

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck  
May 20, 2009  
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## **PREFACE**

The following oral history testimony is the result of a recorded interview with Sholom Rosenheck, conducted by Julie Oswald on May 20, 2009 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Coral Springs, Florida and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

## SHOLOM ROSENHECK

### May 20, 2009

Question: This is **Julie Oswald** with the **U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum** in **Washington, D.C.** We're here today in **Coral Springs, Florida** with Mr. **Saul Rosenheck**. He's going to be telling us his story. Mr. **Rosenheck**, would you mind spelling out your name for us, please?

Answer: Okay, my name [indecipherable] Yeah. My name is **Sholom Rosenheck**. I'm going to spell it for you. **Rosenheck** is **r-o-s-e-n-h-e-c-k**. **Sholom**, **s-h-o-l-o-m**. I was born in **Czechoslovakia** in a small Jewish town called **Mukachevo**. Life was pretty decent in – for the Jewish people under the **Czechoslovakian** – under **Czechoslovakian** government, but this didn't last long. **Great Britain** betrayed **Czechoslovakia** and sold them down the drain to appease **Hitler**. **Czechoslovakia** was then occupied three-quarters by **Germany** and the rest by the Ukrainians. The **Ukraine** government that time planned to annihilate all the Jewish people because they – th-the – thanks God they didn't – they didn't last too long because **Hungary** came in and occupied them.

Q: But –

A: But they found documents that they were ready to kill all the Jewish people from – from **A** til **Z**, to annihilate them, all of them. So that was another miracle that time that the Hungarians came in and what they wanted to do to the Jewish people, it

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

happened to them, because they shot them wherever they found them, the Hungarians, they killed them merciless, you know, wherev – but they deserved it too, because they wanted to do something else. You know how the saying, you dig a hole for somebody else?

Q: Yeah.

A: You could fall in th – yourself, so that's what ha –

Q: So did – did **Ukraine** come in before **Hungary**?

A: Yes, bu –

Q: Okay, when did **Ukraine** come in?

A: What year was that? Around 19 – I think 30 – '39, something like '39, '38.

Q: Were they still under Soviet control at that point?

A: The uk – **Ukraine**?

Q: Yeah.

A: **Ukraine** was – was – this was a separate **Ukraine**.

Q: Okay.

A: There was the real **Ukraine** occupied by the Soviets –

Q: Right.

A: – from the **Soviet Union**. This, this was the carpa – in the Carpathians, they occupied that time the Carpathians. So, when they had the power they thought they

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

gonna get away, they gonna stay forever there, so they wanted to make it, like the Germans said, **Judenrein**, free of Jews.

Q: Right.

A: In order to make free of Jews they had to kill all the – all the people, but then it happened to them, because **Hungary** claimed that this – this territory belonged to them.

Q: Okay.

A: Now, over there you had every day at – e-every day, I wouldn't say every day, but very often new governments.

Q: Right.

A: First was Czechoslovakian, then was **Ukraine**, then was Hungarian, **Germany**, all of them, you know. So when I went to school, I had to learn all those languages.

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: You learned one language, and this – a couple of months later you had to start another language, but that's was the name of the game in those days.

Q: Do you still remember them?

A: Oh, I sure do remember them. I – sure, you can't forget, I was –

Q: Good.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: – I was a kid there, you know. I remember what happened to me by – when I was three years old, I could remember all the w-way back, yeah.

Q: Oh, what happened?

A: No, nothing happened –

Q: Oh, was that when you started learning?

A: – just as a child –

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, yeah, I knew that, you know, what was going on the – and I could remember the days, you know, when I went – started to school, and how I was treated in school, and all kind of things, so –

Q: What language did you speak at home, though?

A: At home? Jewish.

Q: Jewish?

A: Yes.

Q: Hebrew, or Yiddish?

A: No, no, Yiddish.

Q: Yiddish, okay.

A: Because yi – Jewish and Hebrew is two different languages.

Q: Right.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Jewish is [indecipherable] from German.

Q: Okay.

A: It comes from **Germany**, the – the language of that time. But, this with the Hungarian, in the beginning they – they were very nice to the j – especially to the Jewish people and everything, but it didn't last too long. Finally Hungarian made a pact with **Germany**, and **Germany** wanted all the Jews out. So the honeymoon ended that time when **Germany** and ho – **Horthy** – **Horthy Miklós** was the – like the president here, he was that time th-the – he was the – li-like the – the president –

Q: Right.

A: – of Hungarian. His name was **Horthy Miklós**. He was very friendly to the Jewish people, but he didn't have no choice because there was a lot of Hungarians, they – they were also sympathizers with the – with the Nazis, with the – with the Germans. So he didn't have no choice and he had to do what they – they told him to do, but the reality, he didn't have no power, had no – nothing to say there.

Q: Right.

A: In that time when – when they made a pact with **Germany**.

