

*Tape two, side one:*

JF: Can you continue about your arrival at Sachsenhausen?

KK: Yes, we came to Sachsenhausen and it was a big, big open space with buildings and so on. We were standing there in line and the S.S. came to greet us. Isn't that nice? Jewish men with big beards. They put on their lighters and burned their beards. And they had to stand like this and the beard was burning. They started to cry; it doesn't help them. Then we came to a barrack and they have to take all off our private clothing and the private clothing came in big containers. We saw them hanging them up. To have to take everything off that we had and wrote everything down. Real German, you know, everything has to be written. But I had a wristwatch, ring [not clear]. Then they stop us to take off our hair...shaved us the hair, the head. [The beard] everything was off. Then they put us [under shower] ice cold water. Ice, not warm water, ice cold. [With a dangerous] powerful shower. And then they gave us new clothing. And I saw what they give us. Heavy military uniforms, maybe 100 years old, worn what, from 1870, or what. From the war in 1870. With high stiff collars, and three hooks here. They had to be closed, those hooks, shouldn't be open. If they find someone with an open collar, they hit them terrible, on the tops of the head. They brought us to barracks, my barrack was 37, the number was outside marked 37. In the barracks there was two parts. When you came in, it was one, the toilets and the washrooms. Then came a day-room where you could sit and eat your *herrliches* [delicious] dinner and table and benches, not chairs, benches. Then came a door, there was the room where we slept: a big room, empty room and they brought in burlap sacks and we had to fill them with straw and has to staple<sup>8</sup> them on the back wall, to stuff them up. Then started our working days and hours.

JF: During this time, what kind of food were you given?

KK: We became [received]...everybody became [received] a piece of bread. Five men, one bread. It was bread, about one-and-a-half pound bread, soft bread. Black bread. They cut this in five pieces. Five men became [received] on bread. *Jeder* [each] a piece. The bread was so, that when you eat the bread, the whole mouth starts to burn. I don't know what the ingredients in this bread were...that everybody became a little blistered in your mouth, insides. Of the tongue, inside, you know. Little white blisters. When you eat fire, so was the bread. And ten men, became [received] one piece margarine, it was a pound piece. For cut in nine pieces and everyone become [received] a piece like this. [A little thicker.] Then they give us coffee...was only black water. That doesn't taste like coffee...was only black water with a sweet taste. In the evening they gave us one *Teller* [dish] full of soup, watery soup. And in that was swimming like, like pieces of *Kohlrube* [kohlrabi]—little pieces was terrible...but I eat it. Other people eat it, too, because they were hungry. So, work, they had not work for us. So the work was to laying a whole day

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<sup>8</sup>Perhaps, stapel, meaning to pile.

on your belly next to each other—the hand in the back had to keep the little cap from head with both hands. And they watched that we had all the hands really in the back, not that we take one hand away. Then the S.S. starts to come in and have fun with us. Up and down, we had to go up from the floor, lay down, up and down, up and down. Till there were a couple of dead people, elderly people who couldn't stand this exercise. Then they stopped. One day they did a wonderful thing—they put people from the other half of barrack, put them in our part. And they have to lay in two shifts, one over the other. There's one laying on the floor and then the people from the other side barrack have to come our part and has to lay on us.

JF: How many people are you talking about?

KK: About 200 people. In two shifts, one over the other and on top come the S.S., stepped over us with a piece of wood and hit the people.

JF: They would walk on the two layers of bodies?

