A: Hannah Taube. We called her Taube. In Polish they call the Tola.
- Q: Tola, right.
- A: So sometimes we meet downstairs without knowing that -- like kids, you know.
- Q: Yeah, nothing planned.
- A: Not I have a place to be there. Because was Hameecha, my friend and we met...She came down there, we talked, nothing happened. So later on I said to myself, Yanka Fishman got a son. He worked for his father. Hameecha, you know, my friend, the cousin, the uncle, he worked there too and I'm a stranger there. I didn't learn too much. I didn't learn too much so one day I went to Yanka Fishman and I said, Mr. Fishman, I cannot stay here. He said, why? I said because I don't learn too much. The son and you, Hameecha there and I'm the last one.
- Q: Yeah.
- A: So I said I have to go look for something better. He admires this what I said. He liked it. He said okay. So I went -- at the time I knew already a little bit -- I went to another tailor by the name of Itzrek Schneider.
- Q: Good name to be a tailor.
- A: Huh?
- Q: Good tailor name.

- A: Yeah, Itzrek Schneider. He was the top tailor in town, Itzrek Schneider. Fishman, he didn't care because he got support from his ---
- Q: From his brother-in-law.
- A: Brother-in-law. The brother-in-law sent money, pension for sisters. He built this house for them. For holidays, he sent double, double money for holidays. Is this important what I'm telling you?
- Q: Sure, sure, sure.
- A: But mine in-law's sister, downstairs, Hameecha's mother, she got Hameecha and she got Meyer and she got, what was her name? I think she's alive. She got one, two, three kids. A girl and two boys. No, she got four kids and an elder daughter. The elder daughter was a little bit impaired, I don't know. Yitta, oh Yitta. She was impaired a little bit. Then comes to -- she couldn't get -- you know before the war, you had to have money -- how you call it, diary, dairy? To give, you know...
- Q: Diary.
- A: The girl has to give some money. Diaric?
- Q: Well, diary is when you write something in. You're talking about giving money?
- A: Yeah. Let's say...
- Q: It's like an allowance.
- A: Let's say when a father has money...
- Q: Dowry, dowry, dowry.
- A: Dowry.
- Q: Dowry, right. When you want to get married, right?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Okay.
- A: So this guy in Dusseldorf, he took care of everything.
- Q: Of all the girls?
- A: When this Hameecha's sister and they matched her up with somebody, the guy in Germany, the uncle in Germany, sent 10,000 zloty for a dowry. She couldn't get married without dowry because she was a little bit, how you call it?
- Q: Well, impaired, I guess, is a good way of putting it.

A: So -- and she got married, he didn't send the money to them. He had a trustee in Radom. A rich man by the name of _____. _____ He had a big house. He sent him the money because when he going to send him the money, they're going to spend the money. So he send to him the money. When this daughter, they matched up with a baker's son, the guy, this donseka and comes to the wedding, he gives the money to him, to the married man. On top of this, he sent a gold watch with a chain. He sent a lot of money, okay. So she got married.

Q: You're more interested...

A: Huh?

Q: You're interested in Taube though.

A: Yeah, I didn't care.

Q: Now Taube, how many brothers and sisters did Taube have?

A: Taube has Fischel, one, Taube, my wife, Butcha, Ech____, a son and one son they got in Germany with his uncle. He went to this uncle and he stayed there.

Q: So there were five altogether?

A: There was another one. Because -- it was Sc____, Sc____ How many kids, six?

Q: It sounds like six. And she was in the middle?

A: Taube?

Q: Yeah.

A: No, there were two marriages there.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: My father-in-law's wife died. He got with her first, Sch ____ Ech____ and Ar____. He was in Germany, Aroom. Three. Then he married a sister from the wife who died.

Q: And she's the oldest of those?

A: Taube was from the other, the oldest. In the other marriage.

Q: Oldest of three?

A: Yeah.

Q: She was born in Radom?

A: Radom.

Q: You said earlier, she was born in 1917?

A: Yes, 1917.

Q: All right. And you had your eyes on her?

A: I had eyes on her but it wasn't so easy for me. Because it was a lot of money involved. She got a dowry to pay to ____ the brother sent for every kid, for every daughter, he sent 10,000 zlotys.

Q: And she was going to school, too. Right?

A: Yeah.

Q: Did her parents have plans for her to be -- to go on educating --?

A: No. she was -- when she grew up, they send her to, how you call it? She went to be, to make monograms and draperies. By machine, by hand...

Q: A seamstress?

A: No.

Q: More than a seamstress. She'd be an interior ---?

A: She was a ...

Q: Draperies would be an interior decorator. But monograms, that's something more specialized.

A: She was specialized in embroidering.

Q: Embroidering, yeah, yeah. She had gone to public school and then, and then --?

A: She finished school.

Q: She finished school. Did she go to high school?

A: No.

Q: No, okay.

A: She finished public school.

Q: So she's working as an embroiderer and you're working for Mr. Schneider?

A: Yeah. I was at the time with Schneider because I left Yanka Fishman and I was... Ancha Goldstein worked for Schneider.

Q: That's where you met Ancha?

- A: Yeah. No, I knew him...
- Q: You knew him but now you got to know him good?
- A: Yeah, yeah. We worked together.
- Q: But you're still living -- are you living at home now, when you're working for the Schneiders?
- A: Yes. Yeah, I was living more by Hameecha, my friend. I wasn't interested at home. Because here I'm interested because I fall in love with this girl.
- Q: That's right that's right. And you have to be friends with her cousin?
- A: Yeah, we were friends. I slept there with him. On top of it, he was --lung, sick. I shouldn't have slept with him in bed together.
- Q: Because you might catch something?
- A: Yeah, but I did.
- Q: I have one question I wanted to ask you at this point. As you were growing up in Poland, when you went to school and then when you were working, did you have occasion to work with, or meet, or be friends with, non-Jews in Poland.
- A: Yeah, when I went to school. I got Polish students, friends.
- Q: So you had non-Jewish friends as well?
- A: Yeah, not really friends.
- Q: Not close friends?
- A: It wasn't like today. No, not close friends.
- Q: Did you ever experience any kind of anti-Semitism?
- A: Oh, yeah, that's how I was born with.
- Q: Do you remember any from Warsaw or everything you remember is from Radom?
- A: From Radom, from school?
- Q: Yeah, from school or from business?
- A: I got one guy who always protect me in school. A strong guy, I have to pay him.
- Q: You have to pay for protection?

- A: Yeah. For protection. Was a Polak. But later on I got a lot of friends, Polish friends. When I was already on my own. I _____. I got a lot Polish customers.
- Q: Yes. Customers. So your customers were satisfied whether they were Jewish or non-Jewish?
- A: They were satisfied. Oh yeah, they were very satisfied.
- Q: You were never attacked by Poles?
- A: Oh, yeah.
- Q: You were attacked?
- A: Yeah, lots of times, yeah.
- Q: Physically, I mean were you ever --?
- A: Physically, with sticks, with stones, with everything. We haven't got so easy in Poland. Why we stay there, I don't know.
- Q: In school, were the teachers hostile or were they decent, nice?
- A: No. In Cheder was a rabbi.
- Q: Of course, there you don't have to worry about that.
- A: In the Polish school, there were...I think I was one Jew in a Polish school. Only one. But I got over there, a friend or two. It wasn't too bad. But on the streets, you're not sure. A Jew, you know, hostile. So where are we -- to go back to...
- Q: You're working for the --Schneider. And you're very close friends with Hameecha and with Taube.
- A: With Taube, that's right.
- Q: Yes, and you're probably still a teenager.
- A: But when I got...I don't know how old I was. This was, I think, in 19 --, not exactly. When I learned a little bit by Schneider, I was already, almost a tailor. So I said to myself, I can make more money when I go back to Warsaw. From the smaller towns, if you went to Warsaw, you made more money. So I said I'm going to Warsaw.
- Q: Alone?
- A: All alone. My mother got a cousin there who was a dymond _____, tailor.
- Q: For ladies?
- A: Ladies' tailor. So I went to him. I went to him and he hired me. He has also a daughter there

which his son-in-law worked for him too. So I was better than him at the time. Are we going straight?

Q: Yeah, sure, yeah. We're going straight.

A: So over there, I worked and I was eating there too. You know, you work and you eat and they deduct the money. This guy didn't pay me every week. He said when I go home, he's going to pay me, he's going to give me the money. The money accumulate and then one day I went down to town, in Warsaw, and I go on the street eating an apple, whom do you think I met?

Q: Who?

A: Moishe Krol!

Q: Moishe Krol, your best friend from Radom?

A: Right.

Q: And what is he --?

A: He was working in Warsaw.

Q: He was working in Warsaw doing --?

A: He _____.

Q: Yeah, small world.

A: Yeah. We met each other and he went eating in a restaurant, a private restaurant, like in a home. They cook for you. So I quit from my -- where I worked. No more eating there and I met with Moishe Krol and we went together, in a restaurant. Okay. Until we have to go up -- when the season ends, we have to go home after this. You know, the tailor -- ladies' tailor business was season.

Q: Seasonal work.

A: A winter and a summer season. So when I said to my boss, I'm going to go home this and this day and I want the money. I haven't the saichel, no, no -- brains, to ask every week for the money. Not accumulate.

Q: Yeah, you're still very young.

A: Yeah, first time away from home. He gave me a vexel. You know what a vexel is? A check.

Q: A check, yeah.

A: So I had to go home. I went home. First of all I went to ____ to buy some presents. When you go home, you have to bring some presents.

Q: Sure, sure.

A: So I went into a store and looked for what can I buy for, you know, for---

Q: Nietz.

A: I bought a -- beads, a chain. Well, in Poland before the war, the -- you had --when they saw a greenie like me, the price went up. I said I haven't got so much money. Whatever. How much you have? I said I have so much and much. They said, okay, take it. So I bought this present for my wife, was a girl friend.

Q: She's not your wife yet.

A: No, no.

Q: This is for Taube.

A: No, it's a long time. And I bought for my mother and I bought for myself shirts and I bought that -- Fishman told me he needs a pi____, you know what a pi __- is, a m _____. In Radom you cannot get it. So I went and I bought for him a m _____. I arrived in Radom. He took the m _____, he didn't pay for the m _____. I give my wife the present. I give my mother the present, I bought myself presents and I was in Radom, thank God. Back to Hameecha.

Q: That's where you stayed?

A: Yeah, after the season.

Q: Yes.

A: Almost -- I was living there almost. My mother didn't saw me too much.

Q: Do you remember how old you were when you were doing this?

A: I think I remember the year when I went to Warsaw. I think it was 1929, I think.

Q: Close to the Depression?

A: 1929, I think.

Q: So you were --?

A: So we went back together, Moishe Krol and me. We were friends. So when I came back from Warsaw, this guy who gave me this check, he didn't pay.

Q: And he's a member of the family? He's a relative.

A: He was a member, yeah. He didn't pay. My mother start writing him letters and he didn't pay. Here I have the money, the check, worked so long and I haven't got paid nothing. So I got friends in Radom. I think he's still alive in Canada. Moishe Kirschenbaum. He was a little-- a

party man, you know. He sold to the tailors in Radom, cotton, all kinds of -- what you need...

Q: Fabrics?

A: No, not fabrics. What you need for tailoring. So he was a little bit more aware than me. He knows a little bit more than me. I went to Moishe, I said, Moishe, look I have a check here. He didn't pay. He said he has to pay for work. You worked for him. He said, he can collect the money if I pay him 50% on the check. I said okay, I haven't got nothing anyway. I think he collected some money. Not all the money. He took half and I got half. I was satisfied. Now I'm Radom right. I'm Radom and I start working for another tailor by the name _____. I went to work for him and by the same time, I went to get a degree. In Poland if you want to go for yourself, you have to have a -- they call it _____. That means a permit. If you have to have a permit to go for yourself, you have to know something. So I went to a place where they examine you. I think the name was _____ in Polish. This was _____. So I went over there and she gave you to make a coat, all by yourself. Suit, _____ purse. If you finish over there you have to know from scratch, everything. So I went there, I passed. I passed and I applied for a ...

Q: A certificate or permit.

A: A certificate or permit to work.

Q: To be an officially recognized tailor. For the first time?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: But I got the permit, but I didn't go for myself yet.

Q: No, but you had the right to.

A: Yes. I did sometimes, private, you know.

Q: Yeah.

A: Somebody heard that I worked in Warsaw. _____ I could tailor, things like that. They came to me so I start making something at home. But I got the permit and I was waiting. I'm still with Taube going to _____.

Q: Friends, yeah, yeah.

A: Meanwhile, the guy who married Hameecha's sister got the 10,000 zlotys. He got a brother, also they have a bakery. If they have a bakery, you know they're better off than everybody else, a bakery.

Q: Sure, sure.

A: This brother start collecting with Taube.

- A: Oh.
- Q: Yeah. You have time?
- A: Sure.
- A: Sundays, he come with the horse and carriage. You know, like a baker. He took the parents for a ride.
- Q: So he's courting, he's courting Taube.
- A: Yeah. He wants Taube. First of all, the 10,000 zlotys, a golden watch and everything...
- Q: Go pretty far.
- A: Yeah. When he arrived Sunday to pick up the parents, Taube disappeared -- with me. We went out. They shouldn't see it. Is this important to the --?
- Q: Sure, 'cause I'm writing an ID of Taube so this is why I'm taking the notes.
- A: So Taube, she didn't want to know him.
- Q: I mean how you get married and when you get married, that's very important, very important.
- A: The point is the parents, her parents, they didn't...
- Q: They didn't want you.
- A: They don't want me.
- Q: They wanted somebody else?
- A: Well, he's a baker and he has a ---. Comes to the house, he's a very -- well I'm an apprentice and I was very skinny, very skinny and that's after I'm sick, like my friend, Hameecha. Also the lungs.
- Q: Lungs.
- A: Lungs was the terrible thing. I wasn't sick.
- Q: No, you weren't sick but you were little?
- A: Yeah, I was small, skinny. She didn't care, Taube, what I said. I was coming there for years. It took a long time. I think it took 13 years.
- Q: Thirteen years of courtship?
- A: Yeah.

Q: When were you finally --?

