

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:22,480

2  
00:00:22,480 --> 00:00:24,430  
What is DP camp?

3  
00:00:24,430 --> 00:00:24,970  
Pardon me?

4  
00:00:24,970 --> 00:00:26,230  
Tell me about DP camps.

5  
00:00:26,230 --> 00:00:27,850  
Yes.

6  
00:00:27,850 --> 00:00:32,619  
After we were brought by the  
British military two to Lubeck,

7  
00:00:32,619 --> 00:00:39,460  
which is in northern Germany, I  
found my ways within a few days

8  
00:00:39,460 --> 00:00:43,570  
to a displaced person  
camp run by the British

9  
00:00:43,570 --> 00:00:45,640  
in a town called Neustadt.

10  
00:00:45,640 --> 00:00:51,040  
It was located in the former  
German submarine school,

11  
00:00:51,040 --> 00:00:54,280  
and there were many people.

12  
00:00:54,280 --> 00:00:55,810  
Jews were in the small minority.

13

00:00:55,810 --> 00:00:57,070  
There were people there from--

14  
00:00:57,070 --> 00:00:57,945  
there were Frenchmen.

15  
00:00:57,945 --> 00:01:01,870  
There were Italian soldiers who  
were interned by the Germans,

16  
00:01:01,870 --> 00:01:05,650  
somehow, after Italy changed  
sides and declared war

17  
00:01:05,650 --> 00:01:07,790  
on Germany in 1943.

18  
00:01:07,790 --> 00:01:11,920  
There were some Yugoslav  
former prisoners of war.

19  
00:01:11,920 --> 00:01:16,630  
There were Poles, Ukrainians,  
as well as Latvians,

20  
00:01:16,630 --> 00:01:19,930  
and Lithuanians, and Estonians.

21  
00:01:19,930 --> 00:01:21,490  
Within a matter of days--

22  
00:01:21,490 --> 00:01:27,130  
no, within a matter of weeks,  
various people left, went home.

23  
00:01:27,130 --> 00:01:33,070  
It was made possible for the  
Frenchmen to go back to France,

24  
00:01:33,070 --> 00:01:35,260  
and the Italian  
soldiers, somehow,

25

00:01:35,260 --> 00:01:38,110  
were able to move back to Italy.

26

00:01:38,110 --> 00:01:40,570  
And the Yugoslavs left.

27

00:01:40,570 --> 00:01:42,460  
The Poles and the Czechs--

28

00:01:42,460 --> 00:01:45,430  
the majority of the Poles  
and almost all the Czechs

29

00:01:45,430 --> 00:01:47,320  
went back east, home.

30

00:01:47,320 --> 00:01:50,200  
And after a matter  
of six weeks or so,

31

00:01:50,200 --> 00:01:55,730  
the people that were  
left in camp were Jews,

32

00:01:55,730 --> 00:02:01,270  
a few Jews, a few Poles  
who-- and Ukrainians--

33

00:02:01,270 --> 00:02:04,960  
for whatever personal reasons,  
did not want to go back.

34

00:02:04,960 --> 00:02:10,449  
And the Lithuanian, Latvian,  
and Estonian families

35

00:02:10,449 --> 00:02:17,890  
of people who escaped from  
the advancing Russians, people

36

00:02:17,890 --> 00:02:22,150  
who, in large part,

I believe, were

37  
00:02:22,150 --> 00:02:23,770  
cooperating with the Germans.

38  
00:02:23,770 --> 00:02:28,570  
And of course, as I got to  
know some of them, some of them

39  
00:02:28,570 --> 00:02:33,400  
did serve in the German  
military in Estonian divisions

40  
00:02:33,400 --> 00:02:37,060  
or Latvian divisions.

41  
00:02:37,060 --> 00:02:40,330  
Life in the DP was  
really a waste of time.

42  
00:02:40,330 --> 00:02:42,310  
There was nothing  
much done there.

43  
00:02:42,310 --> 00:02:45,640  
We were, of course,  
provided for by

44  
00:02:45,640 --> 00:02:48,400  
various charitable organizations  
and the sponsorship

45  
00:02:48,400 --> 00:02:50,680  
of the United Nations.

46  
00:02:50,680 --> 00:02:54,400  
UNRRA was the organization that  
really was responsible for it.

