

Recording now.

Can you pause a moment?

Oh, can you pause?

Finish?

No, nope.

Oh, we'll finish in a couple more minutes.

OK.

OK. All set. Any time.

OK. I'm still a little confused here. I thought you said earlier that when you got to Gross Rosen, you asked if you could see the crematorium or something. Did you say that?

Yeah, I wanted to see a crematorium in Nordhausen.

In Nordhausen?

Because I there in Nordhausen. So I volunteered to work, because there was no work. In the morning, they ask, who wants to work? So I say, I want to work. So they gave us a little thing. There all the dead people from the crematorium to the wings.

To the--

Was people, dead people. So we put them over there to the ovens. So I put them over there. So I know that's the crematorium. And I wanted to-- I want to see on my eyes.

Why did you want to see it?

To remember. To remember how this was it. So I had a chance to work there. And I saw everything how this works. That's it. The same thing I want to see-- in the beginning, they hanged six people in our town, the beginning, because they caught them. They had something smuggling or something. So they hanged them up, six people.

So I say, I want to see it. Many people say, don't go. Don't go to look. I said, yes. I want to see it. So I went there. And I saw it. I should remember it. So this is a terrible things. I know the people. You know, so it was really bad. See it? They hanging down like apples, the six people.

Do you know what it was that made it important for you to see these things?

To remember.

What was important about remembering?

Maybe someday I can take-- what you mean-- I can do something.

What do you mean do something?

I mean, what, to kill them? I don't know. I won't kill. It was not my time. But to remember, you know, I was thinking,

maybe, I can do sometime something to them, if I have a chance. When you're young, you have different ideas, you know?

Did you tell the psychiatrist about working in the gas chamber?

Whom? Whom?

After the war, when you saw the psychiatrist.

I told somebody?

The psychiatrist after the war?

Yeah, I told him everything. The psychiatrist, I told him everything, including this. But I told him, I have nothing special. I sleep well. I have no nightmares. I have no this or no that. I never dream from the camp, nothing from camp. So I say, It's amazing. I say, I shut it out.

He said that?

I say that. I shut it out. I don't dream about it anymore.

And what did he say?

There's something here. But by the end, I told him that I'm so sentimental, I can cry for nothing, he say, yeah, that's the reaction. That's the reaction. OK. That's it.

Was the psychiatrist able to help you?

In that? It's not so important. If I have a little crying, there's nothing there. Yeah, I'm very sentimental. That's right. If somebody says a good word, a soft word, I'm already soft too. That's the problem. And sometimes, I'm ashamed of myself. I'm not a man.

Sure you are.

Pardon me?

Sure you are. The strongest men are the ones who can cry.

Right.

Why did you go see the psychiatrist?

Oh, I didn't go to a psychiatrist by myself. They sent me. They sent me. In the beginning, they sent me to a psychiatrist, to a doctor, and this, and that, to the German doctor. They should see how I am and everything. So I says, I gladly go. Because I like to know. I never go to a doctor.

So I'll go to those doctors. And so I went to the doctors. They sent me to one doctor. This was the beginning when they want to make restitutions. Restitution, so they will send you to a doctor, how you are, what is a Jew. So they sent me to all doctors and to a psychiatrist too.

So in order to get restitution, you had to go?

Yeah, I did. In the beginning, I say, I don't want to get it, because I didn't want to get nothing from them. But I came to-- my brother came from Israel to the city, to New York. And he says, I have to go to this place. Can you take me over

there? And I came over there.

So I came over there. And there, the people make restitutions. They work for restitutions for the people. He asked me, do you do something? I say no. Says, we are together in camp. And it's true. He was a guy who was in camp together. I won't let you out. Sign it. Ah, baloney. All right, sign it. I signed it. And I signed it.

They start to send me, I should come to the doctor, to that doctor. Say, OK. To doctors, I'll go. And I find out. And I told them everything. Thank you, it's good. That was a German doctor from a-- yeah, a ear doctor.

So I came in. So one guy, the German-- he was German-- so he said something in German. The guy was here. He thinks that he can fool us, you know. OK. I came in. I told him everything. He checked everything, the papers, this, this, this.