A: You know I finished... It finished out okay. I was eleven.

Q: You remembered the years exactly.

A: I was married in '39.

Q: 1939, '38, '38.

A: Now comes the problem. The problem was the guy in Germany sent already 10,000 zlotys to this donseka _ because every girl that was going to married, the mother wrote crying for this brother always. He sent over 10,000 zlotys to this donseka, a friend, the trustee. Like it was with the others.

Q: Like with the others, yeah.

A: And she was not ready to give me the 10,000 zlotys. An apprentice, who is he? He is sick, he's skinny, all kind of things they talk about me. So the money was sent to this donseka. When they saw that nothing to it, Taube wouldn't care for nobody, just for me. Then we went out officially, already. We met in this house here by Hameecha.

Q: Hameecha's house.

A: She knows that I'm coming in the evening and she comes down. We talk, we went out, we talked, we went out, but nothing serious. Then when they saw had nothing to it and we talked about -- no. I went and I saved money without anybody telling and I bought a little diamond ring for Taube. I went to a jeweler and I bought a present.

Q: When you get married, do the members of the family come to the wedding? I mean you're getting married -- this is obviously a love marriage. You're marrying for love.

A: Yeah.

Q: This is not an arranged marriage.

A: When I was in Warsaw and I was writing to her letters and I was so much in love, terrible, I don't know why. Then we were talking about wedding. The other guy is out of the picture already.

Q: The baker, the baker is lost, a loser?

A: Yeah. She's out with it. Taube doesn't want nobody, just me.

(Side B, Tape 1)

Q: So you and Taube are looking for an apartment? You're engaged to be married...

A: We find an apartment... Nothing yet.

Q: Not engaged?

A: No.

Q: Not engaged but close to it.

A: Yeah. We find an apartment on the _____. Radom

Q: Okay.

A: You have _____?

Q: Yeah, I'll find it on the map when I get back

A: Yeah?

Q: Yeah.

A: _____.

Q: All right.

A: And then we got married. The wedding was at her mother's, at the home.

Q: Full Jewish wedding?

A: A wedding.

Q: But no dowry?

A: No money. But she called me in before the wedding in her bedroom, my mother-in-law. She showed to me a golden watch and a chain which her son sent for me for the wedding. When I'm going to get married, I'm going to get the watch. I haven't got nothing. The money, donseka has the money. When Hitler came to power, the uncle from this...

Q: Dusseldorf.

A: --was writing to them letter before. They have to support themselves because he has to go away from Dusseldorf. When Hitler comes, he has to leave. He left for -- I know where he went, he run away.

Q: He left Germany?

A: He left Germany.

Q: But he didn't come to Poland?

- A: No.
- Q: No. So the money stopped coming?
- A: The money and she was crying and he said, should go to donseka and take some money. Because was 10,000 zlotys there. So she went and took money. Donseka give it to her. The point is I haven't got the watch. I haven't got the money, nothing
- Q: But you have Taube?
- A: Yeah. That was more important.
- Q: That's right, that's right.
- A: My mother was angry. They did me a favor at the time and they went with me to the--how you call it --who writes notice....
- Q: A notary, a notary.
- A: A notary. They said -- they gave me 2,000 zlotys on the house. How you call it, not the money.
- Q: No, no. It's a...
- A: They make me an owner of a part...
- Q: Share, it's a share.
- A: A share of the house. We went to the general attorney or something, I don't know, from the town. I signed, I have ripertick... how you call it --ripertick.
- Q: Partition?
- A: No. Let's say when you have a house and you write me over money a new house, how you call this?
- Q: Let me think. There's a legal term for that. I mean it's not the same as power of attorney.
- A: No.
- Q: Well, we'll investigate this after the interview.
- A: So she wrote me over I should have from the house, 2,000 zlotys. Or I don't remember yet. So we went to this lawyer who works for the government. I don't know how you call it. General attorney or something.
- Q: Procurator?
- A: A rayant or something? It's not important.

- Q: Not important, no.
- A: Okay, I didn't care too much. The war broke out already.
- Q: Now you mentioned Hitler before. Were you paying attention to what was going on in Germany? Did people talk about Hitler and the Nazis?
- A: Oh yeah, oh yeah.
- Q: What was the feeling during these years?
- A: Not too much feeling.
- Q: Not feeling?
- A: It's not going to happen here.
- Q: You weren't --?
- A: It was Germany.
- Q: Germany.
- A: Germany. Here is Poland. Different.
- Q: Germany, Poland, different but not great. I mean ---
- A: We knew. The anti-Semitism grew very much.
- Q: In Poland?
- A: Yes. Of course, I lived on the main street. Zeromskiego was the main street. Like later on they changed the name to R_____.
- Q: When the Germans came?
- A: Across the street was always an organization, anti-Semites. They show you pictures, the way a Jew sits in a wagon, a carriage. The Polak pulls him, he pulls him like the Japanese, the rickshaws.
- Q: The rickshaw.
- A: The rickshaw, yeah. In the Polak comes down the sweat from his face and the Jew sits in this car and the Polak schlepped him.
- Q: But you never got to sit in one of those rickshaws?
- A: No, nobody, just ---.

Q: Just propaganda?

A: Propaganda. It also starts at the stores. _____.

Q: Don't buy by Jews.

A: Don't buy -- yeah. In every store, they were staying and watching. A Polish customer shouldn't go in. It started very bad.

Q: Yeah. And what about the fear of war? Did you suspect that there might be a war? That Germany might come to Poland?

A: No, we didn't expect this. But later on we heard that the Germans are going to go to war with Poland. First they declare the war with England. You know, England, Germany and England.

Q: Well first they go into Austria. This is why I was asking the question. They go into Austria, they go into Czechoslovakia...

A: They took Austria, Czechoslovakia, they took all these countries. Then without knowing, they attack Poland. I was living over there..

Q: In Radom?

A: In Radom.

Q: With your wife?

A: With my wife and I got already the baby.

Q: You had one baby already, Max. Born in --?

A: Max. Just one.

Q: Born in the summer of 1939?

A: It was summertime, yeah. Then my brother got a call---

Q: Called into the army?

A: To the army.

Q: This is Herschel?

A: Herschel.

Q: Yeah. What was he doing during these years, your brother, Herschel? Had he gotten married?

A: No.

- Q: He didn't get married. What did he do when he finished school?
- A: He finished school. He helped my father when he was in business and then it was too late for him to go to an apprentice, he became a painter.
- Q: Okay, so he became a painter. In Radom?
- A: In Radom. He was a painter in Radom. He did okay. He was a nice guy.
- Q: Did he serve in the army before 1939?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: One year, two years?
- A: Two years, he was in the army. My mother cried and cried and cried. Especially they took him to the horses. He never saw a horse. He never was near a horse. My mother was a little bit the heavy side but she went down, down, down, skinny. Herschel -- the only thing was Herschel. The war, Hitler -- Herschel went to war. She went with him to Warsaw when the --.
- Q: When he was called up?
- A: Called up.
- Q: What did he want to be? He was a painter. Is that what he wanted to be, a painter?
- A: He don't want to be but he became a painter.
- Q: Became a painter because he had to make a living?
- A: It's the easiest way to make money.
- Q: No wife, no girlfriend?
- A: No, no.
- Q: And then he's called into the army? And he's just an ordinary soldier, he's not an officer?
- A: No, he was a ulan, army--.
- Q: Cavalry. What about your oldest brother? What was he doing during these years?
- A: My oldest brother, it's on tape now, what I'm saying?
- Q: Oh,, sure, sure.
- A: Can you stop a minute?
- Q: I will. Now did Eli get married before you?

- A: Yeah.
- Q: You remember when he got married?
- A: He got married two years before me.
- Q: Did he have children too?
- A: One child.
- Q: One child. Son or daughter?
- A: Daughter.
- Q: And he's in Radom when the Germans come?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: The Germans come in 1939. You're in Radom living with your wife in the apartment --?
- A: And he was living across the street, on the same street.
- Q: With his wife?
- A: With his wife, with a kid.
- Q: And Herschel's in the Polish cavalry and then he comes back after the defeat?
- A: No, when we were living already together in Zeromskiego my brother went --.
- Q: To the army?
- A: In 1939...No, to the Russian side.
- Q: Right. But after the Germans came?
- A: Yeah, after the Germans. He run away with the friends.
- Q: Right. And then he goes to Slonin?
- A: Yeah, right, okay.
- Q: So you stay --?
- A: I stay in Radom.
- Q: What happens after the Germans come in?

A: I got a sign outside my place...

Q: You have your own shop?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you're in business for yourself now?

A: Business for myself. Donschneider and so and so, on all sides. Is a Rosenblat. I worked over there, the Germans came in and they want to have made coats, suits, you know. I worked for them. No money. But it was hard to get already, to eat something, Sometimes they brought me something, a bread or something. They don't pay for the labor. I'm staying and it was 19 ---. The ghetto was opened in 1941, I think.

Q: Yeah. You lived outside the ghetto?

A: It was not a ghetto yet.

Q: No. But I mean the area you lived?

A: The area was Zeromskiego.

Q: That's a mixed -----?

A: Then the Germans when they came in, they named Reich-----. I still worked in my apartment. We heard that they going to evacuate everybody from the Reich -----. No Jews in the Reich _____. So my kid brother went first. They come in --out you go. They took the kid. Where does he go? He goes to my parents.

Q: Is that inside the ghetto?

A: Not yet the ghetto.

Q: But I mean, in the area?

A: In the area but not in the Reich _____. So he went to my parents. My parents haven't got a big apartment but was enough for him to stay. I still in Reich _____ in _____. One day, three SS men come in. Come in the house and they said to me -- and I was without the jacket, without anything, my wife went out shopping, she's not home, the kid is in the other room, in a carriage, I bought a beautiful carriage and the kid is sleeping in the carriage. When they come in, I said I have here bolt cloth for the Germans, ____, out you go. No jacket, no nothing so I went to the other room. I want to take my kid, he said, take the dreck with you. You know what means -- shit -- with you but not the carriage. Everything has to stay in the room. So I took the kid on my arm. I think was three months old at the time or maybe four. So I took the kid on my arm and I went out. On the way out, my wife comes back. She bought something, groceries. I said Taube, no more apartment. You have nowhere to go. We stay on the street, where should we go? Nowhere to go. My mother, my brother, no apartment, to go to her. She didn't like the idea but we haven't got nowhere to go. So we went to her mother. Don't forget she has got nothing and I haven't got nothing.

Q: Had she been working, your wife?

A: No.

Q: She'd just take care of the house?

A: Yeah.

Q: So you're back in the Fishman house?

A: Back to the Fishman house. We come up both with the kid. They weren't too happy but where should we go? It was terrible. Terrible the way they treat us. Their own daughter.

Q: But the Germans were worse?

A: Then he's a ladies' tailor and I'm a ladies' tailor. When a customer comes in...

Q: You're competing?

A: No. He's the boss.

Q: Yeah. So you lost your shop?

A: I lost everything. So then I have to look for something to _____. By the way, can you stop a minute?

Q: Sure, sure. So we were talking about your brother Eli has moved into your parents' house and you've moved into your mother-in-law's house. Now has the war affected your parents? Your father and your mother, are they still working? Or before the war ---?

A: Before they take them in, he was working. Not as a manufacturer but he was a cutter from leather.

Q: Okay. So your father cut leather for the ---?

A: Shoes.

Q: Shoes, okay.

Q: Soles, the hard leather. He made okay. He did okay.

Q: Then what happens in 1939? What happens to his business?

A: In '39 he was still living in the house in his apartment.

Q: Still working?

A: Yeah, still working. He made better when he was working for somebody than he was a

manufacture. He made my mother a beautiful coat. He made for himself a cloth coat with inner lining fur, you know. With a leather collar, he was doing okay. But when Hitler came in, everything is gone, nobody works. We had a rough time. People were dying in the street, hunger. Somebody dropped dead in the street, you covered it with a piece of paper and that's it.

Q: How did you eat then? After the Germans come in? I mean what was the --?

A: Me, right, me?

Q: Yes.

A: When I was -- when the ghetto opened, everybody has to go into the ghetto. I couldn't find a room for nothing. At the time, I was working for the Germans.

Q: As a tailor?

A: As a tailor. Coats, suits --.

Q: Fishman, Mr. Fishman also working for the Germans?

A: No, no. He didn't care to work for nobody. He got money from uncle.

Q: But you needed the work to get food?

A: Yeah, I haven't got where to go in the ghetto so I went to the Judenrat, you know. Opened up a Judenrat and the Judenrat took care of the SS. So I went over there. I haven't got where to go. They didn't listen, they didn't listen. So I went to a customer of mine, a German. I said I cannot work any more because I haven't got where to work. I got already a few coats to go I cannot finish and I haven't got where to go. So they went up to the Judenrat. When they went up to the Judenrat, they listen to them. To me, they didn't listen. They looked up a place. You had maybe, you got interviews in the ghetto, sch _____. You heard of Sch_____?

Q: I certainly didn't interview him, no.

A: So the Judenrat took me over there to a junky place and I got a little shack over there. The owner was a butcher. He got in the front of his property _____ another shack. They told him he has to give me his shack and he has to go to the other shack and I have to move in over there. It was not nice but if he would give me the other little shack, he has a wife and a kid. He's a butcher because he was dangerous. Dangerous, the butchers were dangerous at the time. So, I got the shack. Terrific.

Q: So you and your wife --?

A: Wait a minute. I got the shack. Meyer Furgelman, we matched them up. They got married with his wife Georgia Furgelman.

Q: So you and your wife matched them?

A: Matched them, right. My father and my brother, they had to go out too. So when I got this

room, one room, and a little kitchen -- so my mother and father they haven't got where to go. I have to take them in, right. They have to have two beds because they wouldn't sleep together. They got children together but they wouldn't show that they sleep together.

Q: What about Eli, where did he go?

A: Eli went to somebody over there. Eli went to the ghetto, to somebody. Terrible. My mother and father -- no -- what I'm do with Meyer Furgelman and his wife? In my apartment, what I got, me, my wife, my kid in. I haven't got any furniture but I managed to have a sofa. So the room was mother and father, two beds. They got a niece, my mother's sister's kid.

