

Interview with Fred Baum + Helen Baum

By Andre Friedner

On 4/2/85 in San Francisco. From Poland

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1 A. My name at present is Fred Baum, and I am born in
2 Poland in 1921, October first. My Yiddish name was--is
3 (name); family name, Winterheim, is (name).

4 I was born in (city name); this is Congress
5 Poland. It belongs to the state of Kielce. This was a
6 little, small town; and it was known because it was down
7 there a big penitentiary. And it was between--it's
8 Congress Poland. All right, I believe that's enough.

9 My father's name was (name), of course; and
10 my mother's name was Miriam (name), and from her house her
11 name was Herzog. My father's father was a rabbi in a
12 little town, Korswank. It's close to (city name). And my
13 mother was born in the--in my birthplace, (city), and she--her
14 father, they were settled down there from generations.
15 Her father was a very well-recognized citizen between the
16 Jewish community. They used to call him (something). As
17 a matter of fact, because his father was actually the
18 rabbi of the town, and they lived down there I don't know
19 for how many generations.

20 Q. Could you tell me a little bit about how many
21 inhabitants there were; and at the same time, could you
22 tell me where exactly Congress Poland is located? In what
23 area of Poland?

24 A. Congress Poland is mostly described as the central
25 Poland. It's Kielce, you know, they like to say the state

1 of Kielce. It was one of the biggest states in Poland;
2 and this is between, let's say, the biggest towns is
3 Kielce, Radom, (city), Ostrowiec, and that's--it's not--it's
4 in the middle. It's not east, and it's not west, it's
5 close--it's closer to the west, but it's not entirely, it
6 didn't belong--it didn't went in under the west.

7 Q. So could you tell me how many inhabitants, and how
8 many Jewish inhabitants were there also?

9 A. In my little town it was, I will say, I will estimate
10 it was about 250 families. I will say about 1200 to 1500
11 Jewish people. It was, of course, it was a mixture of
12 people. It was Jewish people. They were occupied with
13 merchants. They were tailors; they were shoemakers; they
14 were carpenters; and they were furniture--they made
15 furniture. It was people that they dealt with grain. It
16 was people that they dealt with--had stores, from textiles,
17 from grocery stores, (something).

18 And we went, we had, you know, the Jewish
19 community had all the institutions, the little Jewish
20 communities that a Jewish city, even a big one, will have.
21 It had the free-loan association. It had free Jewish
22 schools for children that they could not afford to pay.

23 They had, you know, it was called, you know,
24 (something). In other words, in those days people, it was
25 not a hospital in our town, so if a person got sick, it

1 was an association where they helped out the family to
2 stay with the sick people; and it was every day--it was a
3 different person took part. In other words, they stayed
4 up the whole night like a nurse; and they had a privilege
5 to collect, to buy medicine for less money at the pharmacy
6 and whatever the people, if they could not afford, the
7 people went naturally and chipped in and bought and helped.

8 And we had in our town, you know,
9 (something). It means, let's say, if a person come over,
10 stayed overnight or whatever. He didn't have anywhere to
11 stay. We had special quarters where they got free of
12 charge; and he had down there too, accommodations to get
13 tea or coffee free; and he slept over, one night or two or
14 three or whatever.

15 We had, you know, (something). It means a
16 burial society where it was free of charge. People, it
17 was a big honor to belong to this society.

18 And basically, we had, as I mentioned before,
19 that we had that big penitentiary down there, and this
20 penitentiary usually it was Jewish people too, paying time.
21 And when it comes--when it came, let's say, a Jewish
22 holiday like (something), Passover; or New Year's; or
23 (something); or (something); or Hanukkah so the Jewish
24 community went up, especially for (something) we prepared
25 them that they will have to have every day a hot meal and

1 respectable food prepared.

2 And as my memory serves me right, it was
3 always, I believe, about 100 Jewish prisoners there, and
4 it was not easy for such a little community to provide
5 food for them because the government didn't give any
6 subsidy for this type of service. So the rabbi went
7 around in little towns close by and collected food and
8 collected money and whatever the need was, and so that we
9 ample supply of food for these prisoners. And like
10 Hanukkah or (something), we (something) and served them a
11 meal. And let's say, in Rosh Ha-Shanah we went up to
12 (something). We (something).

13 Q. Now, I would like to ask you what kind of government
14 it was at that time where you were talking of this event,
15 and also what year, and at the same time if you can talk
16 about the people in general. What was their feeling,
17 vis-a-vis, the Jewish people?

18 A. Well, basically, it was a government, a democratic
19 government, in Poland in those time. And the Jewish
20 people, of course, were permitted to do everything.
21 Besides, always in Poland was an anti-Semitic country; but
22 till the later years, until after 1933, Jewish people
23 were--we were in a way afraid; but it was not any special,
24 any special fear from the Polish people to the Jewish
25 people. We dealed, we did business with them, we,

1 whatever they had in their heart, we didn't looked in; but
2 it was an open society. Basically, the Jewish people;
3 beside business, we didn't associate much with the Polish
4 people; and we didn't have much in common with them.

5 I myself went to school, to--it was a public
6 school where the Jewish people had to go too; and we--even
7 with the students we didn't come in contact too much. In
8 a way that they hated us, and they always made fight with
9 us. But we were used to it; and it was not--they didn't,
10 I mean it was not a harm; they didn't did special harm to
11 us.

12 Q. Why is it that people were not--I mean Jewish people,
13 were not associate; or trying to associate with the people
14 that were not Jewish; and why, vice versa, there was not
15 such association? Also, if you can tell me more about the
16 specific time lapse where this really happened.

17 A. Well, the reason we didn't associate with them is
18 just plain because our way of life was different, and
19 their way of life was different. That's one thing.
20 Secondly, we didn't have the same thing in common because,
21 basically, the Jewish people, we always strive to, to live
22 the Jewish way; and they were not from the Jewish faith;
23 and this, I would say, this takes in the time from, as I
24 recall, from 1929 to the liquidation when the Germans took
25 the Jewish people out of the town in 1942.

1 Q. I just wanted to specify; you were born in what year?

2 A. 1921, October 1.

3 Q. Now, could you tell me, how far is your town from,
4 like Warsaw or Krakow, which are major town in Poland?

5 A. Well, we are, I believe, from Warsaw about 125
6 kilometer; or from Lodz, we are about the same amount.
7 And from Kielce we are 35 kilometer; Ostrowiez, we are 21
8 kilometer.

9 Q. And could you tell me if you were in contact with
10 other Jewish community or whether, when you were small,
11 you were going in trip, having vacations, and going to
12 those major city to see the palace that were, for example,
13 in Krakow or different demonstrations that from time to
14 time was happening in Poland?

15 A. Well, basically, when I went--when we went for a trip
16 or whatever, we basically went with our father (something),
17 when he went to the rabbi. My father was a (something).
18 It was all kind of dynasties. It was (something). It was
19 (something). It was (something). It was (something). It
20 was (something). My father was a (something). So
21 basically, for most of the time of the year, when he went
22 to the rabbi, he took us children with him; and as we had--our
23 grandmother used to live in Ostrowiez; and (name) used to
24 live in Ostrowiez. So we didn't have much difficulty
25 where to stay, so we always went with our father, and I

1 was in other towns. I was in Kielce; I was in Lodz; I was
2 in Warsaw because I was learning in a yeshiva, in a high-
3 education school, Jewish school, so I learned in this town.

4 Q. How did you decided to learn, to go to a yeshiva, and
5 was it in a yeshiva, a big one? How many people were
6 there? Also I wanted to ask you the place where your
7 father was bringing, you mentioned the name Ostrowiez.
8 Could you tell me a little bit more about the name, the
9 meaning of the name?

10 A. Well, what the meaning of the name Ostrowiez, I don't
11 know exactly what the meaning is. I read, I believe, in
12 some place that it used to live down there a big landowner,
13 and his name was similar-like, and they named it after him,
14 this city.

15 Q. Now, what about that yeshiva? At what age did you
16 decide to go to a Jewish yeshiva, and for what reason did
17 you decide to do this instead of doing, like, engineering,
18 or any other kind of work? Were Jewish at that time able
19 to go to university that were not Jewish university, but
20 regular university that was for Christian or (something)?

21 A. The basic, the most up-bringing of the Jewish people
22 in Poland, the majority were inclined to be learners,
23 scholars; and the education of college or more to speak,
24 not Jewish education--like, or engineers or lawyers or
25 communication or commuters or whatever. This was not the,

1 it was not known in this time so much, and what it was
2 known, each parent and everybody, their dream was that
3 their kids to grow up to be scholars in Jewish study. So
4 that's the reason I went to a yeshiva.

5 When I went to the yeshiva I was 14 years
6 old. I went, my first yeshiva was in Lodz. I learned in
7 the (proper name) yeshiva in Lodz for a time. It was, I
8 would say, about 60-70 students; and I learned a time
9 there; and the (proper name) yeshiva had a central yeshiva
10 in Otwock. Otwock is close to Warsaw, and down there we
11 learned more deeper learning, and it was for more advanced
12 students, and I learned down there until the war came on.

13 Q. Yes, I would like also to ask you to describe me some
14 of your day-to-day life like when you were in the yeshiva,
15 when you were--were you living outside the yeshiva in a
16 house? Were you renting? Maybe before the yeshiva, maybe
17 can you give me an example of what was for you a day-to-day
18 life when you were at home, when you were visiting your
19 parents, or when you were at the place.

20 A. Well, basically, the yeshiva life was, it was certain
21 kinds of yeshivas. But in this yeshiva they had quarters
22 to sleep, and they had quarters to eat. But on Saturday
23 we were designated to certain people to eat. In other
24 words, let's assume, let's say I used to eat (something)
25 by (name). He used to be the (something), you know, at

1 the rabbi of (something). And he was a very, very, nice
2 (something), you know, very respectable. And so we, the
3 management from the yeshiva saw to it that everybody
4 should have (something), a steady place to eat. So we ate
5 down there, I mean me, myself, at this space by
6 (something); and you had some other people, students; they
7 ate someplace else. And people kept to themselves as a
8 (something) that they can take home a boy from the yeshiva
9 for a (something) or what.

10 Q. Well, could you tell me also, were you visiting your
11 parents, or was it like you were going for the whole year?
12 And also what I wanted to ask you is, were you, were you
13 paid to go to the yeshiva, or did you receive some
14 allowance, and what kind of money was it at that time?

15 A. Well, we basically came home twice a year. We come
16 home from the yeshiva for (holiday name), for Passover,
17 and we came home for New Year's, for Rosh Ha-Shanah, and
18 we stayed until after (something). We didn't pay any fee
19 to the yeshiva because the yeshiva was an institution that
20 they collected money; they had some richer people that
21 they supported them.

22 I received from home, I received every once
23 in a while certain packages of, like, cookies and cake and
24 some, some food. And like beside, you know, we received,
25 like, jam or salami or baloney or some roasted chicken or

1 whatever. We received it just to have it, and cakes and
2 cookies.

3 Q. Could you tell me what type of money was at that time,
4 what was it called? What was the name?

5 A. The name of the money in Poland was zloty, called.
6 It was, they had a good money, but it was hard to get the
7 money. People didn't have the money, but the name of the
8 money is zloty.

9 Q. Was it, over there, was it, instead of having money,
10 was it most important to have things for trading instead
11 than to have money?

12 A. No. It was people trade with money. It was not a
13 trade for item per item or service for service. It just
14 was for money.

15 Q. So there was not like black market or anything like
16 that at that time?

17 A. No, it was no black market. Everything was
18 obtainable for money.

19 Q. I would like to ask you when you were studying at the
20 yeshiva was there a time set to study the history of
21 Poland and in what way was it taught? And what kind of
22 history?

23 A. The studying in the yeshiva was not that type
24 actually of history. You automatically, you learned
25 (foreign language) and Russian. You learned (something);

1 you learned (something); you learned (something). This
2 was not a type, basically the history, not history, you
3 learned when you were a (something) boy. And a
4 (something) boy, what I mean to say is basically until you
5 were 12 years old. But later on you just learn deep
6 learning in the, how we say, the wish of the parents from
7 the yeshiva boys, we didn't learn to become rabbis. We
8 just learned to know, to be learning.

9 And later on if a boy came to his married
10 age, usually he married and his parents or the bride's
11 parents took him in his business or helped him to
12 establish himself in business; or if he wanted to become a
13 rabbi and he could, he had (something), he was capable,
14 many of them went to be rabbis too.

15 But otherwise most often we went in the
16 trade business because as it was said and said again that
17 basically, the Polish government or it was not their
18 system that the Jew could be a lawyer or he could be a
19 doctor or he could be whatever. And the engineer or an
20 architect or, this type of jobs were very, very rare.

