Interview with MARTY ROTHMAN
Holocaust Media Project
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Begin Tape 1, Side 1

My name is Marty Rothman. I was born in Hamburg in 1918 and went to apprentice schoolas a painter. I was living in Hamburg by my parents who had four sons and two daughters. My father had a tailor shop and was, at that time, pretty comfortable. We had an apartment in Hamburg and was living on (General Liftmanstrasser) in Hamburg . We belonged to a football club Hamburg and our education was to finish high school. From there out, we went to a professional shcool and learned to be a painter.

It was in 1938, we were made stateless. Hitler took all the naturalization papers away and sent us to a camp in (Sponchene) on the border between Poland and Germany. That was the beginning of our imprisonment. We stayed there for nine months and we got a visa to go back to Germany to apply for our immigration. My mother and father at that time, in 1938, and my two sisters were staying in (Sponchene) until we left for Hamburg. My three other brothers went at the same time to Hamburg.

In Hamburg, in October, we got a postcard from the Gestapo to come to the police department where they assembled most of the men. They forgot about me. I was the youngest and I was hiding out by my sister-in-law. They had already

a visa to go to America. So six weeks later after Rosh Hashana, they caught us. I went with my brother, Alan, to Milan. On the way to Milan, we was arrested on the Bernard Pass where the Gestapo and cabaleri was working together hand and hand.

They sent us to (Hammibeck) and from there we went to (Corelfeu) and that's a police jail, what used to be called a police jail and make it concentration camp. What they call (Corelfeu) is concentration Hamburg.

was 14 miles from Hamburg. There I met my brothers again and I was beaten up there first and we had one guy was named (Hammon). Was a six-foot-five guy and real mean character. Later on, I came back to my brothers and we was all in one block. What they call a block is where we were sleeping in, what do you call it here? Was like a police jail, but it was about at least thirty to forty beds in there. It was a bigger jail than normally. Over there, we make exercise and we had to have four or five minutes of exercise and it was most of our friends we knew about before we got to this police concentration camp there.

In January of 1939, we went to (Sacsenhaussen) that was in the City of (Kohoningberg). Our first greetings was . There were ten laws where you say and if you left the country and all this kind of stuff, then you may go free. That was their slogan, you know. So I come in. I see people there. I

thought I was in some institution. Some, what they call it a mashugina institution because people had arm bands and people had lot of limping and lot of had head injury. It was to me - I was young, it was really - first, scared in a way, funny too, because I never seen anything like it - also took the Russian (shinda) out. People that was married to gentile girls or that was caught by or went out with a Jewish. Hitler put out a law in 1934 or 1935, that no Jewish people could be married to any gentiles. Then they had political prisoners.

We all went to where the shower was and they gave us a haircut and I remember I had heavy, curly hair and SS man came to me and ripped some of the hair out and said, "you have all this curly hair", you know, they like - some of the animals. We got a haircut all over. They had to cut the hair complete off and I start to cry and the guy, the SS man was watching us detail and gave me a couple of slaps on my face and said I shouldn't cry. Then they gave us a shower and infected us and gave us new clothes. In the meantime, they took the people, what they call (hassenshender) took them over and best them up and gave them some whipping. Most of them probably didn't survive at this time because they took glasses away from everybody, because nobody wore glasses then. There was a mountain of glasses and shoes laying there and then they start to come between the people

and gave them a real bad beating and laying down in the mud, they call it sport. So before we got dressed, there was half of the people laying down there, probably half-dead.

Then they took a hose again and gave us cold water and sprayed us all over. After this, we was assigned to a block, what they called a Jewish block. It was 38, 39 and 37 and they gave us a number and that was not engraved at that time. It was on our left hand side on our jacket. They gave us yellow and red because they called us political. That's the reason all red triangles was a sign of political. They they had some black triangles what they called that was people that didn't like to work or refused to work and hitless things. Then they had people that had green triangles. They were professional gangsters, that came out of jail. They had purple ones for bible took it to Catholic priests and different denomination, Lutheran, anybody that was against Hitler. They put in this kind of section. We had people, especially homosexuals. They had a pink triangle, that they recognized right away and they really treated them very bad, too. Most of them never made it after three days.