Q: Your cousin?

A: A cousin, yeah. She survived. The kid was a young kid and they have to take it because the mother and father got killed. She has to take the kid. She has to take the kid with them. So in the front of the room, two beds, my mother was sleeping with the kid and my father in the other bed. We ---made carrying around crushed. Meyer Furgelman like here has an iron bed, it stays at the wall to the right. Me, I have a sofa, stays to the left. My kid, I have to look for a bed for the kid, a small little bed. Should stay close to the sofa. So I went and bought, I don't know how I got it, how you call this, made from straw, a little bed, how you call this?

A: How do I call a bed made of straw?

Q: Bamboo or something like that.

Q: It's a woven bed.

A: So this little bed stays from my sofa. No room to go in. But I have customers, a German, and I told him. They said they're not going to go in there because typhus, at the time was typhus. A lot of lice and things like this and bugs and all kinds of things. My kid was sleeping in this little bed. Every morning he wake up bitten the whole body. Marks from the, I don't know how you call this swanzen. They're on the wall, the walls and everywhere. The customer, my customers that went into the German police and they said they're not able to go in to fit because they are afraid of typhus. The police should give me a permission to go to them. This, for me was good. The police gave me a paper. The time allowed to go to fit to them. Because you cannot walk on the street because at the time you were wearing the ... Star, the armband.

Q: Yeah. From the time of the ghetto, you were wearing the armband? You can only stay in the ghetto. You couldn't go out without permission? And the Germans don't want to come in?

A: No. Also when you go out, you don't have to walk on the sidewalk. You have to walk with the horses.

Q: Yeah, in the road?

A: The traffic.

Q: So you got permission to go outside to fit?

A: I got the permission to go outside to fit.

Q: You had to wear the armband?

A: If you covered this and they catch you ---.

Q: You're shot. So you had to wear it.

A: I have to wear it, yeah. And go middle in the street. I went to fit. Instead I have to fit once or twice, I went to fit three, four times. Every time, they give you something, breads, all kinds --.

Q: Who were these, Germans?

A: Germans, yes. Some of them, not all of them. Some were very nasty.

Q: And the food that you got supported your wife, your child, everybody?

A: The whole, the whole, everybody in the house. I risked my life. On the way, when I have the coat on my arms, like this, see, underneath I was holding a bread or something else.

Q: You smuggled the food back into the ghetto?

A: So if they catch me, I would be dead, you know. When you got to -- for fitting -- in the middle of the street, when the SS goes by, you have take off your hat. So I took off the hat. I have to take off a lot of times. One day, they called me over. To hell with that. Why I took off the mitzen, the hat. I don't know what to say. I knew my friend, he was asking me. One, two, you're not my friend. So they don't want me to take off the hat. Next time I take off the hat, I got the same trouble. Why didn't you take off the hat? The beating and the _____ we were used already to it. But the main thing, I'm coming home, risk my life and I brought something to eat. They didn't pay you but they give you what -- old bread or something like this, they give you. That was good enough. We stayed in this apartment till 1942. Meyer Furgelman, his wife, my mother and father and my niece, my little girl, me and my wife and my kid. Then comes an order. The Germans are going to open a shop. SS and _____. Everybody from the meister, I'm a meister.

Q: You're a master.

A: Moishe Krol was a meister. Moishe Rafilovich was a meister. My brother was a meister.

Q: Master tailors. They wanted master tailors?

A: Yeah, to work for the Germans. The carpenters, dressmakers, shirt makers, all kind of trades. Supposed to go in this shop.

Q: So the two Moishes, Eli and you?

A: Huh?

Q: Eli, your brother, you and the two Moishes, Moishe Krol, Moishe Rafilovich?

A: Yeah, they're masters too.

Q: So the four of you --?

A: Not the four but others too.

Q: Of the ones we knew?

A: First of all, we have to go and register. We went in to register and they said, a Jewish girl was sitting there, the registrar. I have a wife and a kid. I'm going to get permission to go in. First of all they took the --to make the shop, the house -- they took from mine brother-in-law, Fishman...

Q: This is in the Fishman house?

A: No, not the Fishman house.

Q: But his property?

A: We got married and he got a house in the other -- on the Rimik so they took his house...They took away his house.

Q: So they made a factory out of this house/?

A: Right. Arlihs said, my wife and kid, Meyer Furgelman, and also me and Lola his wife. My father cannot register. My father stayed in the shack, as I told you. We stayed over there and then they said.

Q: So you lived and you worked in the same house, after you registered?

A: No, no. I still was in _____ with my father and mother. But later they give in the back of the shop -- this house was connected, the Polish side, you cannot go out here but they give us in the back, an apartment. Also a Jewish apartment where we going to live. It was a three bedroom apartment. There was a lot of meisters, a lot of people. So we know that we going to stay here in this apartment. In the back we can go to work in the shop. At night, we go home, it's closed. We stay still in the shed. But later we went up to this apartment. Moishe Krol, Rafilovich and Mondelbaum and _____ he's in Chicago -- we all have this apartment. I have still my wife and kid. My father was in the shack. When comes the 1942, at night the main thing, everybody had camp. We were sitting home in this apartment. All of a sudden, we heard marching, soldiers into the ghetto. So we saw -- and lights went down. You can see a needle on the floor. When we saw this, we said, let's go into the shop. I take my kid and my wife, Moishe Krol, Moishe Rafilovich, we went outside. We had to go outside. We have to go outside. Meanwhile in the back was closed. We wanted to go into the shop. We come to the door on the shop, was already German police and the same _____, the Jewish men's tailors, meisters. You can go in. I can go in. Moishe Krol can go in. Laza _____, Moishe Rafilovich, no. No wife and kids. I can go in, not my wife. We start telling we have permission ____ Forget it. So what are we going to do? We went back home.

Q: So everybody went back?

A: Back to the same apartment. With all the wife and kid, nobody's going to go in, so we went back. We're sitting home and it's getting dangerous.

Q: This is still nighttime?

A: Right. I think twelve o'clock at night. We heard the shooting already.

Q: Do you remember what month?

A: 1942, what month --.

Q: Summertime?

A: It was still warm, yeah. Because my kid was wearing the shorts.

Q: That you showed me?

A: Yes. So we heard like a wall, killing, killing and killing and killing.

Q: You could hear shooting?

A: Yea, machine guns and everything. So we said to each other. Let's go to try and sneak into the back. Because I knew the house. So we went down again. We cannot sit home because they come in, they kill you. We went in, in the back, the windows are closed from the shop. Cannot go in. So we knocking on the door -- the windows, knocking on the windows. Then a guy comes by. The guy comes by, Shepsman was his name.

Q: Jewish, Jewish man?

A: Yeah, he was in the shop already. He worked for my uncle. For Mr. Fishman's brother. Mine in-law's a brother. He was a donsneider too. I said, Shepsman, open the window. He's afraid. Shepsman, you know me. Open the window. He's afraid. I said don't be afraid, open the window and nobody would know. You go away. He opened the window. He opened the window, we went in.

Q: All of you?

A: All of us, the whole bunch. We went in. We went to my room. They got their rooms. Was a few meisters in one room. Then we come -- before we went in, the guy in the front desk, also Jewish -- he comes running, screaming. You're not allowed, you cannot go in with the wife and the kids! I said who's telling me I cannot go in. If you can go in, you're not even a tailor and I cannot go in? He said, can you go somewhere to hide? I said, we can go hide. We went to the ruins in the back -- in the house in the back, basement --

Q: Where the junk is?

A: Junk. How can you stay here? I said forget it. We're going to our room. Oh, he was --. You

have nothing to say, I said. We are the meisters here. We come to the room. Moishe Rafilovich has two kids, twins. The most beautiful kids in town. Two beautiful girls. ____ has one kid. I have one kid. Moishe Krol has nothing yet because he comes from -- remember I told you he comes from the G____. When we came out --?

Q: Is Eli with you? Eli, your brother is he with you too?

A: No, he was separate.

Q: Separate, okay. So you're all in there, kids. Then my kid, put him on the floor to sleep. He was sleeping. We sitting. Then we saw the light because we can look out on the Polish side, the windows. We saw the soldiers marching. We saw the killing, we saw the machine guns, we saw everything.

Q: These were all Germans? Were there all Germans or were there non-Germans as well?

A: Germans and Volksdeutschen.

Q: Volksdeutschen. No others? No Poles, no Ukrainians?

A: No, Ukrainians was later. They do the killing. So we sitting. We are thinking we are safe because we are just on inside already. No. Meanwhile, the Judenrat, non-tailors -- I don't know if it's an excuse or not an excuse --they come into the shop too. The SS did find out they were hiding in the shop.

Q: The Judenrat came to hide in the shop?

A: Yeah. Non-tailors, the big shots, everybody came in to hide in the shop. We didn't know because we were upstairs in our room, in the rooms. All of a sudden, Moishe Rafilovich's brother, Meyer Rafilovich, he was a policeman, a Jewish police --

Q: He comes?

A: He comes up to the room, he said everybody out from the shop. Everybody out. I said we have permission. He said to Moishe, his brother, everybody out because they come up, they're going to kill everybody. We still didn't go.

Q: They're killing people outside already?

A: Outside they're killing already. Where should we go. Meyer Furgelman, who worked for me, he was there too. He comes again; they're coming and they're going to kill everybody. So we went. And the minute we went out, where we were going to go in the first place.

Tape 2.

Q: You've been running from the Germans and you've separated from your wife and your children and you never saw them again? Now you're clearing between the two rows of Germans?

A: So when we already come to this point, where the Germans, rows of SS and they send you one

way or the other way. Mostly they go the other way, But we didn't know, right is good or left is good. But we came in front of the SS, we saw across the street, a blackboard with chalk written down numbers. We didn't know what it means or something like this. We have our cards from the shop that we are meisters. You don't have to show them that. Forget it. They don't need any cards. They only looked at your face. They looked at your face and then you go right or left. Right is good or left is good, we didn't know. So we saw --we was staying together, the bunch without wives and kids. We saw which SS man he let through more people. So we went to his row. The cars with the meister doesn't mean a thing. They looked at your face, go. So we went. Where did we go -- a place was a leather factory, a Jewish leather factory.

Q: This is inside the big ghetto?

A: No. This was outside the ghetto. And the place, we were running. We didn't know where to go but we run and we saw people stay and fight. So we went into these people here, in the leather factory. _____ was the name, the leather factory. We stayed there and then what a human being is, like an animal, we were asking which is _____, good or bad? What's here? We think already, here you lost your wife and kids and everybody; you're asking if it's good or bad. We were staying here. What went down back there, we don't know. We staying in this factory. Before we come in, piles of people on the floor dead. We stay there till the light comes, daylight. From this people, they always came and they took out people, even from here. Why - -because they took them to the streets to clean up the dead. Because the street was full of deads. They have to bury them. Open up ditches and put them in. They didn't took us because we were the last ones over there. When the light comes on, we start marching. Where we marched, we didn't know. When we march, on the left side was a bunch of SS. Between the SS was also _____ and the name Shippes maybe you heard somebody, no. Shippes, he was the top. Sam _____ and _____ Fishman, an uncle of mine, they were in front. When we passed by the SS, Shippes said to S_____ you _____ for him, he made the uniforms. He said Herr B _____, it takes you so long to make a uniform, a suit. You see we did in a few hours, we finished our job. What can you say -- nothing. So we marched and we marched. You see the streets, you got such pictures to see.

Q: You felt bad and still you didn't know whether your wife was there? You didn't know anything?

A: I didn't know about my wife, nothing.

Q: Nothing, nothing. You could only imagine.

A: Where did we go, you think? Back where I lived, in Zeromskiego.

Q: Okay.

A: Where the shack, you know. Was an empty place in the middle and we went over there.

Q: To the shack. And there's where your parents were?

A: Yeah. Mine parents, the girl told me, the niece, she survived. That my father could have lived when he would go without his wife. But he said he goes with his wife. So they took him.

Q: So they were taken by the Germans?

A: Huh?

Q: After he refused to be separated from your mother, the Germans took him?

A: No, they took him from the sch_____ from the house. They took them. You know they cleaned out the -- everything. They took him to -- later we find out, we did find out -- because the trains were waiting over there. Far away from us. All the people who went from here, left here, they went to the trains. The trains they went to Treblinka.

Q: So your mother and father --?

A: Yeah. This girl told me. And my wife and kid too. And _____ and Moishe Rafilovich.

Q: His family?

A: Yeah. So before they went into the train, they undressed the people. Because they know that everybody has hidden something in the clothing, which is true. The same thing with me.

Q: You explained your boy's collar.

A: I sew it in. So everybody who goes into the train, women, men, children, undress. Naked to the trains. The trains, they were rolling to Treblinka. You know when you come to Treblinka, that's it.

Q: Now the people they were shooting, the night before. Were those the people that were running away or didn't want to go into the trains?

A: No, no.

Q: So they were just shot --?

A: They shot them in the houses, in the streets, somebody hide in the house, they find them, they shoot them. Some people hide in a bakery, in the oven and they shoot them in the oven. They shoot the people who they have to go to Treblinka without going to the -- over there on the streets they got killed. Was a war. So we come in, we marched till we come in where they said to Mr. Bowman, they did a good job, so fast, why he take so long. They come in back to the sch _____ where I lived. Mine house was empty already, nobody there.

Q: Did you happen to know who was living in your apartment? The one that you found after you got married? Remember when you had to leave the baby carriage and everything, did you ever find out who lived in there after you moved out?

A: I never went there.

Q: Could never go back?