KK: On the two layers of bodies and hit us terrible. The head in there was un-human, so the S.S. couldn't stay long there, because they couldn't stand the heat too. They had uniforms on, the black S.S. uniforms with the S.S. signs. They start to feel uncomfortable. Thanks God, they went out again, because they couldn't stand the heat. But they worked so long over the people, until there were a couple of dead people there—from this strenuous exercise. In the evening we had to go out and stay in line and get counted. But the people were laying on the floor, their brain couldn't stand it. They couldn't stay on their legs, from laying a whole day, so they tumbled, they couldn't control themselves...they stumbled over the whole place. Like they run away too, like this. They couldn't control their own...After the third day or fourth day, I don't know exactly how many, I felt I was one of the victims too, soon. The *Blockaltest* came in, he was a criminal because he had green triangle with his number. A tailor should *meld* [announce] themselves...who is a tailor? So I get up and I said, "I am a tailor," and with me maybe ten other people. And he took three out, from this group he took three. One of those three was I. We could sit on a bench, shouldn't lay on the floor anymore. No more exercise for us, we were sitting, those three, men sitting on the floor...we could take off our jacket because a tailor has to work, you know, has to be comfortable...could take off the heavy jacket. Those three men, you imagine the feeling that we had? We were so *nebbesh* [helpless] for the others, but we felt good...Ashamed to tell you, but it was like this. We could cool our bodies on the wet windows, the windows were wet from the heat, and the wetness felt good on our naked chests. And we had to sew on those *Mogen Dovid*s on the prisoners' clothing and the numbers. Everybody on the floor, one after the other, has to sit up, has to take off the jacket, have to give it to us. We were sewing on the numbers and the *Mogen Dovid* and having to give it back to them. They had to put it on again, and lay again on the floor. The S.S. came in and [made] a terrible exercise with those on the floor. They had such wounds on the knees, from them laying on the floor.

JF: You were doing this in the same barrack where you had been before?

KK: Yes, in the same barrack, but we three they took us out, not out, they put us on a bench, we could sit on a bench. They were laying before us, those hundreds of people, and we were sitting on a benches, three men. And I was one of them.

JF: You had mentioned before that the *Mogen Dovid* were two separate triangles?

KK: Yes, two separate triangles, so put on that it looked like a Jewish star, like a *Mogen Dovid*.

JF: And the color...?

KK: The color was red, one triangle was red and one was yellow. Yellow is Jewish, the *Juden Fleck* [patch] you know, the yellow *Fleck*, and red. Some had *aber* [but] black *Fleck*...parts, black triangles. Those were Jews who were already arrested once in a while. One cannot criminals, they named them a-social. A-social was not a normal person...he lives off others of other's peoples.

JF: Like a petty criminal?

KK: Yes, like a, what they say in *Rusland* [Russia], [how do you call] the sort? Yes people were done that had regular work, live from little petty things,<sup>9</sup> or little *Krumme Sachen* [petty crimes]. They had a black triangle and a yellow on top.

JF: And the ones that had the red piece were considered political Jews?

KK: Because we were political Jews, because we were Polish Jews and still in Germany like, you know. We had to live there in Poland. Then some Jews had green on red...green on yellow—yellow for Jew and green was criminal. That's why Jews were already arrested...were in maybe prison. Not much. Jews are not this type of people in general, who are in prisons. Saved my life, maybe, this episode. All my years in concentration camp I had so little chain of little luck, since I would never live six years in concentration camp. I wasn't this strong enough. One luck was that I was always a small eater. I could live with little bread, a little bit, with a little bit water soup. Another thing was, I was a tailor. It saved my life in this moment. A third thing is, I wasn't married. I was a single person. I not have to think what happened to my wife: What is with my wife? What is with my children? I am here, where are they? Living, or what, knowing you couldn't go to them. We couldn't wrote to them. After a month in concentration camp we could wrote the first postal card. [But] we should put...only wrote what they said. We should write, "I am all right, I am here and here barrack and so and so. [I am] fine, and I hope you feel good, you're all right." What they said, we should write, we wrote.

JF: And who could you send that to?

KK: To my family, to my father, to my sister.

JF: Were you able to hear from them after you gave them your location?

KK: Not right away, not right away. The first postal card after a month, we could wrote to them so that they know where we are. They didn't know. They took us out of beds,

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<sup>9</sup>Perhaps, "parasites."

they didn't know what happened to us. At night, we could take the straw sack down and spread them on the floor and could lay on them. But there were so many people, there wasn't enough room for each person to lay like a human being, on the straw sack. You couldn't lay like this, how impossible, there wasn't enough room to lay straight on your back. You have to lay on the side, on one side, and the next person has to lay *fast* [almost] on your side. The *Blockaltest* [block supervisor], this murderer, every day he had a couple deaths. He has to show them the results...the dead people were laying outside barracks after they were dead.