From there, we went to our block. There was a gangster, was an ex-gangster, Hitler wouldn't let him out because he didn't trust them too much and there was a charge of our block. There was about 350 people on straw. We was

laying on straw. We had aluminum little pot where we could get our soup and a spoon and one towel. That was our tools to eat with.

So we was assigned to different jobs and I was assigned to Klinger. Klinger was eight miles away, but we marched out in the morning. First in the morning at six o'clock, we got black coffee and we worked to twelve o'clock. Twelve o'clock they gave us water soup. Now Klinger was really a brick company but really didn't produce any bricks because everything was sabotaged. The way they organized it, they just want you to work and put you up on a hill. They got some of the cobblestones and they tried to kill you from there out. They push you down. Every single and double action, you had to run. They had a little box about three foot by three foot and two handles on each side and you and your partner was working, carrying bricks or the stones or whatever was there. In the winter, we just carried snow in this.

My friend, (Joe Pomberger) was my partner. He was from Hamburg, about twenty miles from Hamburg. I knew him from Hamburg because he played on my brother's football team. Somehow they gave him a very bad time and actually the one SS man took his hat; we had a little hat and threw it over the where the guards was laying. He went after it and they shot him in the back three times. That's the way most of them got treated. Actually

The whole purpose was to kill us off so I got a new partner and I thought (Frederick Arnepool) was our leader for this labor gang, was about ten-thousand in this particular gang and he had the number four. He was a professional gangster but was put out as a charge of the whole labor gang in Klinger, and I talked with him several times that I used to be a painter and said, you haven't got a Chinaman chance. Jews only will be used on the concrete and stonework and heavy work, that's all. So as we marked in 206 and about forty percent of the guys would march in there, fall apart and couldn't take it anymore because we didn't have any food and was heavy work and nobody really could survive, but their purpose was to get so many killed as possible.

Q: DESCRIBE WHAT THEY DID, TREAT YOU IF ANYTHING AT ALL?

A: The whole purpose was really to get the people down so they hardly couldn't work any more and gave up, but sometime we built a canal and we got boats in after we finished the canal. Hundreds of guys died on it because we had - everything was done by hand. We had a big hauler which you see on the highways hauling us for it, and we had about fifty people on this going up and down, up a new canal to get it a little bit solid, to get water in there. There was one time, after we finished that, people couldn't take it any more and they went on an electric wire or they were

beaten to death, because they couldn't work any more and for the SS men, the guards, they just wanted you to work and that's it.

Our soup was very bad, but we got at twelve o'clock, at lunch time, we had [illegible] what they call, it looks like a pumpkin, was rotten and it smelled very bad with a potato soup. Some time you would find a half a rotten potato in there and normally you wouldn't give it to pigs here in America. It was really soup that the people got blown on the eyes, they had big bags of it and they got water in their legs. You could put a finger in there and there was a hole and it took some time to get it out, because everything was water. If you just have to live on this kind of food, you wouldn't make it.

So we were later assigned to a [illegible] command where we tried to steal some carrots and some potatoes and everything we could steal and the guards weren't watching us. We just ate all and that's the way we used to schlepp some of the potatoes in the camp for my brother and for my friends, if we had enough there. Some of this was just building foundations in the fields and that was a very good labor camp. Once you got out from Klinger, you really were away from the mass killing, where SS was observing too close. Every time you get to a labor gang where they don't observe you so bad and you had a big chain-gang, you could hide a

little bit and steal some food, that was the only possible when you were in a different detail than Klinger.

Later on, we had next to Klinger was a 267 a targer practice where the SS took prisoners out from us, put them on the thing and that's the way they practiced, on live people. They didn't give a damn who it was. They just took out several people and tried to shoot and practice on the live targets.