So he asked me if I was sick. I said, yeah, I was sick on typhus. Oh, you have typhus. You have OS. Your ears is no good anymore. This ear is worse. And this ear is a little bit better. That's from typhus. So you know, thank you. That's good to know.

I went to all doctors. I say, good to know, because I couldn't afford it to go to a doctor, Park Avenue, for \$100 or \$150. And say, if you want to take me, why not? I had all the doctors for the heart, for this, or that. I was poor that time. I didn't have nothing. So it let me go to doctors without money, why not? That's how I went to the doctors.

So these were German doctors?

Not all of them. Were some Jewish doctors too. But a few was German doctors. The first doctor I was, it was an elderly man, a German doctor. And he was surprised a little bit. When I came in, say, no, what's your complaint? I say, no, nothing.

So he [INAUDIBLE], he says, how is your heart? Good. I say thank you. How is this? Good. I say thank you. Later, he measures me. So I make like this here. I say, oh, you are sportly. Yes, I was a sport level. Oh, you have inches, [INAUDIBLE] are different.

So I was happy that he checked on me everything, I'm OK. And this was it. And the psychiatrist, the same thing. He asked me, have you some nightmares? I say no. Have you this? Have you? No. What is you? You haven't got nothing? I say, one thing, I have something. I'm very easy to cry for nothing. Oh, yeah. That's the story. Naturally, he told me.

So did they give you reparations?

No, they didn't give me nothing for it.

Because?

It'll go away. It's nothing. It's nothing.

So they didn't compensate you for all the labor either?

Pardon me?

They didn't compensate you for all the labor either?

For the?

Labor, the forced labor.

Oh, forced labor. He knew it was forced labor. He knew I was in camp. That's why he man. I went through everything. I told him. By the end, he told me, also, he lost a lot of people.

He was a psychiatrist. He learned in Vienna. He's from Krakow, but he most of the time was in Vienna. And he lost a lot of his family. He told me. He start to talk to me like friendly, so that we are in the same boat. I have also the same thing sometimes, he says.

So that was a German doctor who said something about let's not let these people con us?

The German doctor?

Yeah. You said something that the doctor said something about people conning or whatever.

I don't get you. What?

Didn't you say a few minutes ago about the German doctor talking about people conning or saying, let's see if these people con us, or whatever?

You see, this German doctor, the ear doctor was telling the-- it was before one. He wants to fool him. He said he doesn't hear good or something. You know, it was a little bit he says not nicely that he wants to cheat him so that maybe they want to get a better rate of restitution or something. They were cheating him. But he's a fool. They don't know that he fooled me, but they cannot fool me. That's what he said.

But I didn't fool him, because actually, I want to know exactly what was with me. So I told him everything right. So he says that I'm saying everything right. So he told me, you have problems. Your left ear is not so bad. Your right ear is very bad, because you went through a typhus. And that's the consequences of it.

So in order to get these reparations, though, the doctors had to certify you lost your health?

That's right. That time, they have to. I knew that there, I'm all right.

But they didn't consider that you lost your family and you did all this slave labor?

No, nothing. That's not their business. That's not their business. They just gave a certificate what you are. They give the report back to that restitution people. And they know how I am, what my condition and everything.

Well, later on, when they did the trials for the companies, like Krups, did you ever get any reparations from any German company?

That's right. This I got. This I got. This I got for work, what I worked over there for nothing all those years. I got something.

Was it equitable?

Well, it was-- that time, I don't know how many there was, a couple of thousand dollars, not much. This I got, yeah.

So but it was just for the slave labor. That's the only thing they compensated you for?

All labor. I should really do a lot, because we left a business with a train there, with the people, what they took away from us, the whole business with the family.

Yeah.

I mean, it's a big business, was a wholesale business. So I didn't apply it.

I'd like to talk before we end just a little bit more about working in the gas chamber.

Yeah.

It sounds like that in your mind, the bodies on the trains where you did your washing at that camp and working in the gas chamber's a little connected.

It looks the same thing. We didn't really care, because it's not a really-- nothing human anymore. As far as was it like coal thing, work. Is nothing. This happened. Happened there already, maybe happen to me too tomorrow. So this doesn't get you anymore, you know. If you see one dead person, you get a little bit so excited. But you see a lot of them, doesn't bother you anymore.

