

BAY AREA HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT  
INTERVIEW WITH MAX DRIMMER and HERMAN SHINE  
1/15/96

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Q: OKAY, HERE WE ARE AT THE HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY PROJECT IN SAN FRANCISCO. WE HAVE MR. MAX DRIMER AND MR. HERMAN SHINE, WHO ARE TWO MEN, WHO NOT ONLY SURVIVED THE HOLOCAUST BUT ESCAPED FROM AUSCHWITZ. I AM JANE GOLDMAN AND I AM GOING TO HELP THEM WRITE THEIR MEMOIRS. IT'S JANUARY 15<sup>TH</sup> 1996 - MARTIN LUTHER KING HOLIDAY - WHICH IS A FITTING DAY TO INTERVIEW THESE TWO GENTLEMEN WHO HAVE SPENT A GOOD PART OF THEIR LIFE, AFTER THE WAR, FIGHTING AGAINST PREJUDICE AND DISCRIMINATION. I'M GOING TO ASK THESE TWO MEN TO TELL ME ABOUT THEIR LIFE, IN BERLIN, WHEN THEY WERE CHILDREN, AND I'M GOING TO START WITH THAT TOPIC. HERMAN, WOULD YOU LIKE TO START?

A: [Herman Shine]

Yes, okay. I was born in Berlin in October 4<sup>th</sup> 1922. My father came originally from Poland. He came to Germany to Berlin, I guess, two, three years, before the First World War. And so we, the boys, were considered Polish citizens. When we were thirteen we had to have a Polish pass. We were very poor - we were many children. We were six, seven children in our family and things, of course in Berlin got tougher and tougher - especially for the poor ones. And so we were - we lived in the so-called workmen district, which they call today, actually, the [schonenfelder?] - this was the poorest area, where most poor Jews lived, in Berlin. And I went to school, in a German school, like all my brothers and sisters before. Almost until the end, the last year or so, they had to throw me out. I went to a Jewish school.

Q: WHAT GRADE DID YOU GET THROWN OUT?

A: [Herman Shine]

Eighth grade, I got thrown out in the seventh grade. You have eight grades in school. And in - of course, 1932, even before the Nazi's came to power, the Nazi's walked around in their

uniform, and then especially after they came to power in January of '33. If you were on the street they would insult you and hit you and so it was a very bad affair for us, and my mother always said we should try to immigrate, and I had an older brother and she pushed him practically to Israel. And then I was also in preparation to go to Israel, but it never came to it anymore.

In 1938, in fact there was an action against the Jews. I was deported with thousands of others to Poland. [Sponcheen?]. And, we were in a train in between, I think about thirty-five and forty-five hours. Then we got a stamp from the Polish registration and we could travel all over Poland. But, I never liked the Poles, because they were already very anti-Semitic already, in Berlin. When you go to a Polish consulate he would always use those Polish bad words against the Jews like, ???[foreign] - in other words it means, "all the Jews should be killed." But my father was already in Poland. But I still didn't want to stay there. So when I saw the same train turning around and they put back to Berlin address, you know, in other words, the train's to Berlin, I immediately boarded the train. And got back to the German border with approximately forty to fifty Jews, that came from Vienna. And I was the only one, probably, that noticed, who knew that this train was back toward Germany. And of course, they were very upset, because they were all older and they had to sign if they would come back their life to Germany, they would be shot. And so one of them said: "You had better throw all your money away. We are not supposed to have no more than twenty-five marks with us." And I didn't have any- I don't think I even had twenty-five cents on me. I saw that pile of money. I grabbed lot of this, while they were huddling and talking - I put all these big bills in my pocket, you know.

And we came back to the German station and here the SS and all kinds of Nazi officials there and they were surprised: "You SB Jews - how the heck can you come back illegally here - you gonna get shot." And another guy came, and they put us in a room. He said: "We want the

passports." And if I had known what it meant, this red stamp, I would have thrown my passport away, because I was only sixteen years old. And I gave him all the ?? and then he saw the stamp that I was already registered - Polish, accepted by the Poles. So they huddled back with Berlin, and then the order came. We were all supposed to be shipped. And I came back in jail in Berlin. I stayed there about ten days and then I was shipped to the Police Inspector, while I had this red stamp in my passport - back to Poland.

And this inspector - this was now in a nice train, and all this - and this police inspector told me on the way there, he said: "You know, I can handcuff you but I trust you when we come to the border. I give you everything, what you need to know and..." So we come to the border and now this border was different from several weeks before. Now, there they had a few soldiers there - now, they had cannons and tanks there, and artillery, and there were hundreds or thousands of soldiers there, Polish soldiers. And we walked a piece, and he said: "Now, when I tell you run, you run. And then about five hundred feet, you are on the Polish side of the border." But they were not holding these rifles upside down, as before, they had them in a shooting position. And I said: "Inspector, if you want to get rid of me, why don't you come with me." He said: "I have no business there. I am a German police inspector. And I have my orders on you. I am not going to go there and get shot." So he saw that he couldn't get rid of me. He had no choice, he said: "Anyhow, the ticket for you back to Berlin." I said: "That's too bad, but I'm not gonna go to these people. You can take me any place, but not there." So he took me to authorities, and then he had to borrow some money and leave my passport there, that we could go back to Berlin. So I got back to Berlin with him - back in jail.

And after several days, I was released, and then ordered to come to the Gestapo, at the Keiser Wilhelm, you know where the whole area in Berlin - Gestapo area. And they said: "You see, step on this chair." I stepped on the chair, and this inspectors there, the Gestapo,

he says: "You see the smoke there," - I didn't even know what he meant. I know the direction he pointed to. He said: "This is concentration camp - Sachsenhausen. If you don't leave Germany within three months, you gonna be ending up there and going through the chimney." I was supposed to come back every month, progress, and I came back and I had my passport back - it took six months until they finally paid the money back and so I got the passport back. And when I finally got my passport back, it came very close to September '39, so there was no way anymore, you know, for me to leave Germany. And, like I said, we were poor. We didn't have enough money to put down for trips or anything. And I came to Sachsenhausen.

Q: BACKING UP A LITTLE BIT FROM AN EARLIER - CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT YOUR FATHER DID FOR A LIVING.

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, my father was a merchant - he did all kinds what, like he sold suits and stuff - whatever was available for so-called Polish Jews. Because actually, they had no permission to work in Germany, but many of them would hire, and you know, if they were good sales people, then they hire them - the Jewish businesses.

Q: WHAT OTHER THING DID HE SELL, BESIDES SUITS, DO YOU REMEMBER?

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja, he made some business, I think he dealt probably in all kinds of merchandise which was probably shipped into Germany - you know, import/export and whatever he could - you know, of course he spoke Russian and Polish, and Yiddish and German, and so whatever he could trade, they would trade. And he also had a very rich sister there. And I guess, she helped us a little bit.

Q: SHE WAS RICH BECAUSE HER HUSBAND WAS RICH?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, they had a big fur company there - fur business, and this was my father's sister, and so I guess, once in a while, they helped, gave

him some money. But I think in 1934, he had to leave Germany, because he was entitled or I guess, his sister, they put orders on him - he worked for them too. So I guess, with taxes, or whatever it was - so he left to Poland. And then, he came back occasionally; but not permanent anymore.

Q: DID YOUR MOTHER WORK IN THE HOME? WAS SHE A HOUSEWIFE?

A: [Herman Shine]

My mother worked - no, my mother worked on the outside. My mother had to go to work. My mother worked, and then they were sewing skirts. My mother also, was very sales-person. So they made a lot of skirts and my mother would go into the supermarkets; but the supermarkets were different than here. Everything was brought in here, you know, fresh on the tables, and lots of these women had no chance to go shopping. And so she, most of them had pretty heavy size, so she had many skirts. And when we went to school, we most of the time, didn't have much to eat. And she said: "At ten o'clock, at the post I be there and you gonna have the biggest..." lunch or breakfast, or you know, and true enough - she was there. And she sold some skirts, then, bought us all kinds of food. And that was customary then.

Q: DID SHE SELL THE SKIRTS IN YOUR HOUSE OR DID SHE...?

A: [Herman Shine]

No, they sold them. She sold them. She just had a whole bunch over her arm and she knows exactly where to go. And she was a good saleslady and se sold, you know, and...

Q: BUT DID SHE - DID SHE MAKE THEM IN YOUR HOUSE?

A: [Herman Shine]

No, she sold them. She was just the selling person.

Q: AND WHO TOOK CARE OF ALL THE...

A: [Herman Shine]

Well we had an older sister. My older sister was about seventeen years older than I was, and she practically raised us. And so I mean, we were three or four brothers and the sisters were already older, you know. But when we were smaller, then they all went out; and my older sister was in charge. She would do the cooking, the cleaning and the shopping and take care of us.

Q: WAS SHE ABLE TO GO TO SCHOOL FOR A WHILE?

A: [Herman Shine]

Oh, yes. Oh yeah, well, she was seventeen years older.

Q: DO YOU HAVE MEMORIES OF SPORTS AND CLUBS AND THINGS?

A: [Herman Shine]

Oh yeah, I was in [macarvie?] - I used to wrestle and do all kinds of sport.

Q: WHAT - BESIDES WRESTLING? MAX TOLD ME YOUR OLDER BROTHER WAS A SOCCER PLAYER.

A: [Herman Shine]

He was a soccer player, yeah, but I would go swim and you know, all kinds of sport. I was very active. But, my main sport was bicycling. And I worked then, when I was little and I mean, as soon as I could - I don't remember what age - probably six or seven years, I found a job in a bicycle shop. And he taught me how to work on bicycles. And then, I went also for advertising this special bike made, you know, with the signs on the side. And then I drove round. And then I worked for some other Jewish business people - he made those special riding pants. I delivered - you know, I delivered those pants for some of the highest Nazi's. He made them - this Jewish guy. His name was Lever Chance. And I never forget and I delivered them, and I got big tips, and when the Nazi's came to power, these guys came in the back of him. And hit him on the arm and said: "You a good Jew. You'll never have any problems," and all this, you know. "And boy,

you still gonna deliver the pants," and that was at the beginning - the first few months.

Q: WAS YOUR FAMILY RELIGIOUS - DID YOU GO TO SYNAGOGUE?

A: [Herman Shine]

We went to synagogue. We were not very religious, no.

Q: YOU WOULD GO ON HOLIDAYS, OR...

A: [Herman Shine]

Yes, my mother was - yes, to the holidays, ja, we kept all the holidays.

Q: DID YOU KEEP KOSHER?

A: [Herman Shine]

No.

Q: DO YOU REMEMBER ANY SONGS OR STORIES, OR BOOKS... HOW DID YOU SPEND, LET'S SAY, EVENINGS AT HOME WITH THE FAMILY, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, we used to do all these different plays, you know. They had all kinds of, like I mean, there's... there were many plays. First of all we were boys - we had lots of friends. Lots of - and then, we had many Gentile friends, and many Jewish friends. But most of, of course, where we lived in a Gentile area, we had many Gentile friends. And they would take us to their houses. Most of their parents were construction workers, which made a lot of money. And they, of course, had lots of to eat. So of course, I would eat there all the time. We were very close. And then, we would go swim, every day. There was a big swim place - we didn't had any bathroom in the houses, you know. So we'd go swim every day, or every other day, you know. And this was warm days always. And then, of course, there was a lot of activities from school. There were theatres for the kids. And then, I came also to a Jewish school. This was a Jewish recreation school, you know, where you would learn all kinds of different things. And they prepared you for Israel and all this, in the early stage, ja. And like I say, and then as soon as I was

probably six, seven years old, I started to work, because we needed the money and all this, you know.

And of course, one day, we walked up there in the area where lived, was a huge theatre, they called it the ['Volksbuhner?']. You know, the German state theatre. And three gentlemen came and I walked up with my older brother and my smaller brother - and they came toward us. And they stopped my brother and they said: "You, are you musically inclined?" He said: "Yes." So they took him inside and we wait outside. A half an hour later, he came out. They couldn't use him. And they came to me, and they said: "Can you sing?" I said: "Yes." So then, they took me inside. And then there was then a big German actor, you know, he was like Clarke Gable or whatever. His name was Hans Alvers. And then he said: "Well, what do you think of him?" "Well," he said, "he's alright." I gonna play a song. You know, and my mother was brought inside the contract. This was about six before the Nazi's came to power, you know. And I became a celebrity; made a lot of money, for which, of course, we could use tremendously, you know.

Q: YOU SANG IN THE PRODUCTION?

A: [Herman Shine]

I was singing in the production, and then, I was playing the son of his, you see. And the name of the play was 'Peer Gynt.' It was a very famous play. In fact, they are still trying to find anything from the time, if find anything about me...

Q: SAY THE NAME OF THE PLAY AGAIN?

A: [Herman Shine]

Peer Gynt. It is...

Q: OH, PEER GYNT - YEAH.

A: [Herman Shine]

You ever hear this play? And unfortunately, it didn't last that long, because, you know, in just a few months...

Q: WHAT ABOUT YOUR SISTERS, WHAT DID THEY DO FOR RECREATION - DID THEY...

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, my sisters, of course, like I said, they were all much older. You know, the youngest sister was twelve, thirteen years older. And the oldest about seventeen, so they were much, much older, you know. So, of course, when I was five, they were all out of the house already. You know, I mean, except my older one, you know. And if they came, they came only occasionally. And they all worked. They worked in different trades, whatever they could find. And...

Q: WHAT WAS A TYPICAL EVENING MEAL AT YOUR HOUSE? WAS EVERYBODY AROUND THE TABLE?

A: [Herman Shine]

Evening meal, was of course, the main meal was potatoes, you know, and I think once or twice a week, you got meat. And you got some fish or something like this, so it - I mean, what we were eating - we were not starving. But, I mean, we would not eat the best, the richest food.

Q: AND DID YOU LIVE IN AN APARTMENT? YOU SAID YOU...

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja, we lived in an apartment. Oh yes.

Q: SO, IT MUST HAVE BEEN THE BOYS IN ONE ROOM?

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja, we were three boys in one room. And like I say, I mean, I don't even remember - I only remember my little sister, you know, that she lived with us, except the oldest one who would take care of us, you know.

Q: AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR GRANDPARENTS - DID YOU KNOW THEM?

A: [Herman Shine]

I only remember my grandmother. She was very old.

Q: WAS SHE YOUR FATHER, OR YOUR MOTHER'S MOTHER?

A: [Herman Shine]

No, that was my father's mother. You know, they came from Poland - I remember she was very old. She must have been high in the eighties. That's the only one I remember. I - we had lots of aunts and cousins, from my mother, that was all from my mother's side. But from my father's side, actually, only one sister, who lived in Berlin. All the others still lived in Poland.

Q: OKAY, THANK YOU.  
MAX, WOULD YOU DO WHAT HERMAN DID AND TELL ME ABOUT YOUR EARLY LIFE - PRE-SACHSENHAUSEN I KNOW YOU HAVE A SISTER.

A: [Max Drimer]

Yeah, I was born, not in Berlin. I was born in a city called Magdaborg, which is maybe, two hundred miles out of Berlin. And only out of hearsay, my parents had a furniture store - second-hand furniture store there, in Magdaborg, and when I was two years old, they moved to Berlin. First they moved to [Staglitz?]; had a furniture store there and we lived in back of the store. And then, the store got too small, and we moved to Lichterfelder, also Berlin, and we had a larger store. My recollection, let's say from two to six years, are very limited. I remember when we six years old, in Germany, you go to school. And my mother was a very religious person. My father was very religious also - let me back off - my parents also came from Poland, in the early 1900's, they came to Poland and my father came from a very religious home, and my mother also. But my father, the minute he stepped over the border to Germany, he left all his orthodox religion, he left it behind, in Poland. And he became, I would say, a non-believer. So, I got into school, and - oh naturally, I was brought into a Jewish school. And the Jewish school was ['Fazaanstrasse'] which was - today is the building of the Jewish main congregation in Berlin. And, I remember, I went the first two years, and then, again, my parents moved to another part of Berlin which was called [Prinsloostrasse?]. I even remember

the number, [Prinsloostrasse] 53 and 55. Also, for the reason, the business outgrew that store. And also, this one street was 80% of furniture stores in one street. So there again I got into a school called Regerstrasse Jewish school. So my young years, I spent with going to school, something like eight o'clock in the morning till about one or two o'clock. In the afternoon, I had to go, what they called - [haydah?], or Hebrew School. And, in the evening, when I got a little older, I joined youth clubs, youth organizations, and my biggest, favorite sport was soccer. And there in Berlin, you were on any corner, you had a boy play soccer on it. The street is - you didn't have to be afraid cars come and run you over - they didn't have cars like they had in America, as many. So I also had a sister, who was, is four years older than I am. And she was born in - it's called - a little city - [Kraai?] in Westvaalen.

Her youth recollection, I don't have that much. We had a funny situation in our home, I guess it was in Europe, common - that the sons always kept with the mothers, and the daughters always kept with the fathers. Now I am a father myself, I see it was wrong way, but I was too little to correct this. So, in other words, I got away with murder, what I did with my mother. And my sister got away with murder, whatever she did wrong, with my father. So there was a little split between the two of us. We were not, we were raised a little bit apart, because we were jealous of each other. Hey, I could do this with mom and she couldn't do that. So that you know, that grows with you. So she went to school, also Jewish school, I think the main reason - the orthodoxy in our house. We had a kosher home; we had, every Friday, Shabbat and dinners and everything kosher. I think the main reason for this - my grandfather, father of my mother lived also in Berlin. Maybe, my mother did this to please her father - maybe, or my mother got into orthodoxy that much that this was her life, and that's what she wanted to do. My father, to please my mother, kept the holidays dinners with us, but not the business. He was open on Shabbats and holidays. And if it would have

gone after my father, he would have even stayed open on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.

So, in Prinsloostrasse, so I went in morning school - and the afternoon, every day, for five days a week, no, four days a week, five days a week, to haydah. And I was educated in Judaism, not that I really wanted. I didn't care that much for - but, more or less, I had to. So, my grandfather had to go once a week, and he listened to me, what I learned there and he weekly portion from the Torah. I to tell him and I had to go every Friday night and every Saturday to synagogue. Then, I had many friends and I was jealous of them, they didn't have to go, but I had to go. They could eat what they wanted outside, and I had to sit on the side and look at it. So it got into me, more or less, that I already - I am not allowed to do that. I would love to do it - no, I didn't say that. But I was raised like that.

Q: DID YOU HAVE GENTILE FRIENDS, LIKE HERMAN DID?

A: [Max Drimer]

Not to my knowledge. We had one - my father had one friend, who he knew from the place where my sister was born, Mr. Karl Zent, was his name. And he happened to work at the IRS, in Germany. And my father learned bookkeeping - that's what he learned - and this man helped my father prepare tax papers and things like that, which in Germany, as you worked for the IRS, you were not allowed to do that - help other people with - they were real buddies. And that's what they... Outside of them - he was married, he had one son, I hardly remember any acquaintances, but - or friends, I don't think so. I don't think we ever had Gentile people coming, say, Saturday nights, or Sunday afternoon for [schmooz?] or something - I don't even remember this. So, I went, we started Jewish school, and in 1933, January '33, Hitler came to power. And our parents, in general, in Europe, maybe, I would say, never talked to children. Like, we were little kids, you were twelve, thirteen years old - you still were considered a little child. Never talked to us about the politics, the life of politics in - the situation... I only overheard conversations when my parents had their friends coming over,

and they said; "Oh, Hitler won't last long. He gonna be here and gonna be gone tomorrow." Unfortunately, it didn't work out that way.

