INTERVIEW

of

GLORIA HOLLANDER LYON

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by

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MS SILVER: I am talking to Gloria Lyon.

Gloria, why don't we start with tell me a little bit about your childhood and the town you were from and your background.

A. My name is Gloria Hollander Lyon. Hollander having been my maiden name, which I adopted as my middle name.

I was born in Czechoslovakia, in a small town called *Nová Bělá*. In Czech it was *Velké Bělany*. It's nine kilometers from the provincial capital of *Beráň* or *Beráň* in Hungarian. There is a reason I give you both Hungarian and Czech names for these areas and that is because when I was eight years old the Hungarians took over my area and the towns received Hungarian names.

My town was about 40, 45 kilometers from the Carpathian Mountains. On a clear day you could practically touch it. And it was mainly agricultural area and forestry. The soil was beautiful, black, and it lent itself to terrific fruit orchards and vineyards.

On the other side, we were about 40, 45 miles from the famous Tokay. We call it Tokai, the town of Tokai, where the famous wine comes from. Consequently, this whole region is wine country.

We owned a lot of land. By that, I mean we were comfortable, but the products that we raised were not for

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sale; it was for family consumption, and vineyards. Some portions of these fields my mother inherited from her parents and my father inherited from his parents. It's something that we survivors don't know anything about today because we have nobody to inherit from.

We raised such items as potatoes, corn, wheat, of course grapes in the vineyards, and sunflower seeds, which was used to make oil out of.

I never forget the most -- Those were my favorite fields. Beautiful sunflowers as they turned with the sun.

We owned horses and cows and we also had a store, a small store, but it was the biggest in our little town.

Every Wednesday my mother and father would go nine kilometers into the city with the horse and buggy and in the winter with the sled and did the shopping for our store. And we children were being educated. I was a student.

We enjoyed living there. We had four strong seasons. And there was a stork's nest on top of our house, which I loved, and one further down on top of the hayloft. I remember the stork coming back with a ring that my father placed on its leg. It would come back year after year.

Q. How many brothers and sisters did you have?

What was everyone's names, your parents, your brothers
and sisters?

A. We were six brothers and sisters. Joseph, Michael, Shandor, I was next, Victor next and I was the fifth child and then my sister Anushka.

Q. What were your parents' names?

A. My parents' name were David Hollander my dad and my mother was Hellene Hollander.

My mother and my grandma ran the store and my father oversaw the fields to make sure that the migrant workers are taken care of who helped with our fields. We children were in school.

Then an accident happened and Joseph was involved in an electrical accident that killed him. He just graduated and we were very proud of him.

In 1938 all the Jews had to close their stores, including us. That really meant that we are heading into hard times, because once the liquid assets are gone, the cash, then we may have to sell some of the things that we can grow.

As it turned out it wasn't nearly as big a problem for us as it was for many Jews who did not own land, who simply owned shops in our town. They were really in destitute many times because their cash was gone after awhile, after a few years, and then they had no fields to eat from and so a family such as ours helped these Jews in
our town.

We had our horses and cows until the very end. In between 1938 and the very end, by that I mean when we were picked up in 1944, we experienced many, many difficulties.

In school, I was in second year high school and nearly finished it before we were picked up.

I took German as a foreign language, which helped me in subsequent years a great deal.

The problem that we experienced with anti-semitic people in our town suddenly we found ourselves singing anti-semitic songs. It sort of caught up with the Jewish kids. The words to an existing melody, melodic melody, I might add, would be very anti-semitic and very current, would pickup the current political situation against the Jews.

One that comes readily to mind was, the translation perhaps doesn't come through as well, but.

* (The song is recited in Hungarian)

That means whoever has a Jewish girlfriend for a sweetheart should put a rope around her neck. This really tells you about the climate of the day. There were others.

Finally one day I remember mother saying What are you singing to that melody? I said Everybody is singing it in the school. We just want to be part of the crowd.
We realized, of course, later that we were working against ourselves. Also the Jewish children had, students, had to sit in the back seat of the row and soon we had to wear the yellow star and that immediately exposed us as Jews. For a while, my family were excused from wearing the yellow star because my dad was a hero in World War I and he was highly decorated. Unfortunately this turned out to be not such a help after all because we found ourselves neither Jews nor non-Jews. Eventually we had to wear the yellow star just shortly before we were taken away. We strongly wanted to belong to the Jewish group, even if we had to wear the yellow star.

Q. What happened, does the teacher say to you, Jewish students you have to sit in the back of the class? Do you remember what happened?

A. Well, it was very simply announced that all Jewish students had to sit in the back rows.

Q. Who announced that?

A. This was announced in each class in the high school where I was and in elementary schools also.

Q. How many students were in your high school and how many of those were Jewish?

A. Quite a few of them were Jewish. We actually -- I would say nearly about one-fourth. That's a very heavily Jewish populated town where I went to high school.
school in Berexas.

Q. Do you remember when the teacher came in and said Jewish kids have to sit in the back of the class, do you remember what you were thinking?

A. I don't remember, except that I remember only the effects, the psychological effects that wearing the Jewish star can have. Suddenly your friends are turning the other way. They are no longer including you in their game or their discussions or study groups. Consequently you felt left out.

So Jewish kids with whom you did not even associate with before, for whatever reason, suddenly found themselves a community there and they stuck together.

In our area this did not go on for a very long time. The Jewish star, as I recall, I could be a little bit off, but I would say that we wore it only about a month to five, six weeks at the most.

Q. What year was that?

A. That was in 1944.

Q. So no Jewish star before then?

A. Exactly.

Q. What about sitting in the back of the class? Did you have to do that before 44?

A. No. That also took place towards the end. The last semester, half year I would say. Actually toward
the end of the last semester. It was half a year.

Q. When did you hear the anti-semitic songs?
A. The anti-semitic songs became very popular in 39, 40. I was only about nine, ten years old. So that makes it about 49. I am sorry. 39, 40.

Q. You were ten years old in 39?
A. Exactly. I was born in 1930. This area was Czechoslovakia until 1938 when the Hungarians took over this area as part of the Munich Agreement. Soon after the Munich Agreement all sorts of racial laws filtered down from Germany into our area and one of them was the yellow star. There were other things much later, closer to 44 when men, Jewish men, disappeared from town and soon the family would receive a notice that so and so is missing in action. But we didn’t really know what happened.

The notice would say on the Russian Front that he would be missing from the Russian Front. One of them was my uncle who lived across the street from us. His wife was my father’s sister and they had seven daughters. I will get back to this family later because something did happen.

Families like this suffered tremendously. They had no food and their savings were completely used up and they depended on those members of the Jewish community who

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could still afford to give something for their sustanance. We could see we were in for hard times but never, ever did we ever think that we would be taken away from our home and we will never see it again. Never thought that. Otherwise, I am sure that many of us would have fled. There were some families who emigrated to the United States in the late thirties and we could have done the same thing, had we known what was ahead of us. But hindsight is always easier to analyze than looking forward and making predictions.

Suddenly in 1944 --
Q. Before we get to 1944 did you hear anything before 44 about what was happening to the Jews?
A. Never.
Q. Never?
A. Never. Until the year before we were taken away. There was a man who came through our town and that was in the summer of 43. I remember him as if it were yesterday because of the news that he brought us.

He came to us because my father was a leader of the Jewish community and he talked to us and my father was to spread the word to everybody. What he said was that he came from almost a slaughterhouse. That he escaped from a pool of blood in Poland where people were being shot into mass graves. And in the darkness of night he said he

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crawled out of the mass graves and he crossed the Carpathian Mountains and he made it his business to go from town to town to tell Jewish communities about the faith of the Jews in Europe by the Nazis.

You see nobody would believe what happened. Everybody thought that he was a lunatic, he was crazy. It somehow made a deep impression on me. I remember, I was only eight years old. No, I couldn’t have been. In 1943 I was 13.

Q. In 19?
A. 43. I was thirteen years old. I remember that face so well. He just said Believe me, it’s happening and that wherever the Nazis go they slaughter all the Jews.

Q. Do you remember his name?
A. No.

Q. Can you tell me what he looked like?
A. I can remember he had very big eyes and bushy eyebrows, full lips, and he was a little bit on the plumb side. But I remember his intensity. He said Believe me, I am completely sane. This is happening to Jews in Europe. But you see, there was a complete news blackout where we were. We were fed only propaganda. But at that time we weren’t really aware of that.

Reading the newspapers -- You could not listen to
the radio. The Carpathian Mountains blocked the sound and they were jammed. The radios, even if you could hear it, in fact my brother had a secret radio in the basement and he took the life in his hands in doing that and static was terrible. He was listening to it all the time and it was jammed and he just could get words through here and there, but could not really get much news, except local news and that didn't help us very much.

So we were completely ignorant really outside of this one persons eyewitness account as to what went on in Europe.

Q. Were you in the family room when he came and talked to your family or were you eavesdropping? Were you in the room?

A. I was eavesdropping. My brothers, although my brother doesn't remember a word about this. I said How can you forget such a thing?

Well, probably I thought he is crazy and I didn't think anything of it.

I thought what if it is true? What if it is true. Somehow I dismissed it from my mind after awhile and later only to think about this man many, many times.

Q. Did you talk to your parents about what you had heard?

A. No. I wasn't suppose to be listening, but
I remember hearing him. When this man left our house he was surrounded by children, because he was a new face in town and they sort of walked with him for awhile and off he disappeared, went to the next town and so on.

Q. Did you tell any of your friends what you had heard?

A. No. We didn’t discuss it. In an area like this you hear many rumors. It was a mistake not to, I realize that now. But, like I said earlier, it’s hindsight. Had we all known and taken this man seriously we all would have known what to do.

Q. So as far as you knew, Jews had to wear the yellow star and this and that, but they weren’t deported or they weren’t certainly murdered?

A. Exactly.

Q. They were suffering like everyone else in the war?

A. Well, in a sense, yes. On the other hand, because a lot of non-Jews were gone also and fell in the war. So actually they were lumped together in our minds. A soldier can die in the war and that’s a war they would say and there is nothing we can do about it. Well, those are just things that I tend to recollect from my early years.