47  
00:02:54,400 --> 00:02:56,200  
The British managed it.

48

00:02:56,200 --> 00:03:00,850

But it was not a meaningful,  
or useful, or purposeful time.

49

00:03:00,850 --> 00:03:02,890

It was just kind  
of time of waiting.

50

00:03:02,890 --> 00:03:05,830

For those who were willing  
and able to go home,

51

00:03:05,830 --> 00:03:09,100

it was a time of  
transition of weeks or days

52

00:03:09,100 --> 00:03:11,020

until they could  
get on the train

53

00:03:11,020 --> 00:03:13,870

to go back to Czechoslovakia.

54

00:03:13,870 --> 00:03:16,990

So after a relatively  
short time,

55

00:03:16,990 --> 00:03:20,710

it was not only a  
wasted time of waiting

56

00:03:20,710 --> 00:03:23,740

but for the Jewish people  
in that particular camp

57

00:03:23,740 --> 00:03:27,310

and generally in camps  
in the English zone

58

00:03:27,310 --> 00:03:34,150

was a time of waiting in a  
relatively hostile environment.

59

00:03:34,150 --> 00:03:37,420  
The Poles-- I don't  
want to single them out,

60  
00:03:37,420 --> 00:03:39,850  
but the Poles who  
were there still

61  
00:03:39,850 --> 00:03:42,850  
had certain  
anti-Semitic attitudes.

62  
00:03:42,850 --> 00:03:52,780  
And I remember an occasion where  
a group of Polish performers

63  
00:03:52,780 --> 00:03:56,860  
came to perform to  
entertain the DP people,

64  
00:03:56,860 --> 00:04:03,220  
and the comedy included  
various anti-Jewish jokes.

65  
00:04:03,220 --> 00:04:10,480  
The Latvians and Lithuanians who  
were mostly kind of in charge

66  
00:04:10,480 --> 00:04:14,170  
to administer the  
camps were obviously

67  
00:04:14,170 --> 00:04:16,480  
people who cooperated  
with the Germans.

68  
00:04:16,480 --> 00:04:20,950  
So it was not a time of healing.

69  
00:04:20,950 --> 00:04:22,690  
It was not a meaningful time.

70  
00:04:22,690 --> 00:04:25,300

It was a time of waiting.

71

00:04:25,300 --> 00:04:31,600

Some of the young Jewish people managed to get into a situation

72

00:04:31,600 --> 00:04:34,240

where they could smuggle themselves into Palestine.

73

00:04:34,240 --> 00:04:38,990

It was illegal at that time because Israel was not yet

74

00:04:38,990 --> 00:04:39,490

free.

75

00:04:39,490 --> 00:04:41,470

Others were just waiting.

76

00:04:41,470 --> 00:04:44,200

I had made contact with my relatives in America.

77

00:04:44,200 --> 00:04:46,750

I knew they were sponsoring my coming to the United States.

78

00:04:46,750 --> 00:04:50,410

I accepted that as my future, and I was just waiting.

79

00:04:50,410 --> 00:04:53,350

80

00:04:53,350 --> 00:04:57,490

Towards the end of 1945, both because I

81

00:04:57,490 --> 00:04:59,200

felt that living in the American zone

82

00:04:59,200 --> 00:05:02,290  
would make it easy for me to  
immigrate the United States

83

00:05:02,290 --> 00:05:09,940  
and because of the really  
unpleasant frictions that

84

00:05:09,940 --> 00:05:13,570  
existed in that camp where  
the majority of the people

85

00:05:13,570 --> 00:05:18,490  
were not sympathetic to us, I  
moved on to the Americans zone

86

00:05:18,490 --> 00:05:23,073  
and to a DP camp in  
the American zone.

87

00:05:23,073 --> 00:05:24,490  
The situation was  
different there.

88

00:05:24,490 --> 00:05:27,460

89

00:05:27,460 --> 00:05:30,010  
By whatever  
circumstances, the Jews

90

00:05:30,010 --> 00:05:33,160  
were in separate camps which  
were Jewish displaced persons

91

00:05:33,160 --> 00:05:34,110  
camps.

92

00:05:34,110 --> 00:05:35,710  
It was still a time of waste.