There was a guy that was shot from SS. He was 279 a charge of Czechoslovakia that took from each block from us a hundred people out and shot them. One of the friends was a (Maurice Ollinger). He was a neighbor from us in Hamburg. He was tall, six-foot-two, very thin. He looks like a skeleton already. (Eisheman) came to us and everybody was lined up. What we done, my brothers and I, we never stand in one line. We always was different and even then, said, left, right, left right, so we were at that time lucky, but a hundred persons from each block was taken and shot right there. The Jews were even not responsible, but what they done, they burned a whole city. The highway was cleared and shooting women and anything else to punish the rest of the people. Everytime somebody was sent in our camp, we had to march around, and to scare us, they called, somebody done some sabotage. They broke a piece of pipe or they done something wrong, but nobody really normally

would care, but for some reason, they always wanted to hang somebody to scare the people.

Later on, I was assigned this professional gangster, was number four, was our leader, got me into a paint shop. The way I got in to Czechoslovakia was working for that was . They called him the (Eisendegustof). This (Eisendegustof) was a guy that used a pipe. He was famous for steel pipe. He had in his hand and that's the way he beat us up. At this particular paint shop was working out, in this outside of the camp by his wife and the two guys talked too much to his wife, so this fellow from our command detail introduced me to the officer and said: "Hey, the guy is Jewish. I don't want him. Well, he don't talk. He don't understand anything and he's one of the best painters you've ever seen, so let's try him out." So the next morning, got new uniform and I was the first Jewish guy in the (Sacsenhaussen) but was detailed to a good neighbor gang and I started out there. She asked me questions, I didn't say anything. She gave me some coffee and a piece of rye bread. So I worked there and was then detailed to (Barhoff) and (Barhoff) we start to get a detail from a new building that was built where they use as a Z operation. Z is the last letter in the alphabet. That was where the people was, especially Russians, came and was shot there. The way it worked, we painted the

floor red. The rest was all natural. Two guards in white coats that looked like doctors, SS men, took the prisoners in line. Most of them were young people. I would say here, would be like boyscouts and I asked the SS men what kind of people are they and he said, Russian spies . Gestapo thinks from the Russians. They put them on a scale as they come in and they measure them up. They open up a hole in the back and shot them in the neck. They call it and that went on for days and days and days.

I had several painters in this Z station working and they couldn't take it. They fainted and vomited and so I get every day, I get some new labor gang that had to paint the floors because you see too much blood and then the people knew about it. That famous station was later liquidated and they built a new one with two chimneys. The first crematorium was built in (Sacsenhaussen). It was only for this kind of purpose and . They called it Z station. There I met . He was like a captain and he was in charge of this detail. He usually used to liquidate most of the persons every four weeks, so I was pretty lucky because later on when my time was up, I was going to Auschwitz because the order came to liquidate most of the Jews. All of the Jews were from Berlin and all over, were sent to Auschwitz, that was in 1941. In the meantime, we didn't know for sure where we were going to go, because there was a system where

they one time got a hundred Dutchmen and they cut the women's hair because they went out with German soldiers. So they went in, they sing the National Hymn, the Dutch National Hymn, and they were all machine-gunned down. That was the same way, place, took Norwegian guys, take them in by buses and they were all shot; punishment for separate charge in Norwegian.

We had next door our camps prisoners of war, women camps and all kind of stuff, but we weren't too sure if they were going to put us in a ward too. There was a famous ward, what they called a and we all made up our mind that we were going to take some of them along if we make a right turn, but if we make the left turn, and we really went on the railroad tracks and open, where they usually put animals and cows and stuff like this and we went - took us about seven days. All we ate was snow and the center of the place was a toilet, portable toilet, a bucket you know, that they just put a little bit of lime, white powder, for disinfection.

As we come in to Auschwitz, we see the same sign out there and the majority was Jews and Polish people. It was the first time we were tatooed with our number and we got a new uniform and my number was, at that time, 71 - 73, on the left hand side. All the guys from Hamburg had

70,000 or 69,000, we we were the first million that came in to Auschwitz. I was, at that time, pretty lucky because Auschwitz was the end of the world. We could smell every day the crematoriums, that awful stink, you know, was very bad and you see every morning some people were executed or put in to the gas chambers.