JF: The block elder you mentioned was a criminal?

KK: A criminal, yes, a real murderer.

JF: Not a Jew.

KK: No, no, not a Jew. There were no Jewish block elders in Sachsenhausen. He had a piece of bread in his hand, and everybody has to lay tight on the other one.

JF: With your knees drawn up?

KK: The knees maybe like this. A little bit drawn up...not straight. And one, the next one has to lay hard on us. He hit me or the other. Like you see a sardine in a box, but a sardine look nice. We were laying like this. One on the other. You could hardly breathe. And when you want to turn, we have to call each other the whole length, we have to call, we wants to turn the other side. So we all has to turn. But one has to go out...on the toilet, once in the while in the night. We had only one little cover to cover us. So he stand up, this...till he could get up, he was so tight on the other one, till he had the power to get up, to get loose from those people, he went to the toilet, he came back. He has no place where to lay down. Right away the place was filled up already. He begged the people, "Please let me in again, let me lay down." Nobody wants to let him in again. He was standing and crying, *nebbish*. That happened every night; every night the same thing. People got up and wants to go to the toilet, come back, couldn't find their place anymore. You couldn't put on light, there was no light. And then the S.S. came sometimes at night with a flashlight to the window and looked. When they saw one of us prisoners laying there maybe stretched his arm or what, made a little motion, you know. "Oh the Jews don't sleep, how can they sleep, let's go in and throw them out." So we had to go out—all of us out, middle of the night because maybe one man raised his arm...out of the barracks on hands, in hands...lay down outside and roll. Rolling, we have to roll, like children, holding up a hands. We had to roll.

JF: You were only wearing what?

KK: A shirt.

JF: A shirt, that's all.

KK: A shirt, that's all. We are rolling, rolling, and they hit us until a couple were dead. Couple two, three, were dead. This happened *fast* [almost] every night. They came and had fun with us. Then they had one or two targets, elderly Jews, and hit them until they were dead. So we saw the dead every day for [before] your eyes. Work, they had no work for us. There was no work.

JF: You were still sewing on the stars, at that point?

KK: Yes, but then come one point where there were no more sewing, but then there was different story. They saw that the people were get so sore, that they had wounds and the pus was setting in. So they had to find another thing. We had to, all four of us has to go in the toilet. In the men's room.

JF: All of you?

KK: Yes, all of us from one room in this side, this toilet from the other side barrack—their toilet. Two toilets. And we had to stay in those toilets. And they pressed us in. One and the other, one and the other. Until we were staying like this. Could hardly raise the chest.

JF: You were standing, packed into this...room?

KK: Yes, standing the whole day. This was the working hours, we had to stay there.

JF: This included you, at this point you were no longer sewing?

KK: I was there, too. People wants to go to the toilet. They couldn't. The toilets were there, but they couldn't move, because we were pressed one on the other. You could hardly breathe. Some people took their hands, you know, to have a little bit distance from the other men, you know, but it was terrible. Staying in one place, you know. The toilet was there but no one could go on the toilet. Because we were standing like this. People made in the pants, it was a stinking terrible thing. The windows were closed, the doors were closed...they couldn't get out, the doors was closed. They pressed the door on us. The *Blockaltest* you know. They pressed the door, it was so full packed, they could hardly close the door, on us.

JF: It was the block elder who put you in here, the S.S. would not...they were also there.

KK: This was their plan to do it. They didn't came in then. They couldn't come in. They had no room to go in there. This was weeks and weeks like this. Then my legs began to get wounds and start to...from those shoes. From those worn out shoes with those cleats. My feet began to get sore and I had big wounds on my feet.

JF: You were standing in this room?

KK: Yes.

JF: From the time you got up in the morning.

KK: Yes, we eat our breakfast, our very generous breakfast, and then we had to go in there. That was the working hours.

JF: That was how many hours?