I remember this is a religious community. On
Sundays the peasants would dress up in black and the church bell would ring and they would look so neat going to the church and coming back I would watch them. A religious community.

Jews and non-Jews lived side-by-side. We were intermingled. What we did non-Jews did and vice versa. We spoke the local language, which was first Hungarian. For my parents that is because they were born in the Austria Hungarian Empire. They are from Hungary. We children were born in Czechoslovakia, which was carved out during World War I, after World War I to be exact. And then it lasted, our part of Czechoslovakia lasted only until 1938 as I said earlier.

Q. What was your mother's tongue or language?
A. My first language was Czech, which I very quickly forgot. I was only eight years old. I went to Czech school and I just remember nursery rhymes and the national anthem, the Czech national anthem, and very little else. Just good morning and thank you. Other than that, Hungarian became the language to know.

So I learned my basic 4-Rs in Hungarian. Even today I can count fastest in Hungarian. A strange phenomomon, because that's the language I learned to read in. So we communicated to our parents in Hungarian. But we children spoke fluently both languages Czech and
Hungarian.

Q. When your family lost the store --
A. Yes.

Q. -- in 39?
A. 38.

Q. And then the next, until 44, until you were deported, the family lived off the land?
A. Yes. We lived off the land and we had plenty of milk. One cow, just before we left gave us about 50 liters of milk. She just had a little calf. The calf could only drink so much. So there was plenty of butter and cottage cheese and so on. We had plenty of wheat and corn. So we had to restrict certain areas of our lifestyle. But there was more than we could have.

Q. What did you have to restrict?
A. Well, things that we had to buy. Clothing, for example. That was the hardest part. Mother had to sell some extra butter and milk in order to raise the cash to buy us new clothes for the holidays. Such was the life after 1938.

The night before we were taken away a friend of my dad's came to our house to tell him that the following morning we would be rounded up by the Nazis.

You see, this was during Passover. We were picked up the day Passover ended, the very next day, and it was
that night before when this Christian friend came to our
house to warn us.

So that night my father said Let's bury the family
jewelry and so they picked -- The family was called
together and dad said You children should know what we are
going to do tonight, because we have to leave our home
tomorrow, the home that belonged to our family for
generations, and the house that my parents built, and that
was our home.

So they decided that mother's jewelry, which by the
way was an investment in those days, because banks use to
go bankrupt all the time. There was no F.D.I.C. or
Savings and Loan Insurance Corporation to insure any
savings in banks. So people invested their money in
jewelry because that can always be converted into money
through a sale.

So they picked up the wooden floors in one of our
bedrooms and they hid the family jewelry in a metal box in
that floor. They replaced -- Apparently they put a metal
sheet on top of it and replaced the wood.

The silver candelabras and silverware, they dug a
big hole for that at the far end of our seven room house.
It was a special room with a dirt floor. Unfortunately
because of the nature of the floor that was found later.

Right away after the news came my father dispensed
my brothers to tell so and so and so and so and instructed
them to tell others about the news about tomorrow morning,
while certain members of the family were digging the hole.

We couldn't understand that we would be going away.
It was all bewildering to my sister and I, who were the
youngest. But the following morning at five the Nazis
really came pounding on the floor.

I'd like to backtrack just one more thing. Since
it was Passover we only had Matzos in the house. We had
nothing like bread to take along. So my mother got the
flour back from our neighbor. Because it was Passover, it
was symbolically given to our neighbors as a sale and then
you could purchase it back.

Mother started to bake bread during the night. At
five o'clock in the morning when the Nazis came pounding
on the door the bread was still in the oven and we had to
leave it behind. I even forgot that part until my sister
reminded me of it when we met.

Q. This was, you are not suppose to bake
bread?

A. Exactly.

Q. You were an orthodox family, Gloria?
A. Yes, we were an orthodox family. We
observed the kosher and all the laws and our tradition.

Q. But your mother broke that for gift night
to prepare?

A. It had to be. It meant taking all Passover dishes up to another level of the house under the roof and bring back down the other dishes.

My father kept telling my mother Don't do anything extra because we don't know where we are going. We can always bring it back when we return. Such little things.

What to take along? We decided we will take our best clothes, the strongest clothes and best shoes. For Passover we always had new shoes made for us. These were all custom made shoes. We couldn't just go into a store and buy a good quality pair of shoes anymore in 1944. So I wore my new shoes and they served me quite well for a long time after that.

So we were then ordered to leave our house in half an hour and turn the keys over to them.

Q. How many people came to your house?

A. There were two, what are they called? The local police. The gendarme. Gendarme, with the feathers in their caps and three Nazis. So there were five people, as I recall.

All I remember, I was so consumed by what am I going to do with my cat Utzi. So the neighbor who watched from a few feet away said I will take care of Utzi until you come back. So I remember handing over my kitty cat.
Q. Do you remember the name of the Christian man that came to your house to warn you?
A. My brother remembers him. I don't remember his name.

Q. Will you ask your brother what his name is?
A. Sure.

Q. Was he a friend of your family?
A. Yes. He was my father's friend and he was a local leader. He was an official. He was also an official. I think -- Well, I don't remember. I was too young to really know what he does, but he was a well respected community leader. I remember his size.

My father had two non-Jewish partners in a thrashing machine that my father owned, which went from farm to farm. This man was somehow involved with that ownership, I believe. I am not quite certain about that.

Q. What were you carrying at five o'clock in the morning when they said to be out of here in half an hour?
A. Well, the most moving thing that I experienced at this point was as they were sealing the lock -- They put a big lock on our door. They started powering wax over it. They were melting wax and pouring it over the lock so that would be the proof nobody went in the house. So we had the secure feeling it's well locked.
and it will be taken care of while we are gone and until we come back.

One of the Nazis took out a stamp and put the Swastica into the hardening brown brownish wax and my father started to cry. That really -- just to see my father cry. I don't remember when I saw him cry before.

So then we were taken to the local city hall and there we saw many Jews arriving from our towns and we took along just what we were permitted to do just warm clothing.

It was April. I think April 15 of 1944 when this happened. It was still very nippy. You could -- Spring was about to come, but it was quite chilly yet. Then we were loaded on the trucks and taken into the neighboring Berexas where I went to high school. There we were placed in a brick factory.

Q. How many people were in the city hall and how many trucks did it take to get you to the next town?
A. There were at least 300 of us, approximately.

Q. Was that all the Jews in your town?
A. All the Jews in our town. We all knew each other intimately. We were all mostly all of us related. Practically all related. But we were all very close friends.
Q. Who were you sitting next to? What was the truck ride like?
A. It was very much like that those in Germany with canvas on top.
Q. And two seats on each side of it?
A. I don't think there were any seats. I think we just sat on the floor of the truck.
Q. Who were you sitting with?
A. My mother and father and my brothers and my sister. We were all there. My grandma passed away a few years before and my brother Joseph had the electrical accident. So there were my three brothers.
Q. Were people panicking? Was your father crying more? Were you crying?
A. My father kept saying Let's just wait and see. Let's just wait and see. Keep calm. He was a very calm and very thoughtful person. He kept many people from becoming hysterical, which we all tended to be.
But we really didn't think anything very, very bad could happen to us. Because they kept -- The Nazis kept telling us Well, we want to save you. We have a lot of anti-semitics in this town and we want to take you to a place where you won't be subjected to anti-semitism and you will be together. So in away it seemed reassuring. But on the other hand, we didn't feel we were in danger in
our particular situation, in our particular town because
we were so intermingled with everybody.

At the same time nobody else thought so. Nobody
else tried to save us or hide us. Nobody offered to save
us or hide us that I know about.

Q. Did you want to be hidden? Did that come
up as a possibility?

A. It didn't even come up as a possibility.

But by the time we learned we were going to be taken away
nobody could escape because the town was sealed. By that
time we lived not very far from the railroad station.
Anybody could just run down half a mile and just catch a
train somewhere. But everything was sealed. There was no
way one could even get on a train. So there was no way
one could escape.

But it's not something we thought about because we
didn't feel we were in grave danger at the time.

In any event, first we were taken into the
beautiful synagogue in Berexas. While the Nazis were
setting up this brick factory, the ghetto in the brick
factory, and eventually they moved us from the beautiful
synagogue into the brick factory where the walls were open
or closed, depending on how many bricks were lined up.

These are sort of little cubicles. They placed
entire families into these little cubicles on dirt floor,
with a running hallway, sort of a hallway, between boards. It was absolutely true, it was a huge brick factory. It had a long roof on top of it.

Soon they were bringing buckets of water for people. If you didn’t bring a cup to drink out of we couldn’t even get a drink.

Soon they were placing everybody to work. And work was taking the brick and giving it to the next person to the next person to the next person and so on. I don’t know what they did with it at the end of the line.

But as the Jews kept coming into the ghetto - they called the brick factory a ghetto because they were assembling all these people from the communities around the area, but only Jewish people. Eventually all of us were there and I remember you could go to the entrance of the factory and see if you recognize anybody.

One time I went with dad and I remember somebody from our hometown came to tell my father that so and so in our town is using our horses during the day and so and so is using it at night. By the time you will come home you are going to have horses that are skin and bones.

My dad, who loved animals so much, especially his own, I just want to tell you how much he loved these animals. Before we left he went into the stall and he went from horse to horse and cow to cow and hugged them.
It was such a pitiful thing. He hugged them and he had the brush in his hand and he was brushing them as if to say goodbye. Maybe he knew more than he let us know. Maybe he did. But I don't know.

And so when he heard that our horses are being used day and night my dad really swore. You tell the son of a bitch that when I get out of here he better lookout for his life unless he takes care of my horses. He loved them so much. In fact, one of them was pregnant when we left. That's the horse that he was mainly concerned about.

Q. Do you remember the name of the person that was using the horses?

A. It's very strange that I have blocked out the names of the people in my town. I have tried so many times to remember these things. But my brother remembers. He remembers all these names. I knew the names of these people intimately. Somehow it doesn't come forward.