- A: Just went out with nothing. The Polaks they took over. The Germans didn't take it. The Polaks were looking for places. They took everything. They took everything, the Polaks, terrible. We sitting there, we cannot go nowhere till it comes an order. We have to go back to the rooms where we got before. We went up to the rooms, two rooms were taken already, taken by the Jewish police. We cannot say nothing. They work for the SS and that's that. Young guys.
- Q: Moishe Rafilovich's brother still in the police?
- A: Yeah. He moved in with us, Moishe's brother. He got two brothers. Liba and Moishe. Moishe Rafilovich was, before the war, a soccer player. He worked for the B _____. He was playing, I mean with the B _____.
- Q: Professional or --? Professional soccer?
- A: At the time was not professional, no. For nothing.
- Q: What did he do for a living?
- A: Before -- I think he worked in a -- because he was a player, he worked in a ceramic factory, a Jewish ceramic factory. So did Libel, I think, his brother too. But he was a donsneider. Listen, you cannot fight with the police. They worked for the SS and that's that. Young guys, also friends. Known friends. Not friends, but a younger generation. So they left us the less room, one room. How can we all fit in over there? Was Laza Malamit ____, Moishe Krol, Moishe Rafilovich, Liba Rafilovich lives there, no was different. Liba was there, but he was with the police. Moishe Rafilovich, a brother-in-law, Laza Malamit ____, Mandelbaum -- a lot of people in this room. My bed still stays at the wall, the sofa -- so at least I have the sofa. We lived over there. We went to work and back. To work and back. The Polaks if you have money, by the wires, they supplied us with -- but you have to give them money, gold. They take everything, goods, materials and we worked in the shop like nothing happened, like nothing happened. But at the time they give you a number. No more Itzrek Rosenblat or Moishe Rafilovich, none of this. My number was number 21.
- Q: How did you get food? Did you have a ration card?
- A: No. You have to buy ourselves.
- Q: You have to buy food?
- A: Yes. It was established already this little arb ____, like a little ghetto. With the police, with everything. The chief of the police was ____, a Jewish guy. W ____ Fishman was the name, Fishman, not related. He was also in the police. We work in the shop and the shop -- I think second floor. Downstairs was the office. If a customer comes in and they need a tailor, a meister to come down to take the measurement, to take the material, was a ____, a boy, a young boy. He was running up and down ,up and down. Runs up, number 21, down. I come down, a customer's there, have to take the measurement. The main thing what I did. She has a package with material she brought. I opened the package like this and I knew already how many yards. Why -- because if I can cut off a piece, I don't need the material. Because they got the material. They didn't ____-__. In Jewish --. When I saw, I have enough material, I can cut off a sk____, you know. So I knew that this is going to be -- can go to the Polaks and give

them the piece of sk ____ and take some food home. But they have to go through the manager, a German manager. Was a Polish manager over us and a German.

Q: On top of everybody?

A: Yeah. He has to give you the dates of the people, for the Germans, when they should come for a fitting. If I saw that I have enough material to make the first fitting and take out the piece what I need to survive, I said to her, three weeks or four weeks or something, I said you can come two days for it. Why -- because I have to cut a suit, a coat and the piece I go to the Polaks right away and I have something to eat. She was happy. We went in booths for fittings. Was a lot of booths, you know, for the customer. Where there was a empty booth, I went in. Sometimes they brought something. Bread or something. We not allowed to take but allowed or not allowed we had to take and I made the fitting. Why -- because I want to have the piece.

Q: Okay, Izzy. We had just returned to the shop from the shack. It's August, 1942.

A: Not to the shop, to the rooms.

Q: To the rooms, okay. Already I've been very impressed with your memory and how you remember all the streets. Do you remember the street where this -- these rooms were, this house?

A: This was on the Zeromskiego.

Q: Yeah, on the Zeromskiego, okay. So what happens after you return?

A: After we returned, the room what we got before, the rooms was taken by the Jewish police. They left for us one room. So we all went into the one room and the other rooms we have no way to _____. You're not going to start with the police. So we lived in this one room. You have to mention all the people there? No.

Q: I think we already know. It's Moishe ---

A: Yeah.

Q: You and we have the same sofa, still there, right?

A: Yeah. And we stayed in the room. The next day, they called us again. Out. Another like it was over there.

Q: The roundup?

A: Roundup.

Q: Before, when we were talking, you used the expression, chicken____.

A: Like a chicken?

Q: Chicken coop, yes. Could you share that with us? How did it feel to be --?

A: We were always like in a chicken coop. Let's say if some -- the SS has a holiday or something, they come in and take a few people and kill. Like a chicken coop.

Q: Just like chickens?

A: Yeah. Next day, we went in already to the one room. Next day was the same thing what happened, you know. Because they haven't got -- they left too many people. So again, they round us up and they made that another selection. They took away people which they already went through the whole thing. And I'm not going to mention names 'cause I know whom they took and they took another 200 people. To death.

Q: To Treblinka?

A: Yeah. Then we went back again. Who left over, went back to the room. Was missing a lot of people but what can you do. We stayed in the room. We went next day to the shop. You have to go to work. Whatever happens, you have to work. Forget about everything.

Q: No work, no food?

A: No. They didn't give us any food. We went into the shop and then we start, you know, still crying and talking to each other. We tried to find out where did they go. My wife and Rafilovich's, all the -- where did they go? The Polaks, a policeman he come in. Got in connection with this police and he said he can find out. But we have to pay him. We paid once, we paid twice, we didn't find out where they went. He took the money, everybody who has a chance to grab the money from us, they did. So we didn't find out, we didn't know. Really we didn't know what happened to the people.

Q: What did you think?

A: We were thinking they send them away somewhere. We didn't think they went to Treblinka.

Q: You didn't know where Treblinka was? You'd never been to Treblinka?

A: No, we didn't know what Treblinka is, at all.

Q: But you knew they hadn't been shot in the streets?

A: Oh the people in --this is a different story.

Q: But you knew that your wife had not been shot in the street?

A: I didn't know. The minute she went away from me, from then on I didn't know what happened to her.

Q: Anything could have happened?

A: What was, later we did find out that the trains were waiting. We heard the trains going back and forth that they went to Treblinka. So we start going back to the shop and working again.

Whatever happened, we shouldn't think about it because it would be sabotage when you do different. So we were crying and talking and we start working in the shop. Customers come in, German customers and special customers. The Kolkdeutsch, the Germans they have the right what were bumped out Germany, when they come in, they come first. Because we got the b ____ also the Germans from Radom. They have to wait. The people who were oskerb ____ from Germany, they lost everything. For them we have to make first.

Q: So your customers are mostly Germans?

A: Germans, yes.

Q: No Poles?

A: No.

Q: So German military and German civilians?

A: Civilians from ost ____ from stugk ____ or somewhere else.

Q: Bombed out from Germany?

A: So we worked in the shop till when we went down to Szkolna. I think we went on the Szkolna 1944.

Q: You worked for another year, two years?

A: In the shop. Yeah, we worked in the shop.

Q: What was an average day like. When you begin work, what time did you begin work?

A: In the morning and at night we went home, in the back.

Q: It's a short walk?

A: Yeah, short. Very short.

Q: Was there heat? Did you have heat? You mentioned there was a stove inside the house. No heat?

A: No heat.

Q: No, heat, nothing? Pots and pans --?

A: The ghetto was, no -- no water no nothing. In the shop was water. So we work and customers come in and the guy came out. They give you a number. My number was 21 because no name. The customer come in, I have to go down in the booth, to fit. We worked over there till 1944. It was an order, Radom has to be Junenrein.

Q: What happens?

- A: I'm still in the room. Shall I tell the story with this guy who took away from us, everything?
- Q: Sure, sure, sure. First of all, did you have any property besides the sofa? Did you have any money?
- A: Money, yeah.
- Q: What was the penalty if --?
- A: Dead.
- Q: Dead. Why did you have the money?
- A: Because I got a Polish passport and I was thinking to go out on the Aryan, Polish side. I got already where to go and I have to pay. Without money, nobody's going to take you. So I got the money.
- Q: So you had hopes of escaping one day?
- A: Yeah. Everybody has a hope to escape. But to escape is also 80% dead. Because the Polaks they know who's a Jew, who is not a Jew. They did know. They were looking for to get money from you.
- Q: So where did you keep your money?
- A: When we come back to this room, before I kept the money in the shop. I got a table where was ironing and I made a double --. We got carpenters too and they make me a double place to hide in the shop. But the money when I went back to the room, I was hiding on this place on the obben on top.
- Q: Up -- near the pots and pans, hanging from the wall?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Near the oven?
- A: On top of the oven.
- Q: On top of the oven, on the wall?
- A: So I saw pots and pans. I said okay I'm going to put over there. I cannot take with me. I need the money in case I want to run away. So I put in a pot and cover it. A gold watch, a diamond and a lot of money. The money was sitting there. From us, from the room nobody's going to take anybody's money.
- Q: So you can trust each other?
- A: Yeah, oh 100%. We went back and forth to the shop. The shop had a lot of things. It was a

little higher, a girl made a little higher they burn the table and they took a few people. No every day, first of all, the place to kill people was on the Zeromskiego, on mine place.

Q: Near the shack?

A: Yeah. When somebody they said sabotage, they took them there to the wall and the Ukrainians came and they killed them.

Q: With a gun?

A: Guns, yeah. So we sitting in the house, we come back from the shop. I was sleeping at the sofa, Sunday morning I wake up and I said to the rest of the people in the shop, in the room, I got a bad dream that they took away from me everything. They steal everything from me. They said, oh, it's ____ minsas, stories. I said, okay. I'm going to take a look. I climbed up over there and opened up the pot and -- nothing. Everything is gone. Nothing. I start screaming, oh what I'm going to do now? I have to have the money. I have a Polish passport to get out and now I have nothing. I was very --. They said to me Izzy, come down. They went looking. Moishe Rafilovich went looking, nothing missing. Moishe Krol went looking, nothing missing. Laza Malamit went looking, everything is gone.

Q: So two of you lost money?

A: Two.

Q: Everybody else is okay?

A: Yeah. First of all they haven't got so much. Everything is gone. So when I was screaming I opened up the door from the police, the other room. And I said, nobody took it, only this room. T____, he was in the room with his father. He survived. He's in New York. His father he wants to kill me, angry. How dare you can tell that we took the money, your money. I said I didn't say you took it, I said this room ---

Q: Somebody in this room took my money?

A: Right. But it's gone. So I start running. I was talking to V____-Fishman, policeman. I told him the story. The chief from the police, _____ was also a friend. He talked to Freedman. They said they're going to search the room where the police was. So nobody has to go into the room. Only me and Lasa Malamit with his girl friend. So they start searching. In the other room was the same oven like in my room, the last room. This oven to heat, to put in coal --. They look and look, V____ Fishman find my money on top of the oven. A bundle of 500 zlotys. He called it guralis. So I have the money and I start counting. A lot is missing but I didn't mind.

Q: Was the passport there?

A: The passport was in a different place. By the way, he didn't took the passport. The passport was there in the pots and pans. Then they start looking, they didn't find anything else. Just the money.

Q: They find Laza's?

A: Nothing Laza's, Malamit, nothing.

Q: So they took in this Teitlebaum. They put him in jail. It's not a jail, you know, room.

Q: A closet.

A: Yeah, closet. He didn't talk. He doesn't know, he didn't took it, he doesn't know, he didn't talk. So we came over an idea that his sister works in the shop by a dressmaker. This girl was a, she got one leg shorter, a cripple. The police told her ---

Q: The Jewish police?

A: The Jewish police, mostly Fishman. You better go to your brother and tell him where he was hiding the other money, the other gold, the other money. She went to him. He didn't talk. Then they said, if he's not going to talk, you're going to lose your job. If you lose your job, you know you're dead. So she went again. She was crying and crying. Then they look and they find my gold watch, gold pieces and some _____, a diamond. Then he stopped talking again. She went again and was crying to him. So he start talking again. He said Malamit's gold and all kind of things, he was hiding outside the rooms under the stairs down. If you go up to the apartment. So they found _____, _____ gold. Then the police send him away to another camp.

Q: In the ghetto or to another --?

A: A camp, to another camp. Outside. With a brother. Okay. One day he came back from there. He run away from there, he came back here. He was stealing again by somebody else. By the way, back when they run away from the camp coming here to Radom, his brother got killed on the way. They killed him. So he came alone. Then when he was here, the police took him and give him over to the SA. When he comes to the SA he start talking that we have Polish passports, foreign currency, gold, do you know what means?

A: Death.

- Q: And then we are not any more in the room. We outside. We know that the police right away is going to come for us. Before they came for us, Laza Malamit at the same time, got to make _____. He was the _____ or something. He was the top.

- Q: _____ with the commander?

- A: SA from the SA. We decided that he better go. He doesn't have to fit, he goes for a fitting.

- Q: So he's making a coat for Foirk and goes over there to have it fitted again?

A: Doesn't need a fitting but---

- Q: He wants to ____?
- A: He wants to talk.
- Q: So it's an excuse to --?
- A: The police said they come and get _____ for you.
- Q: So it's an excuse to go and talk to the Germans?
- A: An excuse to talk to this Foirk. So he went there. Mr. Foirk said you didn't tell me you need a fitting today. He said I want to make sure that everything is perfect. So he said to him that's nice. He said to him okay, schneidermeister have a wine. Melamik start crying. And he said, what happened, what Teitlebaum says and it's not true. He said don't worry.
- Q: Not true that you did have money and passports?
- A: We didn't got anything. He said, it doesn't matter.
- Q: Foirk said that?
- A: Foirk, yeah. Doesn't matter because it's not your time, no. Everybody has to be killed. But you're going to be the last ones to kill. He didn't say anything else but that's what he said. You're going to be the last ones to be killed. Oh, okay. He came home, he told the story. So we went back up to the room. We went on with our life again like we did. We worked over there, we finished the uniform for Mr. Foirk. He didn't say nothing. We worked over there till - in the shop -- till 1944.
- Q: Two years, almost two years?
- A: No, yeah. In the shop we worked almost ---yeah. It started in 1942, I think. Shop was opened in 1942. Yeah, I remember that. Then they decided to liquidate Radom, Judenrein. No Jews in Radom. We have to pick -- they liquidate the shop and they said. Everybody can pick where they want to go. It was P----. You had a P_____ maybe. Munitions factory. Was a lot of places to go, Majdanek and all kinds of places. My brother still got his kid.
- Q: Your brother, Eli. He's still alive?
- A: He's still alive. He still had the kid.
- Q: With his wife and the kid?
- A: When we had to go into the shop sometimes, they stopped to search everybody, the kid went into a suitcase. He carried the suitcase into the shop. When he said to the kid, he should be quiet, not a peep. Quiet.
- Q: Where was he living then? Eli and his family?
- A: Also in --?