Q: Could we maybe go back a little bit and just talk about your childhood and your parents? Any anti-Semitism you experienced, maybe going to school, what that was like for you.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Well, in the school – I was born in **Munkacs** and I went in the first and second – second grade, I went in **Munkacs**. Then we moved to **Kwassie(ph)**. **Kwassie(ph)** is in the **Carpathian** mountains. And the – it all depends what kind of teacher you had. If you had a nice teacher, they were very nice, and some of them were special. I had the **Ukraine** teacher by the name of **Kohut(ph)**. He was unbelievable, he hated the Jews. Every time – he was a substitute teacher [**indecipherable**]. So my teacher, she was a Hungarian teacher. And she was very nice, absolutely, she handled the people, not only Jewish people, she handled the people because there was Ukraine kids, Ru-Russian kids, you know, Hungarian speaking kids, she handled everybody one way tha – with love, I could say.

Q: And this was in public school?

A: This is public school, right. Now, this teacher, when he came in, he – w-we had to stand in two lines and we had to go over to him and he – we had to show – put my hand on his hands, and he checked if you have dir – cut nails or dirty nails. So when I came he looked at my ne – of my nails, and my nail were a hundred percent clean. But his – his – his hands were this – this thick black, he was a drunk. So he says, okay next. Ge – next dirty Jew. He called us dirty Jew.

Q: And you weren't even dirty.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: In front of everybody. I cou – you couldn't say anything because in those days you couldn't start up with teachers, you know.

Q: So it was a very mixed classroom, though, between Jews and maybe Gentiles?

A: No, they were – we went to one class.

Q: Okay.

A: This wasn't only – it was a couple of Jews there, we were the minority there, you see.

Q: Right. Was is mostly Christians, or – okay.

A: Yeah, mostly Christians, right. And – and-and couple of – and Jewish kids mixed in. We never had any problem with the – in the school, but all depends on with these teachers. Or sometimes – I'll tell you another story. When I was already in a higher grade, that was already when I was in – in the fifth grade, I think. So I had a – a – a teacher by the name of **Skoba(ph) Laslo(ph)**, a very nice man. So, wh- when you were old, I think by t – 11 – 11 or 10 years old you had to, like here – like the – the Germans had the **Hitlerjugend**, the – the kids when they had – they – they trained them for – for army and things, and singing and marching. The Jewish people – the Jewish kids, they took us and we had to clean the toilets, we had to do all those low class things. And instead of they – they had the make believe gun, they give us shovel, so – but wh-who cared, you know, as long – we did what we had to

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

do and you cou – we didn't have no choice. So one day my teacher told me I should do something for him, I had to go to the post office or something. He says, okay, this – for this, because you took care what I told you, you don't have to go four times to the – they call it the **leventher**(ph). So I said thank you very much, and I was off, because every week, once a week you had to go there, to the thing. So when they see that I was missing, they came, two guys, grown up, they were maybe 18 years old already, but with guns, you know, how come you didn't go to the – how come you didn't come to the leven – I says, I have off for four weeks. He was the main guy, this **Skoba**(ph), teacher, he was the main guy from the **leventher**(ph).

Q: Oh, wow.

A: So I said, **Skoba**(ph) gave me off four weeks. We don't care, he says, we have an order, you have to come. And my mother wasn't home, so I – they have to come, I went with them. And was snowing that if I – he was sitting as far from me, you couldn't see my face, that's how strong it was snowing, it was wintertime.

Q: Just a few feet.

A: Yeah. So he s – and I came over there. The other one was a – the – a ver – also a big Jew hater, was named **Cossack**, like the Cossacks, you know? Was also **Ukraine** guy. He was the number two man, but **Skoba**(ph) was the higher – higher

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

man. So he says – first of all he gave me a shovel, and I have to hold on with the shovel like this, and standing like this, so –

Q: Up in the air.

A: Yeah. So, I was standing there. From far away I see somebody's coming with a bicycle, because you couldn't see, because it was so heavy the snow. When you come closer ca – I says, this must be **Skoba**(ph). He came close to – closer and closer, he says, what are you doing here? Didn't I gave you off four weeks? So I told him. He says, throw down the shovel, you go home. I'll take care on the rest, right. And he had the big fight with them, and he says, when I tell – when I gave him off, that means he is off. You have no right. Next time he behaved. He put him in his place, cause he was the head guy. So as I said, there was some of them very nice, and some of them, you know, Nazi sympathizers.

Q: Right.

A: They were the worst.

Q: So you had a very mixed bag of experiences like that?

A: That – that – that's – that is correct. And that – even the concentration camp. The worst, they were e – th-those – they called themselves the **[indecipherable]** that they wanted to – to become for **Germany** one, you know, they were the worst. Like, Ukraines, Lithuanians – Ukraines, Lithuanians and Romanians, they were the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

worst. They did killings like – like you step on a cockroach, that’s what they used to do. But you gonna hear the stories later on, when I was in the concentration camp, what had happened and what was going on.

Q: Did you have any brothers and sisters?

A: Yes, I had two – two more bro – we were three kids.

Q: Okay.

A: Two more brothers, young – each year – I was born 1929 - 1930 and ‘31.

Q: Okay.