KK: Around eight hours or so. Until 5 o'clock at night. Five o'clock, and then they let us out, we could hardly walk, because we were standing. We were counted again. 180 Jews *angetreten zum* [falling in] to *Appell*. Ten deaths laying next to us...ten dead. Naked. I don't tell you everything, don't think, if I can tell you everything, we stay here until tomorrow. I can't tell you everything. It's impossible. Then the war was against

Norway. Yes, they conquered Norway, the Nazis. Norway's people are *stark* [strong] against S.S., against the Nazis. They started to do everything to boycott them, to hit the Germans where they could bring them in a fight, you know, [murder them]. We got prisoners from Norway, because Norway they had an N and an O on the chest, next to their triangle. Then we saw many different kind of people from other countries. On the *Platz* [square]<sup>10</sup> on the *Grosseplatz*...This counting was first only for the barracks. We saw nobody. Only we could see to the next barracks, that's all. Later on we were counted the whole camp the whole concentration camp were counted on a big, big free place.

JF: Were you also sewing the Norwegian...?

KK: No, no, no...only for the Jewish barracks, for mine barracks. Barrack No. 37. In other barracks was maybe the same thing. This took long with those *Mogen Dovids*, maybe 100 people. A couple days. How can you sew with those wet fingers, you could hardly hold the needle in your hands, from the heat. So I became those wounds here in my leg. I can show you still those big knobs here on my leg.

JF: You still have a big knob on your leg?

KK: I don't know if you can see anything.

JF: From the rubbing of the shoes?

KK: Yes, from the wounds on my legs. I don't know if you can see something.

JF: Yes, I can see.

KK: This was from here, till here.

JF: The whole back of your heel.

KK: Like a hand, so big things, a hole, with green, green.

JF: It was green.

KK: With green, swollen and pus. On the other side was not much. Only this leg.

JF: Was there any question about having it treated at all?

KK: So we tried to go to the *Revier*. *Revier* is the hospital. *Revier*. The only thing what they could do to give us paper, bandages *aus* [of] paper, so they put paper bandages on...but nothing else. Not medicine or so nothing. So after those days in the toilet they was thinking to put the people who couldn't walk—I couldn't walk—put them outside, not direct outside the camp, it was still inside, *aber* [but] on a place where nobody came. From the whole camp it was...from the camp, the...the dirt, I don't know what. We have to lay there. No far from them, on the floor, and the big...*Hitze* [heat] the heat was terrible, it was already Summer, 1940. For the Polish prisoners...they were all free...there was nothing in Poland. They only worked a little bit, right? In Poland, the Polish Jews.

JF: Were you able to talk to any of the prisoners from the other countries?

KK: No, impossible. Was not possible.

JF: Were you able to get any information as to what was going on outside this camp?

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<sup>10</sup>[Later on we were counted on a big Platz.]

KK: Yes, a little, a little bit. What you hear from other prisoners, talking, you know. Yes, a little bit from the war going on, you know.

JF: That's how you got your information?

KK: Yes, yes, yes.

JF: Were you able through that year to hear anything significant from your family?

KK: Nothing.

JF: You got no mail at all?

KK: Yes, I got mail, but they couldn't write either. When they wrote something what the S.S. didn't like, they made a big black stamp on it, CENSORED. A big stamp, CENSORED. So you couldn't read what they really wrote, what they didn't like. Every letter was censored. Refuse from the camp there was the refuse, was *stapled* [piled] on one place at the edge of the camp, and they put us there. Next to this. Hundreds and thousands of flies came, and the flies smelled our wounds, the pus, went insides and put their eggs up.

JF: So this is lice?

KK: No lice. Flies, the flies were flying and smelled our wounds and...

JF: And laid their eggs.

KK: And laid their eggs. The sun hit our legs and I had such a *Blasen* [blisters].

*Tape two, side two:*

JF: You were saying that the sun hit the wound on your leg...on your ankle...