- A: With you?
- A: No, he was in different place. Also in the Zeromskiego. He was in the shop.
- Q: In the shack?
- A: No.
- Q: But near where you used to live?
- A: Yeah. In the same neighborhood.
- Q: So what did they decide now. The Germans are clearing Radom and your brother still has his wife and his kid.
- A: My brother, I was friendly with the top of the shop. Mr. -- what was his name -- a Polak. He was the main man over there. My brother was set up to go to P_____ because he heard that over there are some kids. I couldn't tell him because I didn't know where I'm going. I couldn't tell him that he shouldn't go because he has a kid. I couldn't tell him anything. At the last minute he decided to come to me and ask me Itzrek, I want to go where you go. I said I don't know where I'm going. Schalvitski, he was -- Polak.
- Q: The Polak, the boss.
- A: The boss, Schalvitski. So I went in to Schalvitski. I said Mr. Schalvitski, I would like mine brother should go where I go. He said you don't know where you're going. I said no, I don't but I would like wherever I'm going, he should go with me. He said it's too late. Forget it, it's too late because he signed up to go to P_____. He (Side B, Tape 2) Instead to P_____, they sent him to Majdanek.
- Q: They sent your brother to Majdanek instead of P_____?
- A: Majdanek was terrible.
- Q: But he didn't know that yet, did he?
- A: He didn't know they're going to send him to Majdanek.
- Q: So he got on that train thinking that he was going to Pionki?
- A: Yeah, he ended up in Majdanek.
- Q: Did you get a chance to say goodbye?
- A: No.
- Q: No, so there's no farewell, nothing?

- A: But after the war I did find out that from Majdanek, they sent him to Plaszow. You heard of Plaszow?
- Q: Yes, yes.
- A: A salt mine.
- Q: A salt mine.
- A: So I didn't hear from him at all. We went to Skolna. The shop went -- a lot of people went to Skolna. We arrived in Skolna, okay. When we arrived in Skolna, we still have a suit, a coat, I have a scarf. You know because I was ---
- Q: You've got your money and your passport?
- A: I still have everything. And in Skolna was already a concentration camp. They were wearing already the striped suits. We didn't because we worked for the German -- we have to be clean dressed to go for the Germans.
- Q: So what happens in Skolna?
- A: We arrived at the Skolna and we formed lines and Ober _____ was the boss of us. We standing around waiting, they count us. Then H_____ called me, like this. I went over to him. He hit me once and twice over the face for nothing. I didn't know what's wrong.
- Q: What does he want?
- A: Then he hit me again. Then from the side, the people said to me, Itzrek, take off the hand from the pocket. I was holding the hand in the pocket. I took off the hand from the pocket so he didn't hit me any more. Because you know, it's a concentration camp. It's not the shop anymore.
- Q: Your first rude shock?
- A: Yeah, when we were counted and everything, we went into a room to undress and to shave. Barbers that shave the head and they start giving us the striped suits.
- Q: The striped suits.
- A: I got a package. I put on the suit and we start laughing. The pants are made too long, the jacket is too long. Moishe Rafilovich, he got too short a package, so we start exchanging between us. Dress, when there's something wrong, we know we're going into sewing, we're going to fix it ourselves. So we were given a barrack where we should live. We come into the barrack, I always took -- there was three beds. I always took the top.
- Q: Any particular reason for this?
- A: Yeah, because I was always a little particular in things like this. To be clean because I know from the top when somebody cleans himself, the louses come down. You know what I'm

talking about.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: The dirt -- everything comes down. So I said I'm going to take the top. So I always took the top. Then we went into the shop. It was a new shop they opened up. The customers from the old shop, they took all the packages what we didn't finish, they took it with them to the new place, to the Skolna. The customers they have to come, they were advised that to finish the garments they should come to the Skolna. Okay. We stayed in this barrack and we went into the shop. The shop was wired around where we were. I took the stuff what I have. I got -- they brought all the tools with the tables over there. Then I out back in my -- what I have -- you know, the gold and the --

Q: So you had all your --?

A: In the table.

Q: Yeah, okay. So you hadn't lost anything?

A: Not yet.

Q: You're doing the same work as before and the same customers?

A: Over there we got special to make dresses for the German women, wholesale dresses. We worked on the dresses. When I was working in the shop, somebody came in and he said Yitzrek your schragen is here. I said what? You know what a schragen means?

Q: Your in-laws?

A: Yeah, sister-in-law. I went out looking for her. I didn't see any schragen. Then I heard a voice. She starts screaming Itzrek, it's me, Dinka. Dinka's her name. I looked at her. I didn't recognize her. She looked so terrible, without hair, with a thing on the head, a cover. She looked terrible. I said to her don't worry. I'm going to try to give her a place where to stay in the barrack. I tried when we make the dresses. I tried to give her a dress. I tried to see that she should have something to eat. I cannot go home to the barracks yet. So when the day was finished, I met her. We talked and she told me what happened. The kid, she -- first of all, she told me -- my brother got typhus.

Q: Eli?

A: Yeah, in Plaszow. She managed when she went out to work, she managed to bring him a piece of bread sometimes.

Q: So she was at Plaszow too?

A: Huh?

Q: She had been at Plaszow?

- A: Yeah, with the kid. When she went to work, the kid was hiding in bed, covered up quiet.
- Q: So the kid was at Plaszow too?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: Everybody, and then --?
- A: Went down and she can only get to my brother to replace a toilet, you know. She can throw over to him some -- she organized some bread. The kid was hiding in the barrack. Not a peep. That's what she told me. One day, they took away from the place where she worked and they transferred her to me, to my camp. She comes in.
- Q: Alone, though?
- A: Alone. Without the kid. She said, I don't know what happened to the kid.
- Q: Where was the kid when she left?
- A: In Plaszow.
- Q: But with --?
- A: In the barrack.
- Q: In the barrack with no one taking care of him?
- A: No. They saw the kid, they killed him. What else?
- Q: Eli was still sick?
- A: Eli was still alive when she left. But after the war, I did find out that he starved to death in Plaszow.
- Q: You don't know when that happened?
- A: No. So now I'm on the Skolna, huh?
- Q: Yes, with your sister-in-law and your friends.
- A: Yeah, we're all together. Then the same thing happened. A transport arrived from Buzim. You heard of Buzim?
- Q: Yes, yes.
- A: When the transport arrived from Buzim, everything changed. With them came a lot of kapos. Not only Jewish kapos, other nationalities, kapos.
- Q: Polish, Ukrainian?

- A: Yeah. Because they liquidated Majdanek. They were sent here to our place. When the Buzim arrived, start stealing. The Buzim, they were our people but ---.
- Q: Thieves?
- A: I don't know if they were thieves, they were butchers and all kind of people. Listen to this; I was sleeping one night on top of the barrack and I had a hand is crawling under mine -- like pillow. Of course, you know, if you're hiding what you have under pillow, some money or something. On the Plaszow from the suit was hanging on the ceiling. I got sewed in there diamond. The rest was in the shop. So when I heard the hand is crawling in and I was thinking what to do. I was thinking I'm going to get up first and catch him. I got up first and I start screaming and I caught an undershirt. He was pulling away a black undershirt. I have the piece from the undershirt in my hand and he's gone.
- Q: You didn't know who he was?
- A: No. I did find out.
- Q: From Buzim?
- A: Yeah. I start screaming and everybody on the lower beds, everybody catch each other. He was coming out from the barrack already. We was still looking for him. I have the place from the shirt. If you go around, where there's an empty bed, maybe he run out from the barrack or something, but no empty bed.
- Q: How did you find out who he was?
- A: So in the morning, I reported to -- the diamond from the Plaszow is gone, not hanging any more on top. Was on the floor. So next day I went to Friedman, _____ to Fishman, and they went to the Buzim barrack looking for somebody missing a piece of the shirt which was stupid. When we went in the barrack looking for the guy who was stealing, somebody came in and he said, that the kapos arrived, so forget about it. They're going to liquidate us. That was not true. The kapos was still there. I didn't know who took it. We still were there. Then one day, they're going to liquidate the Skolna. No more Jews in Radom. So one day everybody has to go marching. We went marching. There was no trains, we marched by foot. We didn't know where we going. We marched by day. At night they let us go in a tent (?) to lay down, to sleep. Some people, they couldn't walk any more. If they know what happen, they would walk. A car -- not a car -- a horse and a wagon went in the back, goes with us, went with us. The SS said who cannot walk any more is tired, should go on the wagon. Near me was Mr. G_____, a little bit older than me and Mrs. Zucker. Her husband got killed on the sch_____ when I told you was a fire, sabotage. They killed her husband and other people. They went on the wagon. When the wagon was full, the wagon disappeared. Then he came back, empty. Some other people, next time, they still went on the wagon. But later on, we saw something is not kosher. The second time, the wagon disappeared. The third time, nobody went on the wagon any more. Because we was sleeping on the field and then one day they said water arrived to give us, to drink water. It was so a mess that they start shooting. They shoot the people in the lakes. A lot of people. Then when they have to march again, yeah, they marched with bullets in the legs. They didn't go on the wagon any more. But the last night, they were sleeping on the field

before we went into Tomaszow- _____. It was a family -- what was the name -- Sinna I think. Was a mother, a daughter, and two sons. Sinnas. When we were sleeping on the field, they took off the corn already from the field. You know, was – the ground was soaked.

Q: Wet?

A: They digged. They start digging. They digged a hole in the ground. They were prepared for it. They digged a hole in the ground and the two Sinnas, the two brothers when they saw that it's going to be light already, we have to march again, they got in there and the daughter, the sister and this wife, they covered up.

Q: So two brothers buried themselves?

A: Yeah, they covered them up with dirt. They covered them up with dirt and they got paper to put on the face and they got from bottles, the neck, the neck from the bottles to give them in the mouth.

Q: To breathe?

A: To breathe. When daylight arrived and we have to go, they were sitting on this grave. On top of them. Because it was dogs also, they were sitting. Then when the SS were screaming, roust going, going. So they were the last ones to leave. Nobody should step on the grave, you know, nothing. And they left. Two brothers were there. They survived.

Q: They survived?

A: Yeah.

Q: But you didn't know that until ____?

A: No, till after the war.

Q: But as far as you could tell, they were left in the field alone?

A: Oh yeah, they were alone. Covered up and nobody saw them and nothing. They survived.

Q: These are friends of yours from Radom?

A: Yeah, they are Radomen, yeah. The Sinnas, I knew them.

Q: Now the people that had gotten on the wagons before -- they never came back?

A: No.

Q: Did you ever find out what happened?

A: Yeah, we did find out later. They took them to the woods and they killed them. They come back empty again.

Q: Do you know anyone who buried them?

A: I know who did. He was the S --. He was in the reveal, the hospitals. He got a Polish name. They knew his name. He was known. Took him over there and killed him, he come back. So later nobody went there. So we start working again till we arrive in Tomaszow. We arrive in Tomaszow. They let us in, in a good factory. They made goods for, you know --. Tomaszow was well known to make materials.

Q: Textiles?

A: Textiles, yes. A textile factory, schtuffed. We went in to this textile factory and the textile factory got the roof, glass.

Q: With a glass roof?

A: Yeah. They still got the where the truck (?) goes on -- how you call it -- where they weigh --.

Q: The spindle.

A: Spindles, yeah. Was made from ceramic or something.

Q: Porcelain.

A: Porcelain, right. We went, come into this room, everybody start choking. Gas. They're going to gas us here. Everybody short of breath and we need water, was a tragedy. We were 100% sure this roof and everything else they going to gas us here. You need water.

Q: You remember what time of year this was?

A: Was getting a little chilly.

Q: Chilly. So probably fall?

A: You know why? Because when I was sleeping on the field, some people that took the blankets, robe and ... You know some people they have -- I didn't took nothing.

Q: You still have your money?

A: Yeah. This I have with me. And the pictures. But I haven't got what to cover up. I haven't got nothing. I was wearing underneath, a regular suit under the striped suit. Maybe, we always got in mind to run away.

Q: You're not supposed to wear anything under --?

A: No, no. Was covered up.

Q: If they caught it?

A: Dead.

Q: You're dead.

A: So we arrived in this place and then I was looking for somebody. I think it was some people they were walking there or something. I paid a lot of money, I said, can I get some water? Because everybody was choking. So I paid for it and he brought me in a dish, some water. I wasn't able to drink the water. It was all the people after me and I spilled the water. I haven't got the water. And that night, one was sleeping on the other.

Q: On the floor?

A: On the floor. Was so terrible, you know, people they have to do something, right? Some people cannot hold back.

Q: Toilet?

A: Was a terrible, terrible, terrible night. In the morning, Mr. Zigman comes in. Zigman was the top sch _____ or something on the Skolna. He took care of everybody. He came in, he hold a speech.

Q: In German?

A: In German, yes.

Q: By now you knew German?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: You learned German?

A: He said nobody should worry. Same thing. You're going to get water. You're going to get a soup. Then said now we're sure that we're going to be dead. No, it's true. We got water and a soup. Then they separate the women from the men. There was no children any more.

Q: No children?

A: No.

Q: Not many women either, right?

A: Huh?

Q: Not a lot of women?

A: Yes, was a lot of women.

Q: Your sister-in-law was still --?

A: Was there too, yeah. And my friends. I have here friends that were there. Radomen. And they

were separated. Then arrived cars, you know, transport –

Q: Train?

A: Train. We went into the train, to the trains.

Q: Cattle cars?

A: What happened with the women, they went a separate way. Cattle cars, yeah. And we start traveling.

Q: No food in the train? Did you have any food?

A: Before.

Q: Just before.

A: He gave us before. Water and soup. We traveling and we knew that we go to Auschwitz.

Q: Did you know what Auschwitz was?

A: We knew about Auschwitz.

Q: You knew it was a bad place?

A: Oh, yeah, we knew. What can you do? Auschwitz is the end.

Q: But then again, why would they feed you if they're sending you to Auschwitz? Did you think about it?

A: You don't go by them. Whatever they say comes different. So we arrived in Birkenau, Auschwitz.

Q: How long was the trip?

A: It was, I think, two nights, I think.

Q: Two nights and one day?