A: Each year. There was one – one ahead – before me, but didn’t make it, so – you know, in those days it wasn’t advanced, the medicines like today, you know, especially in **America**. [phone ringing]

Q: We’re going to pause for just a second.

A: Yeah, okay. [tape break]

Q: [indecipherable] Okay, we’re back with Mr. **Rosenheck**. Mr. **Rosenheck**, could you maybe tell me a little bit about your parents, like what they did, what life was like for them, and your family?

A: Okay. My mother and father – my mother was born in 1901, and my father was born in 1901, in same – in same thing. My father lived in – in **Kwassie**(ph), the – and my mother comes from **Munkacs**.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: It's about a hund – hundred kilomet – kilometers in distance. So my mother always want to become a doctor, and in those days she went in university and she wanted to become a doctor.

Q: That's impressive.

A: But something happened. They had a big business, and it was selling materials for ladies, for mans **[indecipherable]**

Q: Your mother's family had the business?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: My mother's family. So, my grandfather in those days, cut his toenails, and cut maybe a little bit too deep, and got an infection. Now today you give a shot of penicillin, or anything, and it's taken care. In those days, didn't have no penicillin nor antibiotics. And my grandmother used to s-scream at him, why don't you go to the – see the doctor? Oh, this – you know, he was a big guy, strong guy. Oh, I don't need it, don't worry about it, nothing's going to happen to me. Well, it did happen. Finally gangrene went in and they had to amputate his leg, and not l – after that, a couple of – a very short time he died, he passed away.

Q: Oh, wow.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: So now, my mother made already three – in those days you had to go four years to university to become a doctor, she had already thre – three years finished, so – and my grandma didn't know how to read, how to write, and she took over the business, and they ha – they had 14 children, but most of them were already married, and a couple of them were still home. So, my – my grandma, she didn't know how to order, she didn't know how to do things. She knew how to sell, but she didn't help out in the business either because she – she did the cooking. And my grandfather had somebody who helped him out, and that's all, they managed very good. So wh-when it came to a point that sh – th-they – she couldn't pay the bills, because didn't have – they wouldn't give her no more st – materials to sell, because she couldn't pay. So it came to a point that she turned to my mother and says, listen – my mother's name was **René** – listen, **René**, you have to stop schooling. You have to take over the business, because you know me, I didn't go to school, I don't know how to handle a business. And because if you're not going to take over we all gonna die. Because in those days there was no welfare. If you had the money you ate, if you didn't have the money to eat, you didn't eat, unless somebody maybe helped you out once in awhile, but they couldn't do it every day because a lot of them didn't have money also, to help you out. So in that time my mother – my –

**[phone ringing]**

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Let me pause once more.

A: That's right. **[tape break]**

Q: Okay.

A: Okay.

Q: All right, we're back.

A: So anyway, my mother took it over, and as soon as the salesman heard that my mother took over the store, they all c-came to run, you know, Mrs. **René**, just, if you need something, we are all here to help you and don't worry about it, and they knew that my mother is – knows how to do things that – they knew it. So my mother took over, and my aunt, the youngest sister, she was in **Israel** and I went to see her, so she told me the story. She said that my mother built up in a – in a couple of months, she made so much money that they couldn't close the drawer, because in tho – in those days they didn't have registers, you know. Everything was in a big drawer and you just laid down nicely the – each denomination, you know, separately. And th-the first thing she did, she paid off all the – whatever my grandma lost, paid everything, paid them back and she made a lot of money, in those days. So that was my mother. My father, my father was in **Kwassie**(ph). My – my father's mother, they owned the mineral bathe – bathe, you know, there was a lot of minerals there, and all over from **Europe** used to come to bathe there,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

especially in the summertime, y-you couldn't find a room, e-even the stables were rented. That's how many people used to come in in the summertime. In the wintertime was a – a ski resort. So, that's more or less my – about my parents.

Q: Mm-hm. How did they meet?

A: That, I really don't know.

Q: Okay.

A: I wasn't around at that time, but anyway, I really don't know because you see, in those – in those days used to be matchmakers. So let's say they knew your parents, they went over there, say oh, I have a very nice little daughter or something, ye – you have a nice boy, and you know, they used to go around and – and match up people, and they used to get paid for that. That was their business, they called themselves matchmakers.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: You heard about that?

Q: Oh yes.

A: Yeah [**indecipherable**] the same thing here. So exactly how and what I cannot tell you because I really don't know.

Q: So your father moved to **Mukachevo**?

A: No, no, my mother moved t-to –



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay, okay.

A: – because when she got – in those days you also had – you got – a – a girl used to get dowries.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So, sh – they got a big dowry and they settled down there in the – in – in

**Kwassie**(ph), in the thing.

Q: Okay.

A: So my father, his main business used to be – they used to buy, let's say in the mountain, there's – were a lot of wood there, so used to buy, let's say, a whole – and a couple of acres of land, and whatever th – woods were on that land, they used to cut them off in th – in the wint – in the summertime. In the wintertime they used to bring them down with sleds, all the way to the station, and he used to deliver all over t – all over **Europe** he used to sell those things. So he was in the – in the wood business, in wholesale wood business.