When you say that, it sounded like you said earlier that you have no feelings. It sounded like you were talking about that a lot of your feelings are kind of dead.

Dead a little bit, that's right. That feeling gets dead, because you see so many of them, that doesn't make you-- you don't feel nothing anymore, because it's like you see chairs, you see people. It's the same thing already.

Because that goes like that. Goes like that-- every day somebody dies, and dies, and dies, and dies, and dies. You don't look them. When I saw people hanging down on the thing that they want to take out, he's dead. He hangs, I went further. I didn't look anymore.

Hangs from where? On the barrel he wants to take out something from.

Oh the people who--

The people, after the war, they started to. This was after the war. But still, was something. He want to take out something. He couldn't. So he hanged and he dead. So you went further. That's it. It's nothing. You get cold for that. It doesn't impress you anymore, dead people, because you know everybody will be dead someday.

When you worked at the gas chamber, it was towards the-- it was almost the last week of the war?

The last days. The last days. The last days.

So what was it like working there in the last days?

I didn't know that's the last days. We didn't know yet. Because you know, they were running away because the Russian. We came out in the night time. We had to run away from the camp, because it was pack everything. And we going. This was in Bunzlau. So the Russians were near Breslau. There was not far. So we had to run.

So what was it like working in the gas chamber?

It's night work.

You worked at night?

No, was in the morning. In the morning, they called us for work if you want to. I volunteer for work. I didn't have to go to work, because there was no work anymore. Was they let us lay down on the thing, in the floors, in the place, and like it was an old movie house or whatever in the camp. We're laying there three days doing nothing-- no work, just a little food. A little food.

So what was it like working in the gas chamber?

Not working, I didn't work. I had a little-- what do you call it, that, on one wheel?

Barrow?

Barrow. And I put out the ashes. And I brought in the people, the dead people. And they took care. I didn't see how they throw them in. This, I didn't see, because they didn't let me in there. But the ashes, I had to pull out and the dead people to bring in. That was it at the time.

Did that--

Alive people I didn't see anymore. And they going in in the gas chambers, no, this, I didn't see.

Did that harm you emotionally in a way that nothing else had?

I don't remember emotion. What kind of emotion you can have? Because you see so many of them, there's no emotion anymore. That's like working something you ever work. But I wanted to see. I want to remember. I want to see how was it just for remembering it. Was without emotion. Just to remember.

Did you gain your emotions back, any of your emotions back after the war?

As I say, I have emotions soft. I'm soft. I'm very soft. As I say, everything--

Sentimental.

Sentimental. This-- anything or something, childish thing, my friends always say, it's a funny film, why you get tears in your eyes? Because it was too soft in like something. So I get tears.

But the deeper emotions, did you get any of those back?

Yeah, I'm emotion. I'm emotional. Now, I'm very emotional, probably.

I wanted to ask you one more question. You said, when you were at Nordhausen, I think, that-- or in Gross Rosen-- that you were afraid to lie down and sleep, because people were taking parts of people's bodies and eating them?

That was in Nordhausen. Nordhausen.

Was this--

Nordhausen, yeah.

I mean, was this because they were taking out of live bodies that you were afraid to lie down? Or if you lied down, would they take--

They hungry. They were hungry. They were hungry. And they told me, watch yourself, because the Russian, they can cut you off a piece of thing just to eat it all. They're so hungry. It's true. It was it like that.

But if you stood up all night--

Pardon?

--that wouldn't happen?

That's right. You have to watch and stay.

Why wouldn't it happen if you stood up all night? I mean were people alive when they did this?

Sure, they're alive. From alive people they cut it, not from dead people. They cut it. They could cut on a piece of meat to have it, something to chew. The Russians were very hungry.

How'd they get knives? They had knives?

Pardon me?

They had knives?

They had knives, sure. They had knives. They made from everything knives in the camp. You had everything. You had a knife. If you wanted, you can make it. You steal with something this where you work, this and that. You making it like in jail too, you have it, no? In jail.

I worked somewhere one time where people would, if you gave them a spoon, they'd make a knife out of it. Yeah. You could make a knife out of anything.