21 Q. Why was it that the Jew, Jewish person, couldn't
22 access to the position of being in the government?

23 A. Well, this is a matter, I would say, I don't want to
24 say that it was no Jewish people entirely in the
25 government; but I would say a very, very small percentage.

1 And it depends. I never seen a Jew to be a policeman. I
2 never seen a Jew to be, you know, employed in the city
3 hall. I never seen a Jew to be a teacher. It was, I
4 believe, that, as Poland was an anti-Semitic country, so
5 they tried to get by with the minimum, minimum that they
6 could.

7 Q. Was it, did the, how did they know that the person
8 was Jewish? I mean, was it written on their face that,
9 okay, that person was Jewish; and he couldn't access in
10 government; or actually did they have some kind of
11 identification card where it was written, Jewish on it?
12 And also I wanted to ask--that's it.

13 A. To the question, how they knew that a person is
14 Jewish, it's basically, first of all that most of the Jews
15 were dressed different than the Poles. And secondly, at
16 the, at the birth certificate was written, to what
17 religion everybody belongs. You didn't have to display it
18 if you are a Jew or not. But they knew it because,
19 basically, most of the Jewish people were different
20 dressed.

21 Q. What, could you repeat the last sentence, you said
22 the different address?

23 A. They were different dressed.

24 Q. Dressed. But beside the dress, there was not
25 something that the Jew should carry, any identification

1 that shows that he was this or that?

2 A. No, you didn't have to carry any identification, but
3 they knew it. And even during the war, when the Germans
4 were trying to catch Jewish people to work, or to catch
5 them whatever reason. The Poles pointed out at them, that
6 he is a Jew.

7 Q. Oh. What, at that time where you describe me this,
8 what was the name of the president? Could you give me the
9 name of president or the minister at that time?

10 A. Yeah, in this time before the war was name of the, I
11 believe, prime minister. Rigz Smigly. I will say you
12 spell it, R-I-G-Z. Smigly will spell: S with a dot on
13 top, M-I-G-L-Y.

14 Q. Yes, and what was the name of the, was it the
15 president, a king, or what was--

16 A. No, he was I believe, the prime minister, or the
17 marshall I believe, they called him.

18 Q. Now, during the past, any generation that Jewish
19 people were in Poland, there were no government that were
20 at all sympathetic to Jewish people?

21 A. Well, it was, I will say, in the time of Pilsudski,
22 they were sympathetic, but basically the style of
23 government were that the Jewish people were excluded,
24 willingly or not willingly, for certain positions or
25 certain jobs that they could not have.

1 For an example I will say, it was a big
2 factory in Starachovice. In this factory a Jew could not
3 be employed, could not hold any job, and a matter of fact,
4 let's say when they built certain buildings, and they need
5 a glassman, and it was no glassman, a gentile. It was no
6 gentile glassman. They had to hire a Jewish glassman. So,
7 it was that he could not enter the factory alone. A guard
8 or a policeman had to go with him.

9 Q. And that was usual for also other kind of jobs beside
10 this kind of factory? Was it the usually common things
11 happening there?

12 A. Well, it's a common, it was a common thing. I just
13 brought up a glass because some other craftsmen, maybe
14 they had gentiles too, but they never contracted a Jew
15 except they didn't have the other way.

16 Q. So Papludski, you said that was--Pilsudski--

17 A. You spell it P-I--

18 Q. Pilsudski. And in what year was this?

19 A. Pilsudski died in 1934. In other words, I will say,
20 I actually don't remember how long he was in power; but
21 from my memory I remember Pilsudski. I remember.

22 Q. So after 1934 succeeded someone, someone else, I
23 suppose. Was it a different policy into the government at
24 that time, a change of direction, vis-a-vis, the life of
25 Jewish people?

1 A. It was different, especially when Hitler came to
2 power. And he, he took possession against the Jewish
3 people, and as Poland is a neighbor of Germany they, they
4 took lots of things from them; and they had the feeling
5 that they can do, they can restrict to the Jewish people
6 more anti-Semitic things.

7 Q. Could you give me also, like I suppose, you come from
8 several generation of Jewish person yourself being in
9 Poland. How far back you can go, how many generation can
10 you go back?

11 A. Well, I believe as I stated before, my mother was
12 born in this town, (city name), and my grandfather and my
13 great-grandfather, and his father was born there so, I
14 will say that this is a history, I will say a history of
15 more than 100 years.

16 Q. Oh, okay. I would like to take a particular day of
17 what were you doing in Poland, like coming in the morning,
18 what would you do the first thing in the morning, until
19 the night? Where would you go, and where would you, what
20 kind of food would you eat? And give me some little
21 example.

22 A. Well, basically, when I was, as I said, when I was 14
23 years, I went to the yeshiva, so before we went to public
24 school; and we went to (something). In the day, let's
25 assume we got up at 7 o'clock. So we went to the

1 (something). After this we come home, we ate some
2 breakfast, whatever we ate, let's say some bread and
3 butter or bread and jam and a bit, some coffee or tea, or
4 summertime when in season we had certain greenery or
5 vegetables or whatever. Then we went to school. And at
6 school my mother (something) gave us some lunch to eat.
7 The lunch was basically some two pieces of bread or jam or,
8 and that's what was, like a sandwich.

9 Q. Could you tell me, I mean, to add more flavor to that
10 information, the bread. What kind of bread was it? What
11 kind of jam? I'm sure it's not like jam or bread like you
12 see in the United States. It's something much more
13 particular than that.

14 A. Well, it was basically the national food that we ate
15 was rye bread except for Saturday where we ate (something).
16 And we had jam like from plums, we had jam from pears or
17 honey or butter, you know. Or a mix of jams. It was
18 plums and pears and apples, and that's what it was.

19 Q. So it was homemade plum or you buy that, was it
20 bought in the market that was in that time?

21 A. It was certain times we made, if we didn't have it we
22 bought it in stores. It was available all the time. It
23 was the basic food eaten in Poland.

24 Q. So could you tell me after school what happened?

25 During the school, you ate the sandwich, and what happened?

1 A. Well, when we ate lunch, so when--we start school
2 basically 8 o'clock in the morning, and we learned. Then
3 lunch was, I would say, by 11 o'clock; and 11 o'clock the
4 younger students like till the fourth grade or they just
5 learned till 12 o'clock, four hours. But the older
6 students learned till 2 o'clock. And we had all kinds of
7 rehearsal; and we had, you know, we learned basically
8 Polish and we learned, you know, we learned geography, we
9 learned mathematics, we learn gymnastic, and how you say,
10 you know from the ground and everything.

11 Q. Tennis?

12 A. No.

13 Q. Basketball?

14 A. No, you know from--

15 Q. Soccer?

16 A. We played ball. It was some kind of a football or
17 whatever. Just football. This was basically the playing.
18 We went, we had recess; and later on we went home.

19 Q. The recess was at what time? You had time to eat
20 your sandwich?

21 A. Yeah. We had time to have lunch, and the recess was
22 about 15 minutes, and for lunchtime was a half an hour.

23 Q. Okay. So you have a recess for 15 minutes, and that
24 was the time where you were eating your lunch, no?

25 A. No.

1 Q. No, that was after. Now when you said you were
2 learning geography, and history--

3 A. Mathematics.

4 Q. --and mathematics. Could you give me what level of
5 geography or history or mathematics--

6 A. We learned basically the geography, you know, we
7 learned of Poland the geography to be known first. And we
8 learned certain countries. We learned the geography from
9 certain countries, like the neighboring countries. And
10 history we learned. And we learned not, a bit of America
11 or Asia or the Middle East countries, but it was not--the
12 basic was, you know, the geography from Poland.

13 Q. But the history, from what year to what year of
14 history was you taught; and at that time what, what was
15 your age when you were in pre-school--I mean in elementary
16 school? What kind of history were they giving you? And
17 you thought at that time that history was correct or were
18 there some kind of a political inference?

19 A. No, it was correct. It was, we learned the history
20 of Poland. How they came to be of being. And there was
21 what they fought all the years, and how they were divided
22 and united later, and so forth. And to try to make us
23 patriotic to the country of Poland.

24 Q. What about the history of the neighbor? Were they
25 giving what view of, like for example, you were close to

1 Germany before the war. What view were they, what feeling
2 at that time the people when they were teaching history?
3 What was the feeling toward Germany or toward Russia?

4 A. Well, they basically didn't have a good feeling
5 because Germany and Russia and Hungary, they always had
6 wars with Poland; and they split up Poland because Poland
7 was coming to be an independent country in 1920 or 1919.
8 And before it was about hundred years, it was under the
9 rule of Russia.

10 Q. So after you finishing your school, which was I think
11 you said about--

12 A. Public school. Yeah, I went to the yeshiva.

13 Q. No, what I meant is you were finishing school--

14 A. Well, we went to (something), and we learned till, I
15 will say, till 8 o'clock in evening, and we learned Jewish
16 studies. We learned (foreign language) and Russian--

17 Q. No, no. I meant, how much, what did you do at the
18 end of the--when you were in the public school, what did
19 you do after you finished learning geography, history?

20 A. Well, we went home. It was the final day. It was
21 the finish of the studies, and we went home. We came home;
22 we ate basically, you know, our lunch or call it whatever
23 you want it; it was basically a warm lunch in winter. In
24 summer we ate some summer food like, for instance, we had,
25 you know, we had young potatoes with buttermilk, or

1 whatever it was in season--to use in this country. And we
2 went, later on after we ate we went to (something), and we
3 learned till 7, 8 o'clock in the evening.

4 Q. Was it far, I mean, was it far away--the school from
5 your, from your place? I mean did you have to cross all
6 town or was it close?

7 A. Well, it was not too far. We, I believe the walkway
8 was probably about 15 minutes.

9 Q. And during those 15 minutes when you were going from
10 that school, when you were in pre-school, to your home
11 which, did they have a store? Did you stop to different
12 store or window display, and look at it and--or stop to a
13 place to buy candies and things like that?

14 A. No, we didn't stop, basically, we just went home.
15 And many times we had to run home because we were afraid
16 of our Polish students, that many times they fought with
17 us and had a fight so we just went home.

18 Q. So you mean sometime when you were getting out from
19 school there were Polish people waiting at the exit of the
20 entrance, I mean at the exit and tried to make a fight
21 with you and steal whatever you have from your bag or--

22 A. No, I don't mean the grown--the citizens, the Polish,
23 but basically all co-students. All co-people, you know,
24 from the school. They many times, they tried to beat us
25 up.

1 Q. And you couldn't do anything? You couldn't tell the
2 principal of the school what was happening or tell those
3 that students were kind of doing some problems to you?

4 A. Well, I don't know if we told the teacher about it or
5 whatever because, basically, the way of life was just run
6 away from them; and that's it.

7 Q. And you never, you never when you were fighting, you
8 were not able to reason that person, or is it because at
9 that time you were too small to be able to even talk about,
10 you know, about those subjects?

11 A. Well, we didn't thought of it when we were small and
12 we didn't have the idea, how to go by with it or what.

13 Q. Now, so that was at what age when you finish your
14 high school and then you went to the yeshiva; and when you
15 finish the yeshiva, could you give me some information on
16 that?

17 A. Well, basically, I didn't finish my studies because
18 the war broke out. When the war broke out I was about 18
19 and a half years. And so what I learned, I learned till,
20 till I was 18 and a half years.

21 Q. Yes, I want to go back a little bit. We forgot to ask,
22 so you went home; I wanted to specify; and then you ate.
23 During winter it was much hotter or warm, and during the
24 summer it was much cooler stuff--food. Now, when you went
25 home, did you go, did you talk with your parents; and what

1 usually were you talking about?

2 A. Well, I talked with them. They naturally, they asked
3 me how everything is, how I learned and that's what was
4 the--basically, if I had a good day and if I ate
5 everything, and that's what was to talk.

6 Q. What was your parents doing at that time? Were there
7 enough time to take care of you? For example, when you
8 were with the family, were you the only child at these
9 same times? I'm asking you a lot of questions.

10 A. That's all right. No. We were two children in our
11 family. And usually, you see, it was--they had, as I
12 mentioned, we been in the (something) business or in the
13 textile--we had a textile store one time.

14 Q. So, yes, could you please restate the last question
15 when we had to turn the tape?

16 A. What was the last question?

17 Q. The last question I wanted to ask you--let me--so you
18 were at home with your brother and talking about school.
19 Is your brother--was he much older, and also maybe you can
20 tell me his name?

21 A. We were two children--me and my brother. His name is
22 (proper name), and here he is called (proper name), and he
23 is younger than me by four years and he went--he was a
24 smaller child--the younger one; and he went the same
25 school, public school. He went to (something). And

1 that's the way we were brought up.