So, in 1933, when he came to power, January, and April 1<sup>st</sup> 1933, was my bar-mitzvah. And also, that's another - it's a big date to remember for me and another date to remember is when Hitler really started out - he called this boycott. It means that every Jewish store in Germany had to have the name of the owner on their window, in one foot letter size, to show the Gentiles - don't go in there, that's a Jewish store. That was the identification for the Gentiles that, that is a Jewish store. So it now comes this holiday - April 1, '33 being we being religious, so we didn't drive to school. We walked to school. It wasn't that far, but we walked with my grandfather and father. My grandfather had a beard, he wore black, the black caftan, the kiddel, what they say, and a big black hat.

Walking to it, there came three SR men, not SS, there was SR - Nazi party, SS was the elite. And they accosted us, and they pulled my grandfather on his beard, and they kicked and they shoved him down to the floor, and told him a nasty word, which I will never, ever forget. In German, he said: "Jude, oider hassen letzen dresse dreck geshichten hier." That means - the last time you crapped in Germany - a translation of... You know, I was thirteen years today. You can already be a man. In fact, I was a little child, shivering and being scared, never seeing that, you know, so then, they walked away from us. And I helped my grandfather getting up, getting on his feet. And he was injured but he didn't show it to me, because we had something to do - go to the temple.

So we were, my bar-mitzvah day came, and my bar-mitzvah day went, and then I heard a talk with my grandfather, my father on the telephone with friends or friends came over. The only discussion they had, was about Hitler. What would he do with the Jews? Nobody ever believed it would ever become that bad. So, in 1938, Hitler, I mean, Germany, the Gestapo in Berlin sent cards to the Jews, to come up -

they had an appointment to come up to the Gestapo, and Germany was that accurate, they had a system. Everything was a system with them - so they sent the postcards out alphabetical order. So we are 'D' - letter D - and the first, A and B's got this card; and you had to go, if it's your day or not. You couldn't stay away from it. So those men went up - they never came back. And this talk got around pretty fast.

So when we heard it, then my father got this card. There was the second day of Passover. So we had the second saydah, and my - we had, were Polish citizens, like I told before, my parents were from Poland and, either by Hitler, or in Germany, the children are the citizens of what the parents are, not where you were born. So my mother figured, don't let him go up there, so after the saydah dinner, we boarded to the train station. He bought a ticket - he had a Polish passport, which was not expired. And he went on the train and went to Poland. So, then...

Q: SO DID YOU GO TO THE TRAIN STATION WITH HIM?  
WAS THERE LOTS OF EMOTION, CRYING, MATTER OF  
FACT?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, we all went. Yes and no. We were shocked that he had to go, that was one. We really maybe, did not understand the background of it. And not, because also, in '38, there was - I was seventeen years old. You know seventeen years old today, you'd be able to get married. At that time no; we were kept in the dark, or in the background. You know that was wrong, of course. Time tells now different. If you start with the children now - there was never such thing, like, to hear a child gets to school when he's six years old - I don't think there's a child today here, who cannot read a newspaper. We didn't know that. So there was a difference of bringing up children. Of course, times have advanced in the meantime. And there was an emotion, but we hugged and kissed and said goodbye. And really meaning of it, we figured it might be temporary, because the parents didn't tell us anything.

Q: HOW WAS YOUR MOM? HOW WAS YOUR MOTHER THEN?

A: [Max Drimer]

Well, my mom - first of all we had a big furniture store. I think what went around in her head was more - I got to handle it all by myself now. Well, when my father was there, he was all day in the store. He was the bookkeeper, and he was the salesman, and he was the buyer and he was the seller. And he was paying for the merchandise. He did that all by himself. And now he leaves, and for him, she probably needed three help for that. And maybe that went around in her head. The emotion of big love, if it was, they didn't show it in front of the children. Today, it's different. We hug our husbands and wives in front of the children, at that time they didn't do it. They kept a low, they didn't show it to us.

So now, then, my mother saw, well, there's no future for us in Germany, so she sent my sister away. Illegal was a way to get in - go illegal to Holland. And from Holland they go to Belgium. It was already several hundred of people who smuggled themselves over to the border, and then they stayed in Brussels. So my mother supported her with sending money; 'cause legally you couldn't do it, because you were not to send more than ten marks out. But my mother was a very, very exceptional, clever, business-woman. She knew all the angles, and she had lots of connections.

So she went there, and I don't know if it - well, in the end of '38, I went to Poland and visit my father. I also could go legally, because I had a Polish passport - a valid, Polish passport. Backtracking, when I got out of school, in 1934, that was the way of my was father thinking - I guess every father thought of this; when the children are to finish with school and then they will take over the business or learn the business, so when his retirement comes up the kids take over. There was no - we saw it already, my parents saw the handwriting on the wall, that going for higher education was not possible.

So it came the time, I left the grammar school, eight years, and then my father go in the back, and of course, we had people working there; they making cabinets and everything. I had no - I was not too much in favor, I did not like to become a cabinet-maker. What I wanted to become was a auto mechanic. Why? Because I was just twelve, thirteen years, I was already driving a car - figure you be an auto mechanic, you have a chance to drive a car. So they had a Jewish unemployment office in Berlin and I went there the next day, already figuring the day after I already gonna have my apprentice job as an auto mechanic. So I had to fill out some papers; I was given a caseworker and then, she went over my application, and she says: "So, you want to become an auto mechanic?" I says: "Yeah." She says: "You know, I got a mile long list - all the kids want to become auto mechanics. It's gonna take an awful long time, if ever, I can provide you with an apprenticeship. So, maybe you want another profession." And I don't know, out of the blue, what, why it popped out of my mouth. "Baker." I was very much interest, I need a profession, because I didn't want to stay in Germany and that's as much, as little as we knew about politics; I was fourteen years, but I knew I don't wanna be in Germany. And I knew if I go to another country, you need a profession. You cannot go without a profession. So - baker - so, alright, she said: "Well, I'll let you know."

The next day she calls me up - my father didn't know nothing about this what I went to the unemployment office. He calls me: "Max there's a telephone call for you." So I go on the phone - "This is the unemployment office, we have a job for you." So I went back there, so give me the paper, a bakery, a Jewish bakery.

Q: WHAT DID YOUR FATHER THINK OF THIS?

A: [Max Drimer]

My father, no, my father, my mother took care of the children. My father didn't have the time to take care of the children. He left everything up to my mother. So he didn't mix in, because he was... I can see why, because, you know, we had a big store, several employees,

and he took care of everything. He didn't - he was a one-man office and a salesman. I already, when I was fourteen years old, he made me into an incentive, he says: "You become a salesman, I give you one percent commission." That one percent commission, that gave me incentive, so I was selling. You know, one percent from furniture - eight hundred dollars, or fifteen hundred or three thousand dollars, that was money. He never gave it to me. "We save it for you." I got five dollar a week, or marks a week from my mother, pocket money. "You need more, then you come to me for it." But I said: "I got a lotta money here." "Yes, I saved that for you." So they wanted to educate us at what is money, what means money and not wasting money, with fourteen years. So, anyhow, let's see, where was I?

Q: WELL, YOU WERE GETTING - YOU GOT YOUR APPRENTICESHIP IN THE BAKERY.

A: [Max Drimer]

Oh, yeah, now, okay. Then I went home, and I told my mother: "I got a job as a baker." She almost collapsed. "You - a what? Baker. Never, ever do I let you become a baker." I says: "Mum, we don't wanna stay in this country. I need a profession; I gotta have a profession." "Yes! You are right - but not a baker." I didn't see anything wrong with it, but she saw. "No, no, no." I said: "Mum, please, let's go there, let's listen to the man." Now she comes. We came to a man with a beard, real orthodox Jew. And I was already asking and he says: "I like your son. I gave him the job." Because over there, it was the flour sacks - they weighed over two hundred pounds, and not hundred pounds like here. She says: "No way," and she run out. She just walked out, and I was ?? And we walked, it was about ten minutes walk - and I begged her all the time. "No. Oh no, no, no, no." So when we left I told the guy I'll be back. I'll be back. So I couldn't persuade her. So I went back and told: "My mother says 'okay.'" So he told - you gonna have a three months trial period, and then we gonna sign an apprenticeship contract.

It's tomorrow work - I'm to start four o'clock in the morning. So I came home, didn't say

nothing. I figure I gonna sneak out of this house. So I went to sleep - I had my own room; we had a maid's room and my sister had a bedroom. So I took the alarm clock and I set it for three o'clock in the morning. I pushed it way underneath the bed and figured I gonna sneak our the house. So, I was so excited - going to work the first time. I did not sleep. So here, maybe one o'clock in the morning, I hear my mother coming into the bedroom - go, hear tick, tick, tick, the alarm clock. And she went underneath the bed and stole my alarm clock. I didn't sleep. So, she went to sleep and at three-thirty I sneaked out of the house. I went on my bicycle and I drove to work. At seven o'clock in the morning, my sister calls me in the bakery: "Are you gonna get it when you come home. You went away without mom's..." So anyhow, it took me four weeks until she gave in and saw, maybe he's right. So I became a baker.

Q: TELL ME, WHAT DID YOU USED TO BAKE?

A: [Max Drimer]

Oh we baked everything, except we were not a cake shop in the sense of wedding cakes, or French pastry. Otherwise we did everything - bread, mainly bread and twists, and [hala?] and rolls and we had a special room in the back where we used only for Passover. This bakery was a lovely job, because we were closed on Shabbat, on the Jewish holidays and on the Christian holidays. The only drawback it had in wintertime, when Shabbat was out early, we had to go to work Saturday night - as soon as Shabbat was over. So, being the apprentice, every night, I had to go and prepare for the next day.

Q: DID YOU MAKE JEWISH SWEETS FOR THE HOLIDAYS?  
AND ? AND SPONGE CAKE.

A: [Max Drimer]

Everything. Sponge cake was [lakah?] - everything. Everything we did.

Q: BAGELS?

A: [Max Drimer]

Bagel - everything was baked what a Jewish bakery concern. So then, I had to go once a week to a trade school. That was just part of the job. It's not like here - here you go to trade school in the evening. There you go to trade school during the day. You on the boss' time to school. Well we didn't get paid hardly anything. I got two dollars a week the first year; four dollars a week, the second year; six dollars a week, the third year, and, no limitation of hours. When the job is done you go home. Sixty hours, eighty hours - it didn't matter. And you got the same pay, ja, I got one ?? - including breakfast. And, by the way, this is where I met Herman, because he lived three houses away from the bakery.

Q: TELL ME HOW YOU MET HERMAN.

A: [Max Drimer]

I knew his brother, Bernard, because we played soccer, in the team. We belonged to [Hagibor?] soccer club, and the season was pretty long there and every Sunday, we went out to the sport's field and played soccer. And sometimes Herman came out, but then, all of a sudden, I got a job. I was next door to them and they heard about it and Mike Herman said very unfortunate which he couldn't help. I was born under a lucky star - I came out of a well-to-do family, and he was not that lucky, he didn't come from a well-to-do... so they came, and I gave them a bread and I gave them a piece of cake, because I knew them.

Q: AND THAT WAS OKAY WITH YOUR BOSS?

A: [Max Drimer]

Oh he didn't know that. I didn't think it was okay with him. They came, not through the store; they came through the backyard and down, was the basement of the bakery. Not like bakers today, on the first level. So, no that was not okay.

Q: DID BERNARD USED TO COME, OR DID HERMAN USED TO COME?

A: [Max Drimer]

They all came. They all came - when you are hungry, you do everything. You do anything just to get some... And, I had pretty much free hand in there. My boss was when I was already fourteen; he was already maybe, in his high fifties. And he had very young wife. She was only three, four years older than I was. And when he was in the bakery, when he was not in the bakery, there's only two things he did when he was not in the bakery - either he produced children with her, or he went over to the synagogue, where there many tiny [stiebelle?]? synagogues in that street, ??strasse - so he went over in studies. You know orthodox keep studying twenty-six hours a day, if they have the time. So I was pretty much on my own there. I had to make deliveries on the bicycle.. Herman had a famous story for that, was a tricycle, because the basket, we put in the bread. It was an old one and we had to bring it to his shop where he worked to have repaired. It was more there than at our place. So, the boss never knew that I gave it to them. I could take home for myself whatever I wanted to.

Q: WHAT WOULD A TYPICAL DINNER [MATZK?] BE AT YOUR HOUSE? HERMAN TOLD US...

A: [Max Drimer]

Our dinners was, well, I wouldn't say much worse than today. You know, we didn't have to look of turning the dime round. And I'm not bragging, I mean, this is the way it was. We had a kosher household - and kosher household is just like here - much, much more expensive than a non-kosher household. We had everything we wanted, let's put it this way.

Q: DID YOU HAVE MEAT AND POTATOES, VEGETABLES?

A: [Max Drimer]

Everything. Everything, everything, ja. The holidays was always a feast. It was like here - just like here. We were lucky, we had. So now, let me go... Now, my sister was gone and my father was gone, so there was just my mother and me - was left.

And the big - we had a big business, mainly due to - we were selling on credit; also on credit, not only, but also on credit. Also, I don't know, even remember why my father got this - Hitler came up with an idea - in order to produce children you have to be married. It's not like here today. Today you don't need to be married to produce... So, if you are married and you have children, you get, I forgot, a thousand marks or two thousand marks towards buying for your new apartment. Now there weren't houses like here, there was nothing, not in the city. So my father was allowed to accept this coupon. I don't know what - because it is brought more business in for us, but then a lot of people, they extended sometimes, the credit, up to three years. And over there, it was like, my father filled out, let's say, you buy something for three years, you put down a certain amount of money, and then my father made out thirty-six checks, for the three years, each month, and you sign the checks. And then, the store, every month, he send through for collection. And, my mother had a suitcase full of those checks, because that was our big business. And when I was left with my mother, and when it came the first of the month, we went to the bank and turned in the bunch of checks, and there were some who didn't pay. I don't want to pay that dirty Jew. And they figured they don't need to. So we took them to like, small claims court. And I went there. I remember my mother was a very superstitious woman - when I went, when I had a court date, she came into my room, when I got dressed, so she took my undershirt and she put it left out.

Q: INSIDE OUT.

A: [Max Drimer]

Inside out. I says: "What for, ma?" "This is good luck, for good luck." And many cases depends who the judge you met. In many cases, we won the case. Some cases, it was a Hitler, nazi bastard, pardon my French, he just ignored me completely. So we kept collecting every month. So we had a good living then, I don't know, my mother never told me, or mentioned it - let's leave the country, because you know, the business was going onto our feet.

To let loose of something, which you build yourself, and you make a comfortable living, and you have thousands and thousands of dollars, outstanding money - so...

Then, came October 1938, my grandfather, I knew only one part, my grandfather - I didn't know my grandmother from my mother, neither did I know my parents of my father, not at all. I was told when I was two years old, they came in from Poland to visit us, but I was two years old, so I didn't know them.

My grandfather had a furniture basement - my mother put him to business. Some old stuff, we gave it to him. We had it fixed up, he had a basement almost across the street from us. And he lived there with his daughter, which my mother's sister, and she had a daughter, which is two years younger than I, my cousin, she still lives in New York today.

And so one, my mother told me one evening, in October, she was told - my mother had, like I said, a lot of connections with the police, everybody. Somebody in the police warned her: "The Polish man will be picked up tomorrow morning." She didn't want to believe this - my mother. So we went to sleep, in the morning, three o'clock, somebody rings the doorbell. We were living above the store. We had a seven-room apartment there. And I said: "Oh, oh, this is it. They gonna come and get me now." So I, without shoes - I go to the front door and I hear my cousin. She was crying: "Auntie, auntie, open the door, open the door! They just picked up oupa," my grandfather. So I hear this and I said: "Oh, then it is true." So I got dressed. Actually, now I went through the back door; took my bike. And our house was - you come in on one street, and you get an exit to another street. So I went to the back street and I kept driving, and what happened - away from home, I stopped and I made a phone call. I called my mother and she says: "Yeah, they were just here to pick you up." This is when they picked up Herman. That day when Herman was picked up and they were sent to Poland to [Sponschen?], it's called [Sponschen?].

I went to Spandau, we had some far-fetched relatives there, and he naturalized as a German years ago. So I stayed there over the weekend and I went home on Monday, and that was it. When you were home, they took you. And if you're not home, they couldn't take you, but they never would come back the next day, or the next day to get you.

Q: BUT YOUR GRANDPA WAS SENT TO POLAND?

A: [Max Drimer]

They sent my grandfather - detour??

Q: AND DID HE MEET UP WITH YOUR DAD, OR WHAT HAPPENED?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, no, no, but, because I don't know. I tell you what - no, because he was put to Poland. Poland has a big border. So if you on one part of the border, you not over there, you know. Let's say in America, you'd be in Arizona, but you not in Tehawana - something like that. That I don't even recall if he got in touch with my grandparents. My grandparents - my grandfather stayed there, but then, what he did meet there was another sister of my mother in Hamburg, and there - all over, except Berlin, they took families; children, wives, even if you were Polish. In Berlin, they took only the man, and not the women. So my grandfather met his daughter from Hamburg, which is four hundred miles away from Berlin. They met there. So they stayed there for several months until they were allowed to come back, to unwind their business. And then my aunt went to Israel with their family. They had three children and a husband. And my grandfather came home, but stayed in Berlin, until he died. He died a natural death, I think, in '41 or something like that.

Q: SO HE WASN'T PICKED UP BY THE NAZI'S BECAUSE HE WAS ELDERLY?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, no. No, he was picked up because he was a Polish citizen.

Q: NO I UNDERSTAND, BUT LIKE YOU AND HERMAN WENT TO SACHSENHAUSEN AND...

A: [Max Drimer]  
No, that we are talking 1938 now. We are still 1939 yet.

Q: YEAH, BUT YOU SAY YOUR GRANDFATHER DIED A NATURAL DEATH AT HOME?

A: [Max Drimer]  
Oh, yeah, I don't know why - I don't remember why he wasn't taken. I don't even remember. Don't remember. Now he was - I visit his grave and when I came back from Auschwitz in '45. He was buried in a Jewish cemetery, in Berlin.

Q: I WANTED TO ASK HERMAN SOMETHING THAT YOU TALKED ABOUT - DID YOUR PARENTS TALK TO YOU ABOUT HITLER AND EXPLAIN?

A: [Max Drimer]  
Yes, a lot, especially my mother.

Q: WHAT DID SHE TELL YOU?

A: [Max Drimer]  
My mother, actually my mother was laying - the renaissance, you know the cards.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Can I go in?

A: [Herman Shine]  
She was playing cards [pasjanks?] they call it - [pasjanks?]. Solitary, but then they call it [pasjanks?], but now, solitaire is the same. And my mother would do this every night. Or every day, many times, and she saw all the cards. Some awful thing is gonna happen to the Jews. And this is like I said before, my brother, who is three and a half years older, and then he's - it was very dark here, and he was very resisting, always fight with the nazi's but it was before the nazi's even came to power. And she saw that he would be in very big danger, especially. So she...

Q: WAS THIS BERNARD?

A: [Herman Shine]

Yes. Pushed him out. You see, then, I was three and a half years younger. So when he was sixteen, I was twelve and a half. So this is a big difference. So, but on the cards she saw that more and more how bad it's going to be. She said: "You must leave." I said: "Well, why don't we all leave together?" She said: "No, all three you don't transplant anymore. But you..." and this is when I begun to - my mother took me there and I was in the preparation - they call it a camp for Israel. And I was ready to go, but my brother was already there for maybe, a year, perhaps, nine months. And he wrote back how awful it is. Ja, they have very little to eat. And he got very sick - he's got malaria and all this, and he - the, all circumstances are just horrible. I should not come, because of course, nobody predicted what gonna be. And so then, on and on was the time. And this is of course, how it happened. But my mother really saw - in fact, later, she even made a living, when she couldn't sell those skirts anymore. There were a lot of Germans which were friend to her - Gentiles. They were so superstitious, they would come to our apartment and they would bring food and pay her money and she would lay them solitary - the cards.