KK: We became sunburned on parts of our body from the sun. We had big water *Blasen* [blisters] on the legs...water blisters *aber* [but] high up. Then suddenly we looked, worms, we had full with worms on our wound. The legs were full with worms, white worms, maybe an inch long. We had to put them down. But *im Moment* [at the moment] it felt not too bad, it was *ekelich* [disgusting], terrible feeling...but the worms eat the pus, they eat the pus from those sores, those wounds.

JF: Yes.

KK: It was a good feeling, you know.

JF: So that they actually removed some of the pus?

KK: Yes they removed...they were actually living from those pus. You were not a human being any more, you were like a piece of animal, without a brain, who couldn't think anymore...only the little thoughts were on this little bit food in the evening, what you get.

JF: You were still getting the same rations that you described before?

KK: Yes, yes. A piece of margarine, one pound margarine was parted in nine parts. I'm not sure exactly, but I think it was nine parts. It was like for every person, was a piece of margarine like my finger is to put on this bread.

JF: Your thoughts then were of the food you described and of the watching the worms or the flies and the process of what was happening to your...

KK: This is what the S.S. wants from all those prisoners. That they shouldn't think anymore. They should only be like a piece of wood, you know, without brains. Only to listen to the command.

JF: Now you had been in the camp a year...?

KK: Less than a year. When I just told you.

JF: When you found that your brain was no longer working?

KK: Practically, practically not.

JF: It was a year?

KK: Less than a year, less than a year. It was June 1940. We were thinking nothing. You couldn't think anymore. You were like a piece of animal, what has to go in *Reihe und Glied* [rank and file]. If you go one *Schritt* [step] out, right away, they hit you, they shoot at you, the S.S. As a matter of fact, when we marched to work, when we were marching they took our camps away from us and throw them to the electric wires. Then they said, "*Jude*, go pick up your caps." They took our caps and threw them there. The poor Jew went to pick up his cap, and from the watchdogs they shoot him. Because they said he wants to run away.

JF: Was there anyone at this time, Mr. Kupferberg, who tried to escape, who did so?



KK: Oh yes, oh yes.

JF: Then what happened?

KK: Then we were counted. One prisoner was missing. They had *genau* [exactly] the number, how many prisoners were there. And when the *Appell*, the count, came, and one prisoner was missing, they let us stay on the big place, the whole camp. Every barrack extra, every barrack *fürsich* [separately]. And this took sometimes a whole night till they found this prisoner.

JF: And then what would they do?

KK: *Entweder* [either] the prisoner was hiding in the camp somewhere, so then they killed him. We were staying the whole night on the *Appell Platz*...without food. Then after the counting, all this, we go back to our barracks and became [got] our little bit water soup.

JF: They would shoot the prisoner if...?

KK: This prisoner, they shoot. If they find them outside, he came back as a piece of meat only. A bloody mess of meat, you couldn't recognize him anymore. Then the dogs were eating him. If outside the camp, they let the dogs loose, and the dog find him, this prisoner, where he was sitting, hiding.

JF: So by the time he got back...?

KK: Then they brought him in on a stretcher and the whole camp had to march by this prisoner, to look at him. They forced us to look at him. On this piece of bloody mess, so *zerfressen* [eaten up] was he from the dogs. Or they hanged him *vor* [in front of] the whole camp, on a gallow, they hung him up and the whole camp has to look.

JF: How often did that happen, how often do you think someone tried to escape?

KK: It happened every second day, maybe. Some people had enough, *entweder* [either] outside the camp, like I said when he was working, and tried to hide somewhere to escape at night. Daytime he wants to hide and the night he wants to run away. But they catch them...nobody was running away. Always they found him and when it was kilometers away from the camp.

JF: Now during this time...?

KK: There was no Jew...it was always a *goy* that run away, not Jewish people.

JF: The Jews did not try to run away?

KK: No, some Jews were very...got crazy. They were thinking on their families, all the time.

JF: When you say they got crazy, what do you mean?

KK: They start to scream. Loud scream like a crazy person. We know why, because he was thinking of his wife and children. What happen to them.

JF: What would happen to him if he would scream?