2 Q. Now, you said you have a family store in this street.
3 Was it the principal street of that village and--

4 A. It was next to the principal street. It was one of
5 the nicer of the central streets.

6 Q. So I suppose, because of the four seasons, you had to
7 do--were you helping in your family shop; and also because
8 of the four seasons, of course, you had different type of
9 clothes, maybe you can describe a little bit?

10 A. Well. I helped my father because usually my mother
11 was not in good health; and in order to do--to supplement
12 us--it was hard to make a living.

13 My father used to go to the--how you call
14 it--to close by little towns where they had the--like a
15 market day. It used to be that each town used to have his
16 market day. The market day that I mean to point out was
17 where people came together. It was the Polish people and
18 Jewish people. They brought in all kinds of merchandise
19 and we stood in the market and we had special--special
20 (something). It's a kind of a designated place. You pay
21 to the city--let's say like, for certain shop for the
22 state and it can--people from the, from the vicinity and
23 from the darker culture people and from the small villages;
24 and it was a market day, and people bought and sold and
25 spent money so I helped.

1 I went with my father for this type and it
2 was little towns close to us and let's assume--you know,
3 it used to be we had our market day in our little town on
4 Wednesday. It was a little town close to us. They had--
5 it was called (city name) in Polish language. In Jewish
6 it was (city name). They had the market day on Monday.
7 And it was a little town close by us, (city name). They
8 had their market day on Thursday. So far that when the
9 Jewish holidays came out in the market day so the market
10 day didn't have so much a function because there was
11 nobody to deal with because the Jewish people didn't
12 brought their merchandise, and nobody was desecrating the
13 holiday or whatever.

14 Q. So that was like a market where there was a lot of
15 clothes and a lot of food and everything, and people were
16 passing, and that was also the same in the winter, and so
17 it was the same in the winter. Now, that was when you
18 were much younger. But then when you were in the yeshiva,
19 your parents were not any more help. Was it difficult for
20 them?

21 A. No. They made it because my mother used to go many
22 times. And if not, my father took somebody to help him.

23 Q. What was the style of that time of people wearing
24 clothes or what kind of color were they using at that
25 point?

1 A. Well, the Polish people--the Jewish Polish people--
2 we used to wear mostly, I will say, respectable clothes.
3 But we wear long clothes, like today you say a long coat;
4 and some maybe used to wear like a semi-long coat; and we
5 had basically different type of hats; and we wore--and for
6 Saturdays we wore different clothes. We had--our hats for
7 Saturday were different, how you--

8 Q. Now you said there was a difference of clothes of
9 what Jewish people were wearing, difference of color,
10 difference of type of clothes between Jewish and also
11 non-Jewish, and also I suppose during summer was it
12 different than during the winter?

13 A. Well, we wore as I mentioned, long clothes like a--
14 like a short jacket, it was a longer one. The colors were
15 basically, you know, not in the most light picture. It
16 was basically darker colors; and we wore sweaters in
17 wintertime or whatever, or heavy jackets, heavy coats, and
18 long stockings, and heavy boots. We used to wear like the
19 Russian caps for winter. You know, nice and warm with
20 heavy cotton. In summer we wore lighter clothes.

21 Q. How much a cap or that kind of clothes was costing?
22 Could you give me some prices or like, for example, a sock,
23 a shoe, a pen--how much was it costing?

24 A. Well, basically a pair of stockings used to cost 50
25 groschen. This was a half a zloty. Or a suit cost, I

1 will say, about ten zlotys, or a pair of shoes cost about
2 ten zlotys. I--a shirt maybe cost two and a half zlotys
3 and a cap used to cost, I will say, two zlotys or three.
4 So it depended in the quality, and of course, for grown-
5 up it was a little higher because it was bigger.

6 Q. And that was in what year?

7 A. This was in the years, I will say, between '35 to '39.

8 Q. So there was--there was--was there inflation at that
9 time, or was it pretty much stable question of prices and
10 also so there was not much difference of clothes from year
11 to year; it was mostly pretty much the same?

12 A. No, it was not no inflation. It was pretty much a
13 stable market.

14 Q. What about the clothes? Was it like always the same
15 type of clothes? Were they some kind of design people
16 that were trying to change the way--the way people were
17 trying to dress or it was always the same type of clothes
18 whether it was winter or summer?

19 A. Well, I will say that the people they could afford,
20 of course, they had different type of clothes like in the
21 bigger cities. But, basically, in our little town I
22 didn't see much of a difference between one year or the
23 other. It was, people tried to dress accordingly and
24 respectably.

25 Q. You said in the big city, they were wearing different

1 clothes. Now you told me you went to Lodz. You went
2 maybe to Krakow or Warsaw. Could you give me your first
3 impression, as a child or as a grown-up, of those cities?

4 A. Well, those cities it was different type of peoples.
5 I knew Lodz very good. In Lodz, basically, it was a
6 richer people; and they had the highest standard of living;
7 and it was poor people that they struggle for a living.
8 And--but the way to find meanings of life, it was a
9 struggle in the whole of Poland because, basically, it was
10 not any--the standard of living in Poland--it was a poor
11 country.

12 Q. But what was the life of Jewish people compared from
13 small town to a big city? Did you--were you able to make
14 friend peoples in the big city easily? What was the
15 feeling about?

16 A. Well, the--regarding friends in the big cities, and
17 the peoples that I associate, I always made friends. We
18 always had, you know, people in my age. We had friends.
19 And the people in the big cities, the richer people lived
20 in a higher standard. Even in my little town, you had
21 categories of people where they made a living easier. One
22 made easier than the other. And naturally, they lived
23 better. Their homes were better. But in the basic system
24 it was everybody--it was a living. Everybody made their
25 living accordingly.

1 Q. When--I would like to ask you, did you went to Krakow
2 and was in Krakow or in Warsaw a place of the town
3 separate from like a ghetto-type of things, and what was
4 the number of people at that time?

5 A. I never was in Krakow. I was in Warsaw, and I was in
6 Lodz and--this is the bigger cities that I was in Poland,
7 and it was--Jewish people didn't live separated. They
8 could live, basically, in any neighborhood that they
9 wanted. But automatically it was a Jewish concentration
10 where people, Jewish people, lived in certain places more
11 together. But it was not--it was not designated a ghetto,
12 or whatever. We didn't know about this thing.

13 Q. So there was in one particular area a more
14 concentrated Jewish people. You don't know what
15 percentage of the population? Was it, for example, in
16 Warsaw, how many Jewish people were there?

17 A. Well, in Warsaw before the war, I would say it was
18 about 300,000 people, if not Jewish people. And the
19 Jewish people concentrated, you know, in certain--as I
20 said--they could live anyplace. But the most of the
21 Jewish people lived in the (something). It was a very,
22 very, you know, business street (something) in Warsaw.
23 And around the neighborhood this was mostly where Jewish
24 people, I would say, lived.

25 Q. What was--was it the people, the Jewish people, that

1 was living there? Was it in big building? Was it houses?
2 Could you give me some information about the way of life
3 they were leading?

4 A. Well, usually it was big buildings; in a building
5 could live 40, 50 tenants or maybe more; and the way of
6 life is--was most like everybody could afford.

7 Q. And how much did cost? For example, were you renting
8 for yourself? Were you renting when you were in Lodz or
9 in Warsaw or were you going to a friend's or a hotel when
10 you were visiting those place, and how much was it costing,
11 the rent?

12 A. Well, I never rented, not in Lodz and not in Warsaw
13 because, as I said, I was in the yeshiva; and if I had to
14 be in Warsaw, I went by a friend because I could not
15 afford to go to a hotel.

16 Q. How much was it costing at that time?

17 A. A hotel, how much it costs, I don't know.

18 Q. Okay. Now, you finish--at what age did you finish
19 your yeshiva?

20 A. I said before, I learned in the yeshiva until the war
21 broke out, and it was when I was 18, 18 and a half years
22 old.

23 Q. And where were you? Were you still in Lodz or in
24 Warsaw at that point?

25 A. I was in Otwock in this point when the war broke out.

1 This is close to Warsaw.

2 Q. Also, were Jewish people or yourself--were you able
3 to go to other country to visit other places?

4 A. Basically the (something) you could. If you had the
5 money to obtain a visa or a passport, you could go. But
6 we have to take in concept that it was not so as today,
7 where in ten hours you can be--let's say you are in
8 California; and in ten hours you can be in Israel, or in
9 16 hours. But if somebody wanted to go someplace, he had
10 the means to go, he could go.

11 Q. And at that time no one were thinking to go to Israel?
12 No one came to ask you whether you wanted to stay in the
13 East in Poland?

14 A. Well, everybody wanted to go. But it was no place
15 where to go. One, for the--for the monetary situation
16 people didn't have money; and secondly, they didn't have a
17 place where to let them in. Like my father, he made many
18 tries to go to Israel; and his only ambition was to go to
19 Israel; but he could not have--he didn't have an entry;
20 they didn't let him in.

21 One time it was happened that they permitted
22 a certain number of Jewish people--rabbis--to go to Israel
23 to become rabbis so my father (something) himself to be as
24 a rabbi to go to Israel. But almost the time that he
25 supposed to get his visa, they discovered this thing, that

1 this thing was not--it was a fiction--a friction. It was
2 not sincere. It was not true, so he could not go.

3 Q. But, there was no--I mean at that time of course, it
4 was Palestine. Is there--was it the government that
5 didn't let him go in Poland, or was it the government in
6 Palestine which was on the different--the British mandate
7 that they didn't want to let them go, and what year was it
8 happened?

9 A. Well, it's just when my father tried, it was, I will
10 say, between '34 and '38; and it was not that the Polish
11 government--the Polish government let the Jewish people
12 out. It's only he didn't have an entry visa to Palestine.
13 It wasn't in the British Protectorate, or mandate, and
14 that's what happened.

15 Q. So, there was no way--I mean each time that you felt
16 that there was--I mean your father felt there was a
17 possibility to go to Israel, and he thought the visa was
18 good. Each time it seemed that it was not good.

19 A. What was it? Exit, you know. Well, as I said, I
20 mean, they could go out; but they didn't have the entry
21 visa to go to Palestine; and it was all the time he was
22 struggling, my father, to leave Poland. But he could not
23 come, so the war broke out.

24 Q. Was he doing it by himself or was it like a Jewish
25 community that was trying to help him?

1 A. Well, it was organizations, basically. Each town had
2 an organization. Like, as I mentioned in the beginning,
3 you know a time I didn't make this point. It was--it was
4 organizations that they belonged to the (something). It
5 was the orthodox type of people. It was (something). It
6 was (something), and it was some other organizations, and
7 everybody--each organization tried to--tried to gain exit
8 visas to Palestine as much as they could, if--if it was
9 possible. If I remember correctly, that from our little
10 town, went to Israel--today what's called Israel--in those
11 days just four people from our town went to Israel.

12 Q. So for 25, 225 families, only four?

13 A. 250.

14 Q. 250. Four people were--

15 A. Four people. One family was--they took with them two
16 children. They are still in Israel. She is--her name is
17 (proper name), and she got grandchildren and
18 great-grandchildren. Oh, in one family was a brother and
19 a sister. Their name was (proper name), and his sister I
20 don't remember the name. And he is still alive. He lives
21 today in Jerusalem.

22 Q. How come this family were able to go and none of
23 your--of those people that try? Was it--did they go to
24 different organization? What organization they were able
25 to go?

1 A. Well, they went, it was the British--the British
2 government permitted certain amount of people to go to
3 Israel each year; and the people, they had to make
4 themselves worthy of going. They had to prepare
5 themselves to go to (something). But (something) means to
6 prepare themselves to do all kinds of work, whatever it is;
7 that they will not fall to the government if the
8 government has to support them; and they went, and they
9 were lucky. They were from the (something). They were
10 lucky that they got exit visas. Not everybody that went
11 in (something) was lucky enough, even he had (something)
12 to get exit visas.

13 Q. And what organization were you belonging from?

14 A. Well, we belonged to the orthodox--a (something)
15 organization.

16 Q. And what was that organization, I mean?

17 A. This organization was the--you call it today, the
18 strict orthodox organization; and their aim was to go to
19 Israel and to build an Israel according to the Torah and
20 to the strict laws and regulations.

21 Q. And besides--that's what your father was belonging,
22 but what about yourself? Were you belonging to a youth
23 organization, also with different aims?

24 A. When I was a younger boy, I belonged to the--it was--
25 the name of the (something). It means the younger

1 generation. I believe, if I'm translating it right, it's
2 like the younger bloom from the (something)--the
3 youngsters.

4 Q. Do you know about friends that you were playing
5 together when you were in Poland that still alive, I mean,
6 beside those four people? Do you know other people that's--

7 A. Well, I know other people that they emigrated to
8 other countries, for instance, to Brazil, to Canada; but
9 the people from my age, I will say, we remained. After
10 the war we were only, I will say, around between 20 or 25
11 people from our little town survived. The most of it, 25,
12 about 25.