Four weeks later -- Oh, while we were in the ghetto they came around with empty buckets. They wanted people to give their wedding bands and the Hungarians were trying to collect as much as possible from the Jews. Most of us had very little jewelry along.

I had a pair of golden earrings. My sister did and so on. We couldn't take those out because they were soldered in so we would not take them out or lose them.
because it was always solid gold. They didn’t take it.

My mother gave up her wedding band. But they did not look elsewhere. If you had anything hidden you could have taken it with you wherever you went. Sometimes people sewed things into their clothes lining or whatever. But not in our case.

About four weeks later we were shipped out.

Q. Before you were shipped out, while you were there were you working? Were you a worker full time?

A. Not I. I was a student. My father had to work and my brothers.

Q. What did you do during the day?

A. A very interesting thing developed. We had some free time and the young people met each other.

Believe it or not I had my first marriage proposal at that time from a young man I never saw before until I went to the ghetto. That was still on the grounds of the synagogue, in the yard of the beautiful synagogue in Berexas.

I said I am too young to get married. I am only 14 years old. But my cousin Leah is 17. She may be interest in your marriage proposal and I just left him. Thinking back now, a 14 year old then was quite unsophisticated, compared to a 14 year old today who knows so much about life. But I remember the young man wanted me to wait for
him and marry him when I come back.

There seemed to be an urgency. A lot of young women received marriage proposals during these circumstances. But life wasn’t really as beautiful as I may have drawn this picture to be. All these young men and able-bodied people had to work doing things. They were taken out of the ghetto and did certain types of work. I don’t really know all what.

Q. Was your father frightened during this time?

A. Everybody was frightened, actually everybody was. Times were so chaotic. Times were very insecure. Suddenly we were away from our homes and thrown into this dirty situation. Can’t even have a change. Babies were screaming and crying. They didn’t have their milk that they needed. Mother’s were just too nervous to nurse. People began to die from pneumonia because it was very cold. The sharp wind just went through this ghetto. But it was really just a makeshift factory. If we brought a blanket, fine. If not, we were not given any blanket to cover ourselves with.

Some people brought along too much and sometimes that was taken away because there was not enough room. The situation was absolutely incredible.

My brother was of military age. He was 20 years
Because of that he was taken out for the labor force. He was told that because he is Jewish he is not going to be getting a uniform or he is not going to be using a gun, but he will be like a soldier. We said goodbye to my brother and I didn't see him for 17 years later. That was my brother Michael.

Now Shandor and Victor and Anushka and mother and I were ordered to load -- were loaded onto the cattle cars. You see the Nazis were very clever. They chose this brick factory because the railroad tracks led into the factory making it easy for the Nazis to ship us all out. Usually it was done at night so the civilian population would not know very much. Not very far from Berexas was a very large railroad center called * Chop. So it was easy to ship us out in any direction they wanted to.

But they knew where they wanted to ship us apparently. Of course, this is from hindsight.

Q. Your father was not on that?
A. Yes.

Q. He was. Everyone but your brother?
A. Exactly. So we traveled for about four days and we arrived at our destination on Friday night. All night long we were kept in these cattle cars.

By the way, when we were loaded onto these trucks they gave us a small barrel of water and a bed pan. We
were so crowded in those trains that most of us really
could not even sit down. So we opted to stand up and lean
on each other's shoulders and try to sleep that way and
then take turns, those could who could sit down.

We had to do our basic human functions with just a
single blanket as a screen. All these things came as a
shock to us, we had to do suddenly that we never had done
before.

When we arrived -- As morning broke dad looked
through the cracks and he commented he didn't like what he
saw. He noticed tall electric wire fences and rows and
rows and rows of long barracks. The name of the place as
we later learned was Auschwitz.

There were just many thousands of us it seemed when
we arrived.

The first thing we heard was shouts in German.
Rausch. Rausch. Out, out. Dogs barking and German words
are hitting us with shouts to lineup and walk in an
orderly direction and go a certain way. Some people in
striped uniforms, blue and gray uniforms, were helping us
down. And some of us were told, like my sister was told
you are 18. You are 18. No, I am just 12 years old. I
was 14. No, you are 18. This was said in Yiddish.

To my mother one said Say that you can do any kind
of work, that you can do work out in the fields. Mother
just remembered this. But we had no idea what this meant. We were certainly not encouraged to ask questions, on the contrary.

So we followed the crowd and we walked. We could hardly straighten out after that. We were all sort of broken up from this long journey.

As we reached a crossroads there was a German officer with white gloves and a baton or a little stick in his hand. He was separating us into three groups.

The men and women had to go in two different directions and the women, the old people and children and disabled, the sick, had to go in one direction and those who were over approximately the ages of 17, 18 to about 40, 45, give or take a few years, were sent in another direction.

I was sent with my mother in the direction of those in the middle group. My sister was sent along with the children and the disabled and the sick and the old. So we thought the old people would take care of the young. We didn’t know what this selection meant.

Q. Who else was with you? Just you and your mother?

A. Yes. My aunt and my uncle and five of their eight children. Three of them hid out in Budapest. My other aunt. Lots of cousins from my hometown.
Q. Can you tell me some of their names, Gloria?

A. Sure. My aunt lived across the street. Her name was Shuttle Scharf. The girls name was Edith, * Yanka and Chela, Burgie and so on and two little ones, whose names I don't even remember.

Q. How were they related to your family?

A. My first cousins. Their mother and my father were sister and brother. And then my uncle * Fahrcash, who had seven sons. Three of them hid out in Budapest and the other five came with us. My other uncle Samuel.

Q. What was his last name?

A. Hollander.

Q. What were the other family last name?

A. Scharf. My sister married a Scharf. My father's sister married a Scharf. My uncle Fahrcash and my uncle Yennie, these were all Hollanders. These were my dad's brothers. They all came with their big families. And there were other cousins. The * Gelb family.

My uncle Bela Gelb, who was the local town teacher. He was a very impressive looking man. He came with his two daughters.

Q. What line was your brother in? He was sent with the men? Your father?
A. My father and brother were sent with the men. After that I didn’t know the subdivisions. In other words, I don’t know who was sent to one side and who was sent to the other side.

Now here mother and I are walking with all these people one way and Anushka was sent to the other side by this man with the white gloves and the stick, who we later learned was Dr. Joseph Mengele, the infamous camp doctor of Auschwitz. For many years he was one of the most wanted war criminals.

Anushka didn’t want to go that way, and wanted to join us. So she stuck around for, seemed like probably was just seconds but it seemed like longer than that. And a German hit her in the back and said go, go and she continued to go the other way with the old people.

A wagon was coming from that direction toward our direction, pulled by two horses, with rubber tires was passing us by. It carried luggage and there was Anushka sitting at the edge, at the very end, and as she saw us in the row she jumped off and joined us.

We were at that time very angry that she did this because we felt that the old people would take care of the young people. Now she would have to work very hard. But at the same time, of course, we were very happy to have Anushka with us. So three of us were together.
We went to a place where they shaved our heads completely and we were given this tattoo on our arm. I was tattooed A-6374. Mother was tattooed first. A-6372. It shows up a little bit when it's moistened. Do you see this number. Mother was tattooed A-6372, my sister is 73 and I am 74. You see, I am still carrying that tattoo on my arm today.

Many of my friends had this operated to get it out. Although my doctor said now it can be taken out through modern methods without an operation.

Q. Did it hurt?
A. It hurt very much. Because it was done with a needle that was stuck into ink, an ink well. Each time they had to penetrate the skin and leave the ink under the skin. So that was the procedure.

The following day our arms swelled terribly. There was some people who died from this. We didn't know what the reason was at the time. They developed high fever and they just died. You see, they used the same needle on all of us.

So looking back now I can really understand what the cause of some of these deaths could have been.

At that time we weren't sure what was the reason for it. We were tattooed.

We had to give up all our clothes except for our
shoes. I was very lucky that our transport was able to keep our shoes. I had good strong new shoes with me, which served me very well for a long time.

Q. I am sorry. Before we go on, can I ask you to take off these bracelets?

I think the noise might be --

A. On sure, I am sorry.

Q. I didn’t realize that either. I just think it might be picked up by the equipment.

(At this time the deposition was recessed)

Q. You didn’t know where your father was?

A. No. Or brothers.

And then we all received a gray cotton uniform.

And that’s it.

Q. All your clothes were taken away?

A. All our clothes was taken away from us.

Q. The gray uniform, was that like a little hospital gown?

A. Yes. Only longer. It came down to the middle of my legs.

Q. Long sleeve or short sleeves?

A. No, it had short sleeves. It didn’t have long sleeves. That was it.

And then we were assigned to a barracks. There we learned how naive we were, from the old timers. The Jews
from Holland, Belgium, France and from all countries under Nazi occupation. You could hear all sorts of languages spoken.

At first when we were assigned to the barracks we were not working yet. We were not assigned to work for a little while. During this time those of us who were very young were still full of pep from home.

We decided to just make the others happy and stood on a stool and we sang songs in Hungarian to the inmates. There they had a chance to learn about what happens -- what the latest is back in your area, in our area. They would give us hints like Well, your parents are not alive anymore. See that gas chamber? See that smoke stack? That's where everybody went up in smoke.

At first we thought how cruel of them to say such nasty things to us. Why should they make us feel so badly? And we really learned a few days later when we were assigned to work that indeed they were trying to tell us something.

One time this young girl, we took turns singing and this young girl was singing this happy song from home and the * blockesta came and gave her such a big smack she flew off this little stool and said Where do you think you are? In a resort place or a hotel? This is a concentration camp.
And she said see that smoke? That's where all your family went up in smoke.

Where did I hear this before? Somebody made a comment like that to us, just not so long ago. What is she saying? It was really incredible to feel such shock. It's indescribable. People would be burned here. Well, if that's true how come you are alive? The whole idea, even when you are there seems just incredible, unbelievable at first.

Well, during those few days before we started work we did a few other things. I thought before I go on I have to tell you that there was a little population shift that took place. Ten of us from my bunk moved to include some of these young girls who came with us. We decided that we should remember this day somehow and we didn't have pencil or paper or anything. So we decided to compose a little poem. Now we set it to a tune. It has to be a tune that we all know, because none of us are musicians. So we chose the tune of *Hauchiqua. We knew it in Hungarian. So that was settled. How do we do this without pencil or paper? Well, you remember a line. You and you and so on and don't you forget it.

