

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:57,100

2
00:00:57,100 --> 00:01:00,190
When did you find out and
what was your reaction

3
00:01:00,190 --> 00:01:04,150
when you found out the
scale of the destruction

4
00:01:04,150 --> 00:01:06,760
of the Jewish people?

5
00:01:06,760 --> 00:01:10,000
I first found out about it--

6
00:01:10,000 --> 00:01:11,110
I'm sorry.

7
00:01:11,110 --> 00:01:13,840
I first found out
about the extent

8
00:01:13,840 --> 00:01:17,260
of the atrocities of the Germans
while I was still in the army,

9
00:01:17,260 --> 00:01:19,920
when the concentration
camps were being liberated.

10
00:01:19,920 --> 00:01:22,630

11
00:01:22,630 --> 00:01:29,590
But I really learned the full
extent of it after I came back.

12
00:01:29,590 --> 00:01:39,950
I came back from the

army in October, 1945.

13
00:01:39,950 --> 00:01:44,150
War ended in Europe
in May, 1945.

14
00:01:44,150 --> 00:01:45,920
I was completely devastated.

15
00:01:45,920 --> 00:01:49,650
Don't forget, this was my life.

16
00:01:49,650 --> 00:01:52,550
I was brought up in that milieu.

17
00:01:52,550 --> 00:01:57,530
I went to a Yiddish
school, elementary school.

18
00:01:57,530 --> 00:02:00,080
I was a secular Jew
in Poland, considering

19
00:02:00,080 --> 00:02:03,200
myself a Polish patriot.

20
00:02:03,200 --> 00:02:07,970
I was fully committed,
you might say,

21
00:02:07,970 --> 00:02:12,320
to fighting for the right of
the Jews in Poland, in Poland,

22
00:02:12,320 --> 00:02:14,480
not any place else.

23
00:02:14,480 --> 00:02:19,400
And my whole world sort
of collapsed around me.

24
00:02:19,400 --> 00:02:23,660

So I was homeless in that sense.

25

00:02:23,660 --> 00:02:27,200

Because when we first
came to the United States,

26

00:02:27,200 --> 00:02:30,800

the thought didn't
even enter our mind

27

00:02:30,800 --> 00:02:32,300

that we would stay here.

28

00:02:32,300 --> 00:02:35,330

The idea was that
after the war was over,

29

00:02:35,330 --> 00:02:40,550

we would pack our bags and go
back to Poland, to the extent

30

00:02:40,550 --> 00:02:45,740

that people didn't even
get permanent apartments

31

00:02:45,740 --> 00:02:49,520

but were living in hotels
because what's the point,

32

00:02:49,520 --> 00:02:50,850

you're just going to leave.

33

00:02:50,850 --> 00:02:56,120

So this was a devastating
experience after I came back.

34

00:02:56,120 --> 00:02:59,510

I did make one
small contribution

35

00:02:59,510 --> 00:03:01,670

to the memory of this.

36

00:03:01,670 --> 00:03:06,740

In my last year of
engineering school,

37

00:03:06,740 --> 00:03:10,880

I was engaged by John
Hersey, who was then

38

00:03:10,880 --> 00:03:19,820

writing The Wall, to, a, garner
documents by any means I could,

39

00:03:19,820 --> 00:03:23,810

libraries, books, memoirs,
whatever it is in Polish,

40

00:03:23,810 --> 00:03:26,240

translate it into English.

41

00:03:26,240 --> 00:03:29,060

He gave me a wire recorder.

42

00:03:29,060 --> 00:03:31,400

There weren't any
tape recorders yet.

43

00:03:31,400 --> 00:03:32,870

Very loose translation.

44

00:03:32,870 --> 00:03:34,820

He didn't want to
get too close to it.

45

00:03:34,820 --> 00:03:39,710

And then what I consider
the most interesting thing,

46

00:03:39,710 --> 00:03:43,400

look over the
galleys for accuracy,

47

00:03:43,400 --> 00:03:46,250

because every
incident in that book

48
00:03:46,250 --> 00:03:49,940
is based on an actual happening.

49
00:03:49,940 --> 00:03:53,570
Now, when I was gathering
these documents,

50
00:03:53,570 --> 00:03:55,260
I was having nightmares.

51
00:03:55,260 --> 00:03:57,830
It was actually the
most horrible thing,

52
00:03:57,830 --> 00:04:00,470
I think, to read
all these things

53
00:04:00,470 --> 00:04:01,820
and have to translate them.