13 Q. 25. So the British didn't want to let you immigrate,
14 and at that time did you--which was in 1936, '34, '38--between
15 '34 and '38--you tried to emigrate to Palestine. At that
16 time did you know that something was going to come up that
17 it was not any more safer for you to stay in Poland?

18 A. We knew that something is coming up. It was brewing,
19 the war was brewing. But we never imagined that it's
20 going to come to such a stage where it's going, another
21 like Germany will fold Poland and will try to erase the
22 Jewish people and not to be left--not one.

23 Q. Well, how did you know that? What kind of
24 information did you get that the war in 1934--in 1934 you
25 wanted to emigrate to Palestine because there was some

1 kind of resentment that something was coming up. What
2 made you lead to that information? How did you get that
3 information?

4 A. Well, the reason why we wanted because we always felt
5 strangers in Poland. We always were treated like second-class
6 citizens. This is one reason. The second reason--the
7 economic reason was, it was how to make a living; and we
8 were trying to--or my parents--were trying to bury
9 themselves; and that's the reason they wanted to emigrate.

10 Q. Could you give me any information regarding--how did
11 you finally decide that the war was coming? How did you
12 get such information in 1934?

13 A. Well, Hitler come to power, and he instigated, you
14 know; and he took away from the Jewish people all the
15 rights; and the Nurnberg laws were enforced and all kinds
16 of stuff. And--it wasn't--we knew everything, and so
17 basically the Jewish people, you know, they tried to
18 emigrate; and we didn't have the place where to go.

19 Q. So you mean that there was information that was in
20 the radio, or I suppose in radio or newspaper, that was
21 given that such event was happening and was going on in
22 Germany; and that was in 1934. Such information was given,
23 such a time?

24 A. No, it was not exactly in '34. Because in '34 it
25 still was in the, I will say, in the miniature stage. But

1 basically, in '36 or '37 we knew; and we felt it; and the
2 anti-Semitism in Poland was getting more and more, bigger
3 and bigger. For instance, as they demonstrated against
4 the Jews not to buy in Jewish stores. Not to patronize
5 Jewish businesses, and so forth, and so forth.

6 Q. And that was still before the war, I suppose?

7 A. Yes, this was before the war, right.

8 Q. And but, what--what make the government, which was
9 not into the domination of Germany at that time, to listen
10 to Germans?

11 A. Well, it is not the point that they listen because
12 the Germans talk to Poland. It's only that it gave them
13 in to Poland. As I mentioned, they always were
14 anti-Semitic; and they figure it, you know, they hear
15 what's going on in Germany. So they--they were more
16 stronger, they used more stronger anti-Semitism.

17 Q. Now, how come now that Poland was starting to do this?
18 Now Germany were doing that. How come at that point you
19 didn't flee when you felt that, you didn't go to another
20 country beside Palestine which at that time was into the
21 domination of English? Why you didn't go to another
22 country?

23 Q. Well, we didn't have any relatives in America. We
24 didn't have any relatives in other places. And that's the
25 reason that we didn't go; and as I mentioned before,

1 Poland was always anti-Semitic against the Jewish people;
2 but it never came to a point where it will be said that
3 they are going to--to eradicate the Jewish people or
4 whatever. We lived with them for centuries like this.

5 Q. Did you feel frustrated that none of the country in
6 the world you could immigrate it, and none would accept a
7 Jewish people? Did you felt revolted?

8 A. Well, I will say this, I didn't understood exactly;
9 but actually it's going to come to us; and I didn't had
10 the picture so clear that this type of--this type of
11 happening is going to happen to us. So we lived like
12 day-by-day living, and we didn't--we didn't know exactly
13 that it sure going to be a war in those earlier years--
14 '34, '35, or '36, '37. And we heard everything that's
15 going on in Germany, but we didn't--we thought that this
16 was not going to happen in Poland because Poland is a
17 different country.

18 Q. There was no Jewish organization or meeting for in
19 case of such things that would happen which--what would
20 you do in such a case, and also were there some kind of
21 preparedness in case if Poland was going to be invaded?

22 A. It was organizations. But it was, if I am right, I
23 didn't believe that it was ever thought that it's going to
24 come to a situation like it came.

25 Q. And no one came to say anything in favor of leaving

1 your stuff, your places, your money, whatever you own and
2 go away as quick as possible?

3 A. Well, it was as we know in those days, was the
4 (proper name) organization where (something). He was the
5 leader and he warned the Polish-Jewish people of Europe to
6 leave Europe and leave everything, that it's actually said
7 that it's too many Jewish people in Poland. But many
8 people, you know, said that he's not talking right or many
9 of them didn't listen to him; and the basic thing is it
10 was no place to go.

11 Q. And so he didn't provide you with any answer to how
12 people would go if they leave everything, how they would
13 go and in what way?

14 A. I don't believe that the question was if the people
15 leave everything. They could take with themselves, you
16 know, certain amount--I don't know how much the
17 restriction will be, but what they could take with them.
18 But the thing, as I said, it was no country to let them in.
19 Like in 1939, or whatever, it was a conference in French.

20 Q. Yes, it was a conference in Avignon.

21 A. Avignon, right. That's what I mean to point out, and
22 it was other kinds of countries, and it was only two Latin
23 American countries that they permitted. I believe a
24 restricted amount of Jewish people to go in. And like the
25 Australian delegate said, as they don't have any

1 anti-Semitism in Australia; and they didn't want to import
2 it, for instance, or many other countries; and this is how
3 the situation was. By the end of the line that the Jewish
4 people didn't have the place where to go.

5 Q. Was there another conference beside the Avignon
6 conference?

7 A. It was another conference in Bermuda. I believe it
8 was in 1944 and this was--this was--this conference
9 achieved only, if I am right, to establish a War Refugee
10 Committee. But to--to the rescue of Jewish people, it
11 didn't have much effect.

12 Q. But, before the war was there any other conference
13 where the German also participate to find what was
14 the--going to be the solution to the Jewish problem?

15 A. I think it was, but I'm not too much familiar at this
16 point.

17 Q. So, what can you--

18 A. It was, I believe, they made up with the Germans;
19 that the German people will not let out youngsters to
20 Palestine; and I believe that before the war England
21 permitted a certain amount of young people to go to
22 England.

23 Q. That was still a limited number which could be
24 counted almost on your hand. Now, everybody--so after
25 hearing that no one wanted to accept, and they had

1 conference to agree that they would not move Jewish people,
2 and knowing that at that time, what makes you feel? What
3 did you felt?

4 A. Basically to say, I didn't--I was not familiar, and I
5 was a youngster, I was not familiar with the situation so
6 much and what Jewish people in general felt, my thinking
7 is that they didn't thought that it's going to come to
8 such a catastrophic situation as it happened.

9 Q. But now that you know the fact that of that history
10 that they could have changed all nature of the war; that
11 if they would have taken Jewish in different country maybe
12 they would not have had so many eliminated. How do you
13 feel about now that they were not able--those government
14 decided to not let Jewish people come into their places?

15 A. Well, I believe that this was Hitler's cards. He saw
16 that no country wants to take in Jewish people, so he felt
17 that he can do with the Jewish people whatever he wants.

18 As a matter of fact, I heard after the war
19 from the Jewish brigade that they took part in the Second
20 World War. They had a--they had a meeting in one of the
21 camps after the liberation, and they said after Hitler--
22 Hitler sent out the two ships from Romania. Struma and
23 Patria was the names of those ships, and those ships were
24 circling the seas for many, many months; and nobody let
25 them in. So the final thing was that Hitler torpedoed

1 those ships, and most of the people sank into the ocean;
2 and as he saw nobody cares, so he felt that he got an open
3 card to do with the Jewish people whatever he pleases.

4 Q. So that makes you feel angry about that, I suppose?

5 A. Well, of course it makes feel angry, but this--I knew
6 this after the war.

7 Q. Now, you said the war broke out, and could you tell
8 me--you said in what places were you, and what were you
9 doing and how did you heard about the war breaking out?

10 A. Well, when the war broke out, I was in Otwock. As I
11 said, I wasn't in the yeshiva. And one of the first bombs
12 fell in Otwock. It was on a Friday morning, and then the
13 war started. So Sunday, we heard, you know, that the
14 Germans are bombarding, you know, all the cities and
15 everything. So we run more to the east.

16 Q. To the east in what direction?

17 A. It was in the direction to Lublin; but as we run, the
18 faster they run. So to each little town we came by it was
19 bombarded, and it was burning, and it was--so we run so
20 about, I will say, about four days. And we saw that it's
21 no solution to this running so we went back to Otwock.
22 And in Otwock we were until after (something). And the
23 Germans were down there, and they did actually certain--they
24 made some--they caught some people to work, the Jewish
25 people in other kinds of stuff and everything. But it was--

1 it was bearable.

2 We thought that it's going to be just a--for
3 a temporary situation. After (something), you know, it
4 was after (something) most of the yeshiva boys--everybody
5 took his few things, whatever he got; and we walked home
6 because it was no communication. We went by foot home;
7 and we went, I will say, about four or five days; and we
8 organized something to eat. It was hard to get it, and we
9 came home.

10 And as we came home, the--it was say, the
11 same procedure, the same procedure--they caught Jewish
12 people to work. They did with them dirty work and nothing
13 paid, and many cases they beat people. They shot some
14 people for no reason at all or whatever, and this thing
15 went on for a time.

16 After for a while, I will say, for a number
17 of months, they--they formed a Jewish committee. The
18 Jewish, they called it the Judenrat. And they made, let's
19 say, you know, the leaders from the Jewish community.
20 They appointed them to be leaders of the Jewish people.

21 Q. That was the Germans that did that?

22 A. Yeah. It was--it was a Jewish Gemeinde, a Jewish
23 Judenrat before. But, no, they--the Jewish--the Judenrat--
24 the Jewish committee had different functions. They had to
25 obey the functions or listen to the functions, what the

1 German people told them to do.

2 Q. Could you tell me also, so you--the trip back home.
3 Could you give me--how was it?

4 A. Well, the trip back home was basically, we went by
5 foot. In many cases we took a little horse and buggy or
6 somebody had a--we met a horse and buggy; we gave him some
7 money; he took us for a certain number of places. And
8 Germans were--it was already occupied Poland at this time,
9 and it was Germans all over, but it was as--we pushed
10 ourselves through because it was lots of people. They
11 were running away from one place to the other, and no--
12 everybody went back to their home place. So they--and as
13 I said, the Germans didn't know the difference between a
14 Jew or a Pole. So they didn't--basically, they didn't
15 make any difficulty for us to go home.

16 Q. Why make it--why did it make you decide to go home
17 and not to go away to a different direction than where the
18 German was going, in the opposite direction?

19 A. Well, first of all, if you mean to say why we didn't
20 went to Russia, or whatever. In this time, as I said, I
21 was a young boy. I didn't know what it could be happening,
22 and I didn't foresee that this thing was going to happen,
23 and I went home. And basically, the life was not so
24 pressing; it was--it was bearable. It was livable, I will
25 say, to a degree. Because the thing to be bad for the

1 Jewish people didn't start all in one time, especially it
2 was right when the Germans took over Poland. They had to
3 establish themselves and set foot in it.

4 Q. When you went back at home, what did you talk with
5 your family? What did you say to your mother, to your
6 brother, and father?

7 A. Well, it was nothing to say because we just had to
8 live in the situation as we are. And as long as their
9 life was in a way, that your life was not endangered--we
10 were used to a life, like to be suffering. Let's go this
11 way.

12 Q. At that time, you were, what was your age?

13 A. My age was close to 19 years.

14 Q. And your father knew that the reason he wanted in
15 1934 to go to Palestine is because the he didn't want to
16 live that life anymore. Now that war was in Poland, what
17 was his feeling at that point? Did he have something that
18 he wanted to do?

19 A. Well, his feeling was to emigrate. But as he didn't
20 have a way to emigrate, so he wanted to do it, but he
21 could not do it. It was nothing to do.

22 Q. And at that time did you talk about a plan of action,
23 I mean of what would you do now that you're occupied by
24 the German? What was the fear or things that might happen?

25 A. I would like to give you a briefing, basically, that

1 when the Germans occupied Poland, it was not like we hear
2 today that is happening in Afghan, Istan, or it happens in
3 some other countries where people revolt against occupying--
4 occupying country or whatever. Because first of all, to
5 be familiar better in the situation, it was not that you--
6 Waffen, let's say, you know--arms--were not obtainable in
7 those days. Like today you can buy it for money or you
8 can obtain it by--by storming a magazine from arms or
9 whatever.