So it was that we wrote, we composed rather a song in Hungarian about our situation there. Strangely enough many years later I would write this down when I was free
and only to look at it now as a masterpiece, something
that really captures. It's full of hope. We still didn't
know where we were and it tells about that.

Q. Do you have that on you or do you remember?
A. I remember every word of it.
Q. Tell me?
A. I will sing it to you. Except my voice
isn't too good right now with a cold.

* (The poem is now sung in Hungarian)

Q. You have a beautiful voice. What does that
mean?
A. It means somewhere in the world there is a
camp with rows and rows of barracks and people always have
to stand in line for say appel or head count. They are
drenched and they are cold and they are shivering, but for
appel we have to lineup regardless of the weather. Be
brave and strong, loyal Jewish worker. Before too long
will come the big change. The day will come, the day of
reckoning will come when we will return to our beautiful
homes into the arms of our loved ones. This is our song
until we die and that we are Jews we shall never deny.

I translated this from Hungarian into English.
It's very strange. After I wrote it down in Sweden -- As
soon as I arrived in Sweden I wrote it down. That little
book that I wrote this into, I have many other songs in it
that I remember my family by. My brothers used to teach me
the songs so I would write it down in the book before so I
could remember my brothers before I knew what happened to
them. It traveled with me. Until recently I dug it up
and there is my childish handwriting in it. So I was
asked to keep it in the safe.

We were in Auschwitz. We would have to stand in
line for say appel or head count. Sometimes for hours.
We would have to get up very early in the morning and a
shrill whistle would wake us up. Sometimes the whips
would go over our head as we tried to scramble out of our
bunks and into the courtyard where we would have to lineup
to be counted. Once in a while somebody would be missing.

If so, we would have to stand there as long as the
totals would add up to what they are suppose to be.
Sometimes they just didn't count right. But for whatever
reason, which we were not told, we would be counted.

They dished us out some kind of tea or coffee. I
never could figure it out. Nobody else could. It looked
like it may have been made from some dark leaves that fell
off of the trees in the fall. But it was very bitter.
The only good thing about it was it was liquid and
sometimes it was warm.

So my mother would tell my sister hold your nose
and drink it because she didn’t want to drink it. So it
will sustain you a little bit.

We would be getting a piece of bread that would be about the slice of two or three slices. That was for the day, which disappeared mighty fast, unless it was consumed immediately. We really learned very fast. It seems so strange.

We all were shaved and I couldn’t recognize my mother and my sister -- My mother particularly until I saw her face-to-face. We all looked alike from behind.

We really were reduced to -- Untermenschen that we were called I felt was never us. I always felt it was the Nazis who were the untermenschen.

Q. What is untermensch?
A. Untermensch means subhuman. We were reduced to a subhuman level. We worked very long hours. It was 12 hour long day.

We were assigned to work in * Brzeszcze or biercanal or Canada. This was sorting the clothing after those who arrived in Auschwitz, who were stripped of their clothing. Those who went to the gas chamber and those who were allowed to live for awhile longer. There clothes ended up in our sorting piles.

One advantage for this job was that we were able to find some food once in a while and try to eat it when we were not watched. But on this job we had -- There was a
Hungarian guard who befriended my mother and my sister and talked in Hungarian to all of us who could speak Hungarian. While I was a little too timid to listen to him, but I listened many times when he would talk about his grandchild in Hungary and he was not in Auschwitz by choice. He even showed pictures of his grandchild to us.

I went to look at that picture. I remember a little girl about four, five years old, maybe six and with pride he showed us his wallet with this picture in it. Well, the reason I am saying this is because this guard eventually saved my life.

While we were on this detail in Biercanal a number of things happened. I would like to share this one thing with you. The Nazis would surprise us by checking us thoroughly, whether we take anything back with us from Birkenau to Auschwitz. We were housed in Auschwitz. We had to walk every day the three or so kilometers to Birkenau.

Where we worked there were several rows of warehouses. This was in the midst of five strange looking buildings with chimneys. The people would go into these places and never come out. Only the smoke through a chimney and flames sometimes over the chimneys could be seen. There was a terrible stench permeating everything, the cause of which we soon learned.
People going into these places were gassed and then they were cremated in the crematorium. We would be smelling the burned human flesh and bones and this really had a peculiar psychological effect on me because in Auschwitz I lost my sense of smell to this day.

It was very difficult to believe even when we worked there that such things were happening. But we finally realized that our days are numbered. That unless we do as we are told we could also end up there across the street, a mere maybe 50 meters away from where I worked, just around the corner, across the street was one of the gas chimneys and crematorium. Every day we would pass by it.

Once in a while a train would come in at a certain time and we would still be seeing the people undressing on the lawn right in front, men and women together, and we were ordered to look the other way as we passed by. You look the other way but you somehow see things that happened there and somehow you managed to look over to the right where the gas chamber was. Soon we would hear none.

Toward the latter part of the job, I worked there for nearly eight months. Except for a brief period when we were transferred to the * Waybury. That was another place where we had to braid fabric. Not everything that we sorted, you see, was usable. So the usable material we
had to crate big packages to be shipped to Germany. The
unusable materials were used in the waybury. We had to
braid them into tight braids a certain width. It had to
be a certain width. I learned -- somebody said these
things are being used for fuses.

To this date I really don't know for what use this
was to the Germans. But fuses sounds reasonable. But I
don't know for sure. I would like to give you testimony
only on what I am sure of, what I witnessed and the rest
anybody can read about.

We came home absolutely exhausted. In the summer
once in a while the water was shut off. We were ordered
to do a lot of work at this sorting place.

One day my mother decided that if we ever get out
of here alive what are we going to do? So she decided to
hide a piece of diamond that she found in the loot, rather
than thrown it into the diamond pile.

Q. The diamond pile?
A. There was a diamond pile. There were piles
of silver, gold, there were teeth, gold teeth, and false
teeth, hair, luggage, eye glasses, rings. It simply
seemed incredible, all these piles of things that
everybody brought along.

Remember, people had to bring along small things,
things that could be also turned into money.
So my mother told Anushka and me about it and we said Don't do it, Mother. Don't you risk your life for anything.

She said Well, if I can get it through maybe we will have something to start with if we ever survive this hell. So she put it into her shoes and into the toes. Lo and behold that very day we had to remove our shoes right after leaving work. We were being checked out for any items. My heart was just pounding. Anushka almost cried. Let's just try not to show anything, any emotions because this is very dangerous.

Now the road right there in this area was not cemented, but it had gravel, larger and smaller gravel. As mother took her shoe off she just opened her shoe and, one of us, I don't remember which, pushed a piece of gravel or a larger rock on it and that is how my mother passed through this inspection period, which could have caused her life.

Q. She threw away the diamond?
A. She just emptied her shoe onto the gravel and pushed a larger piece, a little piece of stone on top of it. There was a lot of gravel there. But if it had been a larger item it could not have been done.

Q. Did she get to keep the diamond?
A. No. She threw it away. She threw it away.
There was another time my mother in Auschwitz almost had to give her life. The twinlager, the twins who were experimented -- If I may backtrack for a second. We were shifted from this building to another building, which was close to the twinlager, right next door to the twinlager in fact. She was a daredevil. She would wrap up smoked meat or some food with a piece of rag or string or somebody's belt. She would throw it across the electric fence into the twins.

She's done this successfully a few times. One day she was caught. We were really very worried because she was taken to the commandant, who was ready to have her flogged publicly. The capo, our capo, pleaded with the commandant not to do it with this woman because her child is the youngest in the camp, meaning my sister, and she is one of our best workers.

So he said all right. That if the mother will get killed that her daughter will -- Not talking about me, but talking about my sister Anushka, would have a devastating effect on her and it would demoralize everybody. So the commandant ordered a Nazi to come and check on Anushka.

One day we were working in the waybury and the Nazi came in and said to my sister, you come here. Anushka really was scared and started shaking. Mother and I particularly worried. The Nazi ordered a chair and he put
his boot on the chair and said to Anushka, Okay, it’s such and such time. Start braiding.

Anushka put the material around his boot and he told her to make it as tight as possible. Your life depends on it. She worked very hard in making, doing her very best. And then the Nazi said That’s it and looked down and checked the braid and checked the inches and then he said Look at this. She is 12 year old and she did this much in such and such time. I want to see all of you do this very thing or better. And took my sister with him.

We didn’t know what was going to happen to her. He took her to a little canteen. I never saw a canteen. Took her to a little canteen and gave her soda water and a potato and some fish, herring, and I don’t remember what else. A half dozen different things.

She brought it back and she shared it with a few of us. That was her reward for doing this job. So my mother was saved and my sister was saved. My sister was a constant, constant worry because she was really in danger of being picked out at every single selection.

One day we were all ordered for a selection. Of course, we were not told that. We were told this was going to be a medical checkup. All clothes off. So our clothes were off.

We had to go through this barracks to go into a
room. You know as we went in people just dropped from anxiety. They knew that their lives are going to depend in that room whether they are going to live or die. There is somebody who is going to make that decision, that Godly decision. So all these people who didn’t have enough stamina to begin with just never made it that far. They would be taken away and never to be seen again.

Well, my sister and mother and I made it in there. I was worried about my sister. But it was I who was taken out this time. I was told to go to this other side by Joseph Mengele, the same man whose inspections I passed several times since we arrived without any difficulties.

Q. Did he talk to you? Was there anything? What did he do?

A. No. He would say Turn around if he had any suspicion about anything. Turned around, all naked as we all were. He would say Go this way or go that way.

I was sent to join the small group, which kept growing. There were 30 or 31 of us. I’d say 30 just to make it even in the end.

My mother and my sister were sent to the other side. I was really -- I really cried. I was very worried particularly for my mother. She knows and I know, we all knew that this is going to be the end.