Q: So is that still when you were alive? Like, did you see –

A: Yes, I was – I –

Q: Was he gone a lot?

A: Y-Yes, yeah. But then, what happened – now I'm gonna comment and – and go on what had happened. See, in those days they took all – one day my father

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

delivered already all the wood to the station and they were ready to deliver, put in the wagons. Suddenly it came that they called him in as a – what do you call that? Enforced labor.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: In other words, he wasn't as a soldier, they – let's say, they were a Jewish battalion. They used to send them to th – to the front to pick mines or things like that. They didn't train them how to do – pick mines, and if you did the wrong thing, i-it – it blew up and that was the end of it. So a lot of Jewish people got killed that way.

Q: What year do you think they first called them into forced labor?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: Do you know about what year they called them into forced labor?

A: What year? It was 1942 - '43.

Q: Okay.

A: So – a-and that's what happened – what – what happened, the big thing that when they called them in, all the wood was there, and nobody e – e – my mother didn't know exactly wha – where to – you know, it came so suddenly –

Q: Mm-hm.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: – because over there they didn't ask no questions. When you got that – that ticket to go – to go into the army or whatever, the labe – forced labor, you just to right away, give a no – couple of hours and you had to go. But anyway, in that time it was also **Poland**. **Germany** tried to occupy **Poland**, but there was a big fight between – in **Germany** and **Poland**. So all the military went through our – our town. And whatever they seen, they seen wood, you know, wood was a big commodity, you know, because everybody need wood to cook, and t – so they seen ready made wood, ready made, cut, everything, just to put it in the oven, they took – cleaned out the whole – the – all the wood was – even the Germans went through the town, Polacks went through the town. The Hungarian army went there. Everybody grabbed whatever they could. If they seen, they didn't ask no question. If you had a cow someplace in the pasture, they just grabbed the cow, they slaughtered them, that's it.

Q: Was it just your father in the wood business in your town, or was there anyone else?

A: There was ano – another – another family was also in that business, but my father was a – on the – on the big – in the – he – he was in the bigger business.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Cause he used to export it all over **Europe**. So now it became a thing, because all the money was invested in that wood, and since everything was stolen, and my mother was in bad situation. So – and, you know, as I said, in those days, th – over there was no welfare either, and th-the – the government didn't pay you anything because you – your father is in the service there, whatever he did – he was like a soldier, but he wasn't – he wasn't doing a soldier's work, but they called him like a soldier. He had to wear a uniform, a Hungarian uniform. So my mother send s – had some jewelry, so she sold out the jewelry, you know, how much – so eventually there's plenty of times that we were in ba-bad shape, he – went to the bed hungry, you know, because my mother said, I haven't got what to give you, go to bed to sleep. And sometimes she had a piece of bread, she cu – she – you know, we were three boys and her is four, so she – she cut it in three pieces. And I – so I said – I was the oldest one, I says, how come you – you not cutting for yourself? You just – and I said no – nobody – because my brothers, they listened to me, you see, I was the oldest one, so they – whatever I said was going. So I said, you – nobody eats unless she cuts it in four pieces. Cause I didn't want my mother should –

Q: Right.

A: – sh-sh-should need. I – I had a wonderful mother, this – that – one thing, nobody could take this away from me, because she was just one of the ni – I mean,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

everybody likes th – their – his or hers mother, but she was the best mother for us. She would have give her life away. As a matter of fact, you could see, she didn't want to eat, and I says no, you have to eat too. And she didn't have no choice, she had to eat it. The kids wouldn't eat it, would take it from her. But then luckily, luckily you see, when God keeps his hand over you, and everything turns out to be good. We, where we lived, our house was the post office, also. We had the big house, and we used to rent for the post office. They used to post –

Q: Okay, so you shared a building with them.

A: Yes, with them.

Q: Okay. Were there – were there any other families in the building?

A: No.

Q: Just you.

A: Only the post office and us.

Q: Okay. Did you have any other relatives nearby?

A: Oh yeah, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: We had plenty of relatives. There was a lot of relatives in this – yeah.

Q: Were they – were you able to help them, or were they able to help you?

A: Well, wait for th – we are coming to –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay, okay.

A: [indecipherable] right. So one guy – and we had also a forced labor from Hungarian, Jewish people came to us, cut woods and things like that. One day a guy comes in into our house and let's say this was the front of – of the – of the aw – of the house, and that was the post office. And to us, we went – here is another gate, we went from here, there's – the other half was ours.

Q: Okay, so you were in back.

A: So back – right.

Q: Okay.

A: So, because he didn't know exactly where to go in, by accident he came into our house and knocked on the door and my mother went out. He says, is thi – where – where is the post office? So my mother says, just go around there, right next – in the front of the house is the post office. Then he says to my mother, what smells so good? So my mother made soup or s – chicken soup or whatever, I don't know exactly what kind of thing. So he says, oh my God, so – smells so nice. So my mother says, well, if you like, come inside, sit down and I'll serve you a plate of [indecipherable] soup.