A: Yeah. Till we arrived in Auschwitz. We arrived not in Auschwitz. We arrived in Birkenau. You know, where all the trains stopped?

Q: Yeah, in Birkenau.

A: We're staying in the train till it was an order, all get out in Birkenau. So you know what happened with the pieces of gold and my pictures and everything. With Auschwitz and Birkenau you don't make any monkey business so I left everything in the train. The pictures and the gold, you know, they start swallowing.

- Q: So the gold that you had, that used to be at your work place, you left that on the train?
- A: Yeah, no I didn't leave it. They swallowed it.
- Q: They swallowed it, yeah and they were still on the train.
- A: I still got on my striped suit, sewed in some stuff. The kapos they come over, we should give everything away. Because the suits they go to delousing to clean up. But I left the stuff in the car, in the train. We stayed there and then Mengeles comes over and did the selection. He looked at your face, what he didn't like goes on the -- was a truck -- goes on the truck. He did like, he looked at the face, he was looking for young, able people to work. So he took out on the truck a lot of people and he's finished with us. He goes to the other transport to Lodz. You know, I told you about it..
- Q: So another transport from Lodz arrives?
- A: Yeah, arrives, same time.
- Q: That's the transport 99% are selected?
- A: Almost all of them went to the -- on the trucks.
- Q: You're still standing there?
- A: Then comes an order -- back to the trains. So I went into the same train. I got my pictures and I got whatever I left over there. Then we start traveling again, we didn't know where.
- Q: You didn't where, you didn't know why?
- A: No, nothing. We got a soup and a piece of bread before we start going.
- Q: You're still with your friends? Moishe --?
- A: Yeah, Moishe Krol, Moishe Rafilovich, Laza Malamit and Sol (?) Mandleman, he's in Canada and a lot of other friends. Radomen.
- Q: You remember how many? Could you guess how many?
- A: I don't know. Who cares how many? So we go back to the train and we start traveling, we didn't know where. We went to Germany. We went to Germany and they stop in a place, and they unlouse us, you know. Was cold already. Everybody has to undress and was a few barrels with soap.
- Q: Chemicals?
- A: With a brush. You naked. You go to this veld. The guy with the brush cleaned you up. Then the clothing was unloosed again. But after the unloosing, comes more lice, a lot more than before.

- Q: Where were your clothes when you got deloused? You took your clothes off --?
- A: Hang up.
- Q: So nobody took them? You kept the same clothes?
- A: I was watching. I didn't took too long a shower. I was right away out and taking.
- Q: So your things got deloused?
- A: Yeah. Then from there we went to Vaihingen.
- Q: Vaihingen.. It was a long trip?
- A: Yeah. We arrived in Vaihingen. The camp was not finished yet. Mud, you know like a field, you know. Over there was already working people to prepare, to make the barracks. There was no barracks. But they made everything new. Over there was working, two brothers and a sister. They carpenters. While they working, they start digging underneath. You know the barracks stays --.
- Q: Above ground on wood, yeah.
- A: Yeah and they were digging underneath. Radomen, two Radomen and a sister. They were digging. They never came up any more. They were underground. Then we settled in Vaihingen. One Fishman, the policeman, he was looking for people who can keep quiet. We have to support them what we need. Everybody didn't know. Not everybody, just a few people. Because we have to supply them with food. How would they survive?
- Q: The people underneath?
- A: Underneath, yeah. So I knew. In case we have to run, they're going to kill us, I knew I have to go down there. They were digging day and day. Let's say that the barracks were here. All sides the wiring was a road. After the road, was field, plain. Over there was a step sand --what you build with.
- Q: Sand for construction?
- A: Sand -- construction -- a pile.... This guy's underneath, dig.
- Q: They're digging a tunnel, a tunnel?
- A: Yeah, a tunnel. They lost control. Because of the sand.
- Q: Too heavy?
- A: No, they digged a little bit too high. _____, he survived. He deserved to live, he went in. Then the Radom burger guy, he went in. Not too many people, a few people knew. We have to every day put food underneath and they took it. Because they have to live. By the way, this was on the Skolna.

Q: This happened in Skolna?

A: Wait a minute. I think this happened in the Skolna.

Q: So this story about the tunnel is in Skolna?

A: Skolna, yeah.

Q: And there are barracks at the Skolna, too? So on the grounds --?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: Let me think twice about where it was. In Vaihingen couldn't happen because it was Germany. Where did they go, where would they go?

Q: Where could you hide?

A: It was in Skolna. So I was sitting in the shop and I saw through the window a commotion. Something happened. I didn't know what. You know where they're digging and they're coming up to hide and then comes a farmer or something with a wagon and a horse. He start taking the sand to construction.. Then when I heard this commotion, a wheel from the wagon went in the hole because it was too thin. You filled up with sand, was heavy, a wheel went in. Oh, the whole -- Zigman and all the people are running over there and they send in people and they send in the first policeman was sent in, M _____. He was a policeman. He went in to look. The guys inside, they saw what happened -- they run the other way, under the barrack out to the sch _____. They start counting that they have five people too many. So they start building a chain, a wooden chain where you go in with your legs and the head and they give you a whipping. They didn't kill them at the time. Maybe there was an order not to kill any more, I don't know.

Q: This was in Skolna and they need the work?

A: Yeah. Then they caught the three, the two brothers and the sister, ____ and _____. Then the two brothers, they went first. Everybody get 25 or 35 on the naked ____.

Q: In the buttocks?

A: And the SS is strongest SS. Oomph and they were screaming. The girl came next. She didn't scream, she didn't make a peep. She took a beating. _____ make more mess than anybody else. He was the guy from the leather factory when we were there. You remember. His father owned the leather factory. B _____ (End of Tape 2)

Q: We're still talking about Solna and the escape attempt that failed.

A: Then they took after everything. They took the people they have to stay in camp. They cannot go to work, no way. They made them on the back and on the front, round things, red --all

colors. Everybody should know that --. And they were wearing this. They couldn't go out nowhere. This was the end of the sp _____. This you have to put over there.

Q: Right, right. Now we go back to Vaihingen.

A: To Vaihingen, yeah.

Q: Now we're in Vaihingen. Unfinished camp, it's muddy and it's under construction and you have just arrived.

A: Yeah. In Vaihingen -- you know, a shave and ---.

Q: Deloused.

A: Deloused and a striped suit.

Q: And you still have your photos and your things?

A: Right. I was waiting to go in again to a shop or something. I should -- can hide in a table again. Vaihingen, huh.

Q: Do they need tailors?

A: Yeah.

Q: They do need tailors.

A: In Vaihingen --.

Q: They need carpenters?

A: We got a job in the --. They need ten tailors and ten shoemakers. They call the place, Agelzay.

Q: Aldezay.

A: Agelzay. O we went out to this shop, ten tailors and ten shoemakers, we worked at this place. Was not bad. We can organize something there.

Q: You're working as a tailor

A: Yeah, as a tailor. Laza Malamit, Moishe Krol, _____.

Q: How about Rafilovch, what is he doing?

A: Rafilovich wasn't in camp.

Q: No?

A: He has another job. He has a better job because he was a little schwaft, you know

Q: Weak?

A: Weak. He got a job doing -- I don't know. He got another job. So we went out, ten tailors and ten shoemakers. We worked over there. Every day we went forth and back. Laza Malamit, he made him, he should be the top of the --. When we worked, he should be the kapo.

Q: A kapo?

A: Not a real kapo.

Q: A good kapo?

A: Yeah, a little kapo. He was the top. So we worked in this place and then one day nobody's going out to the shop, to the ---. They round us up, they count us. The lagerteera was a Wehrmacht, Mr. Hoffman. He was in charge of the camp.

Q: So Wehrmacht officer was the commandant of the camp?

A: Of the camp. We stay all together and then he start picking people. On the side was a little hill. He need people, I didn't know at the time, to go to in Theresienstadt. You heard of Theresienstadt? You know, I never come in contact with them. I've never looked them in the eyes. I always was the last one to hide. So I was the last one. They picked the people and I was thinking that he's finishing with picking the people. So I took my head and looked out a little bit, what's going on. He called me.

Q: Called you? And you're afraid? Why did I look up? To the other people. Then I start screaming to Friedman, please help me. I helped him all the way, did a lot of things for them. No way.

Q: But you don't know what he wants you to do yet, the commandant?

A: No, I didn't know. He didn't help me. Comes a truck and the r --- well known, krokenbrecha. You heard of the krokenbrecha Miller.

A: Miller, okay.

Q: He was the krokenbrecha?

A: Yeah.

Q: He broke bones?

A: The minute he hit you, he didn't hit me, this was in Vaihingen. Because we were carrying stones from one place to the other, Sundays.

Q: So that's what they wanted you to do, to carry stones?

A: Yeah. We put the stones in front from the camp. Next Sunday, we put it back. Next Sunday we

put it back.

Q: Stupid work.

A: When I got ---- heck with this Miller one time. When I had to take a stone, was raining, it was dirty. I didn't want to dirty mine striped suit so I went, you know, a little, a smaller stone. He called me over. One and two. I didn't know how many. Two teeth or something went out. But I was still okay.

Q: You lost two teeth?

A: I think I lost two teeth, yes. When he hit you, a good thing he didn't break my jaw. Now this Miller, krochenbrecha took us to Unterriexinger. I arrived in Unterriexinger, was terrible. Mud, in the barracks was not finished. The barracks hadn't got wooden thing, only cloth covered -- you know when you lay on it.

Q: Canvas?

A: Canvasses. No light. I went into this barrack and I tried to go up on the bed and the camp is broke. I fall down. So I was staying near the bed and crying. Here I'm lost. In Vaihingen, I was okay. Here I'm lost. And the kapos -- Radomen, landsmen, I know them -- they didn't care about you. They say, I'm the king. To them don't mean nothing. Then the guy in the other bed, he was -- his names was Frank. He used to be a tailor in Majdanek for big guy also. He said -- they knew me. He said Itzrek, come up to my bed. Don't cry. I went up to him, it was warm. Two people, till next day I arranged something, they should fix my bed or something. Then was the order, day and night, we had to go clean up Stuggardt the walk from Theresienstadt.

Q: Why was that? What was going on in Stuggardt?

A: Bombed.

Q: Bombs. So you had to help clean up the damage from --?

A: Yeah. Day and night. Two shifts. I talked to Ku _____. He was a Radoman. I knew him. The other guy was a terrible guy. His names was ---. He was indicted by the SS. He was chained to an SS when they went to court after the liberation. Guzbaum. He was a Radoman, his name was Guzbaum. He was the most terrible guy. I went at night. I came back in the morning, I went to sleep. Why are you here? Radoman! I said I work at night. You didn't work at night. They took away my ration, my --, you know. You're not going to get food today. I didn't get it.

Q: How was the food there? Was it better or worse than Skolna?

A: Skolna, we didn't rely too much on the food. Know why? Because a lot of -- was a printing people. They went out every day. When you have the money to buy, they smuggled in. We got to eat.

Q: Here in Vaihingen, no smuggling?

- A: No.
- Q: So the food was --?
- A: Yeah, they went out too but you cannot buy anything.
- Q: No. How about the bunks? Do you still have the bunks one on top of the other? The three --?
- A: Two, two beds.
- Q: And you're on the top?
- A: Yeah, on the top, always on the top. I didn't got anything to eat the same day. Then when I start talking to -- next day to people. When I said I wish they would liquidate the whole place where I used to work over there. They should all send them here. Laza Malamit, Moishe Krol, --.
- Q: You mean Agelzay? You want them to liquidate Agelzay?
- A: Yeah, Agelzay, right. They said to me, don't be like that. You want trouble? You want them to be in trouble too? I said no. I don't want them to be in trouble when they're going to liquidate Agelzay, it's a possibility that the people they were not SS, they were --.
- Q: Wehrmacht?
- A: No. Yellow, yellow uniforms with _____ here. They were --.
- Q: Civil defense?
- A: No, the yellow uniforms. Aurbytes or something.
- Q: Arbytes, deutsch, or ---?
- A: I'm going to come to it.
- Q: But they were civilian?
- A: No, military. So don't you think one day, Miller arrived. Miller.
- Q: Yeah. nochenschwer.
- A: Miller arrived. He called Malamit because he was the --. He said pick me out but remember, the best five tailors instead of ten, and the best five shoemakers. You know, they arrived here too. Ramit. I was alive already. When I have all the friends with me ---.
- Q: You're one of the five best?
- A: Not yet, wait a minute. When -- who is going to take Malamit? He is going to pick me. He picked me, he picked Moishe Krol, Laza Malamit, him, Friedman also a Radoman and another

one, I don't remember. He was not a Radoman. He picked five shoemakers, also Radomen. For him, was terrible. He has to pick. The others were angry. You pick your friends, you didn't pick the others. But they can't say anything. Laza picked. So Miller took us on a truck. Before we went, this lager ____ from the _____. He was a German, what was his name? Before we left, he took away the top coat from us and he took away -- he give us broken shoes, old shoes. Laza Malamit told to Miller, Milofsky was his name or something. He called him, he said where are the coats for these people. And this guy hit him, the lager _____, he decked him right away in the mud to the floor. You know it was mud high.

Q: Yeah, deep mud.

A: He went in deep. Right away was our coats and the shoes.

Q: On the ground?

A: No, they brought it. We put it on and they were asking if we have everything on the truck. This guy was driving, we're thinking we're going to be dead anyway, the way he is riding, so fast. So we arrived in Vaihingen, back.

Q: Back to Vaihingen?

A: Then I talked to Meyer, talked to Moishe Rafilovich, I talked to --. I said I think that now I'm going to survive. If I got off from there, it's a possibility that I'm going to survive.

Q: Did you have any idea then, how the war was going?

A: No.

Q: So you didn't know that the Germans were losing?

A: We talked. We saw the bombing. You see when we went out cleaning the tracks where they bombed and everything. We saw the English with the round marks, the bombing and the SS they were running like hell. We even looked up like a song. Didn't bother us. Then when they bombed Stuggardt. We saw in Vaihingen, in the SS, they were running. So we stayed outside and looking. We saw the way they throw down the lights. The lights come before, then the bombing. Was like a Christmas trees, the top. For us was perfect, but the SS they were afraid.