10 And a fact to it, we can say it--let's take
11 the Polish people after Germany occupied Poland. It was
12 not much revolt against the government, where the Polish
13 people, they were more, more at their home. They had more
14 footage, and they didn't did it either, and the Polish
15 people didn't did much of the revolting, even they were
16 more at home; and they had more footage; and I will say,
17 that even the rest of the western European countries
18 didn't did much revolting like French or the Netherlands
19 or Belgium or Denmark; or until the later years they got
20 organized. They did something, but in the beginning
21 nobody revolted. First of all, that the rigor from the
22 German people and the German army was so strong that for
23 any little darts that they had it was no other penalty but
24 that death by shooting. So everybody was afraid.

25 And later on after the Germans got settled,

1 and they organized with us--they, they gave orders to the
2 Judenrat, to the Jewish leaders, you know. First of all,
3 it was to register how many Jewish people there are and
4 the names of everybody and the names of children and
5 everything; and they restricted, naturally, the Jewish
6 people to less rights than the Poles had; and they caught
7 Jewish people more to work and gave them dirty work; and
8 they start, you know, from time to time to shoot somebody,
9 but it was in miniature way. It was not in a mass killing.
10 Later on in years, you know, and as everybody had
11 something, we still were at home. We sold whatever we had.
12 It was hard to make a living because they took away from
13 the Jewish people. The Jewish could not have any store,
14 any ways of earning a living, a livelihood.

15 Q. So your store was taken away, and that was right by
16 Passover, or before Passover?

17 A. Well, this was, I will say--I will say it was the end
18 of the first winter. Let's say it was 1940, in the middle
19 of 1940. I will say May, June, or whatever; and they took
20 it away and a little bit of--of merchandise, of course, we
21 were hiding. But whatever we sold it was in the black
22 market. It could not be in the open and everything got
23 scarce, and they initiated coupons for everything.

24 Whatever a person had to buy, you had to have coupons; and
25 those coupons were given mostly not to Jewish people--it

1 was not given those coupons.

2 Later on they organized a Jewish market just
3 for Jewish people to buy, like, groceries; and we had
4 coupons. You had the right to buy, let's assume every day
5 so and so much bread and so and so much--some other stuff.
6 And they caught us to work and again the same thing.

7 Finally, the Jewish Gemeinde, or the Jewish
8 community leaders, came to a settlement with the Germans
9 that each Jew will work, of course, not paid--for nothing--so
10 and so many days a week and so and so many hours a week;
11 and basically, it got calm for a while. Let's assume I
12 work two days a week for nothing or whatever, or somebody
13 else the same. And--but this thing didn't last too long.
14 Every day was different--different orders to squeeze in to
15 the Jewish people.

16 Q. What--they were assigning special work, like military
17 work, or was it like regular work?

18 A. It was to help the army. It was to clean; it was
19 to--it was regular work, not anything professional--not
20 anything that it was a regular type of work. Until later
21 on it was, I assume it was 1941 or whatever, we were
22 allowed to be written up to go in the--in the--to do the
23 factory ammunition work.

24 As I mentioned, I'd been later on in
25 Starachovice because my father, he--before the war, two

1 years, as he had a difficult time to earn a living in my
2 little town, (city name), he moved to Starachovice; and in
3 Starachovice was a big factory. It was about 10,000,
4 15000 people working in this factory. It was a factory
5 that they produce ammunition mostly for the Polish
6 government, and they had good jobs and everything, and the
7 city of Starachovice was more affluent with livelihood,
8 and it was easier to make a living. And my father--he was
9 a good merchant, and he built himself up fairly good.

10 So later on they assigned us to the those
11 factories, and they paid us a certain amount of money.

12 And we worked in this way.

13 Q. How much money were they paying you?

14 A. I cannot remember how much they paid, but we were
15 getting an amount--a substantial amount of money that it
16 helped us to live. It was a bigger part of money that we
17 could, let's say, let's assume they gave us maybe about 60
18 percent that we needed to like, live. If we needed, let's
19 assume \$50, they gave us \$30--or 30 zlotys. So it helped
20 us.

21 But before they took us again--yeah, I
22 omit something. We were, as you might know, in Poland
23 didn't have good roads, and the German machinery--when they
24 took over Poland, they had to build up the highways and to
25 make them wider and make them more efficient and more

1 better. So they took the Jewish people to do this work to
2 widen the roads, and we were getting up, you know, early
3 in the morning, I will say 4 o'clock. And they took us
4 out for 30 miles away, and we worked until 7 or 8 o'clock
5 in the night. And of course, we were suffering, you know;
6 and we didn't have, you know, any hot meal; and it was
7 cold. It was wintertime, until this time, and the name of
8 the company that undertook this thing was the Hasag.

9 Q. What was the Hasag? What was the name?

10 A. H-A-S-A-G, Hasag Company. It's a German firm.

11 Q. But okay, now, when you were working in this company,
12 German company, did you not thought of making sabotage or
13 anything like that to destroy the occupants?

14 A. No, we didn't thought of it, and we didn't thought to
15 make sabotage. It was not, it was not feasible; and it
16 will not be achievable either. It will only cause--if I
17 will make sabotage, I will be shot on the spot. And
18 that's the reason that it was--it was not--we were not
19 told of it; and we were not organized for it, because
20 basically, we thought the war was going to be a short time;
21 and we will live through. And later on, as I said, we
22 worked in the factories. We worked in the factories for a
23 number of time, with pay. And--

24 Q. In the factory what--could you give me some detail
25 information of how--what were you doing in the factory?

1 A. In the factory where I was working, they melted iron
2 ore; and we made from this iron ore--they made iron.

3 Q. For what?

4 A. The iron was used for--for war purposes, like to make
5 ammunition and to make, you know, let's say, you know,
6 cars or whatever--all the kinds of parts, what they did
7 from the iron.

8 Q. It was raw material.

9 A. That's right, raw material. That's right. Then we
10 did this for a number of time, and we went home after work,
11 and we had the right to go to work by ourselves and other
12 kinds of stuff. We were like the Polish workers, but we
13 had lesser pay; and we did, of course, the harder work.
14 The Poles did the easier.

15 Q. But were they not at that point--did you not feel
16 like you wanted--there was no organization right now to
17 get Jewish together to do something about this or to try
18 to--to think about something else--to prepare for yourself
19 that maybe something might be much worse coming for Jewish
20 people?

21 A. Well, to this effect I just want to bring you a story.
22 As I mentioned, my father dealt with lots of people from
23 the factories that they worked. My father was an orthodox
24 Jew, and he was wearing a beard and everything. It was
25 hard for him to go to his clients and he introduced me to

1 this clients, to his clients.

2 Q. What kind of clients? What do you work for?

3 A. He sold goods to these people, and he knew them. So,
4 as the war broke out and he had--he could not go to his
5 people, to his customers; and because it was--he didn't
6 have an open store. He just went and showed them samples
7 and sold them. So anyway, as I will say, a peddler,
8 maybe, in the American language.

9 Q. So he was like a peddler, but was he selling to
10 Jewish people or to Christian people too?

11 A. No. He sold basically to gentiles. Yeah. And
12 because no Jewish people were permitted to work in this
13 factory, as I stated before; and he recommended--he got me
14 acquainted with his customers; and as I was a young boy,
15 it was easier for me to smuggle in to his customers, you
16 know, certain merchandise what they needed. And they give
17 me money, and I make made a good profit. Of course, this
18 was not legal.

19 And my father came to me, and he said to me,
20 "(proper name), maybe we should go flee to Russia,"
21 because those days lots of Jewish people went, fled to the
22 east to Russia. And I said to my father, "Listen." I
23 took out a bunch of money from my pocket, and I said,
24 "Dad, what is wrong here? It's nothing wrong. We will
25 live through the war, and as we expect that the war is

1 going to take a short time, why run away?" We didn't have
2 it so bad.

3 And so let me go back to my basic thing. So
4 this thing was going on that we work for pay for a number
5 of time. Later on they didn't pay us anything. They
6 stopped paying us and we had--must go to work for nothing,
7 for no money. But we still came home. We still had a
8 home. So, whatever everybody had he sold, and we somehow
9 existed, to call it.

10 And it was other kinds of Jewish
11 denigrations during 1940 until 1942, when they took all
12 the Jewish people out. It was, for instance, they one
13 time, they run out the young people and told them that
14 they have to come and they took him to Lublin. And Lublin,
15 it was a kind of a--of a work that they did down there
16 with coal--loading or unloading coal, shipping--I don't
17 remember what it was. And of course, the Jewish committee
18 did lots of effort to rescue, to bring home back people;
19 and they succeeded. And every time it was all the time,
20 every day it was a different--a different order for the
21 Jewish people. Many people they took, they asked to give
22 them this, to give them this, to get from the Jewish
23 community lots of money.

24 Q. They were asking money. How much money?

25 A. Contribution money. I don't remember the amount, and

1 they collected from the Jewish people. Of course,
2 everybody had to give; and if not, they said they were
3 going to shoot so and so many people and so and so many
4 things.

5 And later on they restricted us to a ghetto;
6 and the ghetto, basically, in Starachovice was not like to
7 say the Lodz ghetto or the Warsaw ghetto. You still could
8 meet gentiles, and somehow we lived. We existed.

9 Until the dark day came where they took
10 out--took the Starachovice people, as it is known they
11 started from Warsaw, you know, let's say, by I believe it
12 was by June. They started to round up the people from
13 Warsaw, and they took them to Treblinka or some other
14 death camps or death--death places.

15 Q. At that point did you know about this camp, or was it
16 pretty much publicized?

17 A. No, we didn't know. We didn't believe that the--
18 that they take the Jewish people to annihilate entirely;
19 that it was a mass--a mass--a mass order to kill every Jew
20 and Jewish child and Jewish women, not to leave nobody.
21 We knew it's no good. But we didn't believe that. But--

22 Q. I wanted to ask--no one did tell you that--or no one
23 did escape from the camp and said such a things was
24 happening?

25 A. In those days, we didn't--we didn't know, nobody was

1 aware of it. I will say so, that nobody was aware what is
2 happening. Maybe it was people that they escaped, but it
3 was not believable and this--this was the--the explanation--
4 one of the explanations. We thought they take us to work
5 someplace, or whatever, but it is not an item that they
6 kill the people.

7 So in those days when they took all the
8 people from Starachovice, as I said, I was employed at the
9 factory; and I had a--a permit to work and everything, so
10 they--this was--they called out that everybody--it was
11 about 6 o'clock in the morning; and everybody had to go
12 out from their house and to come to the market place. And
13 if somebody didn't went so fast or somebody tried to hide
14 or whatever, he was shot on the spot. And this day when
15 everybody was out, they called out, you know, the people
16 that they got permits to work, to go on one side; and the
17 people that they didn't have, they were not occupied, to
18 go on the other side. So naturally we went on the side
19 where we had the permits to work; and we stood down there
20 for a number of hours; and it was, as I recall today, it
21 was a hot day. And we stood and stood and stood.

22 Later on they took us to march down, they
23 built in Starachovice a camp. It was actually two camps.
24 One of the camp was the name, Myoofka (phonetically), and
25 one was the Shellnitsa (phonetically). The department

1 where I was working was belonging to the Shellnitsa
2 (phonetically), and the way to the Shellnitsa
3 (phonetically), I believe it was maybe about 2,000 people
4 that they had permits to work or around this figure. So
5 when we came up to the Shellnitsa (phonetically), it's a
6 place where the Polish government before used to train
7 soldiers or would-be soldiers to train them how to use
8 ammunition.

9 This place, it was a place--it was like a
10 mountain. In the middle it was empty, and it was two
11 mountains. They took us in it and in this part, the
12 leader it was (name), the name, or (name). They called
13 out that everybody, that got any possessions, gold, silver,
14 money, or any rings or jewelry or diamonds to give it out.

15 Q. Before you go further, could you tell me that at that
16 time why you were required to wear a star, like?

17 A. Yeah. We were required to wear an armband. It was--
18 the armband had a star, of course. This was starting, I
19 will say, in 1941.

20 Q. What was the reason they did that?

21 A. The reason was to identify that I'm a Jew.

22 Q. And what happened to those that were not wearing, I
23 mean?

24 A. If they caught somebody that is Jewish, and he didn't
25 wear, his punishment was to be shot on the spot.

1 Q. And that also, you wear that also in the ghetto?

2 A. Yeah, we wore this in the ghetto too.

3 Q. And in the ghetto there was not any kind of revolt
4 like they did in Warsaw?

5 A. No. Basically, as I mentioned, that the ghetto in
6 Starachovice was not a sealed-off ghetto. We still could
7 see gentiles. We still--it was not legal, but we still
8 could talk to gentiles, and we still could come in contact
9 with them.

10 Q. When you were in those ghettos, why you didn't try to
11 get help from the gentile to kind of have a resistance
12 kind of thing to get armament or something?