So there was a commission that came from the (I.G. Farden) and the (I.G. Farden) was a big industry and the biggest industry in Germany and they were bombed in (Kleiberg) and (Dortmund) where that was their headquarters. So they built a new camp there, what they called (Bruna). (Bruna) was named after a tree in Africa that the Germans used to own, where they made artificial rubber. We went out with 12,000 people and they let us work. We changed our age and there were people between 16 and 25 so any time...

End Tape 1, Side 1

Start Tape 1, Side 2

We got to Bruna to the new camp. We stopped after about five miles and everybody was in attention when a big Mercedes-Benz convertible Gestapo came by. They stopped and what was like a captain, major, came out with two guards and he came to me and my line and said - my name was, in camp was, Mops, that was what I was known and this particular guy in Sackenhausen I knew him. He was in charge

of all the kitchen was in 1940 was ready to be shot and he was caught with some gold leaf and different kinds of emeralds and I read outside of the camp where only the painters went out, I read that (Bernard Haukis) is sentenced to death on the ninth of April 1940, so I was involved with it, but he never talked about me so I was pretty lucky. Actually the guy saved my life because I was the guy in the paint shop which gave him some of the stuff, so he took me out, took me in the car and said, "look, I need a guy to do my shoes and my uniform and I need a guy that talks Polish because you know, we're going into Poland here we've got to talk the language and they wouldn't trust you anyway". I knew the guy that worked in the kitchen, so I told him, I got the guy. There was a guy from Warsaw we call him (Cindy) and he was in charge of the uniforms, so I put three guys in charge what he told me. And he gave me a labor gang, like a foreman where I got they were all soldiers. They fought for Kaiser Selassie in Ethiopia . They were all Jewish boys, what we called . I had this labor gang and we had three beds, straw beds on top of each other and the civilian was from (I. G. Farden) they observed the news because they're going to build a new factory, refinery, the gas for rubber, artificial rubber, what they call (Bruna). So we were treated a little bit

better or there because that was the purpose, you know, to build a new one. There came prisoners of war, English. There was Russian prisoners of war, students labor, and everything there was about million and a half, two-million people, all around our camp. They got up six o'clock in the morning; twelve o'clock we got a little bit better food and then about five o'clock we had recreation, that's where we could do a little bit sport. At that time the guards came in all mostly and some of them even couldn't talk German. So we had to learn, first different kind of languages because labor gangs between my gang and some other ones was French and Yugoslavian and Belgian and mostly Polish and the the worst we've ever seen. They were in charge of our - most of our labor gangs and they used to beat us with big sticks and piples and everytime somebody was called out, we knew he was going to get punished for something. At that time, there was a friend of mine still in L.A., , his brother was called off and some Polack told the Gestapo that he was ready to escape so three guys of them was hanged. We were hiding Freddie because he was about the youngest one of us, you know, so he wouldn't see that. His father died in a camp in Sackenhausen and it was his only brother left. They hanged him and everybody had to walk by and it scared him.

That day, we didn't get any food at all. Later on, I put him in my labor gang to save him.

Then in '43, we got little bit better work because they were hoping that they were going to conquer the world. So was in very few sections from (Bruna) because it was all handled by engineers and by from (I. G. Farden) to build a new because they knew for but the sabotage was so big that on each day, they were ready with gasoline. The Russians came and bombed the convoy pretty good. It was about two, three hundred tanks on the railroad tanks and everytime they were filled up, the Russians came and the English, sometimes too, and bombed it. Before sometime they bombed the railroad, the (Bruna), from the air, you could see a wide stripe of concrete and there they could see most where our camp was. Otherwise, they bombed all around there, gas tanks, but they didn't bomb our camp and they never touched the crematoriums. Funny to see that they wasted so many bombs and never could kill the bombs. In our camp was women gang from and mostly women camp force and they built to our camp. We watched some of the Polish foremen, you know, used to beat the girls to pieces; was to pitiful that one time I told to my S.S. man that was in charge of that camp and he took the two S.S. men and sent them in the coal mine. But when

certain happened, you got to know to who you talk about, because I knew this guy from 1939 when I came to (Sackenhausen). So we talked some time a different language. One time we were arrested, this S.S. man and I because we talk what we learned in Germany, in Hamburg, and this guy was a , a Polack and he mentioned to the Gestapo that we would talk English. He couldn't understand the language. So the next morning, they hanged that Polack because it was ridiculous to go to the Gestapo and tell this S.S. man he talked English, you know.