Q: But did you suspect that maybe Germany was going to lose the war?

A: Yeah, we talked, you know, everybody talked a different language.

Q: Soon maybe. Did you think maybe the Americans were coming?

A: No, no. This was a dream. We not going to survive anyway. I'm still back in Vaihingen and I still go up to Agelzay.

Q: And you're a tailor?

A: Yeah. All of a sudden, I didn't feel good. But I didn't give in. Temperature went high but I

didn't give in. I knew when I was going to go to the barrack and you knew the only thing what happened to you is typhus.

Q: You had typhus?

A: And typhus is dead. I didn't give in. Then when I worked, I went home in the barrack. I picked up my shirt here all red. My belly was all red, spots, red spots. I knew it's typhus. I still went to work because if I go into the barrack, I'm dead. But it took a while, I couldn't work any more. They carried me in their arm so I have to go in. So I went into Moishe Goldberg's barrack. Moishe Goldberg also was a friend of mine.

Q: Radomer?

A: Radoman, no friend. Was Usha Goldberg and Moishe Goldberg. Usha Goldberg was top echelon, he was a policeman, he was everything. I go into this barrack holding my shoes like this. The main thing, the shoes.

Q: You still have the photos?

A: Right, in the _____ shop. I'm waiting under the door because was no room. I have to wait until somebody dies. When he's out, they throw me in bed. _____ so help me God. I went in and the guy was laying in bed still. Was still alive. This guy has diarrhea.

Q: Right in the bed?

A: In the bed, yeah. He was still alive. They pulled him out by the legs. Like I see it now. You know what they did with me? They throw me in.

Q: Right in?

A: In the mess. I say to myself, that's it. If I would drop dead, I wouldn't mind but I always was conscious of to be clean. Here I lay in a mess, somebody else's mess. Not on top, on the bottom. Then I start looking for help. Moishe Goldberg cannot talk. He got a _____. He took care of the room. Was also a Radoman, Friedman. I didn't know him too good. Later I got to be a friend of his. I start calling. Friedman, if you can give me a sack with straw, you know, and take this away. He didn't listen. I said, _____ was his name. Also _____ Friedman, like the policeman. I have some dollars, I give you some dollars. He felt, he said okay. I'm going to put on you -- mattress. Mattress huh -- straw on top. I said, this would be fine. I paid him. Money can buy everything. Then I was laying and the crisis arrived. I was laying again in water, top.

Q: Somebody's ---?

A: From myself, no. This water comes from myself. When you have the crisis, you start perspiring.

Q: The fever's high?

A: Yeah, high and then you perspire. When you survive this perspiring, you're okay. One day I

lay again in water from myself. I felt the crisis went over and I'm still alive. After that typhus, you need to eat. Let's say when they give you my whole Frigidaire with another grocery store, not enough. I don't know where it goes but you can eat so much, it's unbelievable.

Q: Where are you going to get the food?

A: I called to Laza Malamit -- message. They cannot come in here. They can send me a piece of bread or something like this. They did, they did. Then they did find somebody by the name of Firdik. He went outside the walls. He brought in always food. I said to -- let him bring me marmalade if it possible and an onion. Because you get scurvy, you know what means scurvot?

A: Scurvy?

A: Scurvot means you don't have the vitamins or lemon or --.

Q: Yeah, scurvy. Your gums get -- your teeth fall out. Scurvy.

A: A lot of people died of this. I said I need a -- he can bring me. I give him a ten dollar bill if he can bring me marmalade, onion and a bread. He did. So the jar of marmalade was under the pillow. Lice, a lot, who cares. You eat the lice. I put in my hand always in the jar and licked it the marmalade. I got the onion to eat. No, I got the bread because the bread I have to hold with me. I'm laying like this, still hungry. In the same barrack, across the street, he was a Swiss or other nation, he got Red Cross packages.

Q: He's not Jewish?

A: No, not Jewish. When I looked at him, the way he was eating the package -- chocolate and all kinds of things. Oh, I cannot go down from bed. Maybe I would steal from him, I don't know. Then I was thinking to myself. Why he can get a package from the Red Cross and I couldn't get it. Unless he -- you know the question.

Q: Yes. You're asking the question now. Could you ask the question then?

A: No. To whom am I going to ask a question?

A: And you couldn't talk to him? You couldn't buy anything from him? You were too far away?

A: No, no. Then I said to myself. After the war, if I'm going to survive, no Red Cross for me. I'm going to hate them always and I'm not going to donate a penny to the Red Cross any more. The Jewish donating money to the Red Cross. I wouldn't. If they can give a package to him, why not to me? Nobody would know. So I'm laying here hungry, don't know what's going on outside. All of a sudden, some people, Meyer Pasternak, a lot of people, they run into the barrack, to my barrack! They not allowed to go in. It's dangerous. They're hiding. They're hiding in this barrack.

Q: Why?

A: Underneath the beds, on the ceiling. You can open -- go under the roof. Because they liquidate Vaihingen.

Q: So they're afraid?

A: They took the people from Vaihingen to Dachau. Laza Malamit went, Moishe Krol went, Meyer Pasternak, he's in Florida. He's a smart cookie, he didn't go. He was hiding. Then the SS did find out. They came with guns and they shoot in the barrack. I don't know how many people got killed or what. I was laying covered up on my place.

Q: So they shot right there in front of you? You could see it?

A: Yeah, in the barrack. In the ceiling, underneath, everywhere. Because they knew they were hiding. But still a lot of people were hiding. Next day, in the morning, just next day, people come in and they brought me white bread. White bread, all kind of things! I said what happened? The French army passed. He said, we are liberated.

Q: Do you remember the day?

A: Yeah, the day was the fifth of April. I was liberated.

Q: In Vaihingen?

A: In Vaihingen.

Q: But some of your friends had gone to Dacha?

A: Yeah, Dacha. They suffered a lot. Some dropped dead and some survived.

Q: Now a name you didn't just mention now was Moishe Rafilovich. What happened to him?

A: He died in Vaihingen.

Q: In Vaihingen?

A: I was --.

Q: He got typhus too?

A: No, he died of lungs. When I came out and then I did find out -- Moishe Rafilovich died.

Q: Disease in Vaihingen? Was it near the end?

A: Near the end, yes. He told me -- it was a special -- was F _____ and _____. They took the dead people in the back. Over there was an open pit, they throw him in. He told me he took Rafilovich out there.

Q: Do you remember when that was? Was it in March? Was it just before you got liberated?

A: A short time I was liberated before.

Q: Just before?

A: Yeah.

Q: And you didn't see him in sick barrack? When you were in the sick barrack he was already --?

A: No, I didn't see him any more. Because I was with typhus.

Q: But I mean he had the lung disease. They didn't put him in the sick bay? Moishe, they didn't put Moishe in the sick barrack?

A: In the sick barrack, no. He died in the regular barrack. This barrack was only for contaminated people, typhus. So when I got this bread and they told me we are liberated, I said to myself, I'm not going to lay in bed. I start crawling from bed down out to the field. The wire was cut already, the people cut the wire and I was crawling on the field where the trucks passed, the French army. They saw me, they stopped the truck and they came down and they brought me a lot of stuff, packages and chocolate and bread and everything. I'm laying here with all the stuff, I cannot carry.

Q: And you smelled?

A: But somebody helped me to take in to the barrack. I went into the barrack and I said why am I sitting in this barrack already? I went out in the camp. It took maybe another hour, we still didn't get out. We are afraid to get out. The French army came in. The French army came in and they start putting DDT on everybody. The army never bathed because they were afraid to go in. They put the powder over you, all over the place. The French people start looking around and they went in the back and they saw how many people laying in this ditch with the striped suits, a lot. They think hundreds and hundreds. Then they called the mayor from Vaihingen, the mayor or somebody and the people come over. They should look what they did. One French soldier, a Jewish, I think he was Jewish, he gives me a gun. When he gives me a gun, I kill him (?) The people who come to work. They brought people to work, to bury the people. I never got a gun in my hand I says and I cannot kill nobody. He looks at me stupid. So we were staying in this barrack and they caught the SS. Hechay, the two guys in the kitchen plus Machine and Bill. There what they did, their job, they cooked. They worked with the people with the Jewish people. They were the top Jewish people cooking. They went home, we were staying on that field to count us. They went through you, like this, and hit here in the testicles. A lot of people they were no men any more. What they went through, they hate you all the time. Even you were hiding, holding like this, they caught them. They caught almost all the SS except Miller the _____. One was there, a Wehrmacht, the _____, we called him. He worked also with them but he was not doing too much damage. The Hoffman.

Q: So you're like a witness?

A: Yeah. Then it was a trial.

Q: Right there in Vaihingen?

A: Not in Vaihingen. It was in Rushtow.

Q: Rushtow, nearby.

A: You heard Rushtow?

A: Yes, in Baden.

Q: Yeah. Was international tribunal. All the SS which I knew sitting at the bench. This Scutzband, the Jewish guy, a Radoman, he sits over there chained with a SS man, a Jewish guy. He deserves it.

Q: He was a kapo?

A: Oh, terrible kapo. Terrible. He took a manufacturer from leather from Radom, big man. He is a - _____ to leather. He should stay on his knees and he should scream loud that his mother was a prostitute. That what he said, he should scream. He give him to drink, urine. He was sitting there. His wife went around to the people, we should sign for him. Nobody signed. What happened to him, I don't know. I never heard from him again. He didn't get death. Hecker, Ros _____, _____, 80 % of the people from the camp, SS, they got death by hanging. This was a tribunal from all kinds of nations. _____ and the others, they got sentences, not death. Okay.

Q: How much did you weigh when they liberated you? You were a skinny guy from the beginning --?

A: No, when I was liberated, I wasn't too skinny. I have a picture.

Q: You mean after all of this and the typhus and you were still okay?

A: Yeah, I was okay. The only thing was bothering me was I was thinking, I'm going to die, is hemorrhoids, bleeding. I promised myself if I'm going to be liberated, the first thing I go is operate. This comes from family. My father got hemorrhoids too. Was very bad. I did. When I was liberated, I went to a hospital and I got operation.

Q: Where did you live after you were liberated?

A: We still in Vaihingen. So the French army took us out from there and they cleaned up a little town, a farmer's town, farmers. They sent the farmers out like the SS did to us. Out and we go in. We go in over there everybody got a house. There was chickens, cows, whatever you wanted, everything, china, was everything there. The Buzima, I tell you about the Buzim --

Q'': I remember them.

A: Libel _____ W _____ was his name and Libel. Libel and Dovit and other butchers. When I was liberated in Vaihingen, we went out. People, healthy people, and I was not so healthy but I walked to town, to organize something. I went into town and I went into a basement in town. You can take everything you want. I saw in this basement, English materials, the best. All kind of goodies there. You know what I took? An onion and eggs. The Germans they put in eggs for the winter. How you call it, they put in a thing that eggs should hold, they caulked the eggs or something?

Q: They're under refrigeration.

A: In the basement. I took eggs and I took an onion. Material, who needs it? Then I organized a bicycle. It was on the street. When I went --.

Q: We're going to end this tape and then I'm going to turn it over.
(Start Side B, Tape 3)

A: So I organized a bicycle. I was carrying this bicycle back to the camp -- we weren't yet in this town what I told you -- the French --. Dovid Winetard and Libel Winetard and another butcher, they come over to me and say, he wants the bicycle. I cannot fight with them, the Buzima, I was still sick. Then was over there Italic another one with another one and they said with those two Winetard, rough people. Don't touch, Itzrek. They said Itzrek is their friend. He was the best donaschneider in Radom, don't touch him, leave him alone. They didn't touch me so I got this bicycle. I went into the barrack with the bicycle. Then when we went into this place, this town what the French army give us -- over there we got everything. On top of this, they brought nurses from Paris to treat us. They made us healthy. They ordered the town, should bring every day meat, bread and milk for the people here. We got so much that from other camps, everybody did find out. They come here and they took soap and they didn't want to go nowheres, they stayed with us. We stayed there for a while. The best liberation.

Q: So you liked the French?

A: They give us the best liberation. The Americans, they took the people right away to peel potatoes. To work. The English, the same. The Russians, forget it. But the French, they treat us and make us healthy. They treat us beautiful. We stayed there till one day a rabbi comes. A Jewish rabbi.

Q: There's only one kind.

A: An American. He wants to take us over.

Q: To America?

A: No, to his side, to the American side.

Q: The American side?

A: This was the French side.

Q: Yes, French zone.

A: He said -- he formed a group, where you want to take us? We picked a few people and me we should look where. He wants to put us again in barracks. There were Polish prisoners; we should go into this barracks. We said no. We not going. You know, he said to me, I'm a rabbi, we want the best for you. We not going. We're not going, we're not going. The French cannot keep us because we should go over to the Americans. They changed the zone. I don't know. Then they looked and looked. He did find a place, Schausen, Schauslangensen. Was German

army there and a Schauss. Took us there. We have rooms, not like here. So we agreed. A Jewish rabbi --.

Q: It's hard to say no.

A: Yeah, so we went to the Schausslagen. They supplied us with care packages and food, with everything. Had enough to eat. We stayed there. Till one day I decided to go looking for survivors. It took us Meyer Pasternak, Moishe _____ and another guy. His name Henik, Moishe Henik I said already him. He was a policeman. I said, we're going to look for survivors. So we went, no transportation. We walked and we --. Americans took us in the trucks, you know. I said I want to go to Dusseldorf to find out if my brother-in-law's alive

Q: Fishman?

A: Fishman, yeah. So we traveled. In every town, we ran into the mayor of the town or something and we got ration card. We cannot buy nothing. Nothing was available. But if you have the ration cards, they have to give you. Especially when they saw the striped suit, they give you.

Q: You're still wearing the striped suit?

A: Yes. Still wearing the striped suits. So we traveled from one town to the other until we arrived in Dusseldorf. You have tape enough?

A: Plenty of tape.

Q: We arrived in Dusseldorf. In Dusseldorf, some people went in for ration cards. On the way over there, we stopped over in Kalniks, you heard of Kalniks? There were survivors, Radomen. Pasternak's wife's sister --.

Q: Was there.