13 A. I will say regarding this case, it was not any
14 organization lined up with the gentiles, that the Jewish
15 people should ask them for help. Basically, one reason,
16 and I believe this is a major reason--because we didn't
17 trust the Poles. They could (something) to the Germans,
18 and if this thing will be known to the Germans, the people
19 that they will ask them surely will be shot and their
20 families too.

21 Q. So, let's get back to the camp, to the place of
22 armament where before they were training Polish soldier
23 beside that--beside answering me such question were there
24 also Jewish soldier in the Polish army?

25 A. Yeah. It was in the Polish army it was lots of

1 Jewish soldiers. They served in the army. Of course,
2 they were not treated as the Polish; and the Polish, let's
3 say hierarchy, didn't give them full respect. But as
4 citizens of Poland, the Jewish people had to serve in the
5 army.

6 Q. And now, you, I suppose now you are--right now let's
7 go back to that. You enter to that place where people
8 were training; and then they ask you to give all the money.
9 That's the commander of the German troop and you said you
10 don't know quite his name.

11 A. It was (name), or (name). And of course, lots of
12 people give the money; and my dad and my brother, they
13 were with me together. We were together. And he asked me
14 what to do. We had some amount of money, and I said,
15 "Give it to me." And I hid it in my shoes and everything,
16 and thanks God I went through. I passed and nothing
17 happened to us.

18 So we were down in the Shellnitsa
19 (phonetically) camp; and this down there, I will say, if
20 it was hell in the world was this one of the toughest
21 places to be. First of all, it was not organized.
22 Nothing was there available. And in a short, short time
23 people got typhoid and many people died.

24 Q. You said people get typhus, and they die.

25 A. Yes, they die. There was no cemetery, no hospital,

1 no medication and nothing. And, basically, they took us
2 to all the heaviest work that's possible, and we were not
3 used to this type of work, and we were beaten, and
4 denigrated, and what not.

5 Q. And that was the soldier itself that were doing the
6 beating?

7 A. Well, it was many of them. It was the Ukraines, and
8 it was the Germans, and it was the leadership. Of course,
9 the command was to do those things to the Jewish people.

10 Q. Where those Ukrainian came from? I mean, they were
11 not German--were they German?

12 A. No, they were not German. But they took the
13 Ukrainians when the Germans start the war with the
14 Russians in 1941, I believe in June was it. And they had
15 many of them that they registered to help the Germans, and
16 they knew that the Ukraines are not friends to the Jewish
17 either, and so they took them; and they served as a kind
18 of a--they carried Waffen--you know, ammunition--and they
19 were treated better than the Poles, and so on. The
20 Germans trust them to a certain degree. They were not in
21 the front. But they helped them regarding, you know, local
22 things to do.

23 Q. So, and do at that time people from the outside,
24 meaning Polish that were not Jewish, knew of what was
25 happening at that point?

1 A. Yes. They knew because we came in contact with them.
2 We worked in the factories and the Polish people saw us.

3 Q. And they saw all the beatings and all that was
4 happening inside that camp?

5 A. Well. They didn't saw what is happening in the camp,
6 but they saw us in the factory because in the factory we
7 came in contact with the Polish people.

8 Q. So, now, could you tell me more about the process of
9 the Ukrainians that tried to beat--I mean they beating you
10 and what was, did you have barracks where you were
11 sleeping, or was there places that you were located to
12 sleep inside that camp, and what was a day life in that
13 camp?

14 A. Well, the day's life was we had barracks. Of course,
15 the barracks had in the beginning straw mattresses,
16 mattresses that they were filled with straw. And,
17 basically, the winter started, and we were not prepared
18 because we didn't have the proper--we didn't have clothing,
19 and we didn't have--and it was the first winter.

20 This was the winter of 1942, and it was lots
21 of people became, got typhoid and they organized, as a
22 matter of fact, they organized some hospital, call it this
23 way. And it was people in this hospital because they
24 didn't want it that somebody will get--will get--somebody
25 will catch one from the other, typhoid. So they made the

1 hospital in one night. (Name), his name, he came down,
2 and he took out all the people.

3 I had in this time typhoid too, but my
4 father (something), he had the feeling that something is
5 going to happen; and he took me out from the hospital and
6 took me to his barracks; and this way he saved me. And
7 (name), he shot everybody from the hospital. So, this was
8 the one thing, and the people got sicker and sicker and
9 sicker, and in a time they made another hospital, and the
10 same story repeated itself. He came and he shot the
11 people.

12 So then it was--this was the whole winter,
13 and it was a miserable winter--lots of people died. And
14 at the Myoofka (phonetically) camp it was in a way better
15 because he was a very, very rude man. And down there they
16 had a different leader. So it was better.

17 Q. In a way was it better? You said he was ruder, much
18 stricter.

19 A. Well, he just--he was it looks that he was more a Jew
20 hater or whatever, and down there, the guy was not so bad.
21 That's it. Because basically, he didn't have orders to
22 shoot, or to a certain degree, to denigrate the people so
23 much. And he did it.

24 Q. It's a new place you're talking about right now.

25 A. This is the place where, after they took out all the

1 Jewish people, they took us to this camp Shellnitsa
2 (phonetically). This Shellnitsa (phonetically) is located
3 in Starachovice. It's about, let's say, 3 miles or
4 4 miles from the city. And they had barracks down there
5 for us and as I said, they had straw mattresses and we,
6 you know, we--we suffered very, very lots--lots of people
7 died.

8 So it came--I will say in the spring of 1943,
9 they moved us together at the Myoofka (phonetically).
10 Yeah, let me bring out one point. It was one time a case
11 where in the middle of the night he came into the camp,
12 and he said it was maybe 1 o'clock or two or whatever.
13 The guy, the (name), the leader; and he said everybody
14 should to go out, and we didn't knew what it is and
15 everything so everybody--it was lots of sick people in the
16 camp. The camp was on top of a hill, and we had to walk
17 down the hill, you know. And this place, and we had to
18 stay in a line, and we stood down there for a number of
19 hours and people cried and everything. We thought maybe
20 they going to take us to shoot and other kinds of stuff,
21 and we didn't know what's happening. And finally, after a
22 number of time, they told us we can go back.

23 So in the spring of 1943, we moved down to
24 the Myoofka (phonetically), and it started to be a little
25 better. It was not exactly spring, the beginning of

1 spring. But in Poland the beginning of spring is still
2 too cold. And what it happened then, it was a bit better,
3 to a certain degree. In this time they took from the--
4 from the Jewish, yeah. Let me make a point.

5 In those camps everything, it was the Jewish
6 management to a certain degree. They took, so we had,
7 you see, the Jewish management, let's say, whatever you
8 call it in the camp. And it was Jewish police that
9 they--when we went to work, they went with us, and when we
10 came back, they came back. But they didn't went alone.
11 They went with the Ukrainians because they took us to the
12 factory, and by this they took some Jewish police to
13 Lublin.

14 Q. What do you mean by Jewish police?

15 A. In camp it was, let's say, the policeman. He called
16 up everybody. Let's assume we had to go to work at
17 7 o'clock.

18 Q. How did he become policeman? I quite not understand.

19 A. Well, they had, the name was policeman. They didn't
20 have any ammunition. They had just had a rubber stick,
21 you know. The--the order of the day was, let's assume he
22 went, it was other kinds of factories; but it was in the
23 same place. Let's say it was a factory to melt iron ore.
24 It was a factory to make the compounds to ammunition. So
25 he had his command. Let's say he had the people that they

1 were designated to work at the melting factory. Let's
2 assume he had 60 people, so 8 o'clock in the morning he
3 called up the names: (name), (name), and so on and so on;
4 and if somebody was not, he made a mark that the guy is
5 absent, you know. And later they called him, they want to
6 know why, the reason he's absent. You know if it was a
7 legitimate, the right reason, you know, he--but if he
8 didn't wanted to go to work, you know, they could do with
9 him lots of things.

10 So anyway, they took those police to Lublin.
11 In Lublin was the camp Maidanek, and Maidanek was the name
12 of a camp. And they took them to this camp, and they
13 unloaded, the truck, I believe, if I am right, three big
14 trucks and they brought lots of clothing--clothes, you
15 know, and shoes and shirts, underwear and everything. And
16 at this time, you know, in--they distributed to everybody--
17 not to everybody, but to most of the people some clothing
18 because our clothes got already worn out. We didn't have
19 anything to change, and it was dirty and filthy.

20 So this helped us lot. Beside the point we
21 found in these clothes many gold coins, diamonds, rings,
22 because the people were hiding underneath, you know,
23 underneath the lining in certain places. And this, as
24 this thing came to the camp, the people start to live a
25 little better. We sold it to the gentiles. We got, you

1 know, we smuggled in bread. We smuggled in butter. We
2 smuggled in, let's say onions or whatever. Food.

3 Q. Where did those clothes come from?

4 A. Those clothes came from Maidanek, as I told you.
5 They killed the people in Maidanek because Maidanek was a
6 very, very big camp where they annihilate the Jewish
7 people in Lublin.

8 Q. Annihilate with what? You mean they annihilate?

9 A. Annihilated, they killed them.

10 Q. Oh, alienate.

11 A. Alienated, yes. They killed them, and as they killed
12 them, you know, they took off their clothes, or the people
13 had to disrobe themselves. So they got the clothes, and
14 we got the clothes, and these clothes helped us lots.

15 Q. And you could see on the clothes the blood of the
16 people that was killed, still blood on the clothes?

17 A. No. Because they were not blooded because as they--as
18 they--they (something). Before they killed the people, they
19 told them to take off the clothes.

20 So this thing went on, so as a matter of
21 fact, I remember today, my father (something), you know,
22 he had contact. He knew the guys from the Jewish leadership,
23 and he told them, you know, "(Name), my children are going
24 naked, and I am naked. I need--give me three coats," and
25 he told them, "Listen, come later." He came later. I

1 still remember this today. He gave him three coats, and
2 we just were newborn people. We covered ourselves with
3 those coats and everything. Because all whatever we had
4 to be covered was dirty and filthy, and we threw away even
5 the straw mattresses because they were full of lice.

6 Q. Lice?

7 A. Yeah. So this--it start, I will say, a new situation,
8 and a new type of--it was, I will say, a spark of sunshine;
9 and we worked, and we were used to the work. We knew the
10 work. But beside the point it came all the time, it came
11 certain things. They took some people. They took in one
12 time a hundred people and took them and killed them at--
13 what's the name of the place? They took out 120 people,
14 yeah, they killed them at the (something). (Something) is
15 the name of a place in Starachovice located, and they
16 never come back. One guy just escaped and he came back
17 and he told the story what had happened.

18 Q. So what did happen?

19 A. They shot all the people down there and buried them
20 in (something).

21 Q. How did they shoot them?

22 A. They shot them with the--just with the armament,
23 with the rifles.

24 Q. And what about the reaction of the German? Were they--
25 what was their reaction?

1 A. Well, their reaction, what was to say what their
2 reaction was? They killed people like flies anytime. If
3 not in Starachovice, They killed them someplace.

4 Q. So there was no, no feel of guilt or anything like
5 that. It was like something they liked to do?

6 A. Sure. Who thought of a felt of guilt? They didn't
7 thought of felt of guilt. It was their daily life. Every
8 day it was something happening. If it was not to the big
9 numbers, it was a smaller number. I believe I omit one
10 thing. In Starachovice the day when they took out the
11 Jewish people, you know, in one place it was cold and
12 (something) the (something); it means his house. They
13 killed 150 people in the day. And this was the day when
14 they took out all the Jewish people when the (something)
15 was.

16 So this thing happened, and in one daytime
17 they took a number of people, I do not know, and they
18 killed them close to Radom. The name of the place is
19 (something). And they brought back the clothes, of course,
20 we knew what had happened to the people. So this thing
21 went on for a number of time. And finally this went down
22 until, I will say--I will say until close to--they sent us
23 away to Auschwitz.

24 I forgot to bring a point of interest. It
25 was in 1943 or 1944 that--it was even a kosher meal for

1 Passover. It's not said in the sense of the word that it
2 was kosher.

3 Q. Kosher?

4 A. Kosher, but it was the sense that it was not
5 (something). In other words, not leavened bread was in it,
6 that the Jewish (something) tried to accommodate the
7 people that they wanted to eat not bread--that they cooked
8 them, let's assume, potatoes with borscht or some other
9 type of food, even (something) meat.

10 Q. The commander, which was German at that time, didn't
11 say anything about that?

12 A. He didn't have to know because it was no different.
13 He knew that they cooking, you know, they maybe cooked
14 (something) and kosher dishes for Passover. But the basic
15 food was no ingredients of leavened bread, of (something).

16 Q. And that happened only one time?

17 A. I am not sure that if this was in '43 and in '44, or
18 it was in '44 alone. I don't remember, or in '43 alone.
19 I don't remember.