Well, I was picked out this time for not being fit
for work anymore. They apparently were sent back to their barracks. We were kept in this barracks long after everybody left. It was dark. We were all naked.

After awhile, in the middle of the night, a truck came and we were all ordered to get on this truck. While we were on this truck, there was one man who led us to the truck, and there was another man who came to close the canvas in the back. This man who closed the canvas in the back was the same Hungarian guard who took care of us in Canada, who showed us the pictures of his grandchild and use to talk to us in Hungarian. There he was in SS uniform.

Q. What was his name, do you know?
A. No. I could have known this at one time and maybe somewhere in my subconscious, but I just will never know. But I can visualize him today.

But just as he was closing it he sort of looked in like that. He saw me and he said you too? In Hungarian he said * taish, meaning you too? I just nodded.

As if to think for a moment, he looked up and said You all know we are going to the gas chamber. Now whoever would want to could jump off on the way. But if you are found you are not to tell of me because if you tell of me you and I both will be killed. Otherwise, I may be able to save other lives yet.
He closed the canvas and he went up front and he slowly drove off.

Q. What language did he say this in?
A. Hungarian.

Q. The women you were with were not all Hungarian?
A. No.

Q. So he was speaking to you. How many other Hungarian women were on there?
A. I don't know. I know there was something from Berexas. I remember this woman from Berexas because my parents use to shop from them the wholesale for the retail store yet. Later mother would sell them butter or things from our farm when things became a hardship.

For years I knew her name. Once in a while it pops into my conscious memory. I tell my husband. Oh, yeah. It's Fuchs. Now I remember. Fuchs. Isn't that strange how this goes in and out? She was among us. I thought quickly and I thought who would come with me?

I thought if I stay on this truck I am going to be killed and incinerated within a hour. If I jumped, I may be found and killed but perhaps not. That here was my chance to see mother again and Anushka.

With that in mind, I just jumped off the truck without knowing where I am, what is going to happen, just
jump off the truck. You see nobody responded to my request. Who would come with me?

Because they were all -- We all knew eventually this was going happen to all of us. We were completely despondent. But you see I think it would help me is if I had my mother to live for.

As the truck approached the familiar wooded area where there was a deep ditch near the road I jumped off the slow moving truck and continued to go down and I found myself in something round. It was a culvert. I just crouched down in this culvert. Within about 15 minutes or so I heard sirens. The sirens go on. Then I heard the German voices, mens voices above. Probably the German soldiers. I just sat there naked in this culvert.

The night passed. I was there the next day. I thought my God what have I accomplished? I will just vanish from the elements alone.

So in the middle of the night, the following night -- this was about 24 plus hours later. I decided that unless I get out of here I will have accomplished nothing.

You see, we already passed the gate from my part of Auschwitz into the other part of Auschwitz. We had to go through a forrested area and then the area of the gas chambers to work. So I was outside of familiar barracks area.

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But I got myself up to the road side and I saw a tiny little star in the distance, a light like a tiny little star. I really followed that light, really not knowing if it would lead me to a safe place or straight into SS headquarters. Really frankly I lost my sense of direction. But I do believe that God must have been along side me and he led me into our barracks.

There I worried about somebody being at the door, which usually happens. Inside the lights were on. I entered and I picked the nearest safe * corio.

A corio we use to call it. I climbed up to the third tier of a bunk. Corio means bunk bed. And somebody woke up and started to scream. I put my hand on my mouth. I said my God, after all this she is going to give me away. I said I will explain to you my predicament. She came from a few miles from my hometown. We found ourselves later together through several camps, until I lost her. But her name was * Levowitz. It is a human being I will never never forget. She gave me her overcoat and I stayed there. The very next morning.

The very next morning, when appel time came with we were lined up and there came somebody and sliced off I don’t know how many, and we were ordered to go to the railroad platform. At first I didn’t know we were going to a railroad platform.
I said my God, only to go through another selection. It so happened that the Germans were empting Auschwitz, because the Russian armies were nearby. This I learned later. This camp was being emptied.

I was ordered to go on to a cattle car with all the others. We traveled for days. We arrived in the concentration camp of Bergen-Belsen. Naturally, I was so elated to be alive after all this.

But now my mother, I missed my mother and my sister sorely. I had the need to prove to them that I am alive and somehow that little hope remained with me throughout my camp life. When somebody new came into any camp I was in did you by any chance see an elderly woman? She was only 48, 49. My dad was fifty-one, by the way when we entered the camp. But according to concentration camp standards that was already aged for those who were alive.

Of course, nobody -- It would have been too much of a coincidence. Nobody heard of them or saw them.

Bergen-Belsen was simply so overcrowded. The camp itself, the terrain was sort of hilly. I remember what we did there was we were given a shovel and we moved the dirt from here to there. Somebody moved it from there to some other place. As I found out later we were digging mass graves. But I didn’t know it at the time.

They didn’t even have barracks for us to go into.
They were already so full, far beyond their capacity, more than double its capacity. So they put up some huge tents. We were in these tents. The side, there is a young forest right nearby, near our tent. It was on a hill. I remember the mud sliding right under the tents and into our tent. Some people were sleeping on the floor. It was absolutely incredible.

There was a lot of suffering in Bergen-Belsen. People with dying like flies from mistreatment and malnutrition and hunger and diseases.

So far as I knew, there was no gas chamber in Bergen-Belsen, but there was a crematoria which operated day and night it seemed. It was very close to my tent. It seemed that people were dying at a faster rate than they could burn them.

After that we were lined up quite suddenly again and I was taken to Bergen -- No, in Bergen-Belsen I was taken to Braunschweig, the City of Braunschweig. There I was housed in the stable of the horses of the SS. It was a camp that was opened temporarily for a certain purpose. The purpose of this particular camp was to clear the streets of Braunschweig from debris so the German artillery and vehicles could pass through.

There we were assigned to a very cruel commandant, who took at the slightest provocation she could would beat
up someone. If at night she was prevented from resting then that person would get a beating right on the spot.

I remember one night a young woman about 16 years of age suffering from acute dysentery rushed to the latrine.

On the way -- Well, most of us suffered from dysentery throughout our camp life. On the way she apparently woke up the commandant and she gave this poor girl such a savage beating that by the time this girl arrived at the latrine she could not hold herself up and she just fell in and drowned. I never will forget seeing her in the latrine the following morning.

Several things happened in Braunschweig. One of them I'd like to share with you. Here we encountered some kind civilians, Germans who really tried to help us. I remember one elderly woman. She had her hair up. She sort of stooped down. Was walking along, sort of looking this way and that way, waiting for the right time for her to throw us this bread under her arm. And when it flew over to us it was beaten up, eaten up in minutes, huge long French bread. It felt good there were good and kind people out there who were trying to help us.

We passed a sardine factory every morning on our job, on the way to work. There was always a sizable pile of sardine bones to be had by anyone who was willing to
brave the whip of the guards by stepping out of line.
There were always brave souls among us. They would just
pile them up in their pockets, however it smelled. It
didn’t matter. And would come back and dole us out a few
herring bones. Even today -- sardine bones rather. I
wonder how could we eat those things? Why they filet
sardine bones?

There is an explanation I learned very recently for
this. They were not really sardine bones I learned. It
use to be a meatpacking, a meat cannery type of place.
During the war they didn’t have enough meat. So they
converted the meat canning places into fish canning
places. So they had to cook the fish and they would
purify it and it was that cooked, the bones of the fish
that we would be grabbing.

Then on our job one day -- Just imagine this vast
work area. It’s in the middle of the City of
Braunschweig. There isn’t a house or building intact.
The Allies leveled the place. Our job was to clear the
major streets as I mentioned.

Here one day one of the girls from the small groups
that we were set up on this very, very long boulevard just
disappeared from us. We were busy with our shovels and
suddenly there is one less person. Everybody is looking
for her. Suddenly a voice comes up from way below I am in
a dark place, looks like a basement. Apparently she fell through the floor of a burned out building into the basement of this house.

So we yelled down to her look around for some food. When the guard was at a safe distance we pulled her up and her large man's coats pockets were bulging with black round burned things. It was potatoes, baked and burned from the fire of the bomb. So we feasted on baked burned potatoes while on that detail.

Then I was shipped out to Bendorf. Bendorf is a very small town now in East Germany, but at that time it was not far from Braunschweig and Bergen-Belsen, about 60, 80 kilometers, I would say.

Then I worked twelve hundred feet underground below in a salt mine. A civilian -- Civilians were assigned to us for training. I was learning how to thread a pipe. We were working on precision instruments for the V-1 and V-2 rockets.

As you know, those were the fastest missiles available at that time and the Allies were very much afraid that Germany would develop these and mass produce them. They already were successful in penetrating England, London itself with them and other places. You see, Hitler, fearing that the Allies will bomb the major industrial places, moved the armaments industry
underground.

It happened that several industries were under this salt mine which I revisited nearly two years ago. And there three thousand men and fifteen hundred women worked slave labor as slave laborers in that salt mine.

I recently learned that if it makes me feel any better this German scientist said to me, the instruments that we produced down there were mainly unusable because it was very dry below but as soon as the instruments were brought up the rust would set in due to the salt content. So most of it was not usable. That was heartwarming to learn.

Then I was transferred to Hamburg, where also I helped to clear the streets of Hamburg of debris. From there to Hanover.

Now Hanover was a very significant place. I was put to work in a factory that manufactured gas masks. I picked this up nearly two years ago when I revisited the Continental Gummewerke in Hanover. Slave laborers worked to produce these things.

Hitler wanted everyone of his subjects to own a gas mask, fearing that the Allies are going to fight a war with chemicals in response to the V-2 rockets.

In revisiting this place in May of 1987 this factory did not know the fact that they had slave
laborers during the war. I was the first one to return to the Continental Gummewerke. I was given a tour around the factory.

When I saw a bunch of gas masks being taken off the machine, I said, 'Are you still making these? What for?' Well, for industrial purposes I was told. I learned that this factory was founded by Jews over a hundred years ago. But that's an area I would like to talk about later.

There we worked on an assembly line. The belt would be going faster or slower, depending on the whims of the Germans, the managers. We were handpicked for these jobs. I learned that only very recently. These industrialists and townships sent representatives into the concentration camp and handpicked the laborers they wanted for their factories.