54
00:04:01,820 --> 00:04:04,280
It was supposed to
be a translation--

55
00:04:04,280 --> 00:04:07,040
very difficult, by the
way, if you know languages,

56
00:04:07,040 --> 00:04:11,060
reading in one language and
talking in another language.

57
00:04:11,060 --> 00:04:14,360
Because the structure of the
language is entirely different.

58
00:04:14,360 --> 00:04:15,530
But that's what he wanted.

59

00:04:15,530 --> 00:04:17,269

He didn't want the
literal translation.

60

00:04:17,269 --> 00:04:19,700

He just wanted to
have raw facts.

61

00:04:19,700 --> 00:04:21,079

So I did that.

62

00:04:21,079 --> 00:04:23,780

So that I consider my
small contribution.

63

00:04:23,780 --> 00:04:32,520

64

00:04:32,520 --> 00:04:34,740

During the point where
you were gathering the--

65

00:04:34,740 --> 00:04:35,760

OK.

66

00:04:35,760 --> 00:04:38,750

The gathering of the
materials for Hersey

67

00:04:38,750 --> 00:04:40,770

consisted of the
following-- first, I

68

00:04:40,770 --> 00:04:42,480

was going to the
library, reading

69

00:04:42,480 --> 00:04:43,890

whatever books were available.

70

00:04:43,890 --> 00:04:46,140

There were a few memoirs.

71
00:04:46,140 --> 00:04:51,990
Then there were a lot of
articles and journals,

72
00:04:51,990 --> 00:04:52,890
descriptions.

73
00:04:52,890 --> 00:04:54,990
My job was in Polish.

74
00:04:54,990 --> 00:04:59,100
So I was exclusively
from Polish to English.

75
00:04:59,100 --> 00:05:02,970
And the third were
personal stories of people.

76
00:05:02,970 --> 00:05:04,930
I knew a lot of people.

77
00:05:04,930 --> 00:05:08,530
And by that time, a lot
of them were in New York.

78
00:05:08,530 --> 00:05:11,730
And I would gather whatever
I could and then try

79
00:05:11,730 --> 00:05:13,200
to translate it.

80
00:05:13,200 --> 00:05:15,420
And I would just simply--

81
00:05:15,420 --> 00:05:18,450
there was such horrible stories,
particularly some of them

82
00:05:18,450 --> 00:05:20,315
that ended up in the book.

83
00:05:20,315 --> 00:05:21,690
There were stories,
for instance,

84
00:05:21,690 --> 00:05:23,520
one that I knew the people.

85
00:05:23,520 --> 00:05:27,990
There was people hiding out
under the ruins of the burning

86
00:05:27,990 --> 00:05:32,310
ghetto in a bunker, in
an underground bunker.

87
00:05:32,310 --> 00:05:37,440
And there was a girl, a
woman and her husband,

88
00:05:37,440 --> 00:05:39,480
and their little newborn baby.

89
00:05:39,480 --> 00:05:42,420
And the baby was
crying, and everybody

90
00:05:42,420 --> 00:05:50,940
wanted to kill the baby because
the Germans would find them.

91
00:05:50,940 --> 00:05:56,580
And one of the heroes of
the ghetto, and later they

92
00:05:56,580 --> 00:05:59,400
wrote a book about
it, Bernard Goldstein,

93
00:05:59,400 --> 00:06:03,810
was the one in that
bunker who said

94

00:06:03,810 --> 00:06:11,880

killing that baby is stooping
to the matters of the Germans.

95

00:06:11,880 --> 00:06:13,380

And the baby was saved.

96

00:06:13,380 --> 00:06:19,230

Now, I know Bernard Goldstein, I
know the girl who's the mother,

97

00:06:19,230 --> 00:06:24,720

I know the father, who later
perished in the partisan vice,

98

00:06:24,720 --> 00:06:27,670

I know the baby.

99

00:06:27,670 --> 00:06:30,000

It was just heart-rending.

100

00:06:30,000 --> 00:06:40,432

101

00:06:40,432 --> 00:06:41,390

[OFF CAMERA WHISPERING]

102

00:06:41,390 --> 00:06:48,680

103

00:06:48,680 --> 00:06:49,380

OK?

104

00:06:49,380 --> 00:06:49,880

Thank you.

105

00:06:49,880 --> 00:06:54,120

106

00:06:54,120 --> 00:06:54,620

You rolling?

107
00:06:54,620 --> 00:06:55,040
Yeah.

108
00:06:55,040 --> 00:06:55,610
Rolling, Tom?

109
00:06:55,610 --> 00:07:16,520

110
00:07:16,520 --> 00:07:18,670
Andrew and Tom.

111
00:07:18,670 --> 00:09:23,222