That's right. They're making from everything.

OK. Well, I really want to thank you--

OK, thank you.

--for the interview.

All right.

And I'd like to, before we stop, ask you to spell some words.

My words? I spell my name?

No, several. I've got a list of words here that we need to spell.

Oh, one second. Let me.

Oh, OK.

Go out.

Can you pause a second, please?

About five seconds, and then we'll be ready to go. OK.

OK. I'm going to name some words. And we need to spell them.

OK.

OK. Katowice.

Katowice-- K-A-D-O-W-I-T-Z.

OK. And also, what was the name-- where did you come from, your hometown?

Bedzin.

We need to spell it out.

B-E-N-D-Z-I-N.

And Oberschlesien?

Oberschlesien. Oberschlesien is O-B-E-R-S-C-H-L-E-S-I-E-N. Oberschlesien.

OK. And then Treuhander?

Treuhander-- T-R-A-U-N-D-E-R. Treuhander.

Sosnowiec? Sosnowiec?

Sosnowiec? Sosnowiec, in Polish or in German? There was German also. Let's say S-O-S-N-O-W-I-C-E, Sosnowiec. Sosnowiec.

OK. And then Juden band? Juden band?

Juden band. Juden band is J-U-D-E B-A-N-D It's not J-U-D-E-N B-A-N-D?

Band is B-A-N-D. And band.

Juden is J-U-D-E-N.

Jude is J-U-D-E.

Oh, it was Jude, not Juden? Jude, But yeah.

OK I'm sorry. I misunderstood the name.

OK. Hauptkapo?

Hauptkapo-- H-A-U-P-- haup-- T-K-A-P-P-O.

One P, right?

Hauptkapo. It could be one P. Hauptkapo.

OK. Bunzlau.

Bunzlau? B-U-N-Z-L-U-- A-U. A-U. Bunzlau.

This is a boy's name. It's Abek Sien--

Abek Shenitzer. Abek-- A-B-E-K. Shenitzer-- S-H-E-N-I-T-Z-E-R.

That was two words?

Abek is a first name. Shenitzer is the second, his family name.

OK. Then also the name of the boy who lost his leg?

What, his leg? This was Romek. Romek-- no, what was their name was? Romek-- what was my wife's maiden name? I



got already.

We'll come back to that.

Romek.

We'll come back.

Romek.

Meister is M-E-I-S-T-E-R.

What is this?

Meister.

Meister. And meister is M-A-I-S-T-E-R. The meister, a German meister.

Oh, OK. And kielbasa?

Kielbasa is K-I-E-L-B-A-S-A-- kielbasa.

And Itzak?

This kielbasa is salami.

Yeah. Itzak?

What?

Itzak, it's a name.

Yitzhak?

Yeah. Itzak, Yitzhak.

Where was Itzak?

Somebody's name.

Oh, Itzek. Itzek. Itzek that was working with me. Itzek-- I-T-Z-E-K, Itzek. Yeah, yeah. Can be only Itzek. It's a E-K, Itzek.

OK. Now, this one is [GERMAN] or something. I don't remember exactly the word.

What I says that time? What was it, that thing?

It was something like [GERMAN].

Oh, that's while I was working.

Well--

That was.

Do you remember that word?

Yeah, yeah. This was in German, no?

Yeah. Do you remember the word?

Yeah, was the owner was saying, [GERMAN]. This is the words.

Can you spell that word?

Just a minute. You were saying, let us hear.

That's OK. We'll do without one too.

Nachschlag, the one that means double?

What?

The word that means double-- nachschlag?

Nachschlag. Nachschlag is a double portion you get, nachschlag. It's in German.

And it's spelled N-A-C-H?

N-A-C-H-- nachschlag-- S-C-H-L-A-G. Nachschlag.

OK. Thanks. Now, Langenbilau.

Langenbilau-- L-A-N-- lange-- G-E-B-I-L-O-W, Langenbilau.

Appell?

Appell is A-P-E-L.

It's not A-P-P-E-L?

P-P, that's Appell.

Jozek?

Jude?

Jozek?

Jozek?

Juzek, Jozek?

Jozek.