For example, I learned that the reason I was picked for Bendorf to work on precision instruments is because I have small hands. Something that I never would have dreamt of. Who knows, I may have had to show my hands to somebody at the time.

But these are the jobs, this is the job of a historian to dig up information like that through records of the Nazis themselves.

Hanover was really a very frightening place to work. The concentration camp was set up on the grounds of
the factory. Around it there were electric wire fences.

   Just outside the electric wire fences was another
fence that just surrounded the entire factory grounds.

   Just on the other side of that fence, the safe
fence shall we call it, were very beautiful little summer
homes and people lived in these summer homes and their
children played in these summer homes.

   In revisiting Hanover and the Continental
Gummewerke in May of 87 I knocked on a few doors and I
talked with the oldest resident on that street. We had
interviewed this person. I told her that at one time we
were neighbors.

   In going back to that period when she was only a
young 17 year old woman she was telling me how well she
remembers the camp and that in her family album they took
some pictures of family events of the children and she
remembers seeing the camp in the background with the
electric wire fences around it and the factory also as it
looked then.

   I asked her if she would be so kind and look
through her family albums. It would mean so much to us
today to have those pictures. She was true to her word
and she mailed us enlarged copies of these.

   Nearby was a canal, which I remember very well
seeing from a few floors up that I worked on. When I
first arrived there in 87 I could not find the canal. I said I know there was a canal here. Where is the canal? It couldn't have disappeared.

Well, we found out that the canal was there all right, but the trees, the small trees have grown up to be big trees obliterating the canal. We found it. And now excursion boats were going down this canal and people were swimming in this canal in 1987, when in 1944 and 45 slave laborers worked there and brought the goods from the factory onto ships that carried the materials down the canal to the cities and towns or wherever because the canals served -- it was a tremendous fuel saver for the Nazis.

Q. You have some pictures?
A. I have some pictures the neighbors sent. I would like to introduce them now. This shows the rubber factory, the Continental Gummewerke at right, and the concentration camp barracks at left. You can see the foreground the children at play in the adjacent gardens.

It's taken from the garden of my former neighbor, a German civilian. She sent us -- Here is another picture of the civilian gardens with children at play adjacent to the barracks, which are at right of concentration camp Limmer on the factory ground of the Continental Gummewerke in Hanover during World War II. Precious pictures.
This one is a recently discovered World War II photograph of the barracks of concentration camp Limmer. That's what it was called. Limmer. That was the Limmer district of Hanover. On the factory ground of the Continental Gummewerke. Gummy means rubber. Rubber factory. In foreground you see the civilian gardens immediately adjacent to the camp showing children at play. Faintly in the background the civilian residences of Limmer.

And just one more. Again, the concentration camp Limmer. It's a barn like building, center left in the midst of civilian residences and gardens, with factory buildings of Continental Gummewerke at right.

In my interview with this lady she said we didn't know -- She didn't know whether we were civilian people from foreign countries coming in, and there were many people who did come and they lived outside the factory and came in and worked at the factory and they received some sort of renumeration for their work. But you see she realized and her family realized that we were concentration camp workers at one point or another.

At night she said she use to hear screams coming from the barracks just across the street from her summer home. She wanted to know what were those screams about?

I explained to her that during the day if we didn't
do our work properly that the Nazis would beat us up right on the spot in front of the civilian workers, who protested, who didn't like to watch human beings beaten up in front of them.

So the Nazis designed a new way of carrying out the punishment. They just jotted down the numbers, our numbers, which was very clearly outlined on our uniforms, and at night after 12 hours of work on this assembly line -- imagine looking at gas masks for 12 hours. They really became like monsters after a while. They didn't look like this. They had a great big steel frame and sheets of rubber would be placed on top of the steel frame and pressed into a machine which would melt the rubber against this form, this metal form, and they were very heavy on top of it.

We had a certain job to do on it and as they came up we had to do whatever it was. If we couldn't we had to put it aside.

If they made this belt go faster we had to do many more work. Sometimes it was designed to just thin us out.

Well, at night our numbers would be called out after we would go into the barracks after 12 hours of work and the punishment would be meted out in the barracks.

She, having lived across the street, would hear these screams come out. When I told her what they were
she just covered up her eyes. She said those screams were
haunting her all her life, ever since she heard them.

From there I was sent to Ravensbruck.

Q. How long were you in Hanover?
A. I don’t really know. I think approximately
two months. We broke down very fast.

After awhile many of us just were in very bad shape
from long hours of work and very little food. On Sundays
sometimes we were off. I am really not sure just what our
days off were. That just isn’t clear in my mind. I think
we were off on Sundays. I think we had one day off.

Q. Do you know the name of the woman
commandant?
A. I think I do. She was there for a short
time and then she is better known in other camps.

Q. The woman in Hanover.
A. In Hanover? No. No, I don’t. There were
a lot of French women working there who were political
prisoners.

I remember one time the Nazis wanted them to work
faster and they were going to give them, give all of us
certain coupons which we can cash in in a little
commissary. They decided, we all decided we are not going
to fall for this. Some of us are going to be weeded out
as a result.
So they started beating up some of us because we didn’t go along with their game. Then the Germans -- Not the Germans. We decided we better accept the coupons. We don’t have to cash them in and we didn’t. Nobody did. So it was really a way of getting back at them. There were very few Jews among us at that particular camp.

Q. Did you take a train to Ravensbruck?
A. We were shipped off to Ravensbruck. This was a camp notorious for women, experiments on women. It was a woman's camp.

Q. Right.
A. There the situation was unbearable, unbearable. I was not there for a long time. Maybe two, three, four weeks.

A. Then we arrived in Ravensbruck. I just want to point out --

Q. The group.
A. I and hundreds and hundreds of other women arrived in Ravensbruck. We traveled for days. It seemed as though we would never get there. I just want to mention these little short trips between camps. What today may take an hour and-a-half, an hour maybe to an hour and-a-half by car, I found out would take us as long as two to four days sealed in box cars. These journeys took quite a bit out of the human body. It was very
strenuous.

Well, there we found that we didn’t know what is going to happen to us. I don’t remember working there or doing anything, other than delousing myself forever. We were all full of lice. We hadn’t bathed for God knows how long.

The situation everywhere was more and more desperate everywhere I went. So finally one day we were put into cattle cars and we were just traveling and the train stopped in the middle of a huge meadow. There was nothing there except this meadow. No station, nothing.

We were sealed in the box cars. We heard the Germans coming, going back and forth. They were deciding how to get us out of the cattle cars for the execution. We were all going to be murdered here out in the open space.

At that point all sorts of reaction set in. Some women sobbed, others became delerious and still others fell into deep apathy. I remember thinking to myself my God, I have lived this long and now it will end like this.

Well, suddenly the doors were shoved open and we were ordered to lineup. The line was as long as the eye could see practically. Instead of shooting us they doled out to us from burlap sacks, a handful of raw macaroni and a handful of sugar. Just plain sugar. I wasn’t
prepared for this. So I took my dress, I held it up to receive my ration. I wasn’t aware there were holes in my dress. The macaroni and sugar spilled onto the tall grass.

So I stooped down to retrieve the macaroni that I could see at least and at that point a Nazi started beating me up. That’s all I remember.

The next thing I remember was when I was hearing voices. I heard You are lucky, you are going to be free. I have to go back and face the consequences in German. I heard voices like You are going through the Danish country side. Pretty soon we will be in Copenhagen. I thought, Oh, God, I must be hallucinating. I am hearing all these beautiful things. What is happening?

When I opened my eyes I was not in the same cattle car that we were traveling in. I was in a real train, a passenger train and I was told we were traveling through the Danish country side and we were being freed and we are free, we will be in Copenhagen soon. I just couldn’t believe it. Could it be really true after all this? Just so suddenly like that?

Here just not long ago they almost shot me and they almost murdered me by clubbing me and now I hear I am going to be free. Just things didn’t add up. That’s how things happened unexpectedly everywhere that we were.
So indeed the train pulled in and stopped in beautiful Copenhagen and church bells were ringing and people were barricaded and they were waving Danish flags all over. We arrived to these smiling faces. I hadn’t seen smiling faces like this it seemed like since eternity.

I really was beginning to believe that maybe there is some truth in what I hear. Then we were transferred on to a ferry boat and I was carried on a stretcher and we were taken to Malmo, Sweden.

While we stood at the station in Copenhagen people broke through the barricade. They came up to the train and they handed us brown bags filled with all sorts of goodies, chocolates, boiled potatoes, even peeled and cut up for us and we ate and ate and we became ill from overeating. We became so ill when we arrived in Sweden.

People were dying all along. All this process was taking place people were dying everywhere. They just couldn’t handle it. Not just from food. But also from their existing illnesses and exertions. Even the news became too much in some cases. There was a whole trail of death all along. That was the saddest thing.

To see that you are so close to freedom and the enjoyment of that freedom and yet it’s not to be.

When I returned to Sweden I went to that cemetery.
and a beautiful film of these graves, young girls 18, 19, 20, 21 line up rows and rows of these cemeteries. These were the girls who died on the way to freedom or shortly after arrival. They just couldn’t be saved anymore.

Well, Sweden.

Q. When you were on the train had you met any friends? Were you sitting with anybody on the train?

A. Everybody was a friend. But I didn’t recognize anybody because in the process transferring -- I was out at this time. When I came to there were a couple people with me. One of them was the girl who saved me in Auschwitz, who gave me the overcoat. She came all the way to Sweden. I have her photograph in my album.

And then we were taken to Malmo, Sweden on May 3rd, 1945. We were taken to a beautiful high school with an olympic size swimming pool. There we were showered and received new clothes and we were fumigated from head to toe with ddt. At the time we didn’t know how dangerous it was.

We were distributed into the various communities of the area.

You see, what happened was that this was a rescue operation of Count Folk Bernadotte of Sweden. He was the head of the Swedish Red Cross and member of the Swedish Royal Family. He went to Germany to plead with Himmler,
to Berlin to plead with Himmler for the release of the
Scandinavian prisoners only.