Q: This is one of the forced laborers.

A: Yes –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: – one of the forced laborers, he lived in **Hungaria**. He was a big farmer, this guy.

Q: Do you know if he was Jewish?

A: Yeah, he was Jewish.

Q: Okay.

A: He – forced labor had to be all Jewish. The forced labor was hundred percent Jewish. So he – he says to my mother, oh my God, he says, you know, I never ate such a good – such a good food, because my mother's so – it was Friday, for Friday for sab – for Sabbath, you know, she prepared for the Sabbath. So he says, do you mind if I'll ask you a question? She says, yeah, you could ask me a question, she says. So he introduced himself and he says, you know, I'm a – I'm a big farmer, I have a lot of cattle, and anything food, you name it, I have it, he says. Maybe you could cook for me too, because I don't like the food what I – what – what they cook there for us in the thing. My mother says, well, if you would like to, gladly, we will help you out. Come in any time you want. And he says, this ca – has to be every day. And suddenly, after a week time, you should see them, we got maybe 10 packages in the post office, big boxes, food he – he wrote home, and they send him meat and sugar a-an – and flour, you name it. Everything was in boxes. He says,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

whatev – just tell – tell me what you need, he says. And suddenly – my mother didn't have no money, no nothing and suddenly, have whatever you want to have. Then, next door was my father's brother's family. So eventually we had about 10 people, also very rich Jewish people, you know, th-that could afford, they – they were rich, and my mothe – but she couldn't cook for – b-by herself, so sh – th – next door my – we had cousins, also that she was – one was 18, one was 20, she both came in and helped us out and there was plenty food and they took home for themselves whatever they wanted, you know? And suddenly wa – there was no more dividing a – a piece of bread in four pieces, we had all kind of food, whatever you wanted. So you see, there's a time when you get a lift.

Q: Mm-hm. Was anyone paying her to cook at that point, or is it all just charity?

A: No, no, they all – th – wa – one was a manufacturer. One was a manufacturer from clothing, so they brought all kind – for – for the kids everybody got pants and jackets and coats, winter coats and shoes. Whatever we needed, he provided. And si – they left also money, they paid, you know, wha-whatever. They were very happy with my mother's cooking. So – so thanks God for that because – but, it didn't last too long.

Q: One more – just one more question about that, was --

A: Yeah.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: – so all of the food and coats that you were being sent out, those are being sent from the family of the forced laborer?

A: Of the t – forced laborers, right.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: Th-They were Hungarian Jews, all the way deep from **Hungaria**.

Q: Okay.

A: Now suddenly, this forced labor start – you know, they didn't stay, they stayed for a couple of months, whatever it is, and then they send them someplace else. But that wasn't the – the problem, because we had, for at least for another year or two to eat, we had so much food in the house, whatever they – they send us, you know, plenty food, no – no problem with that. There was one night, beginning in 1944, the Hungarians – Hungarians came with the – with the – with the hung – Hungarians and the German from the Gestapo came in, just like that. You have an hour time to get out from your house. Leave all the jewelry, all the money you have, leave it on the table, and leave the keys in the door. And you have to go end of the town, there was – you know, there was a lot of – like a hotel type, you know, they had a lot of rooms. All the Jewish people have to be – leave everything from the house, take a couple of pieces what you need, and the rest – le – leave everything home. And if you have money, leave it on the table. And if we gonna find out that you packed

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

some money away, you'll be shot – put to the wall and shot. That was the German talking. And they me – they meant business, because they were unbelievable, those people. You gonna hear stories, later down in the line. So we – we – it – yes. And my father was sent on a furlough for a couple of days. So he just was called an-and this – with us together, so we were all together.

Q: So he was back home at this point?

A: Back home –

Q: Okay.

A: – for a couple of days, but once they took him away, that's it, they couldn't return th – no more, to where he was. But this – they didn't care about that.

Q: So it's just your mom and you and your brothers going in to –

A: And my father.

Q: And your father, okay.

A: And my father.

Q: Okay.

A: Because he didn't return to his – his unit.

Q: Okay.

A: That was finished, the unit was gone already. And that was the first night of Passover, I'll never forget that. Suddenly – th-the kid – the young kids, they lay

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

down to sleep and the bigger kids wer – you know, Passover, there's a Passover meal, you know, and they – I don't know, are you Jewish, or no?

Q: I'm not, actually.

A: No, no, that's okay, tha – but –

Q: I know about it.

A: – but you know about – you know about those things –

Q: Right.

A: – is – there's – they call it a **Seder** and they – they pray, and they eat matzos, they do-don't eat bread, things like that. Suddenly, I would say it was dark outside, suddenly Germans came in with – with about two, three cars, with motorcycles.

And they – and we were sitting, by the – they didn't open the door, they broke the door in coming in. They always ma – like to make a – what do you call that

**[indecipherable]** something, something –

Q: Breaking in, you mean?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: When – when you're – when they were breaking in?