KK: They hit him, and then when it got dark, he ran to the electric wires, to the barbed wire around the camp and touched the electric wire and he got electrocuted. In the morning when we got up, we looked out the window we saw hanging people like spins,

spins in a net, a spin, you know what I mean? Hanging in the net, attached to this electric wires.

JF: Like a moth or a butterfly...?

KK: Like a spin, spin net.

JF: Oh, a spider web...

KK: Yes, a spider web. He was hanging like this in the wires. Touched to the wires. And they had to take off the power...the S.S. had to take off the power and then we had to take them down. Everyday.

JF: Everyday, someone.

KK: Everyday you saw, two or three, or four hanging in those wires. People to do suicide and they run to the electric wires, got electrocuted.

JF: Was there any group of people who carried on any prayers in the camp? Was there any opportunity for religious...?

KK: No, no opportunity. We were so busy to watch ourselves that we didn't get killed, that we had no prayers. Someone...some *fromm* [pious] Jews were there remembered...you didn't know what day it was. After a little while you lose your track, if it is Thursday, Friday what month or date. One of the Jews said tomorrow is Yom Kippur. Some people start to cry and start *davening*. When they were in our barracks, you know.

JF: What happened then? You had talked about June of 1940, it was the point at which your feet were so infected.

KK: Full of those worms...what the flies put their eggs in you know. But like I said, on one side, you feel *Ekel* [disgust], but the other you feel that the wounds start to hurt not so much anymore. Those worms eat the pus from those sores. In September 1939...

JF: You mean 1941...I'm sorry 1940.

KK: 1940. After I was a little bit less than a year there, September 1st or the 2nd, and on the 13th it would be a year. They put us in cattle trains—all those people that couldn't walk, some with sores, with wounds, put us in cattle cars and sent us to Dachau, around twenty kilometers or what from Munich, not far.

JF: About how long were you on that train, then?

KK: Oh, these train I was 24 hours.

JF: About how many men do you think were with you?

KK: In every cattle car were about 50 or 60 prisoners. It was a very long train. Air came into two little windows on the ceiling. With iron gates. You couldn't get out, you know. Those doors were closed...they didn't let us out when we wanted to go to the toilet, so we had to make in the cattle car.

JF: Was there a guard with you on the train?

KK: No, no, maybe there were guards, but they were not on those cattle cars; there was no room for them. They were in regular wagons, the guards. They were there. When the train stopped they went out and watched so nobody *irgendwie* [somehow] tried

to escape. We came to Dachau. First they treated us not bad. They put people with wounds, they put us in hospital, in beds.

JF: Were they treating you with medicine?

KK: They treat us with medicine.

JF: Who were the doctors?

KK: Prisoners.

JF: Jewish?

KK: No, no, *goyish*. Jews were not allowed to have such good jobs where they could work under a roof. Put us in bed, put bandages around our legs and give us medicine. Nor oral medicine—for the leg, they drenched us in a jello<sup>11</sup> solution.

JF: A jello solution?

KK: Yes, I don't know what it was. Disinfectant, I think what it was.

JF: And the oral medication, do you have any idea what it was?

KK: No, not oral medication, only the leg they treated.

JF: Oh, they didn't give you anything by mouth?

KK: No, no, not by the mouth.

JF: I'm sorry, they did something...this jello type solution?

KK: They drenched the bandages with this solution.

JF: I see.

KK: And we could lay there. The leg was up in the air like this. It was resting.

JF: How long do you think your feet had been infected by the time you got to Dachau? How long a period of time?

KK: Period of time?

JF: From June or earlier than June?

KK: From May 1940.

JF: To September?

KK: May '40 this we came to Dachau was...

JF: From May to September of that year...

KK: And then September and then we came to Dachau with those bandages, those wounds, and then we came into hospital and they treat us very nicely there.

JF: Was your food any better at that point?

KK: After a little while the wound started to heal. Shortly before the wound started to heal, it was only like a quarter big, they threw us out.

JF: They took you out of the infirmary, or hospital.

KK: Yes, the *Fuss* [foot] was still bandaged, but the wound was smaller. Outside we could go into barracks. And then the hell started. All the Jews were automatically in the *Straf* [penal] company.