93

00:05:35,710 --> 00:05:38,650



It was still a time of  
waiting, but at least there

94  
00:05:38,650 --> 00:05:43,720  
was an opportunity for us to  
nurture each other, to somehow

95  
00:05:43,720 --> 00:05:47,350  
help each other in healing to  
give us a sense of importance

96  
00:05:47,350 --> 00:05:49,270  
and value.

97  
00:05:49,270 --> 00:05:51,020  
But that was  
displaced person camp.

98  
00:05:51,020 --> 00:05:52,540  
There was nothing  
dramatic about it.

99  
00:05:52,540 --> 00:05:54,985  
There was nothing  
really helpful.

100  
00:05:54,985 --> 00:06:02,110  
It was just a time of waiting  
and maybe getting well.

101  
00:06:02,110 --> 00:06:04,720  
And maybe some of us  
managed to go to school.

102  
00:06:04,720 --> 00:06:09,700  
I was too young to really  
try to go to university,

103  
00:06:09,700 --> 00:06:13,720  
and I was too old in terms  
of my own experiences

104  
00:06:13,720 --> 00:06:15,760

to start going to high school, even if there

105  
00:06:15,760 --> 00:06:17,430  
was an opportunity to do that.

106  
00:06:17,430 --> 00:06:20,890  
So it was a time of waste, a time of waiting.

107  
00:06:20,890 --> 00:06:26,500  
And in October 1947, some two years and four months

108  
00:06:26,500 --> 00:06:30,310  
after liberation, my papers came through,

109  
00:06:30,310 --> 00:06:33,190  
and I came to United States, where I started a new life.

110  
00:06:33,190 --> 00:06:35,710

111  
00:06:35,710 --> 00:06:38,950  
Can you-- overcrowded or was--

112  
00:06:38,950 --> 00:06:40,928  
Most of the--

113  
00:06:40,928 --> 00:06:43,368  
Let's-- cut for this point.

114  
00:06:43,368 --> 00:06:50,970

115  
00:06:50,970 --> 00:06:52,667  
Yeah.

116  
00:06:52,667 --> 00:06:54,000  
You want to talk about DP camps?

117  
00:06:54,000 --> 00:06:54,400  
Yeah.

118  
00:06:54,400 --> 00:06:55,233  
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

119  
00:06:55,233 --> 00:06:55,790  
Marker five.

120  
00:06:55,790 --> 00:06:56,290  
Wait.

121  
00:06:56,290 --> 00:06:56,870  
New slate.

122  
00:06:56,870 --> 00:07:02,840

123  
00:07:02,840 --> 00:07:07,100  
Clearly, there was a difference  
in how the DP camps looked

124  
00:07:07,100 --> 00:07:09,710  
and operated in the  
first few months

125  
00:07:09,710 --> 00:07:12,920  
after the war when so many  
people were sick, and dying,

126  
00:07:12,920 --> 00:07:15,420  
and needed medical  
attention, and so on.

127  
00:07:15,420 --> 00:07:18,860  
But within three or four  
months after the war,

128  
00:07:18,860 --> 00:07:21,200  
things settled  
into some routine.

129  
00:07:21,200 --> 00:07:22,760  
They all were  
pretty much the same

130  
00:07:22,760 --> 00:07:25,220  
virtually all the  
camps were established

131  
00:07:25,220 --> 00:07:30,440  
in former military facilities  
of the German army, navy, army,

132  
00:07:30,440 --> 00:07:31,880  
and military.

133  
00:07:31,880 --> 00:07:35,840  
We were housed in former  
military barracks,

134  
00:07:35,840 --> 00:07:37,730  
and our barracks in Germany--

135  
00:07:37,730 --> 00:07:39,320  
and not barracks  
made out of wood,

136  
00:07:39,320 --> 00:07:43,370  
but they were stone buildings  
where soldiers lived before.

137  
00:07:43,370 --> 00:07:47,390  
So the living conditions  
were quite austere, usually

138  
00:07:47,390 --> 00:07:50,210  
a number of people to a room,  
but given our background

139  
00:07:50,210 --> 00:07:52,050  
as prisoners in  
concentration camp,

140

00:07:52,050 --> 00:07:55,160  
this was still much better.