Q: I THINK THEY CALL IT A FORTUNE TELLING - SHE COULD READ THE...

A: [Herman Shine]

Fortune teller, ja, but not - but the cards, ja. That's right - she told the fortune out of the cards, you know. But she predicted what really gonna happen.

Q: WHO TAUGHT HER HOW TO DO THAT?

A: [Herman Shine]

I have no idea. I mean, but they all came and she would do that all the time. I mean, all the time. In fact, she met a gentleman then; she had several cousins, her mother - they WERE all on the German side, yeah. You know, German born. And one of them was a chief cook of a Catholic [hYme?] - you know, home, Catholic home I think, for children.

And he liked my mother. My mother was already divorced, you know. My father left for long time. And he wanted to marry my mother, but my mother says: "I still love you father and blah, blah, blah." So she introduced him to one of her cousins. But while they were still going, he would come and visit us, once or twice a week. And he said, and he knows that we were very poor. And he said: "Manny..." you see, my name - Herman, I named myself after the war - my real name was Mendel. And the nickname in Germany is like Manny, you see, Manny. And he says: "Manny I want you to come..." I was an expert on the bike, and I had to a big rope-sack, what you call it -

A: [Max Drimer]  
Knapsack.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Knapsack - no it was not a knapsack. This was a rope sack, a big tall one - rucksack. They go on the bike, you know, big one. Because I was delivering; I was doing all kinds of work whatever I could get then. He said: "You come about..." when it was dark in the winter time, "about seven, eight o'clock, and knock on the door and I come out." And when I came there with this empty rucksack, and he filled it up with food. You know, from there, there was lots of food. And I got the food, the best, we always had to eat. And I came there for months and months. This extra stuff, like, you know, there - there's nothing they didn't have. For everything we didn't have. But then of course, introduced one of her cousins, and he married her. And this is how she got saved; and my mother - not.

Q: WHEN YOU BOYS WERE TEN, ELEVEN, TWELVE AND YOU STARTED SEEING NAZI'S ON THE STREET, DID YOU ASK YOUR PARENTS, WHY DOESN'T HITLER LIKE THE JEWS? WHY IS HE DOING THIS TO THE JEWS?

A: [Herman Shine]  
Well, he - the nazi's they told.. you see, we were still going in a German school, when he was in power. And there were several teachers who taught us, in our class, who told about the nazi fairy, you know.

Of course, they did not talk about God, and they didn't really talk about the Jews, as a whole. They just talked about what Hitler's gonna do. You see, against the Jews, it never really started in general, until the Nuremberger law. But then, it really came to a huge crunch, when, in November 1938. the crystal night - this is when he really went against the Jews, you know.

Q: I WOULD LIKE IT IF YOU TOLD ME ABOUT KRISTALNACHT, I TALKED TO MAX ABOUT IT AND I KNOW HIS STORY. COULD YOU TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED THAT NIGHT?

A: [Herman Shine]

You see, first of all, the area where we lived, was not as affected, because this was the poor area. And they were not much interested in the poor area. But where the stores of the Jews were, the wealthy Jews, was in the center of Berlin, where of course, you had hundreds, maybe thousands of stores - where of course, they had diamonds and all this kinds of stuff, you know. And whatever Jews were selling - and this is where the, not only the destruction, but this is where also the serious ?? - they not only cracked the glass, they cleaned out the stores, you know. They brought the truck loads along and loaded and loaded everything on it, you know. 'Cause sometimes people say it was just the glass that was cracked, it was that too, but like I say, this happened to a minimal. In fact, in our poor areas, because there were not, what stores were there - there was the bakery, mostly, bakery and deli's. And these were not really stores. They were much in - of course, they marked there "Jude" - you know, Jew and all this stuff on there, and cracked also the glass. But, the destruction did not, was not in the way - and that's why this huge impact, we did not feel.

Q: WERE YOU ASLEEP? WHEN DID YOU HEAR THE NOISE - THE BREAKING...?

A: [Herman Shine]

Of course, you heard the noise - the noise you couldn't help. The noise, you know they roamed around the city in bands, you know.

I mean, they were - they came, they never went single, they always went in whole gangs, uniformed, you know, like the SA. They went around, because after all, they were the power then. And they had wagons with music, and all these nazi songs. And this is how they went along, with the flags on there, the nazi flags. And they were shouting, you know, obscenities against the Jews. And then, with them, of course, it ended up - like Max said, the Jews with the beard, the religious ones. You know, naturally when they came around our area, when they came they caught them by the beard, cut the beards off, you know. And then hit them, and all kinds; these were their main acts, you know. And this was of course, horrible, because the police, which we always saw was not on the nazi side, directly, but they did not interfere at all. In fact, they were neutral. You know, the police did not really take part in it, but they did not protect the Jews or the citizens either.

Q: DO YOU REMEMBER WAKING UP AND...

A: [Herman Shine]

Oh we woke up all the night, because, I mean, it was, this was constantly. I mean, once they got into power and then it come for a little for a year, so there was more peace. So then, it starts. Then one, like the propaganda minister, Goebels, he riled up the nation, and he started this whole in ?? and number one, and the other guy of course, was the Jewish striker who wrote ?? - the paper, where he was famous, writing everything against the Jews. What the Jews are doing, and what they did to the Germans and you know, molesting the girls and cutting out their parts, and all this. And this is how he infected the Germans. And these were actually the two most effective ones. You know, Goebels and Stermer, of course, there were many others, too. But, not in the same effect as they were.

Q: AFTER 'KRISTALNACHT' DID YOUR MOTHER AGAIN THINK WE HAVE TO GET OUT?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, this is when we started, you see. And then this is all, but like I said, we tried then to get out, and my mother took me to several places but of course, one place where I could have gone, was probably Israel. But when my brother wrote, I should not come. He said the conditions are just horrible there. So that drives you away from it a little, you know. He got the malaria, he got that, you know, he was very sick and all this, so we thought maybe, we can go someplace else, but then the time went by so fast. When I came back from Poland and then, I was supposed to leave Germany. So we tried to go different. And my sister practically, older sister, went with the last transportation to Shanghai. She has a little daughter then, and she was just about four, five months old. And I brought her to the train station. She probably was one of the very, very last. And when I came in the camp, my mother right away wrote to her, you know. And in fact, but I guess, this we talk later - it is not part of this now, you know.

Q: DO YOU GENTLEMEN REMEMBER ANY DREAMS YOU USED TO HAVE WHEN ALL THIS WAS HAPPENING? DO YOU USED TO HAVE ANY NIGHTMARES - DO YOU HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF THOUGHTS YOU HAD ABOUT, WORRIES?

A: [Max Drimer]

Not before, but after, after the kristalnacht, this things once got into your head, it didn't leave so soon. [to Herman] Did you live in Kanadeestrasse when it was the kristalnacht?

A: [Herman Shine]

Yeah.

A: [Max Drimer]

Alright. The Kanadeestrasse was, give or take, half a dozen little, tiny synagogues, very orthodox - [stiebelles?] they used to call them. And on that day, because I went after it cooled down, during the day, I went there, because the streets was full of ashes, because they threw out all the books, the Torahs, threw them on the street and then lit them up. So this is where I saw that they burned the inside of the synagogues, or the contents of the

synagogues. That one street where Herman lived, this is where I...

A: [Herman Shine]

But maybe we didn't live there anymore. I think, no, I we lived Louteringstrasse.

A: [Max Drimer]

So the kristalnacht, sure this is a - something. Then they tool away the business from my mother and partly stoned - if it was not stoned, then it was demolished. They used sledgehammers in our place. Like I told you, we, early in the morning, I don't know, six o'clock, seven o'clock, then was only my mother and me in that big apartment. Then we heard the noise when they busted big, huge store window glass. And they make a lot of noise, because not just thin glass. We looked out through the window and saw bunch of SR men. Trucks and Jewish stores across the street from us, you could see all what they do there. Couldn't look down what happened to us. So we got scared and we run up - on the fifth floor was an attic. And we hid there. And that took hours until the noise subsided.

So then, slowly, my mother went down, and I stayed, she didn't let me come down and she went first, look - see the situation. And then she came back up: "Let's go downstairs." And she took whatever was left, or what she was hiding there - she was able to get that one suitcase full of checks. And she had a girlfriend, my mother had a girlfriend a few houses away from us. They had a - they were a tailor and producing women's clothes in their apartment. We went up there, and they gave us one little room, 'cause they had a huge apartment. And so we took over - at nighttime we went and took a little belongings - what we could get there, and we nested into that one room there. Then, my mother said: "Let's get out of here, let's go to Shanghai." 'Cause Shanghai, when you had money - all you needed was a ship ticket, and you buy your ticket and go. And I had letters from friends of mine - Max... who went to Shanghai - 'don't come to Shanghai; nothing to eat and the climate's terrible. Sickness is big...' So I said to my mom, "No, I don't want to go. I'd rather go to

Poland," and unfortunately, that's where I end up.

So, then after, then it is crystal night, it's the story what happened, then the mothers got together. And, "We got send the children out, we got to the children out." That's what some of them did with putting the kids on the train. Don't even know where they gonna land. They could have land any place. Luckily, they did land in England, you know. So they found somebody who told them, they will bring us over the border to Holland. Cost fifteen hundred marks and there was five boys; one was quite a bit older than we were, and we had a guy - he was a driver at the opera house, where Herman once performed in the Volksbuhner. And apparently, he was a member of the party and he would go there, in SR uniform, to the border, and he knows somebody at the border - and he will bring us over. And the unfortunate thing is, he was recommended to us from a Jewish girl. The unfortunate - at that time we didn't know it. So we met the guy, and he had a coat on; he opened his coat and there was the SR uniform underneath the coat. And he said: "That will help you getting over the border." So the mothers put us in his car, Saturday night; crystal night was from Thursday to Friday, and we drove, maybe eleven hours to the border. And in order to show the mothers that the kids went over the border - they gave us blankets and thermos coffee, thermos bottles, because it was wintertime already. And he will bring them back, as proof that we are gone. And we had to leave a certain time, because he figured out when he gets there in the morning it's still a little dawn. So then, we sneak over. So we thought of all night; stopped only if we got to go to the bathroom.

And my sister wrote to me, described to me what street it is. There's a streetcar going by there; you get out one side of the streetcar, is Germany. You get out the other side of the streetcar, is Holland. And you coming under an underpass of trains and right past there you are already... So we'd been driving all night and the guy didn't talk to us at all. Sleeping, we were sleeping - being happy, we getting out of here, not knowing what's gonna

happen to us. So, all of a sudden, I see, maybe a half a mile a way, I see this. I told the guy: "Oh, we are already here, there's the bridge. We have to go there." As I was talking, a big, black limo passed us, with high speed and we looked and said: "Oh, six guys in there..." - didn't pay any attention who they are. We didn't know that. So I didn't even watch which way they went. Straight ahead - and as we getting underneath the bridge, to make that right turn into the street, there was this limo and the six guys outside, guns drawing and stopping us. Everybody out of the car. We had to get into their car and they told him, faking, now I found out later: "You wanna help the Jews to get out of here, you traitor," - something like that.

So they took us to jail in the city called Achen. In Achen, you know, we get into jail like everybody else; you got to have fingerprints, you got to have picture taken, you get in from one room into the other. As I walked by the hall and the doors were open, I see they guy there - he was drinking and smoking with the Gestapo. So this is how I found out that he was, that this is a set up story.

Q: WAS HE A JEWISH GUY?

A: [Max Drimer]

No. No he was not; the girl who recommended him was Jewish. She lived in ??strasse, Lenie Goldfarm.

Q: WHAT KIND OF CAR WERE YOU IN WHEN THIS TRAITOR TOOK YOU TO THE BORDER - DO YOU REMEMBER?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, it was a four-door sedan. That's all I know.

Q: AND THE OTHER FOUR BOYS THAT WERE WITH YOU, WERE THEY FRIENDS ON THE SOCCER TEAM?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, I don't know. I knew one guy, and the women - the mothers. The mothers; they were friends probably and you know, they putting their heads together: "What are we gonna do

with the kids? What are we gonna do with the kids?" And they came up with that conclusion they have found somebody, who knows somebody and this is how we got talked into it, into them.

Q: SO YOU - YOUR MOM ACTUALLY SENT YOU ABOUT A DAY OR TWO AFTER CRYSTAL NIGHT HAPPENED, VERY QUICKLY?

A: [Max Drimer]

Couple of days after, yeah. Couple of days after. Then we went to jail.

Q: OKAY, IS THERE ANYTHING EITHER OF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD ABOUT, THAT YOU THINK WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR ME ABOUT YOUR CHILDHOOD? I MEAN, FAMILY TRADITIONS, OR SONGS OR MEMORIES YOU HAVE.

A: [Max Drimer]

Well the only, I could add, not add I mean. Our home was a real Jewish home, not traditional, I mean, everything was Jewish minded. And, like I said, I don't recall any gentile friends, and that goes back even before Hitler was there. I mean, then I was, you know, a little kid. But I, with the exception of one, all our employees - are mainly why I didn't wanna become a cabinet maker because we had guys working over there, in Germany, it's not like here - you had guys working there, they were there before I was even born. And I said to myself: "How will I have respect when this guy tells me how to do this and do this," and that was also a part why I did not want to become a cabinetmaker; if I would've been put to another factory, or another shop - maybe. But I had no respect for them, I mean, respect, I wasn't disrespectful; but I wouldn't accept any orders. My dad's store, you know, something like it. So no, ours, my mother was active in Jewish lodges and organizations - she was not just a housewife and she also worked hard upstairs. She got a big household to keep; also we had a maid living, a live-in maid. And they entertained a lot. And she went away a lot - meetings, and went out with their friends to movies or operas, or plays.

Q: DID YOU AND YOUR SISTER TRAVEL ANYWHERE, LIKE ON VACATION?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, I was very unfortunate with this. My mother took me, I think, two or three times - I remember once, to [Chesselwakie?]. Wherever she took me, I got sick. Wherever she took me I got sick. Once I had an appendicitis - I needed an operation. Once I came down with the measles. So, there was not, you know, I think they were more, living for the business, than like we do here - to day, if you a little bit well-to-do, you take a vacation. You go here a few days, there... I don't remember they did this, no, no, no. My aunt, my mothers' sister lived in Hamburg; she had a traveling business. She was traveling silverware - in bed sheets, linens, tablecloths. But she was going overland to little villages and knocking doors. And then they always came to us, because they had a car, they had a chauffeur and they were close always to Berlin. So they came, they came and visit to us, instead of we going to them.

Q: WAS HANUKKAH A BIG CELEBRATION?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, we like I said, you know, we - you see, our most extensive education did not come in school. But we would go to a Jewish, they call a kinderhalt, where this is a...

A: [Max Drimer]

Kindergarten.

A: [Herman Shine]

Not kindergarten. It is much more than that, where they prepare you for Israel at a young stage, and go up and up. And with them, we would go, one of my sisters was a teacher there, and they'd take us on trips. I went to quite a few trips with the sister, you know, in Germany, all over you know, like there was the East Sea and all this. And I would go constantly, like I say, we would go there everyday - direct from school; you get there. You get two meals there, and then, of course, you have all kinds of education. You know, education and play.

And also, we would, like I said, they take us around, and with my sister, we go on the weekends - different outings all over through Berlin. Well, Berlin was a very large city. But, of course, this is all, naturally, before '38. You know, I would say, probably, up to '38. Up you know... So as far as - this was our main life and so, we would go all over, between them and my sister, because like I say, my sister was a lot older. And of course, when they had their own apartments, we'd been invited over there constantly. And then, 'cause one, my older sister, later, then she was then involved with one of the German socialist communist leaders. And one of, her boyfriend, was the right hand of him and there I learned a lot politics, through them. And this was, of course, before the Nazi's came to power.

Q: HERMAN, DID YOU USED TO TAKE BICYCLE TRIPS BY YOURSELF ALL OVER?

A: [Herman Shine]

Oh, yeah. Oh yeah, I rode all over to Berlin. Well, first of all, I was known - I had this special bicycle built for me, you know, and then I made advertising. I worked then, for one of the largest, German bicycle shops, in Berlin. And I drove all around the city; it was my job, you know. I had a special outfit on and this was highly interesting, and then of course, later, I worked for this Jewish tailor - his name was Lever Chance. He made this special riding pants, which was his patent, and like I said, all the highest ranking Nazi's, would come before the Nazi's came to power and after. And they had their sizes made, and all and I would deliver them.

Q: WHAT WERE BIRTHDAY CELEBRATIONS LIKE IN YOUR HOUSE, MAX, WAS IT A BIG DEAL AS IT IS IN AMERICA?

A: [Max Drimer]

Well, yeah, something - I could invite my friends and presents, you know, was always there. Hanukkah was a very big spiel. I remember as kids, not like here, each present is wrapped in a gift wrap paper. There we had a big couch and this couch was filled up with

presents and there was a blanket over. And then it was itching. We had to eat dinner first, and light the candles first and we wanted to get on to there. So, the last, until everything was done - the maid cleaned up the table and then they'd pull off the blanket, and all the presents were individual displayed; not in boxes, or anything. So, no, we always waited for that. And then, I remember the - about Easter - it was sometimes, Easter, real Christian Easter and the Passover fell at the same day. So the maid always give us Easter eggs and Easter bunny and chocolate and we were not allowed to eat it, because it was not Passover stuff. That's a bad memory I had on this one - can you wait eight days? The chocolate is yours and you had to wait - because I had a sweet tooth all my life. All my life I did.. no, holidays was always a big celebration. And birthdays, always, why this was when my parents had birthday and when the children had birthday, you know. When my father's birthday I asked for money from my mom, or when my mother's birthday I asked money from my father. We have to get something for the parents. So it was, it was always a nice family affair.

Q: HOW ABOUT YOU HERMAN, WITH SO MANY CHILDREN?

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja, this was one thing when we had birthdays, my sister or my mother, would bake my favorite cake and make the my favorite dinner - I mean, this was always, you know, lots of friends come up there and.. But generally, we had more than one celebration, we'd celebrate in school, at the kinderhalt garden, and the home, you know.

Q: WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE CAKE?

A: [Herman Shine]

It was - they call it a German crumb cake. You know, special cake, ja. But you know, the Germans, they would bake very good cake. You know, in Germany, you bake the cake, then you bring it to the baker to bake them. They make them and the baker - because we don't have the stoves in the house - so the baker. And when, right there we lived next door, there was a huge bakery, and there, you pay a few pennies,

and then they bake them in the big stoves, you know.

Q: DID YOU GET PRESENTS ALSO?

A: [Herman Shine]

Oh, ja. I mean, small presents you know, mostly what you really needed.

Q: AND WHAT WAS HANUKKAH LIKE IN YOUR HOUSE?

A: [Herman Shine]

well, it was, I mean, like I say, if you needed something, then this is what you'd get, you know. I mean, it was not in a big way, because like I say, the finances just weren't there.

Q: DID YOU HAVE A PASSOVER SAYDAH IN YOUR HOUSE - TWO NIGHTS?

A: [Herman Shine]

Oh, yes. Oh yeah, my mother was very religious. In fact, she made noodles and then, put the stuff on the sheets there, and let them all dry, and all that, oh yes, she was... This is one thing, every holiday and then my mother would be, to Yom Kippur she would be all day long in the temple, you know. We would bring a apple with some melts in there so she get some to smell, so she wouldn't pass out. Spice - what they call it - nelt??