20 Q. And did it happen only once?

21 A. I don't remember if it happened once or twice. Of
22 course, we (something), let's say, like Rosh Ha-Shanah, we
23 (something) the holiday prayers after work; and Yom Kippur
24 we (something) too. I believe that I never worked in
25 Starachovice on Yom Kippur, but other days we worked, and

1 I always fasted in Yom Kippur.

2 So this thing went on until 1944. Before
3 they took us away to Auschwitz they built a big camp again
4 in the Shellnitsa (phonetically), and everybody they
5 liquidated the Myoofka (phonetically) camp. We all went
6 up there.

7 Q. What do you mean by "they liquidated the camp"?

8 A. They took, as I mentioned, it was two camps--the
9 Shellnitsa (phonetically) and the Myoofka (phonetically)
10 camp. Now they built back at the Shellnitsa
11 (phonetically) a big camp. I don't know the reason, and
12 they made one camp only for the Jewish people.

13 Q. There was another camp for also, for other people?

14 A. For Jewish people. It was two camps, but now they
15 made one camp and--

16 Q. That, how long did it--how long did you stay there?

17 A. Basically, we were in this camp from I believe June
18 or July--July, 1942 until I believe August, 1944, we had
19 been in Starachovice. Or in the Myoofka (phonetically) or
20 in Shellnitsa (phonetically), but this was Starachovice.

21 Q. And during that time they were still beating? They
22 were still--what kind of job were you doing at that point?
23 Still in the metal work?

24 A. No, in this time I was in a different job. I did--I
25 put in--they brought, I will say, today it was about 8

1 inches of 8 inches, you know. The long--long pieces of
2 metal from Sweden or from (something). I believe, yeah,
3 the (something) factory and we cut this thing and put out
4 of it for the tanks or certain armaments and this by--it
5 was actually my father's job, but as I was a young boy,
6 and he was naturally older than I am, so I talked to the
7 foreman. He was a Pole, and I told him, "Listen, how is
8 it if I take this job, my father's job, and let my father
9 do the job what I'm doing?" So he agreed to it. So this
10 is--this was my job. I did it. And so we worked this
11 until number of time, and we got used to it, and it was, I
12 will say, basically the--to call it somehow--"a get used
13 situation." So this went on until, I will say, until 1944;
14 and I would like to take back one thing.

15 As I mentioned as we were in Starachovice
16 after the--the leader from the Germans, (name), shot all
17 the people from the hospital; and my father--I--my father
18 pulled me out miraculously and the day after, I don't know
19 how my temperature was or whatever. But it was not such a
20 thing that it should be any sick people in camp. So my
21 father (something) and my brother to many happy long years,
22 they hold me under their arms and took me to the factory;
23 and in the factory, I will say, I worked just like a
24 non-recognizable sick man. So because it--if I will be
25 recognized that I am sick to a certain degree, I will not

1 be there anymore. I will not be here. So this is a
2 recollection today to the other part.

3 Q. Also, I wanted to ask you, what about your mother?

4 A. Well, my mother passed away before the war, but I had
5 a stepmother; and she naturally, she was taken away, when,
6 you know, when they--when they took away all the Jewish
7 people, she was taken away too.

8 And we worked down there until 1944, in July
9 or the beginning of August. And it was an episode that we
10 supposed to go, I believe if I am right, it was like a
11 (something), they told to take us away from Starachovice.
12 And we were already out in the wagons, and I know they
13 came that we had to go back, so we went back. We thought
14 that the Messiah is coming or whatever. But the next day,
15 they--we had to, they took us away.

16 At this time it was an episode. We had
17 actually in Starachovice another small place where Jewish
18 people used to work. It used to be a--how they call it?
19 So, one episode where they had, as I said, a third place
20 where it was a small Jewish camp; and this was located in
21 (something), and (something) is a Polish word where they
22 cut the lumber to different sizes and they--in this night,
23 in particular, the light had to be out because they were
24 afraid maybe somebody will escape or whatever; and they
25 brought the people from this little camp to our camp

1 because they wanted to ship away everybody at one time.

2 And one lady she is--she still, she is, I
3 believe in North Dakota. I met her in Washington D.C. at
4 the holocaust gathering, and she pulled out a gun from the
5 German leader, and she was--she said to everybody, "Let's
6 make an uprising or whatever, because, you see what's
7 going to happen." They--they--I think they didn't know
8 that we are still there in the barracks or whatever. And
9 it happened so that she was took away and she kept this
10 gun for the whole night, and finally she surely should
11 will be shot if he will caught in this minute, but we
12 bribed them not--I mean the Jewish committee, whatever,
13 bribed them. And she gave him back the gun, and he let
14 her alive, and she's today alive. She lives in North
15 Dakota. She got six children, I believe.

16 And then, as it was, they thought many of
17 the people escaped in this night. It was some kind of a
18 makeup, I don't know even until today, that the gates were
19 open for a certain time, and many Jewish people escaped.
20 And many escaped through different ways, and many of them
21 got shot, and many of them got hurt, and many of them got
22 killed by the Polish people. And most of them didn't
23 survive. It survived a few, like (proper name). He lives
24 today in New York. His brother, (proper name), he lives
25 in New Jersey, and many, a few more people.

1 And they took us away. Of course, when they
2 took us away, we naturally didn't know where they take us;
3 and we drove away, I believe, it took us a night; and in
4 the morning we came to a place, and this was,
5 unfortunately, it was Auschwitz, Bergenau (phonetically).
6 And they took us down there in Bergenau (phonetically),
7 and right away they separated men from women. In the same
8 token, those camps in Starachovice, we were men and women.
9 The younger women they took to work too.

10 So in Bergenau (phonetically) they separate
11 us, and they took us and gave us a bed. They didn't made
12 any selection. Because due to the fact, all the Jewish
13 committee made something with the leader, the German
14 leader, that we will not go through a selection or
15 whatever. And they give us the striped clothes like, and
16 they give us tatoos, and my number is today A18792. It's
17 A18792, and my brother got a similar number, and my father
18 had a similar number too.

19 And we didn't, after we got in they cut us
20 our hair, and we didn't recognize one or the other because
21 we never wore any separate camp clothes. Even in
22 Starachovice, we wore civilian clothes. And we were down
23 there, and I believe that the same day we didn't have any
24 food in our mouths; they didn't give us. We just were
25 hungry until the next day. The next day they give us some

1 food, and we were at the--it used to be called the
2 (something), and we were down there. We got up, I will
3 say, 4 o'clock in the morning; and it was no place to do--to
4 relieve yourself. It was a place where we had to walk
5 quite a number of time, and it was full all the time
6 because it was lots of people, and the accommodations were
7 not made for this thing.

8 And during the whole day, we just carried
9 stones for a number of miles without any purpose; go with
10 the stones, let's assume, from east to west and from west
11 to east. And we walked so around the whole day. This was
12 for a number of days.

13 I don't know exactly how long I was in
14 Bergenau (phonetically). I was not too long. I will
15 assume it was ten days. And I was with my father and
16 brother there too, and they asked everybody--one time they
17 called us out and asked everybody what kind of a
18 profession he got. Well, I said I was a (something)
19 operator. It means I work for heavy machinery or whatever.

20 My brother worked in Starachovice. He used
21 to cut the big metal with a torch to mark how much should
22 be cut. And when he came to Bergenau (phonetically), he
23 was afraid to say that he is a welder; and so he didn't
24 say anything. But later on, thanks God, he gave me the
25 right idea and the right time. I went and pulled him out

1 from this barrack where he was designated as not capable
2 to work and pulled him out and forced him to say that he
3 is a welder. And down there was a Jewish (something), and
4 he beat me up for it. And I don't accuse him for anything
5 because if he will not beat me up, maybe he will be shot.
6 So it's better that I took a few punches from him and
7 saved my brother and saved him. So finally my brother
8 said that he is a welder, and he--they give him a tatoo.

9 Unfortunately, my father said that he is a
10 bricklayer. And my father usually, he knew this to do.
11 He thought that if he's going to say this, this will be a
12 big plus on his side. But it looks they didn't need any
13 bricklayers, and he remained in Bergenau (phonetically).
14 And since this time, we never seen each other. If I took
15 notices from people, that they saw him either the end of
16 December, 1944. And presumably, he is lost like many of
17 our millions, brothers and sisters and children, whatever.

18 Then, they took me and my brother. We went
19 to Bergenau (phonetically). No, we went to Buno
20 (phonetically). In Buno (phonetically) it was, I will say,
21 in this time when we came was still Polish gentiles; but
22 as we came, they got rid of him, and they took him in
23 another camp or whatever, and the camp was remained, I
24 believe it was 10,000 or 12 just Jewish--Jewish slave
25 labor. It was strictly Jewish slave labor.

1 I was designated to certain types of work
2 but later on I--somebody told me that it's good to work by
3 this guy. It was a (something); he was a German Jew, a
4 (something) Jew, a (something) Mensch. And I told them
5 that--that I am a good worker, and I would like to work
6 under his command. So he said okay. I will take you
7 tomorrow. He went in to the office where they relocate
8 the working people, and he said, "You are under my command.
9 You go with me." And I worked by him a time, and he tried
10 to do for us lots of good things. He tried to give us
11 extra food and everything.

12 Q. What was so special about being a (something) and how
13 was he good?

14 A. I will come to it. I will come to it. And we had
15 basically a good time. I mean, basically, it was better
16 to work for him. So this thing went on until, I will say,
17 until the middle of (something). It's roughly, I will say,
18 close to two months or a month and seven weeks.

19 Then my brother comes to me with a story
20 that they're going to send him away. He doesn't know
21 where he goes. And as I heard this, I went to a
22 (something). I knew that I am separated from my father.
23 Now I'm going to be separated from my brother.

24 So anyway, I went over to this (something).
25 His name was (proper name), and I said to him, if he can

1 do me something good. I told him the whole story that
2 they are going to send away my only brother, and he said,
3 "Let me see what I can do for you." He went in the
4 Schreibstube. As I said, this is the office where they
5 designate the people, and it took a while because we
6 didn't have too much time because they didn't notify you
7 24 hours ahead or whatever, and he said, "I cannot make it
8 that he should to stay here, but I can make it that you
9 going with him." And I said, "Do you know where we go?"
10 because every going could have lots of translations. It
11 could mean that you go to the oven to be gassed, and he
12 said to me, "I don't know where you're going. But I will
13 tell you one thing: you are not going to be--to go to the
14 stove." He knew this for sure. He said, "You're going to
15 go in a place where you will have clothes to work, and you
16 will work in the warm. It's not going to be cold to you."

17 And I've made up my mind; I'm going, and I
18 went. So they sent us to a (something). This is 5
19 kilometer close to (city name). We worked down there, and
20 it was true. We were--we had the factory close to us.
21 And we had about two-minutes walk to the factories, and
22 this meant lots because you didn't get so much wore out in
23 the cold and in the snow and whatever. And we worked down
24 there. We worked mostly to buy parts of airplanes to
25 supply. And we worked down there until, I will say, until

1 the end of December, 1944.

2 By the end of December, yeah, I will like to
3 bring backwards a little while. In Buno (phonetically) we
4 were, the Allied commandos bombarded the A. G. Factory.
5 In Buno (phonetically) we worked at the A. G. Factory.
6 Why, in English it's A. G. Factory. Why I bring back this
7 point is to prove that the Allied forces knew exactly
8 where we are and where we been. And with this bombardment
9 they killed lots of Germans. They did lots of damage.
10 And, of course, they killed lots of Jewish workers, slave
11 workers.

12 So, and we were (something) till, almost the
13 end of December. By the end of December, they, we knew
14 that we going to go away. We didn't know where. And so,
15 it was--it was a kind of disorder, and we got in in the
16 kitchen, and in the kitchen I got, I was lucky. I took
17 two loaves of bread; and we had something to eat. In the
18 way we ate it, and I give not the whole bread, but almost
19 a whole, I give to friends of mine, and the rest I had
20 with my brother.

21 So, we went, and we--they took us in, of
22 course, in wagons, open wagons; and it was winter; and it
23 was cold. And we arrived in Mauthausen. We arrived in
24 Mauthausen. We came down; we were frozen, and we were
25 cold and everything. And they, the way to walk to

1 Mauthausen, it was, it is off a mountain that they camp;
2 and we walked in, I will say, in every meter, or in every
3 two yards or whatever, stood a German and a German soldier
4 or whatever, with their rifles out like we will be the
5 biggest--the biggest war mongers or whatever, and we
6 worked down there. As we came, they served us hot coffee,
7 where it gave us a big lift, and we sold down there. They
8 called them the "fire commando." It was a bunch (something)
9 strong boys, tall boys and everything.