141

00:07:55,160 --> 00:07:59,210  
Food was distributed  
in kitchens.

142

00:07:59,210 --> 00:08:02,390  
In some places, later, for  
families it was possible to,

143

00:08:02,390 --> 00:08:07,040  
rather than get in line to  
get your food in the kitchen,

144

00:08:07,040 --> 00:08:09,740  
to get some supplies,  
so people who

145

00:08:09,740 --> 00:08:15,290  
had the need to and the ability  
could cook their own food.

146

00:08:15,290 --> 00:08:26,570  
It was really somewhat of  
a regimented life, which,

147

00:08:26,570 --> 00:08:29,150  
to those of us that  
came out of the camp,

148

00:08:29,150 --> 00:08:32,960  
looked like a wonderful time  
of vacation and recovery,

149

00:08:32,960 --> 00:08:39,380  
I think, to us today,  
with our background,

150

00:08:39,380 --> 00:08:44,780  
would look very restrictive  
and kind of a shabby existence.

151

00:08:44,780 --> 00:08:46,640

But that's what it was.

152

00:08:46,640 --> 00:08:50,120

We were free to walk around,  
and we were free to communicate.

153

00:08:50,120 --> 00:08:52,220

And we are free to  
involve ourselves

154

00:08:52,220 --> 00:08:57,980

in whatever civil  
and civic things were

155

00:08:57,980 --> 00:08:59,600

organized in the camp.

156

00:08:59,600 --> 00:09:01,130

But again, I need  
to repeat that it

157

00:09:01,130 --> 00:09:05,630

was time of waiting,  
waiting to go to Israel,

158

00:09:05,630 --> 00:09:08,840

or waiting to go to  
America, waiting to find

159

00:09:08,840 --> 00:09:11,660

the means to live outside.

160

00:09:11,660 --> 00:09:14,240

It was also a time  
of growing up.

161

00:09:14,240 --> 00:09:16,610

I was 18, and my hair grew.

162

00:09:16,610 --> 00:09:22,160

And I realized that

I was a man, and I

163  
00:09:22,160 --> 00:09:25,220  
think I must have fallen  
in love once or twice,

164  
00:09:25,220 --> 00:09:27,720  
as teenagers are apt to do.

165  
00:09:27,720 --> 00:09:33,200  
But when people ask me  
to talk about DP camps

166  
00:09:33,200 --> 00:09:36,380  
and I try to think  
of them, I see

167  
00:09:36,380 --> 00:09:39,110  
a picture in black and white,  
not a picture in color.

168  
00:09:39,110 --> 00:09:42,620

169  
00:09:42,620 --> 00:09:45,428  
Did Ben-Gurion come to  
where you were then?

170  
00:09:45,428 --> 00:09:46,316  
No.

171  
00:09:46,316 --> 00:09:48,770  
Ben-Gurion did come to--

172  
00:09:48,770 --> 00:09:51,380  
I know now, but where  
I was, in the camp

173  
00:09:51,380 --> 00:09:55,610  
in Deggendorf,  
which is in Bavaria,

174

00:09:55,610 --> 00:09:58,880  
I just don't remember  
anything important happening,

175  
00:09:58,880 --> 00:10:03,620  
except a time of waiting.

176  
00:10:03,620 --> 00:10:05,390  
I needed, for  
example, dental work,

177  
00:10:05,390 --> 00:10:07,590  
I remember, in those days.

178  
00:10:07,590 --> 00:10:08,928  
There were no dental facilities.

179  
00:10:08,928 --> 00:10:10,470  
I had to wait until  
I came to America

180  
00:10:10,470 --> 00:10:15,020  
to do whatever dental  
work that I needed to do.

181  
00:10:15,020 --> 00:10:20,110  
And I did not see  
anything exciting.

182  
00:10:20,110 --> 00:10:22,190  
I did not see anything great.

183  
00:10:22,190 --> 00:10:26,380  
Yes, there were people  
under Israeli sponsorship

184  
00:10:26,380 --> 00:10:28,120  
who tried to  
organize young people

185  
00:10:28,120 --> 00:10:33,640  
and arrange for them to smuggle  
themselves through the borders



186  
00:10:33,640 --> 00:10:37,330  
to go to Palestine,  
but for those of us

187  
00:10:37,330 --> 00:10:39,410  
who decided, for one  
reason or another,

188  
00:10:39,410 --> 00:10:44,260  
to wait until our American  
papers came through,

189  
00:10:44,260 --> 00:10:45,770  
it was a time of waiting.