We had several labor gangs and when the people go too old, or too sick, they send them to a labor gang, what they call (Blumenfleurer), you pick flowers when you're old and have that, you know. That means when you're assigned to this labor gang, that usually, (Otto Eichman) some of the bigshots came out, and they sent you down to the crematorium. That was mostly people who couldn't walk any more because (Bruna) was really better than most of the camps because it was under or overseen by the civilian people. One time had inspection, we all got a cigarette and white linen, what we never seen before, and they came - Japanese general, the came, two Arabs with the , and Mussolini and, two, three other ones from Franco, they inspected the camp and the Red Cross was there. They asked questions, but nobody dared

said anything what is going on. That day, they gave us, first time, an egg, that we never seen before and everything was put to a wherever they put . Right after this we had to give the cigarette back and the white linen was taken away from your bed. We just had straw and I learned the hard way, sometime when I had a little piece left, I want to keep for the next morning. I put it in my pants and hold it up and use it as my pillow and the next morning, I found out somebody stole it. But from our Jewish boys, we helped each other. We had a blacksmith and we used to steal potatoes and bring them into the camp because (Bruna) was something like you see Richmond refineries, was a big and not too much observed by the S.S. They didn't have too much to say, but the civilians. We could get out some time and get some carrots or cauliflower, anything laying in the and we used to sneak it in. We had a song too, what I didn't understand too much, but it was in Greek and French and we had a little boy there about eleven years. He had three other brothers and they're living now in France, in Paris, in Marseilles. (Telephone interruption). This boy was really terrific. He used to be what we called (kleptso-kleptso) keep in life. He always brought some potatoes, some carrots, and some cauliflower and one time he brought that rabbit along that he found

probably six, seven days old, so we told him, he shouldn't touch that, because it's poison.

He kept together with his brothers and he was the guy that was in front when we marched in. He used to say (le gauche, le gauche) and then they sing their song. So as I bring my gang in to the camp, S.S. men, I report in commander sixty-nine people and they guy give me a kick in the ass. You mean you're bringing home for singing and ; said no, the Soviets, they like to sing when they march. So the guy didn't say anything any more, but their purpose was to bring them home half dead here, make them work very hard and once you were in camp there, there were no more civilians to observe our work from the (I.G. Farden), so anybody got sick or anything else, they gave them a (spritzer) and they sent them to the crematorium. We lost quite a bit new, because everytime some new transport came and there was not enough place, they went right into the gas chambers. When we asked for 400 new guys, especially there was - they wanted and mechanics, then they took them off on a transport and right inside to the gas chamber. They sent them up to (I.G. Farden). We were lucky that we had a friend of ours (Sigie Harper), he was a druggist from Poland and he was in charge of one of our first-aid stations. He talked Polish too and we were happy to get

some little bit medicine for first-aid things, but the biggest sickness was (piss-boil), what were boils from bad blood from the different kind of - you didn't have the right food and you got boils and they used black medicine, what they called , was the German thing everything you got. Once you got G.I. dysentary, what you got very easy, because you didn't have enough clothes in winter and in winter we sometimes worked in 20 below. It was really bad for our wooden shoes and nobody had socks. We used to get some paper. I used to carry always two newspapers on my chest to keep warm and I was lucky I could collect sometime from the outside post where I worked, some little butts of cigarettes which I exchanged for food sometime, but most of the time, you never seen anybody smoking or anything like this. Guys used to serve a little piece of horse salami, which we used to get a little piece of salami with a piece of bread for just a puff of cigarette, especially, a lot of foreigners, they used to be smoking. Some of the religious people wouldn't touch the horsemeat. They died of starvation because they wouldn't touch - they'd rather die before they have to eat some of the ham, bacon, whatever there was in the soup, because over there, the soup was a little bit thin. It was not all water because they expected to build a new