At first Himmler wouldn't see him. Send an
emissary. No, let them rot in Ravensbruck. He gathered
the Scandinavian prisoners together and placed them in
Ravensbruck. Then one night he called, he sent word to
Bernadotte, tell him to take them all out of Ravensbruck.

So it happened that he wired or telephoned Sweden
and said have all the available vehicles ready to roll
into northern Germany to Ravensbruck to get all of these
inmates out. And he said Paint them all white with Red
Crosses on them.

His government wasn't ready to receive all these
thousands of emaciated sick people. They were ready for a
few hundred. I don't remember. Three to five hundred
Swedish inmates. Here Bernadotte has all these people
coming into Sweden. As he writes in his book Curtain
Falls, he says that as the ambulances and trucks and vans
and so on were rolling into northern Germany to
Ravensbruck they were still in the process of painting
them and the paint was all wet when we arrived.

But that didn't matter. We placed as many as we
could into all these vehicles and they rode into northern
Germany and they passed our train and so it was that our
train was included in the White Fleet Rescue Operation.
Many thousands came after us. I found my name among this rescue operation in several books at Yad Vashem when I was doing research there in 87. We arrived in Sweden. I was sent to Landskrona. Landskrona is a charming little town at the southern tip of Sweden.

Q. This is after Malmo?
A. Malmo was a place we were cleaned up and received new clothes and from there we were distributed to the various communities.

The people of Sweden have been simply the most humanitarian people. I will always love them for it. I have never seen so many people do so much good for human beings as they have during that time.

When we arrived in Landskrona they didn’t have enough hotels to put us in so schools were used to place us in. I was in quarantine in the high school where I eventually went to high school. The high school was closed early and they placed mattresses on the floors of large rooms, classrooms, and there we were very happy on mattresses.

Later when I returned I was told You were placed on mattresses on the floor? That was quite an improvement over what we had before and we were delighted.

But we couldn’t handle food. So people came in, Swedes were allowed in, certain ones, not to be with all
of us but those of us who were sick but not contagious, did not have contagious illnesses.

We had to be spoon fed. Many of us, not I, but many of us had to be spoon fed. For weeks and weeks we lived on oatmeal just to start opening the stomach and get us use to food and little by little to learn to eat food.

Q. How were you feeling?
A. I was suffering from malnutrition problems and 17 cavities in my teeth. But my main problem would surface many years later. My shoulders did not grow together properly, which did not show up upon my arrival in Sweden. It would show up some 30 some years later as a result of malnutrition.

You see, at a time when I should be still growing at the age of 14 my body was actually consuming itself. So there was not enough room for me to raise my arms anymore. So I have had two shoulders operations here with the deltoid muscle having been relocated and the acromium process had to be carved off to make room for the arm to come up. These things came about later.

But the psychological scars, I think they will always be there. The nightmares. Even though my nightmares have subsided considerably compared to what they use to be, when my husband would wake me up several times a night, even after 1949 when we got married, they
would still appear and reappear. Certain scenes and
fears. Once in a while he still has to wake me up.

Certain psychological scars just seem impossible to
eradicate. I think the best way to deal with it is to
talk about it and to live it to some extent again in order
to bring it to the surface and they help.

I have decided the best way to do it is to teach
young people about the eyewitness account of the Holocaust
and that is what I do a lot.

Q. To say the least. I suspect there is no
one has given more presentations than you in the Bay Area
certainly.

Back to the town in Sweden and then we will come up
to the film you are making now. You, as an educator. How
long were you in that town?

A. I lived there for -- First I was in
quarantine until they sorted out the tubercular problems
and contagious patients and then those of us who were not
contagious but simply needed to build up our energy and
whatever, we were sent for a few months to a summer resort
place. There we were under constant nursing care.

So that sometime in the middle of the summer I was
released. But when I was in quarantine in Landskrona a
Swedish family came to visit me all the time. They would
bring me packages. Apparently I was full of life very
quickly. I would borrow the nurse's bike and ride it in the school yard. That's how the Sweden family said they spotted me.

I was the youngest member of that transfer to Sweden I was informed. I was 15 years old at the time. Fifteen and a quarter to be exact. That Swedish family had a beautiful daughter just one year younger than I. They wanted me to be adopted and become a daughter, a sister to their daughter * Gulan.

After I was released from the summer camp the Swedish family signed for me and said they would take care of me and I went to live with this wonderful Swedish family who gave me so much love and care and understanding. Really just what I needed to become a human being again.

Q. What was their name?
A. Guilan Berglund was my -- I call her my Swedish sister now. We correspond today and we are very close. It's the Berglund family. Eric and Lillie Berglund, the mother and father, and their daughter Gulan, who later married a Jewish man and turned Jewish.

When I returned to her home again in 1962 for the first time she was telling me about her * Cashroot system in the kitchen and it was incredible for me to see this since I remember going to confirmation to her church with
her and she would come to the synagogue with me.

But I lived with them until I came to the United States. Initially I told them I cannot be adopted but I would love to come and live with them. I felt it would be better for me to live with a normal, so-called normal family rather than be together with the refugees. That was good and bad.

But understanding survivors was very difficult. I was plagued by many nightmares. In fact, to the extent I actually affected my Swedish sister. We shared the same room in twin beds. She would get up at night and started having nightmares of her own after hearing some of my stories. They seemed unbelievable.

They kept wanting me to forget it. Don't talk about it. Start living a normal life. While I felt this is what I would love to do but how? I can't seem to get it out of my system. It seems there is so much pressure in there. Now I am free and I suddenly have all this time to think about my family. Who survived? Who didn't survive? So far as I know I am the only survivor.

I was hoping that they will help me look for my family. They promised to do that and they did.

What happened was my name, along with all the survivors in Sweden appeared on European radio. At that time they were announcing everyone's names. At crucial
centers in Europe our names would also be printed on long lists and pinned on the walls.

So it happened that people came to tell my mother, who survived the camp with my sister Anushka, and on January 27, 1945 the Russian Army swept through Auschwitz and sent them back home. Home, Czechoslovakia became Hungary, became part of the USSR, part of the Ukraine. The Russians took this area.

So my sister and my mother went back home shortly after our separation, while I had to go through six other camps after that.

My brother Michael survived the slave labor camps, the death marches under the death orders of Alolph Eichmann and Buchenwald and he too went home.

Shortly before Roshashana, the Jewish new year, my father and my brother Shandor, went home together. They were together. Only 17 years later I found out that my brother Shandor and my father were about 40 miles from each other when I worked in Bendorf in the V-2, rockets parts factory and they were working in dura. Dura dynamiting silos and tunnels. Neither of us knew that the other was alive.

So Victor was the sole death in the family in the Holocaust from my immediate family. From my father's family nobody survived. My mother's family luckily her
sisters, and I have some pictures to show, and her brother were in the United States and that's the family that stayed intact.

Back in Sweden our names -- The people kept going to my mother to tell her that they heard my name on the radio and that I am alive and that I am in Sweden. She refused to believe it.

Anushka, my sister, told me later my mother fainted when she heard that. And then later she would send Michael to Budapest, which was the closest very large center to look at the comprehensive list of survivors issued by the Red Cross and he found my name on it. He had a copy of it, which he carried around with him for years. It's no longer to be found. Eventually my mother believed that I was alive. Only she wrote to me later when she received six letters from me all at the same time.

She didn't learn what happened to me because she died shortly after freedom from hardships suffered in the camps.

The family jewelry was still there and served them well because when they came home there was not even a pillow to their name. All the animals had been auctioned off, the fields taken away an nationalized by the Russians.
So my father and the whole family moved into Berexas, the city, where there was still a few Jews left who came back. But almost everybody in our town was annihilated in the gas chambers of Auschwitz.

I found a very interesting document at Yad Vashem, in which -- Well, which I filled out apparently. I don't remember doing this anymore but I found it and I must have. Filled out upon arrival in Sweden, in which the question was who am I looking for? I must have thought who could be alive? Probably my brother for not having been in the concentration camp, not having known he went through all that he did, and it was part of the deception of the Nazis to tell one thing when they are going to do something else with you. Where was I?

Q. The document.

A. Oh, yes. And I am looking for my uncle in St. Louis Missouri, my mother's brother. I remembered that my mother had a brother and sister alive in the United States, but I didn't remember my aunt's -- I didn't remember her address. Even though I use to write to her and my uncle. One night while I was in Sweden, in the middle of the night I woke up and I said to my Swedish sister Gulan, waking up. I just dreamt my uncle's address. It's 5236 Delmar, Saint Louis Missouri. She said write it down. By morning you will forget.
I thought I wrote it down dutifully not understanding what she meant and the following morning she ordered me to write to that address. Of course, I did. My uncle got that letter and I missed the address by two numbers within the same block.

And he contacted my aunt in Kansas City, Missouri. The two of them immediately started preparing papers and I remember the first letter from family. That I have somebody left in the world.

Immediately my aunt instructed me that my mother is alive, that she heard -- No, I am sorry. That was a little later. That I was the first one to have shown a sign of life and that I should write only to her, not back home.

I didn't know what this meant at the time but I later learned that my mother and my sister were home and that if I write to them the Red Cross will want to re-unite me with my family in Russia and my aunt and uncle wanted me to come to the United States.

You see, I wanted to go home. I really felt that I needed my mother. But a letter from her said that as much as we would love to have you come home, we think you would have a much better life in America. So I listened to my mother with pain in my heart knowing that I would never see her again.
But I felt it was quite a sacrifice on her part to want me to be safe.

Looking back now, it's a good thing because I did have a much better life in America since the Iron Curtain was put up and nobody could come in and out during the Stalin Era. They all were stuck back home and I didn't see, I never saw my mother again. She died within two years.

Q. When did she die?
A. She died within two years after the camp.

Q. The brother you didn't see for 17 years?
A. I haven't seen any of them for 17 years.

Q. You didn't see any --
A. Anybody. I came to the United States and they went back home. The Iron Curtain prevented me from going there or for them to come here.