A: They breaking in, and they started to shoot in th – in the – on the ceiling, you know, and the kids started to – they got – they scared the – first they tried to scare the people, and make a – a -- **behollah**(ph) means, you know, with noises and with

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

dogs, you know, this was their motive always, to scare the – first the people, and to, you know, to make them afraid of them. So that's how they – they rushed in. And then – all you hear, people are crying – the kids were crying and screaming, you know, because they got scared. They don't know who – that was German or it was Hungarian, or something. And then they put machine guns on this – on the street, and there was a field going down to the water. There was a – a river. The river was that – the **Tisa**. That was the big river there. So my uncle – people were running like – like crazy, were you – one on this way, one that way, one the other way around, cause they got so scared, frightened, you know, from those – from those Germans, the – when you come in – somebody comes in in a house and starts shooting and breaking and coming – and hitting you, thing, you get scared and you run every – a-all over. So, my uncle was running to the water, in the snow, you could see right away, when a person runs on the snow, you could see. Snow is white and if he wears the dark clothes, you can spot him right away. They shoot – killed him right there on the spot, so he fell that – right there. I was running with a friend of mine, he had the little baby. The – the mother just gave birth like maybe a week or two years old, I don't remember exactly that, but very small baby. So we ran in – into a shack there, and they were running through, and suddenly the baby gave a cry, you know, he woke up, and the – right away. So they came in, and, get out, you know, and the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Germans, get out from there. And one guy hit me with a gun – with a – with a gun from the end of the gun, hit me over the head. Luckily, he didn't hi – he didn't hi – if he would have hit that baby, that baby would be dead right there. Didn't – didn't matter anyway, because the baby didn't – didn't survive anyway, but that's besi – another point. So that was – we were there in this house for about a couple of days, and from there they took us and we went to **Máltészalka**, that was a ghetto.

Q: This was in winter of '43 or '44?

A: Winter of '44.

Q: Okay.

A: Beginning an – beginning of –

Q: Like in January or February?

A: – or something like that.

Q: Okay.

A: All right. So [indecipherable]

Q: [indecipherable] **Máltészalka**?

A: Yeah, we went to – they took us and put us in-into wagons, and they – they packed us in like sardines there. We came to **Mátészalka** and after a – I don't know, we rode the whole night and – and half a day, I think, something like that, a day and a half. And then ther – they put us on an open field, no nothing, no – and it

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

was raining, you know, and it was cold. And we did – we'd – we had the ha – no raincoats, we didn't have raincoats, things like that, or the coat. And a lot of people died there on this – on the thing, because the older people, they just couldn't take it, it was very cold.

Q: How long were you on the field for?

A: On the field, we were, for a nice couple of days. I cannot tell you – maybe four days, five days –

Q: So the people tried to sleep on it?

A: The – there were – there were also houses there, but in the beginning they wouldn't let us into the houses, because it wasn't ready somehow, I don't know.

But after then, we came into the houses. And we were there in **Máltészalka** also for – just for a couple of weeks. And it –

Q: Did people like, try to sleep on the field, though, or did they just have to use the bathroom out there?

A: Well, you use the bathroom, you went there on the side a little bit. Who cares? In those days you didn't care. Could be a good looking girl, or something. I was a kid, I didn't e – wasn't interested in those days for – for the women, or something. But that's – that's was life. And they had there a guy, also a German, the Gestapo. If he walked by and he seen you, he didn't like your looks or whatever, he took out his

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

pistol and killed you on the spot, without any questions ask. And he gets away with everything because he do whatever he wants to do. Killed people. And we were so scared, when we seen him, everybody was hiding, because we knew what this guy is doing.

Q: Mm-hm. How many people do you think were in **Mátészalka** at the time?

A: Oh, I don't know, there was a lot of people this – not only from our town, from all over around. For – they always – took most – most they took them there to **Mátészalka**. Maybe they took him someplace else too, which I don't know. I was still a kid that time, and a – but anyway, after a couple of weeks, we were in **Mátészalka** and one day they came and they says, you – you people are gonna go to work, and you going to **Poland** to work. We didn't have nothing to say. And then they said, we're gonna examine you, and if you still have any jewelry or something – they undressed everybody naked, stark naked and they checked you out from top to bottom, and if you had something hidden or something, they beat you up like unbelievable. So finally they put us in wagons. And we didn't know where we are going, but we wi – wind up in **Auschwitz-Birkenau**.

Q: Who was with you at this point in – in your family?

A: In the – i-i – that wa – in this point, my mother, my father and the three brother – three kids.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: That's – includes me, too.

Q: Right.

A: Three kids, we are three brothers. Finally – and this was – this was unbelievable, because you see, in that time, a lot of military was going. So if a military train came, they took us and pushed us in the back to make for them the – the right of way to go, to go ahe – oh, this must be my wife.

Q: We'll pause for a second again.

A: Yeah, okay. **[tape break]** Bay –

Q: Hold on a second.

A: Yeah.

Q: All right. Okay, we're back. We might hear Mr. **Rosenheck's** wife in the background a little bit, but – she's here, but we're still with Mr. **Rosenheck**.