(I.G. Farden) Company. In January 1944, we had to have a shooting and the Russians came. So they just liquidate our camp and everything alive that could walk. The rest was shot and hanged and went to (Klivist). (Klivist) was a camp, actually worse than Aushwitz where they make soap from skin, from fat, from dead bodies. So we were ready to escape because close to us was the (capatan) mountains, was known as the underground where they were hiding the and they were supported by the Russians and by the English. We seen sometimes, parachutes coming down and there was ammunition and food for the . Most of them that escaped was killed by the S.S. They were already with the dogs. So we went to (Klivist) and in Klivist), we was all disinfected again and everybody sing everytime you go to the crematorium.

Now we were assigned to a new job to where we built a V-bomb where they shot from Calais to Dover and at that time, they just used the youngest and the best people that were ready to work. was Werner Von Braun and the guy that escaped from Rudolph, one of the engineers, that worked here in America. They were our bosses. We was attached to a labor camp in (Northhaussen) and all our our that was in charge of this, they were all down there. (Figard, Buchkaller, Kaiser) all the S.S. men

was there in this camp, so we knew them already and you know exactly how you really got to be careful by some guys. There was all the S troops but was there since probably 1934. So as we were assigned to jobs and was lucky and we started a labor gang where they brought new barracks on because this was the most important bomb they had to send over to England and they tried to, what I understand something like an atomic bomb over there too. It was 700 feet in the mountains, in the [illegible] Mountains with solid concrete and inside was down where they built the bombs, assembled them, was like a football field and the person that was there before us and got the mountains, they [illegible] was where you got a blue gas, you would breathe in and it was a real poison. Most of the guys died there because when we were assigned to this camp, they called it Dover, and was changed to different names Northhausen because everybody was scared. Before they would go in there, they would make suicide, you know, because very few people survived from that, but once it was finished, mostly drilling of this or hammering out the factories downstairs was a better condition. I understand what I heard some of the bombs didn't go off in England was sabotaged by our prisoners, they [illegible] nice too because instead twelve -

Q: YOU SAID SOME OF THE BOMBS WERE SABOTAGED?

A: Yeah.

Q: HOW?

A: They didn't go off in England.

Q: HOW?

A: They didn't explode. They didn't have the ignition and the fuel was put together so that they couldn't explode, you know, it was sabotage them, but they counted always the bombs and instead of twelve to put out, we charged them sixteen. They were so confused because they go up the elevator and then on the railroad track and then they send them to Calais or to France. They had technicians and checked them out but most of them didn't explode in England was sabotaged by us prisoners. They were hanging them too, some of them, tried to get them, but the job was lucky because there they need every man and it was going to the end of the war. So in the meantime, we had a lot of people going to Bergen-Belsen to different kind of camps and (Sigie ), our first-aid man was like half a doctor, he took the people we know. We could put on the side. We saved several young kids because most of them end up in Bergen-Belsen in the gas chambers. They didn't survive. In March we were bombed day and night and sometime, three nights we didn't have any food or any drinks because there was no cooking done or anything else. It looks like - our camp looks a tar hole in the mountains, all pine trees. You never could see any camp. It was so camouflaged. The only things the MIG's and Russians could bomb was the railroad

and that was [illegible] overnight but the factory itself, nobody could bomb was fixed in the solid concrete, the mountains. That's known as the heart, middle Germany.

In April [illegible] started bombing day and night and the Americans bombed that so much that everybody went into the basement where the S.S. were hiding. That's the way when (Hans [illegible] and David Nachman) we three escaped. David is living now in Tel Aviv and the other one is in South America and I went with the army after we were liberated. We went back to the camp and the whole camp was demolished. There were no survivors. The people escaped before us were alived and (Sigie [illegible]) living in Los Angeles. Several guys that was rooming with us, we all escaped.