JF: The *Straf* company?

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<sup>11</sup>Perhaps "yellow."

KK: *Straf* Company...this is a certain type of group of people, of prisoners who were treated worse than the others...punished. The whole camp has to work six days a week. On Sunday, it was a day of rest. We Jews had to work all seven days of the week.

JF: This *Straf* company...what does that word mean?

KK: Punishment...this is a group of people they were extra punished, because they were Jews. We had to dig ditches outside the camp. Dachau is a camp, what is outside filled with a big ditch with water. First is there electric wire, then is a big deep ditch with water. It's very deep, the water. If you want to escape, you drowned in this water.

JF: Is that the ditch that you were digging?

KK: No, no, this is only the situation what Dachau was. Then you go outside the camp, you go over a little bridge, you saw the water *ringsum* [around] and then we walked on those fields outside Dachau.

JF: Outside of Dachau, were there homes or...?

KK: No, only fields.

JF: Only fields. As close as this was to Munich, this was empty farmland...

KK: This camp was isolated from houses...you saw nothing, only fields.

JF: So there were not farmers...

KK: Far away you could see the Alps...from far away. Dachau is 800 meters over the sea-level high. We have to dig ditches. Those ditches were for drainage for the fields to put water on the fields, and then they let the water through to those ditches. And the water wasn't very high, maybe like this here. So maybe two feet deep. We have to dig ditches and till the ground with spades; put the spade in and till the ground. We working in long rows one next to each other. In the evening when we want to go march back to the barracks to the camp, the S.S. was standing there and threw many from us in those ditches.

JF: They threw some of you into those ditches?

KK: Yes, those prisoners. And the water was only till here, so they struggled out of those ditches...and some of them they didn't let out. They hit them when they struggled to come out. They hit them with [not clear] over their heads, and they got unconscious when they were hit on the head and fell in this little bit of water and drowned. That we saw everyday. Everyday two or three or four of us, drowned in this water.

JF: Would they pick these people at random?

KK: At random, they didn't like their faces, or what. So one day one of the S.S. men called me, "Come here, you dirty Jew." With his fist he hit me and I fell *Kopf* over [head first] into those water. And I stumbled out, and he called me again. I was standing to attention. I was standing like this. Wet, wet.

JF: With your arms next to your side?

KK: And he give me again a hit with his fist, and again I fell into this ditch. But he didn't hit me with a spade, not me. When I came out of the water, and the Doberman dogs come on, it bit me in the legs, and I was standing with pain where the dogs bit me and then he said, "Back to work." Nothing happened to me...only I had bleeding wounds from

those dogs...and were wet. And I was still working. But many of my friends died this way. In this little bit water, wouldn't let them get out, hit them on the heads with the iron parts of the shovel.

JF: When you were working in these fields, were you still in those German uniforms that you had been given in Sachsenhausen?

KK: No, in Dachau we became [got] striped uniforms. Blue and white striped uniforms. Pants the same.

JF: And also with stars, the same colors?

KK: With the stars on them.

JF: I hope this tape is good.

KK: I'm sure it will be. Go ahead.

JF: We worked seven days a week. One day we had to go to the *Appell Platz*, the *Platz* where they count those prisoners. All the prisoners were in there. Everybody takes off their uniform, put them together in a nice bundle and put *vor* [in front of] your feet, they were saying there. There is going to be a selection.

KK: How long has this been since you arrived at Dachau?

JF: Maybe a couple of months later...maybe May, or April of 1941. Suddenly we saw far away naked women running...it was far away, but I could see it was women, naked. Running for the S.S....the S.S. was standing and they were running...was a selection of women...far away, of the same place, but far away. I don't know what happened to them. But we could see the naked women, and we were standing naked, for hours, and then the sun went away, and...it got cloudy, you know. The sun hid under the clouds. Under the clouds we start to freezing, you know. When the sun was there we were happy, it was warm. When the clouds came, the sun was hiding behind the clouds. Hours and hours, we had to put on our clothes, and we had to go back to our barracks.

KK: You mean there was no selection?