A: [Max Drimer]

Yeah, but I don't know what it's called.

A: [Herman Shine]

You stick them in the apples, you know.

A: [Max Drimer]

Cloves.

Q: CLOVES. YEAH, A SPICE.

A: [Herman Shine]

And then they smell on it.

A: [Max Drimer]

To make it easy on fasting.

Q: ANYTHING ELSE YOU HAVE? 'CAUSE I CAN SHIFT GEARS A LITTLE, BUT WHAT I THINK WE'VE A LITTLE MORE TIME, DON'T WE?  
[YEAH, WE HAVE ANOTHER HALF HOUR]  
THIS MIGHT BE DIFFICULT BUT AS I'M PREPARING TO WRITE THE BOOK AND DOING MY RESEARCH, I'M WONDERING FROM BOTH OF YOU IN SACHSENHAUSEN AND AUSCHWITZ, I THINK I KNOW WHAT THE DAY-TO-DAY LIFE WAS LIKE. WHAT I DON'T KNOW IS WHAT WERE YOU GUYS THINKING - WHAT KIND OF CONVERSATIONS WOULD YOU HAVE WITH THE GUYS IN YOUR BEDS, OR WHEN YOU'RE WORKING FOR IG FARMS. CAN YOU GIVE ME A FLAVOR OF THAT?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, that comes later - well, I tell you. In Sachsenhausen, it was the same in every barrack. You had Jews arrested from all over Europe, practical. And there were many rabbis; there were politician; there were military men, Jews who served in the army, in different countries. Some of them became quite high officers. So there were generally business people and what they did is, we were the first two, three months isolated in the barracks. These were all three barracks, and it's later, four. These were '38, '39 and later it was forties. This was a camp within a camp - completely sealed off. But especially the first three barracks, 37, 38, 39, they were sealed also, from the outside. And, in between - when the Nazis' would come in, of course, and they'd torture and punish and kill. But then they would go, and we, the young guys, we had to watch that they not being surprised, you know. In other words, when the Nazi's would come, some of them they crawl underneath - you couldn't see them. Then of course, you get tremendous punishment, because they know you warned them. But these people there - whoever they were, rabbis - they would give lectures, bring up hope, told, you see, because that's the only thing you possible could do. And they talked about many, many - of course, some of them I agreed, some of them I didn't agree. Then some other, talk political. Some others said it cannot last - the Nazi's, the military - they gave their opinion. They said that this cannot last, that they would fall together. So this is actually how you got some hope, how you got something, and this would go on, of course.

This would go on for months, but of course, many of them, unfortunately, especially the rabbis - they were much older than we - they did not last long. And when the SS came in the barracks, which is everyday, many times during the day - we were not going to work, nothing like that; we were strictly isolated; they would pick them out and torture them, and kill them.

And we were the young guys that were supposed to clean the barracks. We had to pile the dead up to the ceiling, in the bathroom, until the next morning, when they had to be delivered to the crematorium.

Q: HERMAN, THERE MUST HAVE BEEN MANY LANGUAGES THERE - PEOPLE SPOKE SO MANY ???

A: [Herman Shine]

At first - yes, but then, they all learnt very fast, German, some of them broken. You see in Sachsenhausen, then they strictly brought them from areas - later in Auschwitz, of course, they brought them from all over Europe, ja. We only got few but most of them spoke the German language, because naturally they all would travel, especially when they were prominent, they'd come and they spoke the language - not too perfect, but they did.

Q: SO, THE RABBIS - WOULD THEY LEAD PRAYERS, AND ALL OF THAT?

A: [Herman Shine]

Prayers, religious, sure and all kinds of course, 'cause many of them couldn't believe it and they said that, you know: "There is no God," and none other - they couldn't look to it, you know. It wasn't only this, there were other things too. I had a cousin, and besides that, they had for the Jews, especially, you see, when the Nuremberger laws come - and any Jew was caught then having affairs with Gentiles, the Gentiles would probably also be put in a camp, but not as strict as the Jews. But the Jews they called them 'die [rasenschender?]', I guess you probably heard that before. And one of them was my cousin and they were put in a '[strafkompanie?]', in a special detail - not in our barrack. And they

brought them out, every morning, and practically - you see, because we were a camp isolated from the other camp. So, they wanted them away that the other prisoners couldn't see this. And there they made sport with them; sport means a special torture. And my own cousin was killed in front of me, you know. 'Cause his father was in [Credeland?], you know, and this is where he was caught, you know, and brought into Sachsenhausen. And these were of course, horrible. Just horrible. You know, things among other things, you know.

Q: I KNOW THAT YOU WENT TO SACHSENHAUSEN FIRST.  
MAX, WHEN YOU WENT...

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, Max went first.

Q: OH, YOU WENT FIRST. OKAY, WERE YOU IN THE SAME  
BARRACKS?

A: [Herman Shine]  
No.

Q: NEVER?

A: [Herman Shine]  
Ja, [looks toward Max] later I think, huh?

A: [Max Drimer]  
No, never.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Never? Not even Auschwitz, huh? No it was always different barracks.

Q: WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE IN YOUR ?? IN  
SACHSENHAUSEN? WAS IT THE SAME ONE?

A: [Max Drimer]  
Well, it was the same. Well, you asked a question before - what went through your head? What do you think? There was no way of thinking anything. You were just a bundle of scaredness, you were scared because the next minute, the next minute it's gonna be you. They scare you so much that you barely were alive; you were breathing; your brain, I would say, was brain dead. But there was nothing to think.

We had - we didn't know if it's Monday or if it's Friday - we didn't know what date it is. Yes, we had some of the religious people. You know, they stood in corners and prayed, they gonna help us, they gonna help us, but we didn't - not I would say, we didn't believe in it - but we didn't even think about it. There was no - we were afraid. We just if we got make the next day - we gonna make the next day. So, because it started right out when we were arrested, I told in my first tape here, that I received my first death sentence on my first day. And I'm here to tell - which, when you listened to my tape, you saw that, you know. I knocked over a high-ranking SS man, and he came to Sachsenhausen looking for me - and I was lucky always. Knock on wood, and I hope it stays till the end of my life that he didn't find me. I would have gone murderly down.

And the, when Herman said, ja, you lived with dead people. We went to sleep on the floor and straw sacks, and we were packed like sardines, which in one way was good, because it was wintertime. You know, in winter they gave us summer clothes, and in summer they gave us winter clothes. And changing clothes, there was no such a thing. Pajama, or things like that - you went to sleep in your clothes. And you were so tight in the straw sacks, if one turned around at night, the whole row had to turn around, and that row was forty feet long - not just five feet. So when the dead - you woke up the next morning, and the guy left and right from you was dead, so the guy in back of you was dead and there was one right on the beginning they ask: "You want to have a pint of soup extra, half a pint of soup extra?" The one who should come forward, so I went there, not knowing what. We gonna be the pall bearers; so when that - we made that trip many, many times during the day. We got one body into a blanket - four guys, each one gets a corner, and then you had run, walking there was no such a thing than walking in a camp. Everything was done in running. And, did we survive this - I don't know. We made out of steel or just - we don't really - we are so lucky, there is no way of thinking why.

Lucky star, if you are born lucky, so I volunteered just to get half a pint of soup. And we had to walk, I mean, go to the hospital which was almost half a mile away from our block, and everything and running. The first body we brought there - we came and they showed us downstairs in a basement. And we set the body slowly down, and want to lay it down, we got a kick in the butt. The SS guy came in, he says: "I show you." He flipped the body out of the blanket, and that's what we have to do I would say, at least, twenty, thirty times a day; a day, on the first four weeks when we were in isolation.

And we had no - nails, the windows were shut; there's nails. They couldn't be opened until when, because when the people died, in Sachsenhausen, they mailed a letter in the ashes to the remaining mother or widow with a letter telling them he died of pneumonia, he died of heart failure, or any of those things and then when we were, the Polish citizens, the Polish Consulate didn't exist anymore, so the Swedish Consulate took over, and then the mothers and the wives ran to the Swedish Consulate: "My husband was a healthy man." And now they got a letter, got his ashes inside, until the Swedish Consulate, the Commissioner, came into our camp. One day, they took all the nails out and they cleaned the barracks fine and then we had to stay outside, and all of a sudden, we saw them in uniform. The Swedish people coming in - they looked at us, they went into the barracks, they went out, but at least we were not anymore in isolation, which was good and it was not good. That time when we were in isolation, we had to get out three times a day in front of the barrack to be counted. After we got out of isolation, we had to go to the apell platz, where twenty-five thousand people stood there, in different block by block.

So, and then, when somebody escaped, which it happened, very, very rarely, then everybody had to stay outside, until they found him. Oh, you stay in front of your barrack, I mean, it's bad enough, but you stay way outside at the apell platz, in wintertime there was once a guy was gone for eight days - we stood there eight

solid days and nights. In wintertime they fell like flies, the people. They brought us the black coffee, the black water so... and they brought us the food there, and so you have, what should one think there? There's nothing to think about it. Just try to get out through the gate, which was impossible.

A: [Herman Shine]

You see, Sachsenhausen was completely different from Auschwitz. While Sachsenhausen was a concentration camp and all the others in Germany; Auschwitz was not a concentration camp, it was an extermination camp. When in Sachsenhausen, somebody escapes, you had to wait - that was one for all, and all for one. In Auschwitz, it was entirely different. In Auschwitz, you stay a few hours, and then they turn it instantly over to their Gestapo, the outside. Because they figured, Auschwitz is one concentration camp, there is no way anybody can get away anyway. And this was... but you see, after the isolation was lifted, in Sachsenhausen, the order came and more than half of all our comrades, the Jews, died. The order came from Berlin, from Himmler; the rest of them should be tried to put to work. I guess this you heard in the tape.

So we were put to work. And then, in the meantime, of course, we are talking about practical six to nine months later, the Germans were rolling all over Europe; we have now practical, the middle of 1940. They were just blooming in their victories. And it looked like and the papers - and you know, we were supposed to read it, you know, in their recreation. The Germans provided Nazi papers, which you had to read. The radios were booming the Nazi music all over the camp. And they predicted, in six weeks, the way we are going, the war gonna be end. And then all of a sudden you know, all the prisoners came - they had some money in their so-called effects.

A new commandant came in - the brutal one was tired, or whatever. A new one came in and the order came, the SS has to have more free time, and of course, when they have more free time naturally, we have more free time. They have to ease up, and at the same time, you know,

there was a prisoner canteen - which was completely empty. And now, all of a sudden, you see the gate opens, and dozens and dozens of trucks roll in with the names we knew from bread that was bought before, we were still out there. And they unloading thousands of breads and thousands of bottles and packets of honey, and then, what they call it, the stuff [looks to Max] what we had then - you remember? Not honey, it wasn't honey, it was all that so heavy, you know. So we could, then, we got permission to go to the canteen and buy whatever we want. And could eat, and you had so much extra time, and the SS were now permitted by the more free time, free time, not to come into the camps. So it all was eased up for a while.

Q: WHY?

A: [Herman Shine]

Because they were - they were blooming in the victory. And one night, we were ordered - our barrack, I don't know, Max's probably too, called late at night to the train station, with the guards. And go to the train station, and there we had to unload trains - cognac from France, in cases, but not for us - for the SS. Cheese wheels, they are tall as we are, so roll them to the camp... all for the... you see, the SS, they had their big buddies, like one of the generals of the SS occupied this area there in Paris, so he sent to his buddies; and of course, with the permission from Berlin. So they had so much to drink and so much food so naturally, they got all solid drunk. So not only did we get our prisoner food, we now get the food from the SS too.

But it all lasted only a few weeks, because then came a setback - something like one of the - got assassinated whatever it was or some defeat some place, it didn't go, and one evening we come back from work, and we were all hoping for a nice evening again. And of course, everybody gained so, quite a bit of weight. You know you eat syrup it was, syrup, you remember? [to Max] Syrup and bread; and you can imagine when you eat the syrup, thick syrup - you eat as much as you want.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Maple syrup.

A: [Herman Shine]  
As much syrup as you can on the bread. You know how fast you gain weight. And you have a lot more time to eat. And you don't get the punishment you used to get before. And one evening we come in, after a few weeks, everything was empty. All your shelves were wide open and you already knew. The gate was now - always, they opened the twelve-foot gate, now only part of it was opened. But you gotta march through the gate, with twelve in the group. Now how you gonna walk with twelve in the group, and only half the gate is open. Naturally, you pile up, and on both sides the SS - with the whips, you know. And, of course, you knew right away: "You son of a bitch," and all... We could tell that something didn't go on with the war. So it was from one, to the extreme opposite, just within one day. And everything changed in the same way. They came back in, and the torture begun and killing begun, just like before, you know.

Q: DO EITHER OF YOU REMEMBER ANY SPECIAL KINDNESSES, YOU KNOW, WHEN YOU WERE IN THE BARRACK?

A: [Herman Shine]  
From SS?

Q: NO FROM ANYTHING, LIKE ONE GUY IN THE BARRACKS BEING VERY TENDER TO SOMEBODY ELSE, OR SEEING SOMEBODY WHO IS REALLY STARVING AND GIVING THEM BREAD... OR THE OPPOSITE?

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, no.

Q: DID YOU SEE A LOT OF FIGHTING?

A: [Max Drimer]  
In Sachsenhausen, not at all. We had, in my block, thirty-seven, was - we had block alteste, an inmate, and he was a professional gangster, what they called, 'beroofsverbryke.' He had a green wimple, a triangle...

A: [Herman Shine]  
Marking him.

A: [Max Drimer]  
He was the greatest murderer, which you can think of. On account of that he was released. And I - we heard the story and I never heard a back-up of it, but - that he was released, he went to Berlin; Sachsenhausen was very close to Berlin. And apparently, somebody recognized him and he got killed - which killed, was much too easy for this guy. This was such a brutal guy, you have no idea what you see today; the violence on the movies, what today violence in the movie with guns - it's easy. You pull the trigger, you blow up. There - is no guns, there is only ten fingers. What this guy did, and the most brutalist guy you can think of... so, there was nobody kind.

Yeah, in Auschwitz, in Buhner, there you had a nice guy, here and there - why... In Sachsenhausen, no Jew had a little higher job. Any, being shining shoes, just a little. I had a high - I was carrying the dead bodies; that was the high job, because I got a half a pint of soup. In Sachsenhausen, there was no Jew, had a position - any kind. In Auschwitz, yes, because there was not enough Gentiles.

So, they had to fill the jobs; so they put in the Jews. And you had a friend here and there, who had the job - he was the one who was easy to you, he was lenient to you. He, maybe, give you something. The karpoo was a nice guy, the block alteste was a... there, ja, in Auschwitz. I always made a remark, is Auschwitz was a sanatorium compared to Sachsenhausen, Dachau, Buchenwald. Because in those three camps, Sachsenhausen, Dachau, Buchenwald, you lived until your last breath came out of your body. In Auschwitz, you either go straight into the gas chamber, all your suffering is gone, or, if you lucky to be going to work, and you don't get sick, you had the chance to survive. So that was the two difference, and people say: "How can you say, Max, you can't..."

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, no you cannot say that.

A: [Herman Shine]

Yes, you call - I say that Auschwitz is a sanatorium compared - the treatment of Auschwitz; not, it wasn't a sanatorium compared to Birkenau's gas chambers - that not. But if you lived, it was the difference there.

Q: HERMAN, YOU'RE SHAKING YOUR HEAD.

A: [Herman Shine]

No, I have to shake my head, I mean, I cannot agree on this. I mean, in Auschwitz, we, Max, maybe he forgot some things, you know, 'cause I was much closer to this than Max was, because I worked in the camp. You see, while Max went to work in the factory, and I know what was going on in the camp. You know, in our camp, for instance, we had, the laager alteste; he is the chief of all the prisoners; this guy had special privileges. And he walked around with a whip - a whip, a real whip, and he would hit the prisoners for no reason at all, and kill them on the spot. [to Max] You remember that. And then there was a laager karmo who was the second in command to him; he was not any different. Because, these were the two's - as soon as the Russians came in - this is what we have, in writing; they were stamped to death, by the prisoners, those two. They were so brutal, and like Max says, too the laagers in Sachsenhausen, there was no difference. This was political - I mean, a professional gangster. Ours was a political - a communist. And do you think he was any different? He was shorter than I was, and he was such a killer, he was such a barbarous man, ja, he would hit the people, the prisoners with anything he had.

Q: WAS HE JEWISH? OH HE WAS A COMMUNIST?

A: [Herman Shine]

No, no Jewish, it was a communist. He came from the border of the [Sallen?] you know, right on the area there. He was such a barbarian. You know, they had the power to give you food; give you no food. I mean, they had all the power they want, because you see, the alteste of the block is the king. You see, he is, you are - he is in charge, while you are not at work. Then the other guys are in charge of the work. Now it is true, in Auschwitz, you

were put to work. Even in Sachsenhausen - once you see, once you were allowed to work, like I learnt a trade in Sachsenhausen. Why do I learn a trade - why they made me learn a trade, because they needed... they were so, you see this Sachsenhausen was a completely Gentile camp. There were about twenty-five to thirty thousand Gentile prisoners and about two thousand Jews. Of the two thousand Jews, we came in September, October '39, and a few later on. Half of them died in less than two months. And the next half died in the next four months. So there was only a very low part left.

So when we were put to work, they needed workers. Sachsenhausen had huge factories outside - they had hundreds of barracks there, you know, and they needed to be maintained. And the Germans, regardless, unless they were very dangerous politician, or they were very dangerous professional killers; they would be let out. Many of them were - they called them the anti-social. This is what my foreman was, you know, my karmo in Sachsenhausen. He was anti-social. He was drinking three, four times on the job. He was a big master outside. And they told him, if you keep the drinking one more time, you gonna go to concentration camp. But you know, drinker, he figured, he's the superintendent - big on the job there. So he came to our camp and this is just what the Nazi's loved. The guy, they put him in charge of the construction, roofing and detail. But some of the Germans, would later be released - also him. So he said: "I wanna teach you trade." And this is with the permission of the commandant of the camp, because this is one thing that can save your life. He said: "You Jews have no chance to survive, anyway. But we prolong your life."

Just like Max, Max got a job there, on a huge machine, where they put the clay, you know, to make the bricks out of the ground, which was a higher job than just being a manual labor; where you get the whip and all this, you know. I mean, we were surprised on the job, many times by the SS, because we worked on the tile, airplane roofs, and they figure they rather illegal stuff goes on there, not from us, but from the VIP prisoners; which was true, which

will come up later. But it was already, because I learnt the trade, I became a roofer and I worked in roofs. They shipped me to different camps and basically, I had it easier as long as I made do my job and the same was with Max, until other things came up in there. From time to time, which of course, you know.

Q: SO BASICALLY, WHAT YOU TWO MEN ARE SAYING IS THAT ONCE YOU GOT TO AUSCHWITZ, BECAUSE YOU HAD A SKILLED TRADE, SOMETIMES YOU HAD IT BETTER THAN WHEN YOU WERE SEMISKILLED?

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, not yet, this was in Sachsenhausen still.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Yeah, but Auschwitz only is where you were selected.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Right, you heard of the selection? You see, when we came to the selection and we came, I think, with less than five hundred or five-fifty what was left of our - to Auschwitz in September or October 1942. We were selected. Now, if they needed roofers they didn't even know what I was then, they didn't even ask me. You see there was Mengele and Eichmann, whoever was there just to tell them - like Max, I didn't even know he ended up on the wrong side. And we didn't even know if I was - if mine was the right side. You know, could have happened that we go in the gas and he was put to work. Nobody know what's right and left meant. It was just....

A: [Max Drimer]  
Luck, luck, luck.