A: Right. Well anyway, now we arriving to – to **Auschwitz-Birkenau**. We still didn't know what was going on. As soon as they opened the doors, you could see the Germans – Gestapo. This is the **SS**, you know, this – they are the worst, with dogs, with German Shepherds. And they were instigating those dogs, you know, and ri – the dogs came, you know, with **[growls]**. You know, they – they are trained, killer dogs, you know.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: So this was after you had gotten off the train?

A: This is already in **Auschwitz**.

Q: Okay.

A: We just arrived to **Auschwitz**. And screaming, **raus** – and there was a lady, I – I remember, I – and I used to know her because her – her father was a shoemaker in town. And she had poli – she had polio. She was about 25 years old, I think, and she had the little girl. But she – when she had the little girl she didn't have the – later on she di – somehow she developed polio. And she – they brought her with – with her bed, because she couldn't walk, she couldn't move. Don't ask. So the German grabbed – pushed her out, with the bed, and the bed flew this way and she went the other way around. And she was crying, you know, but he – they didn't care. Now, I was a kid. For me to jump down from that wa – wagon was nothing, because a kid, you know, is about this tall – high. But an elderly person, he couldn't jump down from there, because he is old, too old, or an elderly woman, or somebody. A young guy is nothing, to jump down from here to the ground is nothing.

Q: Just a few feet.

A: Right. And they started to hit us with the – with the canes and with the dogs, and everybody was running in different directions. I run this way, my mother, father, somehow wind up the other way around, and some of my brother went this way,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

you know. Depends, depends. You – you always try to run away from the thing. So finally everybody was out from the wagons because they had to ma – clear the – the rails, that's the reason they wanted us one, two, three out, but it takes time to – to jump out from there even, and especially for the sick people or elderly people, they just couldn't jump like ano – another person. So finally, a guy comes over to me, an inmate already, a – a Jewish guy from **Poland**. He says listen, don't tell them how old you are. Tell them that you are older, and tell them that you are an electrician. Guy came over and talked to me in Jewish.

Q: How old were you really, at that time?

A: In – in that time I was about –

Q: 14?

A: – twel – 13, something like that.

Q: Okay.

A: Thirteen. So he says – he says to me, now you see there in the corner? That's

**Mengele** standing there. You heard about **Mengele**?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: You just have heard.

Q: Oh yes.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: The death of the a – a-angel of death. Cause if he send you this way or he send you this way, this way is to life, and this way is to die. Now, he is gonna interview, he interviews everybody. And he just makes with the finger, this way, that way, this way, that way, but sometimes he stops and asks you some questions. So when I came, he asked me, how old are you? I says, I'm 15. He looks, looks. Well, you working? He said what – what did you do? I said, I worked electrician helper. Yeah, okay, he send me this way. People – if you were pregnant, he – I don't care how old you are, if 18 or 20 or 15, when he see that you're pregnant, that's to die. There's no question, as any pregnant woman was going to the – to the crematoriums.

Q: Were you undressed at this point?

A: Undressed, no, no.

Q: Okay.

A: This is still just from the wagons out –

Q: Okay.

A: – and then when – when he sends you this way, you had to go through a bath, and they change you, took away all your clothing, and they give you the concentration camp clothing, you know, those striped clothings? You must have seen it in the –

Q: Oh yes.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: All right, okay. So – and now suddenly, I became all by myself. I didn't see – I didn't know where my father was, I didn't know where my mother was, I didn't know my two brothers. Own – only by myself, completely by myself. Okay. So finally we came in, and they sh – take all – sheared up all – all your hair, all over, and they – they call it ant-lousing. You know, they disinfect you, you know, because a lot of people maybe came, had lice or whatever, this, you know, so – and they took away everything what you had and they gave you the concentration camp clothes. So I wind up in – in the – in – in **F** lager. You see, **Auschwitz** was divided, **A, B, C, D** and **E** – and **F**. Now, between – between each, **A** and **B**, there was high voltage wires. You touch that wire, and that's it, you cannot – could not – you could not pull back your hand. It's like – it pulled you like a magnet, it killed you instantly.

Q: Did you see anyone touch it?

A: Yeah, I'll –

Q: Okay, okay.

A: – we'll come – we'll come – coming – coming to that. So anyway, I just want to tell you the way – ho-how I arrived there. So finally I came into the barrack, I was so tired, so knocked out, because in-inside in the wagons, you couldn't – I couldn't stretch my feet. If you sit down you couldn't get up, if you get up you couldn't sit

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

down because like – like sardines they put you in – in those – in those things. Now imagine if you had to go to the bathroom. And what do you think you did? You did where you were standing. And the smell, you know, from I don't know how many people it was in the wagon, at least 50 - 60 – I don't – I can't tell you because I really, honestly don't know myself.

Q: So this was still in the wagon when –

A: Still – yeah.

Q: Okay, and ye –

A: But this is already now I'm out from the wagons.

Q: Okay.