Q: HOW DID YOU ESCAPE?

A: We went to a farmer about five miles from there and we were waiting for the American troops to come in, but that evening the farmer came and said if the Germans don't answer the heavy artillery, they should be here early in the morning. That's the first time he gave us a piece of bread. He grabbed his gun, you know, he was staying with us what they call a [illegible] where they got the animals and store this. So that morning, six o'clock-five o'clock in the morning, we heard the tanks coming, rolling out so Hans and Freddie,

we went out to the public, to the open street and they tried to shoot at us, the American tanks, until we got our jacket on the bayonet and hold it up. Then they came and we told them we - from the camp, I talked with one guy Yiddish, he was a captain. They took us in the camp and we told them Northhausen and I got most of the pictures from Northhausen. There was nothing to liberate. The machine gun burned everything out and the same day, four or five hours later, Eisenhower came and Bradley and from that day on, we worked with the army and we were looking for S.S. men and later on we went to France. I came to France and they sent us down to the Pyrenees to Monte Carlo and Nice where some of the S.S. were hiding. After this, I made it eventually to the American Embassy and I told them. I had a letter from Bradley that I worked for the American army. So I got a priority visa. I was the only German-born quota. At that time, you had different quotas, like Chinese got ten-thousand, Polish very little. There was not desirable for America at that time. So I got my visa. I met a cousin of mine. He was in the signal corps - my brother-in-law. He liberated Buchenwald and I got actually from all the organizations, the Quaker was the best. They helped us the most and I got a ticket. I didn't want to wait for the or any of those organizations because very few of them had done anything for us. I went to Marseilles to Le Havre and from

Le Havre, I came to America the 2nd of April 1946. I was one of the first prisoners from D.P. camps in America and I met my brothers. That night, his wife got a baby and I my friends, we went to high school in Hamburg, they just got out from the army. They were before in the United States, took me home. By the way, in Paris, I phoned my brothers. That's the first time I got a letter. My brother Bruno, I recognized his handwriting; had a beautiful handwriting, was an electrical engineer and he told us that I should go to America and make the papers out to them. So I went to America and I started to work for Columbia University. I went later to Hollywood. I didn't like New York. There, I made the papers out for my two brothers. In the meantime, I was drafted in the United States Army and I spent two years in El Paso, Texas.

My two brothers came in 1949 and wherever I was, I was responsible. Now I'm happy. I'm married and got four children and got one grandchild.

Q: HOW MUCH OF YOUR EXPERIENCES DO YOU SHARE WITH YOUR CHILDREN?

A: Most of mine Friday, in Los Angeles, a charge of the second generation, where they had all the big guys up there. There was producers, but most of the films about things and they had the major there, Bradley, and it was a big success. I seen them last week because I had a convention

in Disneyland. He's very good. He goes to the generation. He's going to get married and he met a girl. He told me that she's like mother. She's . She's thin. She's real soft. My wife is Sephardic, you know. So he was very happy.

My daughter here, anything that's going on in the Bay Area, she's going to the second generation too. They know all about it. For a long time, we didn't talk about it, but they always asked, since they finished college, they ask more questions, you know. I was speaking here in '47, '48, in high schools, in colleges. One time I was only to speak in high school. I had in High School where they had mostly A students and some of them even wouldn't come. I spoke for three and a half hours and they took me to a pizza place and we had questions, more than two and a half hours. They were very interested. I got letters to show that the people wrote me. They were very happy to see some, because they never seen any. I had apprentices never heard about Hitler.

End Tape 1, Side 2

Start Tape 2, Side 1

After the liberation, then I went here to Vallejo. My wife was born here and she was a native of California. We tried to raise our children in the Jewish way and my son now a second generation in Los Angeles very active.