A: [Herman Shine]  
But then, once they put you to work, you have a chance to live another day, another day, another day. But of course, you get sick, or there's something comes up or there's something there - anything can happen, extraordinary. You don't live out the day even. And it was very, very brutal, even in Auschwitz. If you do a job, they come sometimes, you see the SS was exchanged - they brought new SS.

Some of them were so brutal, you know. And they couldn't care less - for them, you meant nothing, nothing. They hit you on the spot and then they whip you to death. You know, if they didn't like it, they pull out the gun and shoot you. I mean, of course that didn't happen everyday, but it happened, it happened a lot, you know. But you were always strictly on the scare, you know.

A: [Max Drimer]

I was once working in this klinker work - where we made the bricks, and there was a small box cart van going back and forth and bringing the clay, and I was in command of taking care of the rails; keeping the rails going. And we were, I don't know, maybe, six or eight guys, and the karmo, and there was three or four SS men came with us. There was two on each side, and we worked on the rails. And we had a mean SOB SS - if you had a mean, son of a gun SS, he calls you, if he was a guard or if he was a high-ranking guy - when they call you, you had to come. So you came to him, you take off your hat, you stood at attention; he'd take away your cap and he throws it away. And you didn't know what he does, so he says: "Go get your cap." And you go get your cap, and he kills you and he makes a report - he wanted to escape. Until the next time it happened again - you never went there. He beated you with the rifle, he turned the rifle around, but you didn't go, because you pick up your cap, you - that's it. He makes out a report - he wanted to escape, and that's what it looked like it. ??? No. I said many times - people have asked me in my lifetime: "Now how have you survived? What made you survive? Are you specially strong?" There's no answer to this - to me, I had two things; I had the goal in my head, I wanted to see my mom, and I believed in God. That was mine, what kept me alive I think. And I don't know if this is the case, or if it's not the case. I wasn't fortunate enough to see my mum and I still believe in God, also there are enough people who don't believe in God anymore - if there is a God, why did he let this happen? But that's each and everyone's own belief. So they do what they wanna believe.

Q: OKAY, I'M GONNA ASK YOU TWO MEN AGAIN TO TELL ME ABOUT WHEN YOU DID THINK - WHEN THERE WAS ENOUGH ENERGY, OR WHEN YOU WEREN'T SO BLANKED OUT - WHEN YOU THOUGHT IN THE CAMPS, WHAT DID YOU THINK ABOUT?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well I think it is never that you are blanked off. You were always - I can only speak for myself, and the people who were directly around me, like with Max and me; we were not in the same barrack and we have different things going on, constantly. I was always full of hope, but of course when the SS just left, and then they tortured the whole barrack and it was just horrible - you hope it has to ease up, it will not be as bad, maybe this afternoon or tomorrow as it is today. And you hope your mother, outside, will do something for you to let you out - to try to contact this and this authority. And you are just hoping. But then, of course, the next day nothing else has happened and it's just starting the same thing or worse, and then you get more disillusioned, disappointed. But, you never give up completely. I have never given up completely, never.

Q: AND IS THAT - WHAT DO YOU ATTRIBUTE THAT TO, YOUR ABILITY TO ??

A: [Herman Shine]

Well I think just - basically, I'm an optimist. And even when sometimes, things are so dark, that you just don't see any...

END OF PART ONE OF 2. [Page 48]

PART 2.

A: [Herman Shine]

... happen which will be better for you, which will be better for everyone. And this is what I think an optimist is. And then, sometimes you lucky - it works out the way you hoping, and then unfortunately, many times in the camp it did not work out for a long, long time. But hope is always there, in quite a few - I would not say in all of them. In many, unfortunately, it is not, because then they use

some other methods ending their lives, which they did.

Q: AND MAX, DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD.

A: [Max Drimer]

Well, it's true, Herman is always more an optimist. I was more on the pessimistic side, because I don't think you have any reason to be optimistic for what you see. You hope, but it was just about impossible to see hope coming. When we got in September '39, after - until we got taken out from isolation, when the Swedish commission came in. And all of a sudden, when we went outside to the main appel platz, for every morning to be counted, then we always saw there was somebody coming from the inmates, from [schripesstube?] and one or two or three out of four barracks was called and they were released. Why were they released? Because they produced immigration. Now, my mother, with all her connections, she tried so hard to get her son out - she did get two other people out, but her son she couldn't get out. We found out later then, because the German, I mean, the Gestapo let some people out but not the youngsters, who may be able to join the foreign army, to fight against Germany. That's the reason why they didn't let the young people out. That was only the first few months in '40, and then, they even stopped this too, there was nobody released; either through the chimney or, you stood there as long as you last.

Hope, ja - I had only one - I wanted to see my mother. I was a real mama baby and now, for me, my mom, my mom, my mom. And you know, everything is fate in life and I was working, this was in '41, I was working in klinker work - there was not the time when we moved out there, when we marched in and out everyday I was working on the, a commando when we bought in the clay by boxcars. Then they dropped it and then we shoveled it up to a mountain. And then came, took it away, little by little, as the ovens needed it. And I fell down and I broke my leg, and I came to the hospital, so-called hospital in Sachsenhausen. In the meantime, in Berlin, talk got around - they found out we marched from the main camp

Sachsenhausen, to the klinker work - we marched in and out. They found out on what streets the inmates are marching. So some of the mothers and some of the wives came to that street. And my mother came too - to the time, fortunately or unfortunately, while I was in hospital, with my broken leg. And I found this out later, there's another story involved, I would have asked - what would have happened to my mother, if she sees her son marching there. First of all, you look like hell, skinny wise, you know. How would she not be able to collapse, or give some kind of a sign, or maybe, God forbid, run over or try to hug me? You know, you lose your head - anybody, regardless what shape. So I said to myself maybe it was a good sign, I did get sick, injured, not to be even there. Then, I don't know, somehow, all of a sudden, it stopped. Maybe the SS got a wind of it that the mothers or the wives come there. And they probably threaten: "You come back one more time, you go inside." So hope was there for me from the first to the last day, but answer myself right away - I didn't think anything will turn out - out of this hope.

Well, I had a chance - I'm an escape artist - when Herman told I had it easy on the mine for the clay, that was due to the fact that we had an inmate, a Gentile, who was in charge of us inmates in klinker work. And he was so good that the factory asked for his release and guaranteed for him. They hired him. And I don't know what happened to my mother's knowledge of people or cleverness, or what do you want to call it - this guy went to Berlin every weekend, and my mother got hold of him, somehow. And you know, for money, you can get anything. So he was bribed. There was another - this guy who also escaped and is in Australia, Bully [Schot?] he had a bride, and his bride, somehow met them. I don't know who met who. So, anyhow, one day I be still on the mountain there and digging the, after I got better again, with my foot. And he walks by and he whispers to me: "Are you Max Drimmer?" I says: "Yes." He says: "I want to see you at twelve o'clock, there and there." Not knowing, not at all, getting any idea what wants. I was just thinking: "What the hell does he want from me?" He knows my name, because when he was an

inmate, he didn't know me at all. He did not associate with us people.

So I met him at twelve o'clock and he give me a piece of paper, envelope and he says: "Listen, hide this - read it. But don't you dare talk to anybody about this letter." So, I read it - it was a letter from my mother. So the next day, he came into work, and all of a sudden, I was taken away from my job, and I was going with the next train, out, to the mine, and he came along, and he wants me to be the grease boy - greasing the crane.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Grease monkey.

A: [Max Drimer]  
The grease monkey for the machine who digs out the... I had no idea why. It was an entrance in the back of crane and an entrance in the front. In the front was an inmate, a political guy, he's been many years; he was the operator of the crane - and I was in the back. And we barely saw each other, and I'm the grease monkey. So he took order, this crane operator, took order from the guy who is now the boss of it. His name was [Fieter Granapur?]. And, they know each other for many years, because they been in concentration camp for long time. So he probably smelled the cake, but he didn't say nothing. He probably got bribed, too, maybe. Anyhow, every week he went back to Berlin and every Monday morning, I saw him looking out the window from the crane - ah, here comes Fieter with a little suitcase. And of course, there was cakes, salamis, letter - this went on and on for weeks and weeks and weeks.

And one morning, Monday morning, he comes to me - he brings me my food and I was already a little embarrassed because I started gaining weight. How can you gain weight in a concentration camp? The main thing for me was he brought me something to smoke. So one Monday morning he comes and he has a tape band - a ruler, and he start measuring my head. I says: "What are you doing this for?" He says: "Read the letter from your mother." He walked away, and I read the letter then.

So she had an escape plan for me prepared, in detail. She will make a wig for me, and he will take - I will go with the train after it filled up into the factory, and he will be on the locomotive, and of course, the driver, and I will be hidden somewhere there; and I go along. And, this train only went through the woods. And somewhere in the woods, the train will stop, I will jump out, and there is a limo from the Swiss Consulate, with the Swiss flag on it - and they will take me away and take me to Switzerland. So, now here starts my head working - I says it's all nice and fine, but hoping, if I survive this deal - concentration camp, and I knew if how we were treated when a person escaped, staying there for days and days. And on top of it, when a Jew escape and he may get through with the escape and never comes back, they gonna kill all those Jews in there. I said to myself: "I cannot take the responsibility, because if I survive, and then, after the war, they gonna point a finger at me: 'On account of you, they killed my husband; on account of you they killed my son.'" So how could I talk my mother out of it. She only cared for one thing, that was her own son, for nobody else.

So I wrote her back a story, the only way I will accept this - if you get me a gun. So she wrote my back: 'You little dumb boy. What do you want with a gun.' You know, I was the little baby. So, "Why do you want the gun?" So I wrote her back - all those weeks passing by. I says: "You know why, in case, if they catch me, I don't want them to catch me alive. I will take my own life." She tried to talk me out of it, and I didn't give in, and I figured, this thing gonna dissolve. But it didn't. My mother, she went on and on.

Then she got this girl involved, Gertie, who then later became the wife of Bully, who is in Australia. So she and my mother, they were in cahoots. And she found somebody - he will sell us a gun, for thirty-five thousand marks, which was a mint. Okay, my mother - didn't matter. She wants her little son, that's all she wants. So she went - and had an appointment made with this guy in a dark place, in the evening

somewhere, and my mom didn't went with her, she went. My mother gave her in a package, thirty-five thousand marks. So she comes to the place where they had made the appointment. He came, and he says: "Do you have my money?" She says: "Yeah, I have your money - here." She says: "Do you have the gun?" "Yeah, I got it here." So somewhere she smelled a rat and she said to him: "Let me feel it." He says: "No, no, no - I have it right here." So he says: "Let me feel it." So she says: "Here." So he must have felt bundles of money in there and she said: "No, let me feel it." "No, no, no, no." Somehow, he said yes - and she grabbed it and it was empty; it was just paper - paper wraps. So she ran away. She ran away and he got away, so that was the end of the escape and shortly afterwards, is when we were taken to Auschwitz.

Q: AND THAT WAS THE LAST YOU HEARD FROM YOUR MOTHER?

A: [Max Drimer]  
That's the last I heard from my mother.

A: [Herman Shine]  
You know, I never knew anything about this. Never.

Q: THIS IS THE FIRST TIME YOU'RE HEARING ABOUT THIS?

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, I hear about this after the war, but not then. I never knew anything about that.

A: [Max Drimer]  
In any case, in the camp I never talked about it, you know, anything like that. But that was the way it was, ja. This is how I got involved with Fieter Granapur, the guy - he got plenty to eat; he got plenty money to buy booze and cigarettes. I'm pretty sure he did it - not for a cheap price, for a good price and for my mother it didn't matter. For her son, is nothing too expensive. And matter of fact, we met the guy after the war, in Berlin.

Q: OH TELL ME ABOUT IT.

A: [Max Drimer]

Yes. We met him after the war and he - once a gangster, all your life a gangster. This is how they say, right. So he couldn't live a straight life. He got married, we met his wife, don't even know how old he was - maybe fifty, sixty.

A: [Herman Shine]

No. He was in the thirties. He was ten years older than you were.

A: [Max Drimer]

But he was in jail, already, for a long time, man. So anyhow, he was cracking; he was breaking into places, you know. So, he busted once, a butcher shop, and the police caught him with something - they shot him and they killed him. We went to his funeral. We went to his funeral. And the casket was nailed. Normally, the family can see it, but they didn't want to open up the casket, because apparently, his head was all gone, or something like that.

Q: HE DIDN'T LIKE JEWS, HE WAS JUST TAKING A CHANCE?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, no, no, no, no. I didn't want to say he didn't like Jews.

Q: SO HE WAS OKAY? I'M ASKING.

A: [Max Drimer]

No, in the camp, he had to produce his beating because he was this person. He was, maybe afraid, what - if he doesn't do it, he would lose his job. You know, a lot of times, there were some karpos or some block alteste who didn't right away with this, [shows fist] they got kicked in the butt from the SS too. But the majority, they were trained - after so many - they got a better life. So this is how they reciprocated by being mean to the people and they got the A-1 name with the SS.

A: [Herman Shine]

This guy - his name Fieter Granapur, was the king in Sachsenhausen, he was not a karmo, he was the chief of all the karpos. He was, you

know, even SS was scared of him. The only guy he was supposed to be responsible to was the commandant, or the leader of the camp. He was just an extraordinary position. You know, he was, the guy had the - he had a special uniform, made by a tailor. And he was extremely brutal. I mean, this is what he was. He also saved my life, when you know - but this was a complete different story, you know, because, I was always involved, you see, with different things.

You see, one time, when I worked in Sachsenhausen, you have it on the tape, I was ordered, right at the beginning, I was a roofer, already, to work on the SS canteen. And in the canteen, the canteen is for the VIP of the SS, and especially for parties, and big guests coming from the outside. And here was supposed to be the general inspector of all the concentration camps, making an inspection. And the commandant goes to the chief of the SS canteen, also an SS leader, and says: "I want you to prepare the best meal for this General, you know. He's gonna come with his commission." And he says: "What does he like?" "He likes the leanest ham you have." And they have a magazine, you know, a room in there, adjoining the kitchen, in the warehouse, where, you know, a cooler, where they have all the hams. And they all marked, especially lean, super lean, whatever, you know. But, I had no knowledge of it.

My order was, to work on the canteen; open up one of the transportable roofs, take out; and make myself a device, like an angle, and pick up one of the packages. They were all numbered - exactly what I was ordered to. My order was from - this guy was Fieter Granapur, and he had all his buddies. They were block alteste and all; they were all buddies - and after all the prisoners worked, the VIP's wanted to be entertained, and then they entertained - that means that they play cards, they smoke, they do everything what they feel like, because this is the [hofvillet?]. There are no Jews involved there. But then they have to eat, too. Now, whom they put in the SS kitchen as helpers? The prisoners. And what prisoner gonna be there? Their buddies. So

they put their buddies in as the assistant cook and all - and, of course, the SS canteen has the best food. They have access to all the food. But they have no way of getting it into the camp.

So now they order me, the roofer, to work on the canteen, and steal one of the packages. And I know how to get it into the camp. So I got this package out and he gives me another package and I got a big wheelbarrow - that was my job, transportation and delivery. So I got the wheelbarrow and put this down, and put some paper up on top and then, put liquid tar over the top, so that it's... So I come to the gate; I have to go back into the camp - this was outside the camp, but it's still all guarded, enclosed. So I gonna work at the kitchen, at the canteen, in the back - I tell them I work at the tailor shop to do the repair. So the guy looks at it, but it all was nice concrete - the outside, naturally, so he let me in. So I delivered this package; I had no idea what was in, I know there was a number on there. I don't even know if it was 22 or 40 - whatever it was. And I delivered it to the barrack. And the block alteste comes out - there were all these guys for the party in there already, because the prisoners are all out at work. So he cuts off, and I knew right away it was baked ham, and that smelled already, tremendously, you know. And I got a slice like this, and I'm supposed to sit outside while I eat it and watch, so they are not surprised by some of the SS, because there were some SS; they knew they were doing illegal activity and they want to catch them. So I sit there and warn - but there was nothing to warn yet.

But then after they ate, they had the party there, they want to have a bigger party and the bigger party is on the roof. On one of the big roofs - airplane roofs, you know. And they have long ladders, we have there and they overlap the roof by three, four feet. And of course, somebody comes up there; the ladder shakes. You know, on top of the ladder, we put the little device up there, like a little rag and that shakes even more, you know, so you can see. And they doing all kinds, outside, now. And, but they have two ladders there. But I

didn't know, and I'm supposed to watch this end. And all of a sudden, I hear voices above me, and I knew this was SS. They came from the other side, which, I never knew existed. They wanted to catch all of these. I warned them, but I couldn't get down anymore and the SS knew that they were warned. And I had to jump from the top, down three stories into a coal pile, you know. But the prisoners helped me - they were co-operating; they knew what was going on.

But, while they asked the foreman - the assistant karmo - downstairs, how many roofers you have working here. But there was one less, and up on top was one less, so where's the one missing there. There must be somewhere missing, you know. So then they figured, one of the roofers is the one who warned them, otherwise they could have caught all these guys. Even so, they were all VIP's. There was some SS who hate them and they want to catch them, and the only way to catch them and fire them from their position, is to catch them in the act. So anyway, I was the roofer that was missing, and now it comes, you see. So I stay in there, you know, after that, but now, the party comes now, and their General, they look, the SS chief, looks for this ham. He sends his assistant in there and said: "Is the book - get number 22." And, number 22, they can't find because it is already stolen.

So they serve him something else, after the party, you know, the chief of the kitchen goes to the commandant, he says: "Commandant, there is one of the nicest ham missing, which I wanted to serve on your order, to the chief Inspector, the General, but it wasn't there. And there is nobody in the kitchen can steal this. It has to be somebody worked on the barrack. And our kitchen, the only ones worked are the roofers." Now it comes me; I'm the one. And you know, I get twenty-five over the ass and... "Where is the ham? What did you do with the ham?" And I said you know, anything I could. I said: "Commandant, I am Jewish, I don't even eat ham." Which of course, everything, and twenty-five more - I probably got about a hundred over the ass. And I got, you can imagine, not only here, but they hit the ribs and everything. And I then, then I

should sit in front of the gate, 'cause I didn't talk. Once you talk, you bringing involved with the prisoners, then you are finished. If they don't kill you, they kill you. So then, the next day I come out where Max is to the staff company, you know.

A: [Max Drimer]

At the mine.

A: [Herman Shine]

And, you know, I was fired from my roofing job and coming to special detail, to be killed. And of course, they warned and helped me, in a way, and this guy - this Granapur, is now a civilian, like Max said, from the head prisoner in the camp, he became the chief inspector in the factory; he was so good. And he played cards, you know, and now this guy - one of the most brutal SS in the camp. You know, he had two stars and he had a nickname - "Schweinebakke" - you know, every SS has a nickname. He looked, you know, like a big pig and very brutal. What was his name? Can't think of his name - but that comes to me too. Anyway, he and they played cards and Fieter Granapur would let them win; they were drinking, you know. He said: "Now, I have to do my job, because I gotta kill one of those..."

A: [Max Drimer]

Excuse me - they probably were drinking my mother's booze.