190  
00:10:45,770 --> 00:10:49,280

191  
00:10:49,280 --> 00:10:49,940  
Thank you.

192  
00:10:49,940 --> 00:10:53,300  
Now we need to be quiet  
and the record room tone.

193  
00:10:53,300 --> 00:11:16,640

194  
00:11:16,640 --> 00:11:18,970  
Seven marker, six.

195  
00:11:18,970 --> 00:11:25,570

196  
00:11:25,570 --> 00:11:32,050  
You have spoken of your  
loneliness and your envy

197  
00:11:32,050 --> 00:11:35,260  
of a normal life, your losses.

198

00:11:35,260 --> 00:11:36,520

Can you talk to me about that?

199

00:11:36,520 --> 00:11:38,080

You're talking about  
in the DP camp?

200

00:11:38,080 --> 00:11:41,770

Yeah, or even just  
after liberation.

201

00:11:41,770 --> 00:11:42,490

Yes, yes.

202

00:11:42,490 --> 00:11:48,490

Well, yes, of course,  
I do remember, still

203

00:11:48,490 --> 00:11:54,250

in Neustadt the fall of  
1945, walking through--

204

00:11:54,250 --> 00:11:57,320

we are free to, of course, go  
to town, but it was a curfew.

205

00:11:57,320 --> 00:11:59,680

We had to be in the DP  
camp at certain hour

206

00:11:59,680 --> 00:12:02,230

because the British  
locked the gates.

207

00:12:02,230 --> 00:12:05,230

But I remember  
walking through town,

208

00:12:05,230 --> 00:12:08,320

and I was 17, not quite 18.

209

00:12:08,320 --> 00:12:11,020

210  
00:12:11,020 --> 00:12:16,150  
My hair was growing, and  
my teeth were broken.

211  
00:12:16,150 --> 00:12:22,900  
And I saw young  
German teenagers--

212  
00:12:22,900 --> 00:12:24,460  
the fact that they  
were German was

213  
00:12:24,460 --> 00:12:29,210  
unimportant-- going to school,  
young boys and young girls

214  
00:12:29,210 --> 00:12:33,580  
with schoolbooks, and  
backpacks, laughing and giggling

215  
00:12:33,580 --> 00:12:35,930  
as teenagers ought to do.

216  
00:12:35,930 --> 00:12:43,490  
And I remember that very great  
pain and very great sadness

217  
00:12:43,490 --> 00:12:48,310  
because I was convinced  
that that will never

218  
00:12:48,310 --> 00:12:50,320  
be part of my experience,  
and I remember

219  
00:12:50,320 --> 00:12:57,740  
that envy that I  
could no longer be

220  
00:12:57,740 --> 00:13:02,480  
one of those young people that

could laugh and giggle and not

221

00:13:02,480 --> 00:13:08,620  
be really, somehow, suppressed  
by memory and experience.

222

00:13:08,620 --> 00:13:12,080  
And that was a very painful  
experience for a young man

223

00:13:12,080 --> 00:13:16,790  
to know that the normal things  
that were available to others

224

00:13:16,790 --> 00:13:18,920  
were denied to me.

225

00:13:18,920 --> 00:13:22,250  
And so, yes, there  
were such times,

226

00:13:22,250 --> 00:13:25,460  
and there was that sadness.

227

00:13:25,460 --> 00:13:31,550  
And those feelings of  
insufficiency, those feelings

228

00:13:31,550 --> 00:13:36,530  
of somehow being second-rate  
that were somehow

229

00:13:36,530 --> 00:13:39,020  
planted in me in the  
war years did not

230

00:13:39,020 --> 00:13:43,070  
disappear the minute somebody  
said to me, you are free,

231

00:13:43,070 --> 00:13:45,050  
and they were with  
me for a long time.

232  
00:13:45,050 --> 00:13:47,390  
I would not be at all  
surprised that some

233  
00:13:47,390 --> 00:13:51,500  
of those things that happened  
and some of those experiences

234  
00:13:51,500 --> 00:13:54,260  
influence me to this day.