JF: Nothing, nothing. The S.S. saw us and said, "I don't want to see the dirt anymore. I had enough of this dirt," so we heard him say this. This is only a short episode. The whole camp was filled with lice. People came with the shirts from the wash barrack where they wash our laundry. The shirts were still with little eggs from lice. They came already infested with eggs from lice. Clothing lice.

KK: They washed your uniforms?

JF: Yes, sure, once in a while...not the uniforms, only the shirts. They became [got] every two weeks clean shirts...I told you before my English is not good...I am a tailor, a tailor has to work, not to talk, right? I had to sew here in America. When I was a salesman, I could learn easier English, but I wasn't. So he became [got] lice. Infested with lice. The whole barracks were alive with lice. My whole body, not only mine, all the others, were full from lice, we scratched, the nails, where we scratched. After weeks and weeks when we were tortured with this lice, we were sitting there. In the evening after dinner we have to click the lice to kill them. Big lice. They took around two barracks for people were so

infested with lice and the bodies were so scratched bloody, they took us, burned our prisoner clothing and put us in other barracks. To heal us, or what, our bodies. They put us on those straw, burlap bags with straw and we had to lay there a whole day, doing nothing. Only like naked. They give one to another shirt, I don't know what it was. Every two or three days they came in, with some salve and we had to, a black salve, and put this on our bodies. It smelled like tar, like tar. We have to put this on our bodies...Food they only give us a piece of bread and water. That's all.

KK: That's all you had each day?

JF: Each day, for eight days. Bread and water. They [punished us yet] because we had lice. Our fault.

KK: You were punished because you had lice?

JF: Yes, like, yes, yes, because of this.

KK: Before that time you had gotten a little bit more food?

JF: Yes, before we got regular prisoner food, with the water soup, you know. Sometimes they called it like spinach, because there were green leaves in the water. Never a piece of potato, except in the winter time. They give us frozen potatoes. Frozen. The *Schweine* [pigs] what they didn't eat, they give it to us. When they open up those *Kessel* [pots] where the food was, the smell was terrible, but we eat it, what could we do, we had nothing else. We eat those frozen glass potatoes, like glass they were frozen.

KK: What were your barracks like in Dachau, as opposed to Sachsenhausen?

JF: They're bigger barracks there. The Jews were not mixed up with other prisoners. Jews were in their own barracks. Bigger barracks than in Sachsenhausen. And they had one barracks was with Polish...with Catholic priests. Young priests.

KK: The whole barrack was filled with priests?

JF: Yes, yes...with Catholic priests. But they had it good. They became [got] better food, they became [got] the food what the S.S. got, from outside the camp...and they treated them better, but they were prisoners. Had their own church in their barrack.

KK: How long do you think these priests were there?

JF: A certain time, maybe a year or...only in Dachau I saw this. They had to exercise, they had to run like the soldiers run. Some were looking good except they had no hair, like we were.

KK: They were also in prison uniforms?

JF: Yes, yes.

KK: But you heard that they were Catholic priests?

JF: Yes, they were Catholic priests, all of them, in the extra barracks. They had a church, too, in the barrack, and better food, too. They eat the same food that the S.S. soldiers were eating.

KK: Was there any difference in Dachau as far as religion was concerned? There still was no opportunity or...prayers going on privately?

JF: No, not at all, no religion. Maybe privately, but not for us. We worked seven days a week. We were half dead when we came home from work. And in the winter time the nose was running in the soup and we eat it. The nose was running in the soup and we eat it. The whole day sometimes you worked in the rain and came home in the barracks with your wet clothing and in the morning, after you slept you put on the wet clothing again. There was no occasion to dry them, you know. You put your wet clothing on and you worked again a whole day. One day, I was working with prisoners digging the field. Turning the dirt. One of the posts, S.S. posts were watching us, called. He called me. With the finger. I came near; he said not a word. "Your number." I showed him my number. He wrote the number down. I know I was maybe talking to mine neighbor, a couple of words, but I wasn't standing still and talk to him. I worked, so I was working and talking, maybe bent my head...