A: [Herman Shine]

Whiskey. [to Max] You didn't expect they'd give it to you. So anyway, he said: "Now I have to do my job, because there's one Jew, he lied to the commandant and I cannot bring him alive back into the camp." And Fieter tried to keep him up from this, you know. He said: "What are you worried about this Jew?" He said: "Let's have another game; another drink." But then the guy got so drunk. And of course, there in Bully and ?? and Max, he was up there in the bunker - he saw me, and I was in the water, deep in the water, with a rubber suit on, and I had to loosen up this clay with - so the machine can grab it. But it goes pretty deep, and now they told me that 'Schweinebakke' is coming down. And the guy, you could see

already, he was steaming, you know. And his holster was open, you know, with the pistol, you know. He comes. He said: "Come here, you son of a..." you know. And he said: "You bastard!" but you could see how drunk he was, but you know, his pistol was open, you know. I don't know why, but for some reason, I mean, he could have easily shot me, you know, but, of course, they didn't yet. So he took a stick and hit me over the head, and I acted like I got hit and get under the water. And he must have told these guys, somehow, that he got me there, and I'm dead, or whatever, you know. So somehow they smuggled me in, and so already I wasn't the one who wasn't alive anymore. So that's how I got saved, through this guy. But this Fieter Granapur was terrible, one of the most brutal guys in the camp. ???

A: [Max Drimer]

Oh yes, ???

Q: DID HE THINK YOU WERE KILLED? YOU - DID YOU HAVE TO TAKE A NEW NAME OR SOMETHING?

A: [Herman Shine]

No, you have no name in the camp, you just have a number. No, they do all kinds of things, I mean, you know. Once, you see, once, if he thought I was finished, you know, close to dying - then he has nothing to do. Then they said he's taken care of already, you know. Nobody checks up on this.

Q: SO HE WOULDN'T...???

A: [Herman Shine]

No, because the prisoners take care of the rest of it, you see. The next day, I didn't get out there anymore; the prisoners hid me in there, because I did not involve any of the VIP prisoners. If I would have involved them; if I would have said what happened with the ham; they all would have gotten fired. And I would have been dead - other prisoners would have killed me, the same night.

Q: SO NOW, AFTER YOU PRETENDED YOU WERE DEAD IN THE WATER, YOUR WITH MAX'S GROUP IN THE...

A: [Herman Shine]

No, no, I was in other barrack. But the prisoners, the VIP's of the camp, which I did not give away, they, the next day - they hid me. You know, many prisoners can do anything. You know, they can, if the VIP's involved, they can hit you and.. See, I got a job then, in the camp; there was a heating system, which was underground, and there they put me in, where nobody could come in. You see, and I had to watch all these devices. But it was nice and warm in there, and nobody would bother me in there, you know. Nobody could even get in there. And I was in there for several - probably, several weeks, until everything is over.

Q: OKAY, SO WE TALKED ABOUT HOPE AND LUCK AND WHAT GOT YOU GUYS THROUGH. I'M WONDERING - DID YOU EVER BREAK DOWN AND WEEP OR DID YOU NOT ALLOW YOURSELF, OR WERE YOU SO HOPELESS??

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, you break down and weep when you get extreme punishment, you know.

Q: WELL, HOW ABOUT AT NIGHT WHEN YOU WERE ALONE?

A: [Herman Shine]

At night you not alone. Like Max said, you know, you lay like herring up there. And then sometimes, a lot of times, your neighbor, your comrade, doesn't live to the next morning. And you know, when you turn around you don't turn around alone. There is so little room - the whole row has to turn at the same time. So you really don't have much time, much thing to think. And the only thing, most of the time, you think in your head, is that you hungry. You hungry - you always hungry; because from one meal to the other, you never get enough to eat, except for that short time when I told you, when we get access to the canteen; and you could buy, but that only lasted a few weeks. Then it was even worse, because your stomach expanded and..

Q: WHAT ABOUT YOU, MAX?

A: [Max Drimer]

I tell you, in the beginning when I got in there - yes, I cried. I cried because I was a mama's boy; I was away from my mother, not thinking the need, the middle of the thing - I'm here. You know, I'm away from my mother. I cried, yeah, I cried. But I tell you I cried more after the war than during the war. And many times, I was in the plumbing business and I drove my truck, almost every day through the city - different jobs, and many times it came to me: 'Why am I sitting here today and drive this truck?' Many of my friends who were stronger than I am, who were younger than I am; they didn't make it. And I had many times, tears rolling down. And I would say I'm very fortunate; I very seldom dreamt about it. There - I know people, even today, they sixty and seventy years old; they scream at night - "The Gestapo comes and picks me up," and there are some, and I was very fortunate. I was very fortunate it never happened to me.

Q: HERMAN?

A: [Herman Shine]

I had lots of - I had lots of dreams. Lots of dreams; extremely wild dreams, but I think I went through the camp much more than Max went, you know - in many areas. Because, I was so close involved with them always, you know. And I dreamed a lot, a lot and especially, I must say, you know, when I been in the hospital a few times. And through some serious stuff and there, of course, then that really comes to you; because then, you don't even know how you gonna come out of it, you know. And especially during extreme, major operation, you know, then you thinking "God" I mean. It all came back.

Q: AND WAS 1989 THE FIRST TIME THAT YOU TWO GUYS WENT BACK?

A: [Max Drimer]

No.

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, back to Poland, ja.

A: [Max Drimer]

Not... we back in 1<sup>st</sup> of May, 1945. [looks to Herman] We went to Auschwitz. You forgot?

A: [Herman Shine]

This is different.

A: [Max Drimer]

We went back.

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja, sure.

A: [Max Drimer]

We went back in - and after this, the first time we went back to Auschwitz was '89, for the reason to try to find Joseph Runner. That was our main purpose. I don't think we would have gone back any other way for any other reasons.

A: [Herman Shine]

Well in '45 we went back because number one...

A: [Max Drimer]

We were close by; we were close by.

A: [Herman Shine]

No, no. Yeah, but the reason was, we had no idea. We figured we knew, the camp was now occupied by the Russians. And we were - even so, we were freed by the Russians, and we had some document from the General, but this was not the document that proved where we were there during the war. And we were ?? - we were advised by some of them, that they must have all the records there. Maybe, if we go back they give you exactly - we needed this.

A: [Max Drimer]

Give us something.

A: [Herman Shine]

But when we came back the Russians did not believe us, and they put us in there. They thought we telling a story. So we had to escape from the Russians. It was, of course, much easier, than from the Germans.

Q: YOU MEAN THEY PUT YOU BACK IN AUSCHWITZ?

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, we were in Auschwitz, but you know, they did not believe us - but we told them.

A: [Max Drimer]

But we didn't find anybody who could help us with get some kind of identification that we have been in there. But later on, it dawned to me, it would be anyhow, impossible, because we were not in Auschwitz. We were and we were not.

A: [Herman Shine]

Yeah, but Auschwitz sent us

A: [Max Drimer]

We were thirty kilometers away from that.

A: [Herman Shine]

Yeah, but Auschwitz one had all the papers.

A: [Max Drimer]

No they have there - okay the Germans are so accurate, you know, when Joseph was here and we told him, when you go back home he said he promises he will go to Auschwitz and see if he can find something from us. So he went back, and he looked through the book - there are books there, and he found my mother's name and better dates than I had for my mother, everything, the birthday and the year she was born, the day she was got into Auschwitz, with number so-and-so. And he copied this and he send it back to us. Then he went under 'S' - under Scheingezicht - and he found him there too.

A: [Herman Shine]

But what was now...

A: [Max Drimer]

So it says - Scheingezicht, when he got in there, and on the end of the line, it says - released.

A: [Herman Shine]

It didn't say when I get in there, Max, it says Mendel Israel Scheingezicht, released then and then, in 1943, and it doesn't make sense at all. It absolutely doesn't make sense.

A: [Max Drimer]

You know, but it said from Berlin. That's what they wanted.

A: [Herman Shine]

No, it was me Mendel Scheingezicht - and my number [points to forearm]; my tattooed number, 70196, and it says released, then and then in '43. It makes no sense, because we didn't escape in '43. We escaped '44. So how is it possible?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, this is somehow mix-up, because if it was released, because he had escaped, then... I wasn't even in the book. My mother was in the book and he was in the book. So then, I should have been in there too. Somehow - yeah, they make mistakes too.

A: [Herman Shine] Lots of mistakes, because this is all...

A: [Max Drimer]

And they had millions of people.

Q: PROBABLY A MISTAKE THAT YOU WEREN'T IN THERE, BUT MAYBE SOMEBODY WAS TRYING TO COVER UP HIS ESCAPE, AND THEY PUT, YOU KNOW.

A: [Herman Shine]

No, I don't think so.

A: [Max Drimer]

No. I don't know - maybe yes, or maybe no.

A: [Herman Shine]

But the date makes no sense at all.

Q: AFTER '89 AND - I KNOW YOU GUYS WENT TO SACHSENHAUSEN AND YOU WENT TO AUSCHWITZ. DID YOU FEEL SHAKEN AND THE DREAMS START AGAIN?

A: [Max Drimer]

Well I tell you when we found out ?? and lived in Berlin, and he was in Theresenstadt and we were constantly in contact with him, backwards and forwards, and I was writing to him that I wanna go to Auschwitz, so he says he will arrange a trip to Auschwitz. So he had a car and a friend of his got a car, two Mercedes'

and my wife came along. My younger couldn't come along, because she couldn't travel that long, and we had his nephew coming by, who lives here also. Matter of fact, he took the movies; he took a camera along. And then, we had a guy; he worked for Channel 9. He tried to get a grant from Channel 9, and they had a meeting and they don't have the funds and the don't have it; so he got a grant from PS Radio - national radio.

A: [Herman Shine]  
S-radio.

A: [Max Drimer]  
National radio. But they gave him a thousand dollar grant, and he came along. Then my friend was there and the other driver was there, and then there was a guy who lives in Berlin, and who survived Birkenau, and he came. That's a very, very sad story - this guy, his name is Koko. He lives in Berlin. And him and his wife and two kids were taken to Auschwitz, from Berlin. And they didn't even go to Auschwitz number one, straight to Birkenau, number two, and they were ready to march into the gas chamber, and Koko was a musician. That's his name - is Koko; his nickname, probably. And he was a musician - as they were shortly before the gas chamber, him, his wife and the two kids, and somebody called: "Koko! Are you the musician?" He says: "Yes." So, he took him out - he must have been a block alteste, or karmo, enough authority to take him out - he takes him out, and he sees his wife and two kids marching into the gas chamber. So he came along.

And my friend who arranged this trip with the two cars, when we got into Birkenau, which we had never been in there - only to the main camp, he said: "Don't scrape the lawn. Underneath you gonna find it's full of bones - human bones." When Koko got into Birkenau, he collapsed. All the reason for... you know this people don't get out of their mind; go crazy when you see your wife and your two children marching into the gas chamber. How does one feel in here, [indicates heart] huh? So, anyhow, we drove to - we came to the town, Nova-Wees, where we were hidden, from Joseph,

and we made one big mistake that we didn't take a person along who speaks Polish. All we speak was the German and English. So we came - drove in there with the Mercedes and the whole village, the kids come all running up - a Mercedes, they haven't seen Mercedes' - Hitler's car, or whatever. And they start wiping the windows and the cigarettes. ??? wanted to have a smoke. So we got out and we talked to some: "Is Joseph Runner lives here?" in English, and nobody answers. And in German; nobody answers, and then they said: "Wait, wait." So they got some older people and they come, and some of them who spoke a little German. And we says: "We are looking for Joseph Runner."

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, it is another thing too.

A: [Max Drimer]

Wait a minute, let me finish.

A: [Herman Shine]

Alright.

A: [Max Drimer]

It is forty-five years. That's a long time, they couldn't know; everybody shrugged his shoulders. So this, the other car, we got lost on the road, my wife was in the other car - we split them up. We came into the town of Gleiwitz where his wife [points to Herman] comes from, and there we split up the car. Herman and I in one car, the guy from the radio station, because he taped us all on a audio tape, not on a VCR tape; and his nephew; so we are one car. So the two cars - we got lost - so we come then, to this town, like I said, we got out of the car. So now we know we had accommodation, in Krakow, in a holiday hotel and we come shortly, we come to the hotel, we find out at the other car broke down, shortly before the hotel, then the night, we checked into the hotel and the next day we went. This radio guy got a tip here, he says: "If you need any help, the best place to go is, go to church. They are very helpful." So we went to Krakow, Herman and him, I didn't, they come back: "Don't you want to come along?" I said: "No," we were sitting outside in a café, had

some ice-cream there, and he went alone with - what was his name? - Pieter Groumann.

So all of a sudden they come back: "Max, Max, Max! we have something." So he, Pieter, this Pieter guy went into the church, and they spoke English and he told these two guys here; they were in Auschwitz, and they looking for somebody that helped them to escape; he is a member of the underground. So he says: "You know, we know of one person in Krakow here, he was a member of the underground, and he's still alive, and I know where he lives. He even has a telephone," which is a rarity. So they called him up and we told him this - the three guys here from America and they are looking for a guy... So, let him come over. Then they come and pick me up and we took a taxi - we drove to his house, apartment house, nice apartment, elderly guy. And he spoke fluently - German. So we ask him our purpose; we come here, this and this happen to us and we escape from Auschwitz, and Joseph Runner has helped us escape from Auschwitz. We are looking for... we are trying to reciprocate. He says: "Well, Max, there were so many in the underground. But I promise you one thing - if he is still alive, I will get him." He gave me his phone number, and we went home. A couple of weeks later, I called up; I says, "Ludwig," his name was Ludwig Kubick, we still send him a check every Christmas. "Ludwig, Max; did you..." "No. I'm still looking." Two weeks later, same thing; "I'm still looking." Two weeks later he says: "Yes, I found him."

So we arranged the time that he comes to - Joseph, comes to his place, at a certain day, at a certain time, and then Herman came to our place, and we - I have two, three extensions on the phone, and we called him up and the four of us were on the phone and we cried. We found Joseph and naturally, right away, we send a letter to him - an invitation to come to America. And he went to the American Consulate, in Warsaw, or someplace, and he got a visa and he came here on 13<sup>th</sup> of April, 1990. And he was received, in this Bay area, better than a president of America. Well, someday, we will talk about the whole thing, because that's another long story.

A: [Herman Shine]

You know, when we came to Poland - first of all, I mean, we did not have a person who speak perfect Polish, but we had enough knowledge between the people we were to make yourself understand in Pole, in the language. But the old system was still in power, and was no - solidarity - was not even gone yet; so there was still the old system, communist system in power; and people were very scared. And, we were practical around the corner, very close, so they don't give anybody away. Later, and even this guy we went to, to Kubick, when we... first we talked to him on the phone, "Oh, ja," he said, he will give us an interview and all this. But he didn't trust us either. He said; "If he's still alive, he will find him." But, he will let us know; he did not trust us yet, because then, he went to the village, and he found the brother, younger brother and sister, and they collaborated our story. This is when he trusted us, because before... first of all, this producer, Pieter Groumann, who went with us, found a story here - that's why he was so very interested, he said the Polish government tied, especially the Catholic church, tried to rehabilitate former fighters, because there were several organizations who were fighting in Poland - some of them were even fighting against the Jews.

And Joseph was supposed to be in one of the groups who hated the Jews as much as the Poles and the communists. And this is also what he told us, which I remembered. You know, there's an AK - this is the army [kuyaver?], you see - this is an organization - they are extremely anti-Semites; they are hating the communists; and that happened when the Russians came in. They knew these guys and the Russians executed thousands of those people, because they fought the Russians, they fought the communism. And naturally, when the Russians coming over by Poland, these are the first to search out. Now this guy, Joseph, was a high officer and he himself, served ten years in jail, in Russia. He was lucky he came out. And he told us how many of his comrades were executed. And he also told on what Joseph - Joseph was supposed to be a lieutenant - he was our age, he was a

lieutenant in this organization. But he had certain reason to help us, which we did not know then; which took a long time -if we ever really found out. But, the point is, if the Nazi's would have caught us, it would have made no difference to the Nazi's what he was, or what he doesn't were. They would have executed his whole family and the whole village, including us, anyway.

So, regardless, if he was in that organization or not, he helped us, and for this help alone, he would have been condemned to death. But now, they wanted to try, especially the church, to rehabilitate - they said, even among this, extreme organization were people who helped the Jews, for whatever reason. And this is why he was interested in finding him. So, what I am saying, so now Joseph became a hero, which he was, anyway, but the reason he had then - if we had known it in advance, we don't know we would have gone. Just like the original escape, the way this escape was described to us, because Max told me first about it, and then, I said I wanted to talk to Joseph too. And when Joseph told me this, before we even planned the escape with him, his plan was completely different from the way it worked out. Because we were supposed to walk no more than one kilometer, or one and half kilometer, and we were supposed to be picked up by a car, which takes us direct into the mountain; to the main partisan. It never happened, because we did not walk one kilometer, we ended walking eighteen.

Q: LET ME MAKE SURE I HAVE THIS STRAIGHT, YOU'RE SAYING THAT JOSEPH MUST HAVE HAD HIS PERSONAL REASONS TO HELP YOU, BECAUSE ACTUALLY, THE UNDERGROUND HE WORKED FOR WAS FAIRLY ANTI-SEMITIC? IS THAT CORRECT?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, let me tell you. When I ask him when he - first of all, how did the escape started? The talk about it. The workplace in Buhner where I worked was - is a room of pipes... insulation of pipes. And he worked there too, as a civilian. He came in the morning, and he went home in the evening. We came in the morning from the camp, and we marched back into the camp in the evening. So, in August '44, he came - we got

friends; in the meantime, he bought me a slice of bread, he didn't have that much either; and we smoked together a cigarette - we became friends, more or less.

So then, in August one day he came to me, he says: "Max, I heard a terrible conversation yesterday." I says: "What did you hear?" He says: "I went to the canteen," and there was two SS guys sitting next to his table, and one guy started talking about the war situation - it looks very bad. So the guy says: "Stop, stop, there's a guy next to us, he can hear this, he's..." "Oh, that dumb Polack doesn't speak any German." He looked like a Polack, shabby dressed; so, but that dumb Polack just happened to speak perfect German. So he was telling him - the Russians are coming, the Americans have landed back in West Europe, they are running and the Russians are running and soon this will be over here. And he said: "You know what we got to do with the inmates; we just open up the machine guns on the towers and get rid of them," because we were too many of... So I says: "So, what can I do?" He says: "I can help you out." I says: "Well, where to?" "To the underground - Polish underground." So I said to myself - Polish underground; the Polacks hate the Jews. If one guy goes, it's easy to be killed, to put away. Two guys is - just out of the blue I says: "Would you take a friend of mine along?" He says, "Yes, no problem." He was a daredevil; he was two years younger than I am, and he said - no problem.

Then in the evening I talked to Herman, I said: "I got somebody, he wants to take us out." And this is how the escape planning started. Oh then he came out and looked - talked to him. He has a different memory than I have, which is possible - he told me, so I remember, I don't dispute him, because we all forget. But I don't remember nothing about a car to pick us up. But Herman says he remembers - yes, he told him - so, let it be this way; which really doesn't matter. It really doesn't matter.

Q: WHAT DO YOU THINK HIS MOTIVATION WAS, IF YOU...??

A: [Herman Shine]

He told us; he told you.

A: [Max Drimer]

That's why I come to this. Now we - we never ask him up there. So, anyhow, we march to his house, and he brought us up to the barn, we had - we come upstairs and then, there was the big ladder to climb up; Herman right away pulled in the ladder, so nobody can come up there. In order to go up there, you had to go through a chicken coop, and there was a trap door. We never popped the question - why did you do that? So now, we found him, we know he's gonna come; we said now we gonna find out what is the real reason. So he came to the airport; we come, there was cameras like this, twenty of them - every single cable, television station was there; every single radio station, every newspaper was there. You had nothing to see but cameras when we showed this. So, of course, the reporters are nosier than we are.

When he come out - big hullo - and he told me; he wrote to me, he says: 'Max don't make a big to-do about when I come. I only come and want to visit you and Herman and your wives. Don't bring your band.' So, of course, when they come, we had my grandchildren and his [to Herman] nieces and nephews. The went with flowers to him - he has never seen men get flowers, anyhow... The first reporter who had he chance: "Why did you take those two guys out of the camp?" So this is his version. If you can believe it nor not, it's a different story. His version is like this...