It's a name.

Yeah, the name is Broch. Romek Broch.

Oh, the boy?

The boy, Romek Broch.

OK. Can you spell that?

B-R-O-C-H

And the first name?

Romek.

R-O-M-E-K?

R-O-M-E-K.

OK. But you also had in Jozek.

Jozek? Jozek? Oh, Jozek was the guy what he was trading with him. Jozek, this is J-O umlaut Z-E-K.

OK. And zed is Z.

Zed is Z.

Purim, the feast of Purim?

Purim? No, Purim is P-U-R-I-M, Purim.

OK, now melon?

Mel?

Meloni? Mel--

What is it?

I can't read it.

Lackschuhes? Oh, what was your head thing, the meloni-something, the head thing?

A melonik. Yes, that was a hat. That's a-- what do you call those here in English, a top hat like this?

A yarmulke?

A cylinder. A cylinder, no.

Yarmulke?

No, this was a homburg. A homburg.

Oh, OK. How do you call them, Homburg?

Well, they do call them Homburgs.

It's a round hat and stiff hat.

OK.

Yeah, Homburg?

Yeah.

Say Homburg.

OK. But you've got melonik.

They call it in-- but Homburg. A Homburg.

OK. But we need to spell this for the--

A Homburg?

No, melonik for the transcriber.

A melonik, yeah. There was melonik. This is a hat, a melonik. That's hard to spell, a melonik hat, they call them.

OK. That's all right. We'll forget it.

Oh, yeah, that hat.

Lackschuhes?

Lackschuhes. Yeah, lack from patent leather. Lackschuhe.

L-A-K?

L-A-K, lack.

S-C-H-U?

Shoe, S-C-H-O-U, Lackschuhe.

S-C-H-U-H?

Schuhe is S-C-H-O-E.

Oh, you spell it the English spelling.

English, I said in English. Know what I can. Lackschuhe is lackschuhe.

OK. Pasiaks?

What is it?

Pasiaks, you know, the striped uniforms?

Oh, pasiak. Pasiak is P-A-S-I-A-K, pasiak.

OK.

Stripes. You can say stripes, but pasiak. In English, stripe.

I've got a word here-- hexenschuss. It's what that guy did when he hit you with a shovel, because your back was tight.

Yeah, hexenschuss. Hexenschuss. Hexenschuss, yeah.

Do you know how to spell that?

Hexen-- H-A-C-K, probably, hexen.

OK.

Hexenschuss.

LagerfÃ¼hrer is--

LagerfÃ¼hrer.

That's L-A-G-E-R-F-U-H-R-E-R.

F-U-H-R-E-R, lagerfÃ¼hrer.

OK. Now, what was that camp, that railroad camp?

Kasper Bauden.

OK. How do you spell that?

K-A-S-P-E-R B-A-U-D-E-N, Kasper Bauden.

Now, we pretty much need to go through the camps you were in, and begin with Sakrau. How do you spell that?

Sakrau-- S-A-K-R-A-U, Sakrau.

And the next camp was?

Next thing Anneberg. Anneberg-- A-N-N-E-B-E-R-G.

And the next one?

And after Anneberg was Neukirch. Neukirch-- N-E-U-K-I-R-C-H, Neukirch.

And after that?

Maslowitz. Maslowitz-- M-A-S-L-O-W-I-T-Z.

And then?

Maslowitz. Maslowitz was Klettendorf. Klettendorf. Klettendorf-- K-L-E-E-T-T-E-N-D-O-R-F, Klettendorf.

And after that?

Klettendorf. Klettendorf, Bunzlau. Bunzlau.

OK.

I was also in Graditz. Graditz was also twice. Graditz was G-R-A umlaut D-I-T-Z, Graditz.

OK. And then Gross-Rosen?

And then Nordhausen and, I think, Bergen-Belsen.

OK. Nordhausen is N-O-R-D-H-A-U-S-E-N?

Nord-- N-O-R-D-H-A-U-S-E-N, Nordhausen. And Bergen-Belsen is B-E-R? Bergen-Belsen-- B-E-R-G-E-N B-E-L-S-E-N, Bergen-Belsen.

OK. Thank you so very much.

OK.