A: Palo was there. We took her along with us. I have the picture, skinny girl. We were staying outside. They went in for the ration. I was staying outside in Dusseldorf. I saw the Germans, the way they're running, dressed nice. Big people, boy, look at me. So I stopped one. Did you know the name Max F _____. He came with the _____. Oh yeah. I said, did you see a man by the name of Adolf Fishman? He was crazy. Crazy, he kept my hand and said you don't go nowhere. Stay here and when you see Adolf Fishman, tell him that I did find you. I said okay, okay.

Q: So he's alive? Adolf Fishman is alive in Dusseldorf?

A: Yeah. Wait a minute. So he said don't go nowhere. You're going to telephone him. He has an office. He belongs to Haganah. This guy don't let me go. He did find me. I said okay, I'm going to say you find me. Then they went over there for this thing and I didn't wait for them. I took _____ and another guy and we start walking. I'm going to his office. He told me where to go. After this, the other people came on top of us and we walked. We arrived in this place the other Fishman had the office, in Dusseldorf. What the stairs was, like this.

Q: Circular.

A: Spiral.

Q: Spiral staircase.

A: Then we talk to each other. Look, most of all, we never saw things like this in Radom. Terrible. And here everything is so big. Nice. And we went up the spiral stairs and we went to his office. In front of the door was a bench outside. I went in. I said, Ich _____ Adolf Fishman.

Q: You would like to see Adolf Fishman?

A: Yeah. She said Adolf Fishman left. I said where did he go? They didn't tell us. If we want to wait, sit on the bench outside. We were sitting, I think was four people, men and this _____. I have a picture. So we're sitting. Meanwhile this guy, this German telephoned Adolf Fishman that I'm over there. He took the matsadas and he went over there for us. But we didn't wait for him. We left to his office. So we sitting, waiting. Then we saw again on the stairs, the spiral stairs, somebody's running. I didn't figure that's him because we talk to each other. We said look how strong they are, the way they're running. This was Fishman. We sitting at the door, Fishman's running, he comes on top of the stairs. We were sitting on the bench. Who you think he grabbed?

Q: You?

A: How did you know? I didn't know him.

Q: He never came to your wedding?

A: No, he didn't know me. I didn't know him. How did he know to follow me and start crying. I have enough crying. He starts crying. How did he pick me? Later I was asking him. He said I don't know, intuition.

Q: Intuition.

A: Yeah. He was crying. Between the crying was asking. My mother? dead. My father? dead. My brother from the shop, you know what ____, dead. My wife? dead. Hirshel? The whole family --. I said dead. Not yet he has to keep ask, we have to keep him. So he calmed down.

Q: So he knew what had happened already?

A: Yeah. Because he was the top in the Haganah.

Q: You didn't know yet about your family? Did you know about your family then?

A: Yeah, dead.

Q: You already knew they were all dead?

A: Yeah, they were dead. The only thing I was counting on was my brother. You know he went to

Russia. But he was dead too. So he called up his home, his wife. He has a small child, a girl. That's all small. So he's going to the restaurant and he's going to be back home. She should be prepared. He called up a restaurant in Dusseldorf. Took us to the Mercedes, all in the Mercedes, to a restaurant. We came into a restaurant. I never saw in my life a restaurant like that, never in my life. The waiters were dancing around Herr Fishman. He looked at the -----, who is he. They were asking. Then with the wine, which one we should serve to the people. He said to mine wine because he _____ was in charge of people passing by. He has to give them money, he has to give them clothing. He was in charge like this. Went into the restaurant. Everything was on the table. Oh my God. The people with me, they were thinking, oh, Itzrek, he's going to be a millionaire.

Q: He already is.

A: Yeah, his wife.

Q: How did he survive? Did you find out how he survived?

A: I did find out. He is not a Jewish wife.

Q: So it was a mixed marriage?

A: Her father was a German. They were hiding him.

Q: So they hid him?

A: He got a passport as a butcher. This way he survived.

Q: In Dusseldorf?

A: In Dusseldorf. All the factories from his uncle. So we drink and ate up to here. Back to the car. He drove us to Erlanga. You heard of it? They making over there the knives and things like that. We arrive at his house. We go in; he kisses the mezuzah. This guy kisses the mezuzah. His father didn't take the mezuzah. Now we look at each other like crazy. We went into the home. Her father was sitting at the piano, playing the piano.

Q: The wife's father?

A: Yeah. It was Friday. I remember because she was benching the licht. She was not Jewish.

Q: No, but this is Shabbot now?

A: Yeah, Shabbos. She took us one by one to the bathtub. Men and the girl. She washed us, took the striped suits out. I was stupid then, I should keep the stripe suit. She put in the back yard all the suits from us, the striped suits and the girl's clothing. She made a fire, she burned everything.

Q: You had jewels in one of them, didn't you?

A: Huh?

Q: Didn't you have some jewels in one of them?

A: I didn't left with nothing.

Q: Okay. But you still had the photos --?

A: Yeah.

Q: --and the passport?

A: No.

Q: No more passport?

A: No more passport. The passport I buried in the shop on the Sch _____.

Q: In Radom?

A: In Radom, on the -- under the roof. Was sand like in an attic. I put it on the bottom covered up. I didn't want to have the passport because after this what happened with the passport, I was afraid to keep the passport. I got rid of it.

Q: But you have the photos?

A: The photos I have. She took everybody and cleaned. Buried the -- burnt the clothing. He left, he bought clothing for everybody, everybody. New things. He gave me a double-breasted jacket, the pants -- I have the picture. He give to Meyer Pasternak, he give to everybody and he give everybody money. So Meyer Pasternak -- he was always like this -- he's going to keep the money. Okay, take the money, who cares about money? Everything is done. Then we go eat again, Shabbos. She went and bench the licht, you know the candles. I look like crazy. Said what's the matter? What's going on. His father was not so religious. Here, she benched the licht and everything, she's not Jewish. We stayed over there. After we talked and talked. He wants to know everything about his family. I said, Adolf, it's no use. Nobody's alive. We stayed one day, another day, another day. Then we got tired. This life is not for me. It's too good. I couldn't take it.

Q: You got to work?

A: No, I couldn't take it. It's too easy. I haven't got all the friends what I survived with. They said the rest of the people, they're going to go home. They said, Itzrek, you're not going. I said Adolf, I'm sorry. This is my family. He said what. I said you're my family but this life here is not good for me. I have to go with them. I was liberated with them and I'm going to stay with them. This guy got sick. He couldn't take it. You have here everything and I'm going to give you everything what you need. I said I don't need nothing. You give us suits and you give us some money. Meyer Pasternak got the money. I have to go. His wife and her father and the girl, they come to me, Izzy, Izzy. You have the family here. Stay with us. We're going to give you everything. I said, I don't need nothing. He was broke and we left. Meanwhile in the Sch _____ the people were talking to each other. Oh, Itzrek find an uncle, a brother-in-law and he

opened up a store in Dusseldorf, with furs, a fur store. Itzrek is the biggest millionaire. I haven't got a penny. But they were talking over there like this and we arrived back in S _____. Meyer Pasternak says everybody wants the few marks what they got from Adolf. He lost the money, he says. He hasn't got any money, Meyer Pasternak. Hell, who cares for the money? Then we have to leave S _____. Eisenhower came to Stuttgart. He gave us the Bismarkstrausen _____. You heard of it?

A: Now you're back in Stuttgart? You returned to Stuttgart?

A: Yeah. We went to Stuttgart. From Sch _____, we went to Stuttgart. Before the commission went to look, if we going to like it. We came to B _____. Was not too much room for everybody. I stayed with Meyer Pasternak. They support us with food and cigarettes and everything. I didn't smoke. I never smoked. They took my ration. It was getting tight to get Rhine _____. You heard of Rhine _____? No?

Q: Yeah, that's the street near Bis _____? They're giving you a house?

A: Another street. A whole street. One side was still some Germans. But one side was cleaned up from the Germans. Everybody lives in houses. Was opened a camp over there with a commission, with the president, with everything.

Q: Was this a displaced persons camp?

A: Yeah. A kitchen you can go every day and pick up your food, everything. They give you rations. They have Kornberg was in this ---.

Q: The gentleman that I met?

A: Yeah. He was in this -- where the products were. He give out, Kornberg. I didn't know Kornberg then. Because I didn't go for the food there. Then they give a room for two people. I said not for me. I don't want two people. They said we haven't got so much room. I don't care, I said. I need a room for myself. So I went to the guy from this department, he gave me a room on the 10th floor. I was living with the _____. I got a room and then outside was R _____ and she was working for the UNRRA, his wife. You know from the UNRRA, huh?

Q: I don't recall now. This is the --. Oh, the UNRRA? Okay, the United Nations -----?

A: Right.

Q: Yeah, okay. I thought you were talking about a person.

A: R _____'s wife and R _____ would be in the room. It was a big apartment and I got the last room over there. But I'm by myself. Then Eisenhower arrived. We stayed close to Eisenhower, they made pictures. I start -- the people start doing business. Black market. I wasn't good for this. I wouldn't go, take a carton cigarettes and stay on the street and sell to Germans. I couldn't do this. A lot of people they have already money. I haven't give even for the strass _____, you know ---

Q: Trolley car?

- A: Trolley car. Then Moishe Krol arrived. I took him to this apartment because some people left already for _____ family, not him but other family . They left for -- some for Israel, some for the United States. Somebody who got family in the United States, the young people that they called to Israel. By the way, my brother-in-law from Dusseldorf ---.
- Q: Adolf?
- A: Adolf. When I went back, he came to Stuttgart.
- Q: He wanted you to go to Israel?
- A: No. He came to Stuttgart with the wife and kid. Then he went to Israel. He got a heart attack in Israel and he dropped dead. Okay, now I'm in R _____ Moishe Krol was in Gar _____, you heard of it?
- Q: Yes, near Austria.
- A: He was liberated over there.
- Q: By the Americans?
- A: Yeah. He got a store, he worked for the Americans. Tailoring. I was in Stuttgart but later on I went to Gar _____ and I saw him. I saw _____ Fishman, the policeman. I even saw Friedman. He was hiding but I saw him. He didn't do too much wrong. He was afraid for himself. He sometimes kicked you, you know, to show for the SS ---.
- Q: To show the Germans that he's -----
- A: But to his hand, nobody got killed. So he was in Gar _____ and I saw him. _____ Fishman was his friend and he wants I should see him. Okay, I got nothing against him. He was not too bad. I was at Moishe Krol's. Moishe Krol got a little store where he works with the Americans. He went at the time to the German ghetto, his girl friend. None of my business but --. Meanwhile his girlfriend from -- what she slept with him in our room, _____
- Q: From Radom?
- A: Yeah.
- Q: She survived?
- A: She survived. She was looking only for M _____, Moishe Krol. She would do everything to find him. Don't you think she did find him in Gar -----? And he saw her like a pain in the neck. Moishe Krol comes to me and he says, what should I do, Itzrek? You know what I said, you lived with her the bad times. She took care, she cooked for you. I think you should forget about everything and stay with her. That what you say, Itzrek? I have so many young girls here, Germans and things? I said Moishe Krol, you was with them, the bad times. Why don't you give her good time too. She did care for you. He got married.

- Q: With her?
- A: With her. She got -- they got a daughter. She lived in New Jersey. She wasn't so happy. She was the boss over him. He was a good guy, nice guy. When she took over, she was nasty.
- Q: So he had reason to regret your advice?
- A: Yeah, yeah.
- Q: What about you? How did you get to America and then when did you get married?
- A: I'm coming to it. Then Laza Malamit went to the United States. So Moishe Krol came to Stuttgart with his wife, with Y ____.
- Q: Did she know that you persuaded him to marry?
- A: No, no. I didn't like it too much. But listen, it's his wife. I like him, I have to like her. They stayed with me. She cooked and everything in the R _____. I haven't got a penny, I told you. Some people have -- the butchers, this Winetard, this rough guy, Libel Winetard, they were smuggling black market in R _____. In the R _____ you can get everything your heart desires, diamond, gold, scrips (?), American donuts, you get everything over there. Was the biggest black market in the world, R _____. We didn't produce anything. Everything came from the Germans but the name was -- we are the black market people. So one day, this Libel Winetard this butcher, with his brother-in-law -- they have two wives, sisters.
- Q: Your friends have all left for America and finally when do you go to America?
- A: I was waiting till they going to send me a affidavit. They going to look for somebody to guarantee for me. So I stayed in Stuttgart till 1950. In 1950 I got the affidavit and then I went to the United States.
- Q: Do you remember the day?
- A: 1950 --No.
- Q: No, that's okay.
- A: When I arrived in New York they were waiting for me. Moishe Krol was waiting for me. They were treating me nice. Laza Malamit wasn't in New York. He was right where he went, to Chicago. First of all, Laza Malamit was not so close friend than Moishe Krol. Moishe Krol was very close.
- Q: He was the closest?
- A: Yeah. After even, after the war. He lived in New Jersey. Moishe Krol was a good, terrific guy. As a matter of fact, his wife's sister, she lives in New Jersey also. She has an apartment in Manhattan. The other day she called me. If I'm going to be in New York, she says, I should visit her. That's okay. No, privately, this is not a -- not on tape.

Q: Well, Izzy, I don't know if we've covered everything today?

A: I hope. If not, I'll let you know.

Q: Okay, well, it's been a pleasure meeting you. On behalf of the Museum I'd like to thank you for spending this afternoon with us. Thank you.

A: And I thank you for being so nice, spending some time with me. This is only why I like the Holocaust. They're all terrific people and I like them all. I like Jennifer, I like her -- what's her name -- and I like all the people in the -- from the Holocaust. The people, they work hard. They don't ask nobody for money. If somebody wants to donate, it's okay with them. But they don't never press you for money. I like the Holocaust very much and I'm going to do everything I can to donate as much as I can. Tony, I would like to take you out for dinner in case you want to get together with Jennifer, we have to make a date. Because you were very nice to me today. You spent two days and I appreciate very much.

Q: I appreciate the thought.

A: That so, it goes for the Holocaust people. Therefore I am hanged up on the Holocaust people. Because they all work hard and they are terrific people. Thank you again and I would like to meet you again with Jennifer.

Q: Perhaps.

A: Thank you very much.

Q: Bye-bye.