235  
00:13:54,260 --> 00:13:57,350  
But in those days, I was  
especially sensitive.

236  
00:13:57,350 --> 00:14:01,250  
And I was especially envious,  
and I was especially sad

237  
00:14:01,250 --> 00:14:09,670  
that I was alone, and  
lonely, and without any value

238  
00:14:09,670 --> 00:14:10,510  
in my eyes.

239  
00:14:10,510 --> 00:14:13,430  
And seeing those young  
people laughing, and smiling,

240  
00:14:13,430 --> 00:14:16,270  
and giggling, and  
going to school--

241  
00:14:16,270 --> 00:14:20,700  
people my age-- kind  
of underlined that.

242  
00:14:20,700 --> 00:14:27,230  
What about religious ceremonies?

243

00:14:27,230 --> 00:14:28,910  
Do you remember--

244  
00:14:28,910 --> 00:14:32,180  
Yes, I remember there  
were religious--

245  
00:14:32,180 --> 00:14:34,340  
of course.

246  
00:14:34,340 --> 00:14:38,370  
In the English DP camps,  
there was very little of it.

247  
00:14:38,370 --> 00:14:41,900  
The DP camp in Neustadt was  
dominated by the majority

248  
00:14:41,900 --> 00:14:44,540  
who was Christian.

249  
00:14:44,540 --> 00:14:47,600  
In the DP camp in Germany--

250  
00:14:47,600 --> 00:14:50,690  
I'm sorry, in southern Germany  
where they were primarily

251  
00:14:50,690 --> 00:14:52,940  
a Jewish camp,  
Jewish ceremonies,

252  
00:14:52,940 --> 00:14:56,810  
Jewish religious  
practices were organized

253  
00:14:56,810 --> 00:15:00,050  
for holidays or for Saturday.

254  
00:15:00,050 --> 00:15:05,270  
I was too devastated  
by what I saw,

255

00:15:05,270 --> 00:15:11,900  
by seeing the thousands of dead  
and knowing of millions of dead

256

00:15:11,900 --> 00:15:15,440  
to be sufficiently forgiving  
to really participate

257

00:15:15,440 --> 00:15:18,152  
in religious ceremony.

258

00:15:18,152 --> 00:15:22,010  
I was not making  
judgment about God,

259

00:15:22,010 --> 00:15:26,080  
but I was also not making--

260

00:15:26,080 --> 00:15:31,730  
I was also unable, really,  
to feel honest about myself

261

00:15:31,730 --> 00:15:37,370  
and, at the same time,  
participate to any great extent

262

00:15:37,370 --> 00:15:38,600  
in religious ceremonies.

263

00:15:38,600 --> 00:15:39,470  
I'm Jewish.

264

00:15:39,470 --> 00:15:41,990  
I'm glad to be Jewish.

265

00:15:41,990 --> 00:15:46,670  
I am glad that my  
children are Jewish.

266

00:15:46,670 --> 00:15:48,980  
But in those days  
and to some extent

267  
00:15:48,980 --> 00:15:54,380  
even today, I have not  
made peace with the fact

268  
00:15:54,380 --> 00:15:57,660  
that it was possible  
for me to survive

269  
00:15:57,660 --> 00:16:00,690  
and others who were  
more worthy did not.

270  
00:16:00,690 --> 00:16:04,430  
And so I did not.

271  
00:16:04,430 --> 00:16:06,770  
I did not embrace--

272  
00:16:06,770 --> 00:16:08,330  
I embrace Judaism.

273  
00:16:08,330 --> 00:16:12,390  
I embrace the idea  
of free Israel.

274  
00:16:12,390 --> 00:16:16,430  
I did not embrace the  
religious practices

275  
00:16:16,430 --> 00:16:18,020  
that were available to me.

276  
00:16:18,020 --> 00:16:23,110

277  
00:16:23,110 --> 00:16:24,090  
Let's cut.

278  
00:16:24,090 --> 00:16:24,800  
That's it?



279

00:16:24,800 --> 00:16:25,300

Yeah.

280

00:16:25,300 --> 00:16:27,150

I'll go back--

281

00:16:27,150 --> 00:16:41,472