Germany marched into Poland, and they had a system, right away, ration cards, food ration cards. So they didn't have that much. And the Jews, got only 25% of what the others got on ration. No meat, no fats - so his father had a little 'Papa / Mama' grocery store. And his father, apparently, had a lot of Jewish friends; all his story. And some of his friends, he gives something from underneath the counter which was no ration - had no stamps. Somebody saw it; turned him in - his father; he got into jail; he was in jail and the jail had a window, apparently there, he jumped out of the window; he fell into a river, he swam over to the other side of the river, and he got out and he caught pneumonia and he died. That was

one reason. The other reason was - he had a girlfriend, which I do now, remember - when Germany marched, ja, could be in '39, he was seventeen years old - maybe. He had a Jewish girlfriend, and one day he looked out of the window, looked across the street, there the Gestapo there, and picked up the whole family, and he says: "I knew where they went to. That was my revenge." If it's true or not, I just left it this way. I didn't want to investigate - you lied and blah; he's a member of the... I don't even believe - I personally, he [points to Herman] doesn't agree with me, do not believe that he even was a member of the underground. I believe he thought, maybe it's gonna go bad, the war will be over - he gonna take us there, when the Russians come, maybe, he gonna be the hero. That's my thought; I don't know if I'm right or wrong.

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, it is possible either way. Even if he was a member - when he saw, because they lived close enough to Auschwitz, what happened to the Jews, and I'm convinced he had a lot of Jewish friends, before - you know, even the most anti-Semites, changed; and there's nothing wrong with him, they listened...

A: [Max Drimer]

The Polacks never changed.

A: [Herman Shine]

Not all of them; he was young enough then. You don't know that. So he said: "Listen, I gonna help some of these guys." Now, he could only help if he's familiar; now he knew you already. He knew Max; they worked together. I didn't know him until much later, you see. So here he thought and probably liked Max, he said: "He listen, I gotta do something, and here is a chance to be a hero. I gonna help you guys escape from the camp." Of course, he thought it would be much easier than it turned out to be. But I remember, I mean, this I will never forget, because it is impossible, impossible, for us - and Max knows it too; to walk eighteen kilometer in Nazi occupied areas.

A: [Max Drimer]

But we did; but we did.

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja, but how - how lucky we were.

A: [Max Drimer]

We are so far, knock on wood. We are lucky all our lives.

A: [Herman Shine]

But I am saying - but not for him to do that, because he was going in front of us, fifty and later hundred - later he even got scared - he said when we stopped at every milestone, you know, he said: "I'm sorry, I cannot walk so much - so far, so short - I need more distance." Max said: "No, we hardly can see you now, anymore..." and he walked, and I pushed Max [indicates a nudge with elbow], I said: "Let him say what he wants; we follow him close anyway." But it turned out that then you come to a station, when you know, you don't know if it was left or to the right, or straight and excepting by the biggest miracle we found him again; we just took a guess, you see. We just took a guess to find him again.

A: [Max Drimer]

The reason was this - when, for him, take us out was - there was something adventurous. He did not think of it, the consequences what could have been. So when he, hidden there and we dug us out the next day - we were covered, we were six feet under the ground; alive, not like a casket. We dug us out; we crawled on the belly through the fence - in the meantime you saw a German engineer, all of a sudden, stood in front of us like this [arms folded] and we didn't know what's happened. I think he must have gotten afraid - there's three against one, because he did not know, he did not know that we are the escapees - because that was huge, miles of camp. So when we came to the fence, Joseph had a wire snippers in his pocket, and this wire is not electric loaded, otherwise you couldn't do it. So he made a hole big enough that we three come out. When we got out, then he got pale white and he realized, oh my God, what did I do. It's then

when he told us, he said he will march fifty meters - which is more than feet, ahead of us and we go back. And we picked that particular night purposely - there's no moon, pitch dark, yeah, oh, he picked it. And so, because there - no moon is shining.

A: [Herman Shine]

But you see, excuse me - but you see, now I gonna refresh your memory with the car again, because now we walked already, maybe for one kilometer, and all from far away, we saw the light of a car, and we thought this gonna be the car which is supposed to pick us up. But just to be sure, we hid behind the tree, and sure enough, it turned out - in that car was the commandant of our camp, with his guards. If he would have seen us, they would have stopped and mowed us down.

A: [Max Drimer]

That was the second luck. The first luck was we met that architect who stood ?? - that's number one; the second one, we walk, we were not on the main street, we were on the country lane yet, and we wanted to go - all of a sudden, big lights come and shine, big limos coming by, and the main SS men from Auschwitz is in there. And here comes the second luck - there was a tree, a big, big tree and we had enough room to hide behind that tree. I still wonder - this is your word, and I don't believe - he tells me we will go to his house. But, well you listened to our tape what has happened on the road. I mean, there is - knock on wood - so much luck...

Q: HERE'S A QUESTION? AFTER JOSEPH DROPPED YOU AT HIS HOUSE AND YOU WENT IN THE LOFT - HE WENT INTO HIDING THEN?

A: [Max Drimer]

No, he went to work, because - to Auschwitz, he got up in the morning.

Q: WHY DIDN'T THEY SUSPECT THAT SOMEBODY IN YOUR WORK...

A: [Max Drimer]

Why should it be him, when there thousands - I would say hundred, two, three four hundred

people - why should it pinpoint to him? First of all, okay, he worked at this commando where I was, but the SS don't know who the civilians were.

A: [Herman Shine]

There were twenty-five thousand civilians in the factory. They had no knowledge - if they had seen, the SS, something, they spy, if they had any knowledge that they communicated, somehow, then he would have been already in a camp. You know - with civilians...

A: [Max Drimer]

I will tell you something similar, of knowledge - why didn't they get the knowledge. And also, we have different stories. So, the escape was planned; Herman had access to go in and out of the camp, to the factory, because there was all SS and because he can go and pick up materials as he needs; he didn't need to ask nobody - all he had to give report in the book; heftling number so-and-so is leaving, and when he come back, he got it scratched out. Okay, now the plan is next... first of all - my karpoo is put in the hospital for three days - you know that story. So now I come back in the evening for the next day, when the escape is. My karpoo, Leo Brunner, who will be here pretty soon - I'm the karpoo.

I come in the evening; he comes to me, [points to Herman] he says: "Max, Max." I says: "What happened?" He had an invitation - he got a notice, he has to appear tomorrow morning to the laager Gestapo, camp Gestapo. So I yelled and screamed with him: "You must have told somebody, because from tomorrow morning..." "No" - he swore up and down the way: "Max believe me," because if you have a brother or and uncle or your father in a camp, you can tell this - not even them. Not even them.

A: [Herman Shine]

Nobody.

A: [Max Drimer]

So I had a restless night. So I marched out, because I was the karpoo, and Herman went, at eight o'clock in the morning, to the camp Gestapo. [to Herman] Let me finish, then you

can talk. So I was very jittery. So, I march out. At twelve o'clock he's supposed to come out.

So what happened is this: when he was taken once away, for six or eight weeks, to an other camp, Gleiwitz, to build new roofs or maintain the old roofs, whatever, and this is where he met the three girls when he was on the roof and singing to them. And he fell in love with one girl and then he knew - the boss told him: "Now you are finished, you got to go back to your original camp." So, somehow he organized to get a scarf - he gave her this scarf; he had taken something to remember her... wait a minute, wait a minute - oh. And then he ask her, out of the blue, where do you live? She says: "Why do you want to know where I live? You have no chance to come to me." So he told her, "Ja, sometimes the SS takes us around," - so she gave him the address. And then she said to him: "You know, there's a guy I know very well, from our youth group," - I think his name was Werner Piek, "and maybe you can find out if he is with you, in Auschwitz." And they left. So now he comes - the escape. So he comes into the Gestapo, in the morning. So this is I remember - he walks in there, he walks up there...

A: [Herman Shine] Is different...

A: [Max Drimer]

He walks up there and come to them; he says: "Listen you have no connection with the outside world. You received a postcard," in the meantime - oh, when he said goodbye to her, he give her the name and the address. So she wrote a postcard to him, with his house number, with the number on the arm, enquiring how is Ludwig Piek. So they say: "You have no connection with the outside world..." at that moment, the SS guy, he was a higher officer, who's in charge of all the arts laborers - he liked him very much. He comes in - he says: "Herman, what are you doing here?" - he kicked him in the butt; 'get the hell out and go to work.' Okay, that's ??? now - at noon time, in the evening we escaped. Him and me - so my thought was, right away, postcard, address and escape, that they may be in connection. So we

thought, for sure, that they will go back to Gleiwitz, which wasn't that far away; maybe fifty miles, or something like that. So, they even didn't do this, because you say why could have been a connection - Joseph and you working on the same place. That was much closer - the postcard, and that, you know. But, I don't know, maybe they are too lazy, which is all luck for us.

A: [Herman Shine]

Yeah, but you see, excuse me, but you see, this way, you getting only the riddles of the part of the story; you know, because we ending up something completely different what we want to talk about. This has completely different - then, we have to go much deeper back; how that all happened, you know.

A: [Max Drimer]

Well, I give it in short.

Q: IT IS OKAY THOUGH, BECAUSE I HAVE MANY, MANY TAPES AND I WILL PUT, YOU KNOW, I WILL ORGANIZE IT ALL IN MY MIND.

A: [Herman Shine]

You see, the only thing is - getting back to Joseph, what I said again and again, it does not really make any difference what his reasons were.

Q: HE DID IT.

A: [Herman Shine]

He did it, and for alone, what he did, he took us up to his place; we were there almost four months, in fact, we were there exactly four months there. If we would and we were almost caught, this we do know, the first two times, were only the little ones - the big ones are coming much later when we are getting much, much closer calls, you know. But, if we would have been caught, Joseph, Camilia, and the entire village would have been wiped out, because that was the typical - what the Nazi's would do. They all responsible for us, because they had to know about us.

Q: BUT OF COURSE, IF JOSEPH AND HIS FAMILY HAD BEEN ANTI-SEMITIC, THEY NEVER WOULD HAVE AGREED TO...?

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, they were not anti-Semitic.

A: [Max Drimer]  
No, no, no, no. I don't believe this for one..

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, they were not anti-... no. His mother would never have allowed that.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Because he had a brother, a sister and a mother and they knew where we are. You know, when we got caught - you know, I mean, we getting too far ahead of... we should be also very thankful to his brother and sister, because the Gestapo was there and we were up there - we saw them from there; they could have said: "Hey, this is where they are," - they didn't. And they were little children; they were not adults.

A: [Herman Shine]  
But, but you see, Joseph, advised us and helped us to escape, but the family who really took their lives, without any knowledge of us, and only because they were Jews, or half-Jews, you know, the mother was also Gentile, from Marion; they, without any hesitation, took us in, because we had absolutely nowhere to go anymore. While Joseph was the one who advised us and guaranteed us, he will help save und alles, and he had all kinds of help in with him - because after all, Pole underground and all this. And these were just plain people with Jews, and they alone, their lives were very..

A: [Max Drimer]  
I think they saw you already as their son-in-law. [have a good chuckle]

A: [Herman Shine]  
[To Max] But at that time, maybe you too.

A: [Max Drimer]  
No - oh, yeah.

A: [Herman Shine]

What do you mean - no?

A: [Max Drimer]

He had a sister-in-law, but nothing came out of it.

A: [Herman Shine]

No but they did really, because - and it came so very, very close that we said that they - they tried so hard, so hard, but everything... you know, everybody would have given us help, if we had papers, but without papers, you know. You know what papers are, I mean, and so getting back to the papers, you know, you had that all this, I mean, and we took the pictures and all. How close I came to getting caught. You know, I have this which, I don't know if you ever heard about this, but when I talked on my tape, I had no knowledge of this. When I talk on the tape, after Max took his - you know, we had a German guy through the connection after we wrote to Berlin, and we told him we in a very precarious situation, we need help; badly help, we cannot stay here any longer, because Joseph always said tomorrow I bring it to the ?? tomorrow, tomorrow... but we were right, practical, in the Germans, direct on the border there, you know. And every time, we read the German papers, and they announce - tomorrow we gonna search these villages; and because the Poles were supposed to turn in every piece of livestock. The Nazi's couldn't care less if they die of hunger, but the Nazi's should have eat enough.

And then, they put in the paper - the next day - on this village, right next to ours, they found a little cow, or a calf or whatever it was in the bed, by [Katchmari?] and they were all executed. And our village is next - so we knew how precarious we were. Where we gonna go, you see? And so, this went on and on and on - and then, we said, Joseph said: "Okay, I gonna" - we said we need a suit and so that we got from Berlin, a suit, and then we had the same figure. Max put the suit on; he has a bike; he goes, gives him the address, half an hour down the road, he has the picture taken, and then he tells him a story, sister picks it

up next week - fine. Now I go; and I go the same way and have a suit on - of course, now we repeating, we have this on the tape - but what was not on the tape - I will tell you that now. And coming back, a German gendarme rides next to me.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Police.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Police, you know. You know what a gendarme is probably. And so he said - to me he speaks, this is the border where they speak Polish and German, but mostly, more Polish. So he speaks to me. But Polish, I know a few words - you see, Joseph also could have taught us Polish, but I don't know, maybe it was not...

A: [Max Drimer]  
It was no time.

A: [Herman Shine]  
No time. In four months you can learn Polish.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Yeah, but how long were we together? Couple of hours a day.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Anyway it couldn't be done. So I said you know, I was staying "??? [German]" I speak German. And he said: "Oh, zu spreche Deutsch?" - you know, you speak German. "So how come you not in the army?" But you know, we were reading the paper - I was just in the army age, you know, twenty-two. And I said: "You know, I'm the next, I go the next village, the Germans planted other Germans there. The problems with the Poles you know." I said: "You know, I live there and there and I'm a lieutenant from the Eastern Frontier. I'm on furlough here." "Oh" he said, "jawol kamerade, alles gut," you know, and then, the best to you and 'Heil Hitler.' I said 'Heil Hitler'... while this guy talks with me, I lose the direction, and I'd circled two, three times around our hay barn. You know, in front is a little house where they lived; in the back is the hay barn.

I'd circled around there and all of a sudden, and this is now, what I had never known, I got stopped and the German brought in a 'helpolice,' you know, auxiliary police - they were the white Russians, they were spies. They were armed and they had the armband, you know, and they had the pistol, or whatever. They were supposed to spy on the population, especially anything that doesn't look kosher. And he said: "Halt!" And this is, which I never had known, until I got the letter from the younger brother; he was standing close by and heard this discussion. I have it, you know, he wrote it, it is translated from the German into English. I show it to you. And he said, and this police says: "Halt! Papers." And of course, how close, and I see his holster was closed. And I'm standing between the bike - I mean, I don't know where I got this bravado - it just came from nowhere. And I put in my hand, like in the back pocket like drawing for a gun, because his was closed, and I said to him, at the same time: "You son of a bitch, Polish pig, you dare to stop a German officer from the Eastern Front for papers," but in German; the only language I can speak. And he was flooded; he never expected this. I mean, I had a nice suit on and all this, you know. He said: "I'm sorry," you know, in broken German, what he only could speak. "Excuse me a thousand times," and runs away, with his bike. I couldn't see where he went to. And the brother, Eugene, listened to this. The only is this variation - he said I talked my way out and go to the library, which doesn't make sense. I talked - he said he would never believe I could talk my way out and tell him I go to the library, which, of course, that makes no sense. But that guy took off, and I don't know if Max heard that, because it was a big shouting you know. And I don't even know where he went. I could not dare to go in the hay barn now, because if I go to the hay barn, that guy sees me in there, he sure knows that something not right. And then he calls the Gestapo. Luckily...

Q: SO WHERE DID YOU GO?

A: [Herman Shine]

I beg your pardon.

Q: SO WHERE DID YOU GO?

A: [Herman Shine]

I went in - I drove around a couple of times and then I went in. But I didn't know where he went. He could have still watched me. I couldn't see him anymore.

A: [Max Drimer]

You know also this, Joseph never got anything for this. He didn't get paid, or nothing. Nothing - this is why - we don't know, what the motive, what was his motivation. Was it what he told us with the father and his girlfriend? The partisans - I never believed in them anymore. And then, when we had the trouble with Berlin and we almost got caught in Berlin and he said he can help us only one more time; bring us to an uncle, he will take us to the underground. And we come there - there is no underground; they lost the contact - so until we ask him to get us a train ticket Gleiwitz, and that was the last of Joseph. So, you know but, as funny as it sounds, we were in contact with Buhner everyday.

A: [Herman Shine]

Yeah.

A: [Max Drimer]

Because my karmo, Leo, Leo Brenner, he knows that I escape, because I put him in hospital. And he knew who took us. So when he come back, out of the hospital, he is karmo again. He saw Joseph everyday.

A: [Herman Shine]

But in one way it was very risky; Leo could still have been arrested by the SS.

A: [Max Drimer]

It wouldn't have had any connection - Joseph, with Leo and us, that was two days later after we escaped. Joseph brought us home the message - Leo told me to tell you that two days after we escaped, all the inmates had to come on the apell platz and they wrote a letter to them, to scare the others, in case, if Drimmer and Scheingezicht will be caught; they will be hung up here in front of you, signed, Heinrich S.

Himmler. And I wrote many letters to archives in England and tried to get them, because I'm sure that letter is some place. But I couldn't get it.

A: [Herman Shine]

Well, the prisoners were even told that we were caught; just to scare them, and we were executed, you know.

A: [Max Drimer]

So this, once in a while, I...

A: [Herman Shine]

In fact, Joseph, even - you see, we - but, this is, you don't - I mean, this all... You know, Joseph was actually told - but this goes back to other parts...

A: [Max Drimer]

After we got away from him.

A: [Herman Shine]

[shakes head] After we were on the way to the Schlesingers.

A: [Max Drimer]

To Gleiwitz.

A: [Herman Shine]

We were told by his future father-in-law that Joseph tried to follow us, because we asked for him, he jumped out of the window when the SS surrounded the place; he was executed, shot. And Joseph also heard - said, even the brother, we couldn't have made it. You see, we, had zero chance of surviving after him. We don't speak the language; we don't know the area; we had nobody there, absolutely nobody.

A: [Max Drimer]

No money in the pocket.

A: [Herman Shine]

Nothing, no - nobody. So, for us to survive, without him, was almost impossible, while he had all chances. He is a Pole, he speaks the language, he knows the underground and he knows the area. So they helped the Poles. So he had everything for him as far as surviving is concerned; while we had everything against us.

So naturally, for this reason, and they heard - we were shot.

A: [Max Drimer]

Now you want to tell me, you won't be able to make a film out of - a movie out of this story? This would be impossible.

Q: WONDERFUL.

A: [Max Drimer]

I mean, there's enough stuff in it. Oh... he heard just about half of it.

A: [Herman Shine]

But I think you have to hear the story, and maybe you have to... maybe you should hear it complete, the way we can tell it. You know, maybe separate from us.

A: [Max Drimer]

But she can - you cannot sit two, three, four, six hours and listen to it constantly; you got to take half an hour at a time.

A: [Herman Shine]

But on the other hand...

A: [Max Drimer]

Sinks into it, because there too, umpteen things involved.

A: [Herman Shine]

The only thing what I'm saying is - if you [to Max] or I would tell the story, you tell the story with more details. And then, later, you can refresh it when we talk like this - you know, yes, you left off. You see like, what you talked about now, with the way I met Marion and what I told, ja, this is only a very small part, because what more important is what came before - way before. What even came before - why I even decided to escape with Max. I don't even think Max knew that, you see. Because when I went to Gleiwitz, before I left there, you heard the story about the - I don't know if you remember the tape, but, one day, you see, I was trying to talk to you a little bit about it, in the restaurant.