10 So they took us to a bed. They give us a
11 bed. They give us a haircut. They cut our hair in the
12 middle, and on both sides it was left. And we took a
13 shower, and after this, we had to walk about three or four
14 kilometer. They locked us in, in a barrack, without any
15 clothes, just like you were born. And it was cold, and we
16 stood and stood. And I will say we stood the whole night,
17 until the next morning. The next morning they gave us
18 underwear, and we stood naked, and we were cold so that
19 one stood against the other to be warmed up. Later on
20 they give us a T-shirt. Later on they give us a pair of
21 pants. So I believe that this story until we were full-
22 dressed, according to them, maybe took two days.

23 And we were in Mauthausen, I will say, about
24 a week's time. Later on they took us to (camp name).
25 (Camp name) is--

1 Q. What did you do in Mauthausen? What was so special
2 about that place, and what was the structure of that camp?

3 A. Well, the structure of the camp, I will say this, I
4 cannot--I cannot recollect. My memory doesn't let me.
5 I don't remember exactly what it was the structure because
6 due to the fact that I didn't do any physical work in
7 Mauthausen. It was just a camp for me, go-through camp;
8 but we knew and heard that it was one of the worst and one
9 of the most--most harsh camps. So we were down there,
10 then later they took us to (camp name). (Camp name) was
11 one of the harshest camps too. It's located, it's in
12 Austria. When we came to (camp name), they told us we are
13 going for vacation, and actually in a way, it was true.
14 They give us to eat. They kept us in the barracks. We
15 didn't went out for an appeal. They counted us inside,
16 and we slept longer, and this took a few days, maybe five
17 or seven days. Later on, they took us out; and they took
18 us in wagons, of course, and trains, you know, the kettle
19 trains. And we went, we came down to Germany, or Hanover.
20 It's Hanover-Linden, actually.

21 Q. That's West Germany?

22 A. West Germany. Yes, it's West Germany; Hanover, West
23 Germany. As we came down there, we had down there some
24 barracks; and it was of course, you know, stood up
25 guards and everything; and we were in, and we worked down

1 there. And we worked by airplane ammunition too, or
2 airplane parts; and many times the Allied forces bombarded
3 this camp, and this camp was a very bad camp too. We
4 worked down there 12 hours a day. It was two shifts,
5 night and day. I worked all the time in the day, and when
6 we came home we were hungry. When we went to work we were
7 hungry. They give us a little soup in the factory. But
8 it didn't have much nourishing for 12-hours work, and it
9 was far away from the factory, and in this point we didn't
10 have practically no shoes to work, and our feet start to
11 get swollen because of the lack of nourishment.

12 And we were dirty, of course. Not clean.
13 We didn't, I will say, that we didn't change a shirt for
14 months since. And we went on with our daily routine, and
15 down there in Hanover it was bad (something), old
16 gangsters, that they were in the camp for years and years.
17 I remember today that it came down a (something), a guy,
18 one guy. He became later (something); that he met the
19 other guy's friend, and one was the name Jacobi. The
20 other guy, I don't remember.

21 Q. Why was he bad? What was the reason that they were
22 bad? I mean they were Jewish, no?

23 A. No. Those (something) were not Jewish, no. And let
24 me bring a point. I thought I got this in my notes. If
25 we talk about Jewish (something), I studied this thing in

1 my mind for number and number of days and nights and hours,
2 and I came to the conclusion that it was not such a thing,
3 a bad Jewish (something). We have to take, to deal in
4 this thing in the circumstance and the conditions and
5 terms.

6 For instance, I will say, I will go back to
7 Starachovice. One time it was an appeal. And the German--the
8 German, let's say, leader, was down there, the ones that
9 he shot so many. He shot the hospitals and everything,
10 and it stood a young boy. I will say the young kid was 12
11 or 13 years; and the Jewish leader went over to him; and
12 he said to him, "Should you stay here?" And he gave him
13 two (something) in his face. "Why you don't go to the
14 last line?"

15 I will say that people can read from this
16 two things. One will say, "What did he have to do with
17 this child? Why he beat him up?" But I see in a
18 different prospect in this. I believe that with this
19 thing, he saved his life. Due to the fact, if he will
20 stay the front, the German leader will take him and maybe
21 shoot him.

22 Q. You mean there was a--the symptom--there was that
23 (something) there was also the German people nearby?

24 A. Yes. The German people were nearby it. Oh, sometime
25 a (something) will beat up, you know, another Jew. Maybe

1 with his beating he saved him his life because the German,
2 the German S.S., or whatever, didn't beat him anymore. We
3 have to think in this terms and not accuse anybody, and
4 let nobody think no matter how many books he will read, or
5 how many stories he will hear, or how many notices he
6 might have; that I came to the conclusion that no Jewish
7 Juden (something) or no Jewish committee was in the
8 ghettos, or no Jew is to be persecuted or judged or bring
9 out any judgment against him. Because those people, they
10 didn't have peace by themselves, and not everybody could
11 withstand the (something). After he came to the point
12 where he became a Juden (something) or a (something), or
13 whatever, he could not be good to everybody.

14 For instance, I will bring a point. The
15 same Jewish leader, the Juden Lagerfuhrer in Starachovice,
16 he wanted to take my father away, so my father told him,
17 "Listen, I got here two children. Leave me alone." He
18 let him go. Or my father needed him some clothes. The
19 guy give him because he knew him. And let's bring it to a
20 point of thinking too. He said as long as you had in
21 those camps where you know it was still, let's assume,
22 Starachovice camp. It was the majority of people were
23 from the city of Starachovice, and one knew each other.
24 Automatically one helped the other because they knew who
25 you are, or whatever.

1 So what I mean to bring out I will not
2 permit, and I will not give (something), and I will
3 believe that everybody should to think over if he could
4 withstand, but if he will be in this situation; and of
5 course, the future generations led one half, five brains
6 instead of one. They cannot imagine the tyranny and the
7 suffering and the denigrating what the Jewish people went
8 through. It was certain places, of course, where Jewish
9 leadership said, "If you need ten people to go to take him
10 to shoot him or kill him. You got me and my family four.
11 And the rest you have to take by yourself." But not
12 everybody could do this thing. And let's, everybody
13 before they come to a conclusion, not to make any judgment
14 of no Jewish (something) or a Jewish Judenrat and say that
15 the Jewish people collaborated, helped the Germans kill
16 the Jewish people. God forbid.

17 In Hanover, so we had other kinds of
18 bombardment, and so it was one day, almost before they
19 thought to take us away, they dugged a big ditch--a big--
20 and we didn't know actually for what this is; but we could
21 think of it. And this was, I will say, about the 6th of
22 April, 1945, and they said, "Who wants to go will go. Who
23 can will go. Who cannot go will remain here." And--

24 Q. What do you mean by that?

25 A. Will remain in Hanover in the camp at the place. And

1 so, many of them, they start to give food for the ones
2 that were going. And I remember today that one--one--one
3 (something), he was from (something), and he changed his
4 mind. He wanted to go, and he pushed himself for his
5 portion of bread, and he was shot by the German leader.
6 So, we were out it was, I believe, it was a Friday evening--

7 Q. Excuse me. You said German lady.

8 A. Leader, leader.

9 Q. Oh, leader?

10 A. Yeah, German leader. So it was a Friday evening, we
11 left the Hanover-Linden camp, and we marched. We didn't
12 know where we go. We didn't know where we will go.
13 Anyway we marched. We went the whole night and right away,
14 you know, We had to do--to relieve ourselves, and we could
15 not because they didn't stop for anything so what we did, you
16 know, as we were marching a few hundred, you just sit down
17 in the middle and did it whatever you can. And many of us
18 got shot and killed and beaten up.

19 I remember that it was some people that they
20 took some food from the--from the leaders, from the German
21 commanders, the S.S., whatever, the soldiers--some food.
22 And later they discovered--they shot them on the spot.
23 And we walked. We did not have any food. Nothing. We
24 ate grass from the earth, and we ate some snow if we found
25 we went through. We didn't went through the normal, normal

1 way. They just took us through zigzagged ways, through
2 the roots and other kinds of stuff. Maybe they didn't
3 want that the civilian people see us, or whatever.

4 And I believe we went out, if I am right,
5 about 500 people or so. And we came about half, because
6 the half got killed in the middle of the way; or they
7 could not work anymore; and they shot them, and so on and
8 so on.

9 So we came to Bergen-Belsen. It was in a
10 Sunday. As we came to Bergen-Belsen, I saw from my eyes a
11 stack of bodies. I will not exaggerate that it was more
12 than two stories high, and we could smell the smell from
13 dead bodies. And as I looked in this, I said, "I believe
14 we went through so much that I'm doubting if we will make
15 it." So we came down; we didn't head down there. No
16 barracks. Nothing. No place to sleep. The windows were
17 broken in those barracks. People laying down and dying by
18 the hundreds and by the thousands.

19 So the next day or the second next day, they
20 took us; and as they saw that the Allied armies are coming
21 closer, they took us. And two people, we had to drag a
22 dead body. How did we do it? We took belts and pulled
23 down a belt and each arm and each hand from the dead body
24 and two people pulled those dead bodies to a big grave;
25 and in a number of days, the corpses were less than we

1 came in. But, yeah, and at this type of work, at this
2 type of work-- (To interviewer) Is it comfortable for you
3 to sit?

4 So as this thing went on they distributed in
5 those days, you know, they had 20,000 loaves of poisoned
6 bread, and they wanted to distribute this bread between
7 the people. And it was down there one doctor. He worked
8 for the S. S., but evidently it looked that he didn't
9 agree with them everything, and he prevented this bread to
10 be distributed. And thanks to this, you know, I believe
11 we didn't get poisoned. Then, the English army--

12 Q. May I ask you, how do you know about those bread that
13 was poisoned?

14 A. We were told after. Yeah, and as a matter of fact,
15 this doctor worked later with the people, and he was--he
16 was a trusted man, in other words, it looked that he was a
17 good man.

18 And we were liberated. This was by
19 1 o'clock, April 15. In the Jewish calendar it was the
20 second day of (something). And if it's written in some
21 books that Bergen-Belsen was liberated at 3 o'clock, this
22 is right too, because close by it was the army barracks
23 where lots of people were--been down there too. And they
24 were liberated about two hours later. As the liberation
25 looked, is (something). How do you say (something)? Got

1 wanted? Let's go this way, that a Jew, a (something) Jew,
2 he announced the liberation. And he said in other kinds
3 of languages. If I am right, it was about 15 languages that
4 he announced the liberation. The liberation by itself,
5 usually if a person is liberated from a jail or from
6 someplace, usually his emotions are very high, and he is
7 happy. And, of course, he is out of his bondage, and so
8 on and so on. But, unfortunately, we were liberated, but
9 we still had our sorrow on our faces because we seen we
10 didn't have nobody. And we were liberated sick, naked,
11 dirty, undressed, hungry.

12 When I was liberated, my weight was 75
13 pounds. I will say 75 pounds, right, 75 pounds. Yeah.
14 And I remember today we were liberated by 1 o'clock, and
15 by 4 o'clock we received small cans of pork and beans.
16 And we received some crackers. Of course, this is army
17 food, and as we people ate this, as our system was very
18 delicate, so everybody--the whole camp, and the same token
19 we were liberated, I will say about 40,000 people in
20 Bergen-Belsen. Everybody started to have diarrhea, and
21 people got sick, and many of them heavier and many of them
22 less.

23 So the army, the British army put up, you
24 know, a temporary showers so the people can take a shower;
25 and we found some kind of magazines where we could take

1 some clothes; and we clothed ourselves; and we dressed up.
2 But, in a few days, all those clothes and everything was
3 dirty because the sickness what we had.

4 And lots of people died, unfortunately,
5 after the liberation. They seen the light; but they died,
6 due to the fact because the Allied and the British armies,
7 they didn't knew what kind of people they deal. They
8 thought that the prisoner probably is a healthy guy, and
9 they give him healthy food. They were not prepared for a
10 situation like this, and the people died like the flies.
11 So that after the liberation, in Bergen-Belsen died over
12 20,000 people. They buried them in mass graves. They
13 were not able to bury them individually.

14 So later on they took us in hospitals. It
15 was army-made hospitals. And they took us, I remember
16 today, to a place I don't know where it is. And they
17 washed us and bathed us and disinfected us; and they give
18 us, they didn't give us to eat because they realized that
19 we cannot start and eat like normal people because our
20 system is sick. And they gave us to eat. We had been in
21 the hospital, I will say, about six months. In those six
22 months we got better and better. We screamed at the
23 soldiers. We screamed at the army, at the nurses,
24 because they didn't give us food. But, basically, they
25 realized that we cannot eat the food; and we didn't

1 understood this thing. So after this it came, so the
2 summer, by the end of the summer, we start to be a little
3 bit more in shape, and we start to look at (something).

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