So I had the first opportunity to visit them, that was in 1962 and that was very early to go to the Soviet Union. It was at a time when the State Department advised me not to go through Czechoslovakia, because they do not recognize dual citizenship. I had to go by way of Helsinki Finland, Leningrad, Minsk and Lvov. I had to meet them in Lvov.

That's the first time I saw my father, my two brothers and my sister. That's a hiatus of 17 years since

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the Holocaust. So you can imagine what a tremendous reunion that was.

First cousins who survived the concentration camps came to Lvov to meet me there and I made some homemovies of our reunion, which I treasure today.

Many years later my husband and I were able to rescue the rest of the family from the Soviet Union and bring them to this wonderful country, the United States. They were all married, they all had three children each and we started with my father and then Anushka, her husband and three children, then my brother Michael and his wife, mother-in-law and three children.

My husband and I singlehandedly brought them out at that time with no help from the community or anybody.

Then my brother Shondor and his children and then daughters-in-law and sons-in-law and grandchild. It's been a very rewarding life.

Q. And brought them to live here?
A. They are all in the United States.

Q. Your father?
A. My father died in 77. But he lived with us for eleven years. During his stay here we treated him to what we consider a blessing, a trip to Isreal. He didn't know he was going there. Where he met Golda Meier and the administration. She was just going out of office at the
time and new administration of Begin came in. We went to
the Knessett. He met a nephew who survived by hiding out
in Budapest.

On his way home he dropped dead in midair. So that
is how he died. But he saw all his children come out of
the Soviet Union and his grandchildren and I think he died
a happy man.

Q. And he lived with your children?
A. That's right. My children always wondered
how come I don't have a grandpa? How come I don't have an
uncle? How come I don't have an aunt? All my friends
have aunts and uncles. I don't have anybody. And it was
my painful duty to tell them that your children will, but
it's not possible for them to have any and the reasons
why.

Just one more thing.

Q. Of course. And one more thing for me too.
Where is Anushka?
A. Anushka lives in Brooklyn, New York.
Shandor lives in Brooklyn, New York. Michael lives in San
Francisco.

Q. Michael lives in San Francisco?
A. Yes. His Mother-in-law, who he brought out
just died two weeks ago. All his children are married.
He has grandchildren. It's really a blessing.
Q. What were you going to say?

A. Just I don't want to leave it out of my story. It's such an important part. I think it should give us food for thought. One of the consequence of the Holocaust is an experience that I want to talk about and that's my brother Shandor, who after coming home from the Holocaust, married this very nice lady and then they had a daughter called Judy. Judy became of marriageable age.

This is the very first children after the Holocaust in an area that was emptied of Jews. Judy did not have anybody to date or to marry. She could marry somebody her own age group, someone younger or someone much older or marry out of faith. This whole generation was wiped out. This was an experience in that part of Europe after the war. Judy married out of faith.

She and her husband also are in the United States now and we saw her recently. I wanted to thank you for this interview.

Q. I have a couple more questions. I want to go back to 1949. You came to St. Louis?

A. I went, yes, I arrived in the U.S. An uncle met me. Aunt Lina, my mother's sister's husband. My sister having died sometime ago.

By the way, I have those pictures I would like to show of my American family. He took me to St. Louis,
Missouri. But you see, I was suppose to go to Kansas City, Missouri. But a telegram waited for me that said do not come to Kansas City. It was from my aunt. Come to St. Louis. While you were on the ship coming over to the U.S. your uncle died. So I didn’t have the pleasure of getting to know him. So I arrived to death. Really a sad situation. Here I left Europe thinking to myself goodbye, bloody Europe. I don’t care if I ever see you again.

I simply want to open up a new chapter in my life and just start from scratch. I am a new person, I am no longer what I was before the war. My heart is not the same, my thinking about things aren’t the same. I feel like I am a thousand years old.

I realize that death is part of life and that we just have to accept it as it comes out. I just wanted so much to meet him.

May I show a picture of him and my aunt? I want to show a happy picture first. I am going to show Anushka’s visit here just recently and in the cemetery of our father. Is this all right?

This is Anushka and I at the cemetery where my father David Hollander is buried in San Francisco. We are paying our respects. It’s called * kaber avold, kaber meaning a visit to the grave, which takes in prayer. And another picture of us visiting on that same day.
A happier moment of Anushka and me in our kitchen. We are doing some household things and having a good time doing it.

The Swedish family who took me in and wanted me to be their daughter. The far right is my foster mother, Lillie. Next to her is Fabro Eric, her husband, my foster father, and this is me on my visit from 1962. From Russia I went to Sweden. That’s my Swedish brother-in-law, Steeg, and my Swedish sister Gulan. Now Eronson.

An old picture of my dad. Here he is. He is a volunteer fireman in our town. This was before I was born, I am sure. That community involvement was always his forte.

And now? How can I do this? This is my uncle, my mother’s brother and my mother’s two sisters. My uncle, who died while I was on the ship coming over here, and the middle one is * Uncle Louie Parnis’ wife-- my mother’s sister, Lani, and this is my aunt Bella Smith. None of them are alive today, but they brought me out to the United States.

These are my cousins. My Aunt Lanie’s children. My first cousins, whose albums I went over. First thing I asked for when I came, may I see your albums, please?

Some of the pictures came from their album. That is how I was able to get some of these pictures. These
also are my mother's sister and my mother's brother.

There is only one more picture, or two. My
grandpa. This is my mother's father. He died when I was
six months old. I did not know him. But he did not die
in the Holocaust.

And one last picture from the American family
album, is my grandma, my uncle and his wife visiting us
and paying our respects to their father, my grandpa.

My mother and dad, she was seven months pregnant
with Anushka. I am right here. That's the only picture I
have of myself as a little girl.

Q. Beautiful pictures, Gloria. We are almost
out of time. Just two more questions. Another time we
have to continue what happened after the war. We haven't
covered that at all really.

A. Sorry.

Q. I am so glad. I am so glad we went into
the details with this. We will do that another time.

Right now I would like to summarize two things
quickly. One is the film and the other is your work as a
Holocaust educator and then we will conclude and another
time we will go into more detail. Carl is wonderful and I
want you to tell about Carl and your kids and what you
told your kids.

Tell me about the film.
A. About eight years ago a professor of film approached me to have a documentary film made about my experiences. He heard about me because I have been making myself available to educate the young people about the Holocaust. At least to the extent that I was an eyewitness.

I always felt that I am an eyewitness and it is much better if I tell it than some day my children telling it. The film has been struggling along. We have some tremendous film footage, but we have been plagued with financial problems each time. It is a much slower project than we anticipated.

To date most of the film footage has been filmed, which takes in a visit, my first visit back to Germany and lecturing at the University of Hanover to German youth in German, in their native language, and getting the feel of what it's like today in Germany.

I also lectured at the * Vicerosa Cultural Center and that was a very interesting experience. I helped dedicate two monuments, one of which is one concentration camp we were setting up a monument for was a camp that I was in and that was Hanover at the Continental Gummewerke.

I visited the continental Gummewerke, where I was the first one to return, visited Bergen-Belsen, where I was the first one to submit a film about my visit and now
it is in the education center. It became archival material. This is unedited film footage. They purchased a copy of it. At least the parts of the film which relate to the camps in and around Bergen-Belsen. They also ordered a finished copy of the film once it's completed, as well as a video copy. So it will be definitely exposed.

If we could only get some funds we could finish the film in a year at the most, because we have the editing to do and just very little more filming. But I wanted to leave a legacy for future generations. This is very important to me.

I am in the schools a lot. I have spoken in over 200 high schools, universities, junior high schools, synagogues, churches, civic groups, you name it.

I find that the oral history of the survivor, the physical appearance of a survivor makes all the difference in the world.

These students write to me thousands of letters. I cherish everyone of them. I answer back one letter to each school. It takes a lot of my time. I have been doing this for nine years at my own expense and an additional three or four years with some help from the schools now and then. But even now I carry the expense of this Holocaust education mainly myself.
I think there is a tremendous need to get some kind of support so that we could have more survivors out there in the schools because we survivors are here on borrowed time.

I am 59 years old and I am among the youngest of survivors. Pretty soon there will be no survivors to tell the stories.

I feel that the first thing on the agenda would be for each survivor to give his or her oral history so that future generations can see us or hear it from us.

Q. That's what keeps you going?
A. That's what keeps me going. When I get a letter from a Stanford student who says I have been blessed with a comfortable life and the privilege of going to the school, I never met Gloria Lyon until just a half hour ago, an hour ago, and I walked out of this class feeling that the world is mine, I don't take the things for granted that I have done before, the sky is blue, I walk into my room, I see the books and the furniture and everything that I have and I can do whatever I want, it's all mine to do with as I please. Yesterday I didn't feel this way.

So what, there are those books, there is the furniture. So everybody else has it. I can call up my mom and hear her cheerful voice. Gloria Lyon couldn't
call up her mom. She doesn't have a mom to call up. She
doesn't have family to call up and yet she waits among
those families with the high rate of survival within her
own family and he thank's God for having had this
opportunity to hear how human beings can treat human
beings and how an entire society can bring down an entire
society from a high level of living to that of murderers
in a relatively short time and man's inhumanity to man
seemed unreal to me before, but now I know it is there.

I get a letter from a black student who says I am a
black American and I know what discrimination is, but I
thought I knew what real discrimination is, but now I know
what real discrimination is like after hearing Gloria
Lyon. It just goes on and on.

Or I read about the Holocaust, I saw films about
the Holocaust and I heard about the Holocaust but not
until I met a real eyewitness, Gloria Lyon, do I know or
have even an inkling what it was all about.

So these letters are simply book material,
historical material for the future. I think we should
make a great effort to finance our oral history project in
order to make it possible for this project to go forward
so that we can save the eyewitness histories for future
generations.

This should be number one. Everything else can be
done later after we are gone.

One of my most rewarding experiences is to be able to tell the students to cherish their democracy and to steer away from discrimination and prejudice, to be kind to each other and treat each other equally.

I think, if nothing else, this to me is the most important thing that I have ever done before.

Q. Gloria, thank you. Thank you so much. We will continue soon.