A: [Max Drimer]

Where the woman - the commandant's wife?

A: [Herman Shine]

Not yet - but that leads up to it. But here it is - when I was on the roof, and there right away in Gleiwitz, and the inspector comes to - the chief inspector, this is the guy from Berlin. I thought it's civilian. And when he gave me the orders, which is on the tape, and then he said I should do these and these roofs; in four weeks he's back. In four weeks was very little done. He ask me why I didn't do it; and he always talk nice to me - I thought he was a civilian. And he says: "You son of a bitch, when I give you and order..." and now he opens his coat, and he has under his coat, he has an SS uniform, with three stars and four stripes; makes him a high officer, you know, a 'hauptstormfuhrer.' And he's in touch to Berlin - you know, to the headquarter; this is way above the camp. And he said: "And I even helped you get extra rations." And he picks a slip out of his paper, and reads to me, and shows me, six, eight different items of food which we supposed to get, in addition to the prison food. And I look at it, and I - he said: "I want the truth. Did you get this food or not?" I said: "I beg your pardon sir, I made a mistake," because now I knew who he was. How can I talk SS to SS? I know before what's going on in the camps, but I had never known anything like that. He said: "I want the truth. Did you get this food or not?" And I said: "Hauptstormfuhrer, I'm in this camp now - I'm in the concentration camp almost five years, and I have never even heard of this type of food." And he go to the kitchen; but I don't even know what happened when he goes to the kitchen, because here is another friend of mine that is the guy - he is the valet to this assistant commandant - who is now commandant of this camp; but only temporarily, because we came all from the same Auschwitz number three to this camp, only temporarily.

But the real commandant from this camp is the gas master; his name is Moll. And he just, few months before, got an iron cross and an extra star for gassing the one millionth or so Jews,

I don't know how many thousands were, you know. Moll, a very brutal guy; know him even from Sachsenhausen, at the beginning, when we came. So this guy now goes in the kitchen, and my friend - it happened just so, that was my luck, that he's there picking up the food at the SS kitchen, for his commandant. This guy comes in - he's the 'hauptstormfuhrer', but he has nothing to do with the camp; he's only for the construction, but he's attached to Berlin - like I said. He said: "I like to see where you keep all these magazines, where you keep these warehouse - with the food." And this guy is the kitchen chef, he only has two stars, he's nothing, I mean two stripes, I mean. He's only less than a private; just a private. He said: "Sir, you outrun me, you an officer, 'hauptstormfuhrer' I stand at attention to you. But, you show me anything, in writing, that you have anything to do with the camps, that I have to show you anything in the kitchen. My responsible goes to the commandant, to the temporary commandant or to the real commandant." And this guy is furious. But my friend heard that, he said: "I will talk to you - you will hear more from me before I get back from Berlin." Now this guy goes on the phone. And on the phone, he calls Birkenau, where this chief, the real commandant is now the gas master, but only temporarily. And he said: "Moll, we have an old prisoner here - he comes from another camp, and does he make us trouble." This you all hear.

So now, I come to the barrack in the evening, and my friend tells me: "You are stupid, you talked to an SS stormfuhrer from Berlin, about the food. Don't I bring you sometimes a little bit extra or something like that... telling the SS..." I said: ?? He said: "Did you know, you dead? Your only chance is getting back to the main camp as soon as possible - how you gonna do that?" And to my bad luck, the same day, two prisoners are missing. But every time prisoners are missing - most of the time, they hide, or go on the wire, where they can find them right away. You know, this hiding, they can't take it anymore. But when prisoners are missing, the commandant, the assistant commandant is always nervous. They have to go to the main camp - report, and a lot of times,

the head, chief commandant reports Berlin and Berlin said: "If they cannot guard these camps, with so many guards, and power wire and machine guns, then they don't deserve to be on the gravy job, send them to the Eastern Frontier, somebody else will take over." So they all shiver. There all these gravy jobs, for the SS. I got to tell this guy, even though he likes me, this - I'm a Jew, I'm the best skilled worker there is... you know. But how I gonna tell him that I wanna be transferred back to the main camp? I have to give him a reason.

So now, I'm come, but I know I have to be back. This is never gonna go good - never. So now I tell him, he's a tall guy you know, I said: "Commandant I'm supposed - could I get the permission to be transferred back to Auschwitz three." He said: "Why, what's going on here? Anybody bother you - whatever?" And he - "I haven't got much time, I got to go back to the main camp - talk, or go away." I said: "Commandant," and this is not true, I lied to drop dead. I said: "Commandant, you know if a Jew knows about gas in the camp, and talks about it to an SS, I don't think I have to tell you..." And I tell you - 'cause I had no other choice - I said: "Commandant, I'm supposed to be gassed." He said: "What!" He got pale. He said: "You make me open my pistol," and shoot me - I said: "I rather be shot than gassed," just like this. He said: "How do you know, who - what do you know about gas? Who told you?" And now I had to hope that that guy gonna back me up. So he calls him; he is his valet and they trust the valet, you know, he cleans his gun, he brings his food - this is, they have extremely you know... So he calls him and I had naturally, I had to hope that he backs me up. If he would have said no, I'm dead anyway. He tells him the story and he goes to the kitchen, with him and me, you know, guns in there. And that guys in there - they stopped, but now it's a different story - this guy is the commandant of the camp. But he has to go to the main camp to report - prisoners are missing. So he said to him - just like this - he stands at attention, and he starts to tell him what he cooks: "Sauerkraut and this for the troops, and garbage and this, for the prisoners." He said: "Shut up - I don't want

to hear. I'm not interested in what you cooking." He said: "If anything happen to this prisoner or this prisoner while I am away on report..." He said: "And if it's the last..." and this is what - we were standing right next to him, "the last thing I do," he says, "is that you and your buddy, Moll, go with me to the Eastern Frontier. You understand?" And this guy figured, "God." So now he's gone.

And back to - and we back to the barrack. But now, the gate wasn't finished in the new camp yet, and when they call you outside, you only have to open the door and put your foot outside, you machine-gunned. The troops they stay right - about three feet away from the door, because the gates are not finished yet, you know. This all under construction still. When they call you at night - you dead. So naturally, I couldn't sleep all night, you know, I was awake and all that. So now, thanks God, nothing happened. And the next morning, he comes back. But he wouldn't send me back to the camp, until finally, the head commandant comes, and I am working close in his area. And he needed new horses; they stole them there... [to Max] you know Hoffmann took care of his horses. They needed a new horse stall, they needed a roof on top of it. So he ordered me transferred back.

Now I am back; back into the camp. And one morning, about two, three weeks later; you remember when I saw Marion the last time, I ask her - I don't get any mail, if she would write me once, you know... and, I should never done it, because I am not supposed to receive any mail. But then she wrote, but I forgot - it must have been six, eight week ago, already. And now I'm going there and I come to the gate, and here is Moll, this gas master, he has no business in this camp. But it is his day off, he has his [gala?] uniform on, with this iron cross he got - you know, he got three stars, he's officer now. So all these small brass now, you see the commandant of the camp, and their assistants, they are all on inspection of the other camps. So the camp is now run, only by the lower grades. So I stay there and he comes toward me. All the other guys admire this thing. He said: "Don't I know you from Sachsenhausen?"

This was true - I said: "Yes sir." He said: "Didn't you lie to the inspector from Berlin?" "Yes." "Didn't you just want me to look bad?" "Yes." You cannot say - if you say no - you cannot dispute them. You have to say yes.

So he takes this report leader on the side, who is now in charge of the camp, you know, he's not officer, but he's in charge of the camp while the big guys are away. He tells him something and then, a few minutes a small, you know, a truck, comes, with some guards in there and I am gone. And I know already - you can imagine. So you know, in a few minutes, you in Birkenau and standing at the gate. And here I am standing, and naturally, everything comes through me. So luckily, the story, you know, with the bike, when this lady drives in there and I untangle the bicycle chain. The chain and whatever, this you know. But I don't know if Max ever knew that in the camp, because you don't talk about this.

A: [Max Drimer]

You never talked about this.

A: [Herman Shine]

No, cannot, you cannot talk about it. But then, when he tells me about escaping, I was for - because I figured they would never give up. Why would they give up? Now he said he missed his chance, but the next chance, he's surely not gonna miss. So this is how I had more encouragement to escape than ever before.

A: [Max Drimer]

At least, I only said this, if you hear the word - freedom - you do anything for it. You don't even think of it; it goes bad, it goes sour, aagh! You've been there five years. You don't see no end of it, so you give up.

A: [Herman Shine]

Max used to paint a pretty good picture.

A: [Max Drimer]

No, he told me only thing - he will take us through the partisan.

A: [Herman Shine]

He told us the way...

- A: [Max Drimer]  
This is not a good picture.
- A: [Herman Shine]  
The way he described it - he says...
- A: [Max Drimer]  
Doesn't matter how we get there. Just ?? who are the partisan? - the Polacks. And who do they love - the Polacks; the Jews - right.
- A: [Herman Shine]  
But the Poles - the way he described our escape...
- A: [Max Drimer]  
Yeah, but it doesn't - I would have walked twenty-five miles for freedom.
- Q: MAX, LET ME ASK YOU ONE LAST QUESTION BEFORE WE CLOSE THIS OFF FOR TODAY...
- A: [Max Drimer]  
Are you cold enough?
- Q: OH YES.
- A: [Herman Shine]  
No, I'm not cold - I'm warm now.
- Q: WHAT DID JOSEPH DO WITH YOU IN YOUR HOMES FOR SIX WEEKS? DID YOU - YOU DIDN'T...
- A: [Herman Shine]  
Six weeks - four months.
- A: [Max Drimer]  
No, no, no, in our homes. I tell you what he did - three weeks in our house, and three weeks in Herman's house.
- Q: AND DID YOU TAKE HIM AROUND?
- A: [Herman Shine]  
Oh, all over. We went to - you know we were highly honored at the Wiesenthal Center, then, we were honored at the sixth army. Then we were honored at the Senate and the Assembly here.

Q: YOU WENT ALL AROUND CALIFORNIA?

A: [Herman Shine]  
Yeah.

A: [Max Drimer]  
When you come to our house, you will see all the awards hanging - my room is full of awards, you know. Yeah, newspaper clippings, pictures and the man - you know, we - when we were on TV, and the news, everything; then we showed him San Francisco. So I went up to Twin Peaks, and we told somebody take a picture with him and San Francisco in the background - he said: "Hey, I saw you on TV yesterday." Wherever we walked, "I saw you on TV yesterday." So we were very, very popular.

Q: THIS MUST HAVE BEEN AN AMAZING TRIP FOR HIM.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Oh, ja.

A: [Herman Shine]  
For him, yeah. Joseph came with a little luggage like this. [makes small motion with hands] And I made he remark...

A: [Max Drimer]  
Little tote bag.

A: [Herman Shine]  
When he came, I said: "He's not gonna go back like this."

A: [Max Drimer]  
He went home with 160 pounds.

A: [Herman Shine]  
But, you know, the funny part is, when he went back, a friend of ours traveled just by coincidence - along with him to Europe. And the plane was supposed to be stopping in Warsaw. And then, it is very complicated in Poland, and then comes back this way, back to Krakow. When they flew there, Joseph was celebrated as the hero he is, on the plane,

A: [Max Drimer]  
That was already here. He flew from here to...

A: [Herman Shine]

That's what I'm saying.

A: [Max Drimer]

You said from Warsaw. From here...

A: [Herman Shine]

I'm going back - British Airlines - San Francisco to Warsaw.

A: [Max Drimer]

To London first.

A: [Herman Shine]

Man, I don't want to in between. It doesn't make any difference how. But to Warsaw, which is passing by Krakow. But the pilot on the way - once they knew who he was, apparently, got permission to land for Joseph, in Krakow - which was not, it was completely unscheduled.

A: [Max Drimer]

From here - the guy was a friend, accidentally on the same plane. And he told, in the plane, the stewardesses.

A: [Herman Shine]

Everyone.

A: [Max Drimer]

The stewardesses went to the captain, and he announced it on the microphone, and he was, everybody bought him a drink and everybody patted him, and everybody wanted to drink with him and toast... He became a... The problem was, I think, you know, after six months he died, when he went home. He was alright, when he left us - he left us with plenty money - he left us, we bought him a room in Poland, like you buy in a condominium here. You buy a room from a family and this is your room, for the same price, as long as you live. So this was all taken care of it - so, but what happened, he was heart sickness, he had heart attacks; he loved to drink, he loved to smoke; and here he was celebrated wherever we went. And a drink and a brandy and a cognac and a schnapps and smoking... I think - and good living, which he was not used to at all. And within six weeks, I think, that may have contributed...

A: [Herman Shine]  
No, no.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Maybe to the heart attack.

A: [Herman Shine]  
I think what was much worse - his brother, this younger brother, who still lives, they hadn't spoken for forty-seven years. And the brother came and made up with him, one night before he died.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Oh yes in the hospital.

A: [Herman Shine]  
I mean, this is something, really. Maybe this shook him up so badly, I mean, you know, forty years is a long, long time; forty, forty-two years. I mean, it is a very, very long time.

A; [Max Drimer]  
Could be, it could have been.

A: [Herman Shine]  
But the man was very sick and you know the way he was eating and drinking...

A: [Max Drimer]  
I think he abused this.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Yeah, but in Poland they not advanced like...

Q: I THINK IT WAS IMPORTANT THAT YOU GUYS GOT TO HONOR HIM.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Right. We were very fortunate, we found him at the right time. I mean, it would have been wonderful if it would have been ten years before, or twenty years before.

A: [Max Drimer]  
Listen, he was greatly honored at the Wiesenthal Center in New York; this is why we were kind of teed off a little bit with 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue, because we wanted him naturally, we San Francisco guys, we wanted to have him honored at Temple Hermana ?? and you have 14, 18

hundred people, and we told them the news of his coming and [Japo Shemm?] they already wrote us they gonna come too. These told - no, the program is already filled up; it's already from last year, we have no more room. This is when I got turned off, and then Wiesenthal sent out - heard about it in Los Angeles, and they paid for all of us, our children, my children went there, and he and his wife went there, his nephews, and it was tremendous. There was a thousand people were there. I tell you it was tremendous. It was tremendous. No, we, I tell you, in this short time, I mean, we could never make enough - pay him enough for what he has done. But in that six weeks...

Q: YOU DID YOUR BEST.

A: [Max Drimer]

You could not - a healthy person couldn't take all that celebration. You know, too many celebrations is not good either. But we showed him - really perfect. You dream of them - many, many things we did to him. I wish, you know, if he wouldn't be that old and the language, we would have taken him to America here. But you know, how can you plant, replant an old tree - he doesn't speak the language - which was the biggest. If he would speak English, then maybe we would have worked it to have him here.

Q: HE ALSO WOULD HAVE HAD TO LEAVE HIS RELATIVES.

A: [Max Drimer]

Yeah, he had the brother, which he didn't speak, his sister, who is constantly surrounded by priests, ?? Catholic priests. So outside - then he had another brother, didn't he? [to Herman]

A: [Herman Shine]

Ja.

A: [Max Drimer]

He had another brother - we never heard of this one. This one wasn't home when we were there. We only knew from Helen, Eugene and him. They were...

A: [Herman Shine]

He was divorced - they have a daughter there.  
His first wife and his daughter living in  
Hanover, Germany.

A: [Max Drimer]

This is also a story which is to believe and  
not to believe.

Q: WELL MAYBE WE SHOULD END THE FILMING TODAY AND  
JUST TALK INFORMALLY.

A: [Max Drimer]

You still got a few minutes left?

Cameraman:

Yeah, I've got about fifteen minutes.

A: [Max Drimer]

Let me tell you - his daughter, he said he had  
a chance to emigrate from Poland to Germany.  
So they went to Germany, to Dusseldorf,  
Hanover, someplace. He and his daughter and  
wife, and he tells us: "I saw too many Nazi's  
walking around there, so I went back home," -  
his wife and daughter stayed in Germany, and he  
divorced. [shrugs shoulders] I didn't question  
this, it just walked around in here, [indicates  
forehead] maybe it is this way, maybe it is  
not. I would personally think I come to  
Germany, is much better than Poland; but he  
made himself something out of it - he became  
head bookkeeper of convalescent home. So he  
was not a dummy - you know, much education he  
didn't had. He was a kid when the Germans  
occupied Poland. But he made himself of  
something, you know. So we were in contact  
with the daughter, and then - one, for a few  
weeks we didn't get any mail, you know the mail  
didn't call, so we called up the daughter in  
Hanover. And she just tell me - today - she  
got a telegram or phone call - the father died,  
and today or tomorrow was the funeral. She  
couldn't even go, so she sent some flowers to  
the funeral.

AL [Herman Shine]

The daughter was very uncaring, very uncaring.  
We sent nice presents along for her and really...

In fact we intended to re-invite him and the daughter, but she was...

A: [Max Drimer]  
She ??

A: [Herman Shine]  
I mean, she could have notified us. She must have known that he was sick. If he was sick, we probably would have gone to Poland and see him.

A: [Max Drimer]  
He was so well accepted from our friends, and we have a large group between the two of us, a large group of friends, he was like - they know him for fifty years. And they made parties for him, receptions for him, and I still say that eat and drinking and smoking may have...

A: [Herman Shine]  
It has nothing to do it ???

A: [Max Drimer]  
And heart problems.

A: [Herman Shine]  
Nothing.

A: [Max Drimer]  
When he stayed at my - he got very friendly with my wife - why? The night before go to bed - we never go to bed before twelve o'clock, so he'd take a sleeping pill, what with the sleeping pill? A glass of brandy. [laughs] So it's sometimes too much for a healthy person; so more for a sick person, you know - maybe - who knows?

A: [Herman Shine]  
And when your number is up; it's up. And I tell you - it can abuse you - absolutely, but this is not... I mean, he loved to eat, you know. He's eat all the ham and egg,

A: [Max Drimer]  
He'd eat all you know, he was a skinny guy.

A: [Herman Shine]

I know, but skinny means nothing, you eat the wrong stuff, it's worse than if you are heavier. It's what you eat, you know - I know skinny people, they have a tremendous high cholesterol.

A: [Max Drimer]

You know, I got a kick when he went home with a big, big suitcase. He got awards, and we framed it; nicely framed - it did not fit in the suitcase, because they were too big. So we had it professional wrapped. We went to those UPS places, costed a fortune, but that's.... So, he carried on - so when he came home, and everybody comes up: "What did you bring along from America? What did you...?" So he showed this, he said: "What's inside?" He said - "It's nothing." "Just give us the frames. You can keep the rest." No, the Polacks just - they love the Jews, rather going or coming.

Q: OKAY, SO WE'LL CONTINUE ANOTHER DAY.

A: [Max Drimer]

Another day - but only under one condition, if it's not so cold. Or we can do it in our house, next time, or in Herman's.

A: [Herman Shine]

You invite us after we filmed, I mean, that - does it have to be filmed all the time?

Camera: Well, it's a good idea, I mean, just for record.

A: [Herman Shine]

What do you have to have to film?

A: [Max Drimer]

Can you make any use of this - what you taped today?

Camera: Oh yes, definitely.

A: [Max Drimer]

Do you use for what?

A: [Herman Shine]

Eventually he's gonna put the whole thing  
together, after it's edited and all this,  
right?

A: [Max Drimer]

You don't have that kind of the money what it  
costs to edit the four hours.

END OF TAPE 2 OF 2.

### **Statistics**

No of Lines Typed: 5 090