My kids go here around the Bay Area sometime. They got a second generation. We try to help each other and I'm a 25 years member in the Lion's Club that help people and Jewish veteran, I was three times already commander for veterans. Our main theme is to make the public known that Jewish people performed in the Second World War, and any war, you know, because our Jewish veteran was founded in 1896. We had one of the biggest, what they call majority in the Jewish people fighting for the United States, from George Washington to the last war in Vietnam. We got right here, two people from where they take care of cemetary, where they got two guys that died in Vietnam. I usually go to Los Angeles when we got from our friends from [illegible] and Auschwitz, we get together and have a reunion all the time. I went to [illegible] and last reunion. First in '59 we started one out in New York. We had mostly people from (Brunha). I'm pretty active in the Jewish life and hope speak in different kind of schools and let them know, because they're very interested. Once they're little bit prepared in the Catholic school and [illegible] different kinds, they prepare their students a little bit that they know what you're talking about. They were talking about how that started. It was a bad way. Was inflation like you had here in America and lot of unemployment and the Versailles contract was the worst thing ever done. That's the reason

we had a Marshall Plan and helped Japan and Germany back on their feet because the hatred was so bad. That was his best tool, Hitler to get back his lost land and land that they never owned where they had to repay so many millions of dollars and other things. It was just jealousy and ignorance and most of the Jews were not so powerful like here in America, because we certainly had a senator or a congressman, or anything like this, but it was like a scape-goat, that's what Hitler done to give the propaganda, like the German newspaper that showed always the rich Jews and they owned and everything. That was their propaganda and lies like you can believe it.

Q: HOW DO YOU VIEW ANTI-SEMITISM HERE WHEN YOU COME ACROSS IT?

A: Sometime pretty bad, like I was in business here. I was a painting contractor and I know what I learned because I'm now teaching school, right here in Martinez. I retired two years ago. There was jealousy. How can this guy get a job. Now they're offering hima job and we don't. Because I know what I'm doing. I know what I learned and most of what I met, people don't even know what they're doing and they're in our business. Ex-sailors, ex-jailbirds, you know, and they know how to schmear some up like every woman can do and didn't know any knowledge about how to prepare a job. How big job is the preparation. I'm veryactive in our Jewish B'nai Brithwhere we got Anti-defamation League.

We had sixty windows broken in our shul. We got only one synagogue here in Vallejo. There are seventy-five Jewish people living here, but anti-semitism is all over and the last two, three years, it slowed a little bit down, but it always happens, everytime you see somebody, they say, hey, you're different than the rest of the Jews, you know, because you work with us. Look at the [illegible] go out and look what they done from the desert, and then you see what Jewish people really can do. Lately, they got a little bit more respect too because they know we got a tremendous army and especially air force. It's hard to copy.

In 1943, we got a letter from a driver, a Polish driver, belonged to the S.S. and my brother knew him. He used to shave him and he got somehow drunk and they executed him. He brought is a letter from [illegible] some place, a small city where my father was working for the army making uniforms and my (daughter) was [illegible] outside - worked for the German army. My mother sent us a letter and said she has to sell her fur coat, it's very cold and it goes to (meilic) means it goes to the end. They're going to liquidate our camp. Later on I found out from my cousin, in Israel, she lived in Tel Aviv, that the whole transport came to direct to [illegible] and run in by dogs in the crematorium. They knew they would go in the crematorium so they used dogs to run them in there. That's the way they died in 1943.

Q: HOW DID YOU FIND OUT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AFTERWARDS?

A: Well, after the liberation, there was a bulletin in Wiesbaden, I think, that they had seen my name and my brother-in-law was in the and he seen my name and two brothers, Frankfurt or Wiesbaden was it? In Hamburg, he told them that I was alive and then when I went - it was like the CIA, it was intelligence things and they let me phone them and they phoned me. There I met a cousin too, she was some place from I think. I met her in - that was my mother's name. I met her in Paris. They were in (Bergen Belsen) and we lived together in the neighborhood in Paris until I left for America.

Q: AND WHO OF YOUR FAMILY SURVIVED?

A: My three brothers Alan, Bernard and Yoyos. My brother Bernard now lives in Las Vegas and my brother Yoyos in Miami and my brother Alan lived here in Vallejo with me. That's all we got left.

End Tape 2, Side 1