A: So, I was very thirsty and was a hot day that time, and I was so thirsty. They didn't give you nothing, nothing to eat, but I went to the faucet and drink a little bit water. That's – that's what – that calmed me down, I says, now I don't care, I'm – there was no bunk beds, and no nothing there. On the cement lay down, and that's it. I lay down, I took off my – my pants and my jacket and I put it under my head, you know, and my shoes. In the morning around four o'clock, was pouring outside – we had Gypsy overseers, sigo – Gypsy, **Zigeuners**, you know. You heard about **Zigeuner**?

Q: Mm-hm.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: There's some German – Gypsies is the German **Zigeuner**. They also beat us, you know, **raus**, out, out, for the **appell**, you know, outside those – lined up. I take a look. I haven't got no clothes, I haven't got no shoes. Look [**indecipherable**] I see. I haven't got nothing to put on. Somebody took it away from me. So I says to myself, listen Mr. **Saul**, you better change your – your habits here, you see what's going on here. You gonna do what you did right now, you not gonna survive here for a long time. Okay.

Q: Was everyone in **F** lager from your transport, or were some people there already?

A: No, no, was me – this different – all mixed in, all different transports.

Q: So there were people there already and you were just coming in?

A: Yeah, sure, they were –

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, coming in. You see, in **Auschwitz**, the-they annihilated i-in a day they could annihilate 10,000 people, that mass production what they had, the crematoriums. But I'll be come – coming – coming to that, too. So finally we went outside, everybody was outside. And then I said to myself – we were sitting there til it got light, because when I – we were – they chased us out, was still dark outside. So finally, must have been maybe seven, eight o'clock, I don't know because I

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

didn't have a watch and I didn't know the time. Because over there the time – the – the time didn't mean anything.

Q: Right.

A: So we're sitting, sitting, then I said to myself – you see, the barracks were going one barrack here, one barrack here, one bar – and here was a place that we used to sit between the barracks. I said, you know, let me take a look, maybe I'll go to the next, maybe I'll see somebody from my hometown that I – I could recogni – maybe I'll see my father. Just for a guessing, you know? So I see nobody looking, I **pfft**, and outside, and I pass by there, I look, I look. Nobody. I went one – another barrack further, nobody. I said, let me try one more. I try one more, nothing, didn't find anyone. As I'm turning around, there was a window. I looked inside – peek inside from the back of the barrack, I see a barrel is there, coffee.

Q: Oh.

A: So I pulled the window – windows open, pull one, I'm looking. I jump in, and at first – first I go and drink like that. I'm – I'm still drinking –

Q: Stick your head in.

A: I was so thirsty, you haven't got no idea. I'm still drinking the coffee, if I close my eyes, the way I was drinking the coffee. So I drank, I drank and – and now I was

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

full. Now I was satisfied wi-with drinking, because you know you – when you are very thirsty, your mouth is dry.

Q: Mm-hm. There was no one else around that saw you doing that?

A: No – nobody, nobody else because they were no more sitting there.

Q: Oh, wow.

A: There was – this part was empty, that's the reason na – then I see a canteens, German canteens, you know, laying on the floor. I don't know how that coffee went in there or what or who put it in there. Don't ask me, because I don't know. All I seen it there, I ran inside, I took one canteen, put it in the – filled it up and put it in my shirt, now this time, you know, because they shouldn't s –

Q: So they were pretty small canteens?

A: No, there's about thi-this tall, you know.

Q: Okay.

A: And thi-this wide. It's a canteen of coffee.

Q: Okay.

A: I put it in my shirt because if they gonna see me with a ca – things, you know, could get into trouble. I went back to my place, and finally lunch time they give you – they took like in a pot for five people, and they count one, two, three, four, five and they give you a pot with some soup in it. Now, if they're nice people you've –



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

you met – find nice people, they share that with you, one spoon for you, one spoon for me. But sometimes they [indecipherable] stronger guys and they said the kid, who – who cares, you know? Sometimes you get – didn't get anything.

Q: So those were the other inmates that would share with you, or –

A: Right, right.

Q: Okay.

A: With other inmates. I got a couple of spoons myself and all right, what I got, I got, that's it. You know, I – I was used to already so – sometimes not to eat, because you didn't have ron – there was a time where you didn't have what to eat.

Q: Was there any trading at that point, like if someone had some bread, they'd give you some bread for [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, but thi-this is later on –

Q: Okay.

A: – later on, when it – it settled down. It's one thing, I never believed in trading. Those people give away the piece of bread for cigarettes, you know. Fo – and besides, I didn't smoke, so – and I didn't want to take. Whatever they gave me, I said that's what I'm gonna eat, and no – no trading.

Q: Right.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Later on you'll see why – why – why I was doing that. So anyway, I came at night, and I went to sleep. In between, when I went out this mor – the – the morning, before [indecipherable] I didn't have no – no – no pants, no nothing. I seen in the garbage can, I found a pair of pants, old pants but this big. Maybe two sows could fit in there, not one. Big pants. I just took it, made a knot, and I was holding like this, at least I had a pair of pants. At night, I met there a guy, so he says, here there's another pair – a – a jacket, and there's a pair of shoes, maybe they fit you. Eh, it fit me, so I was sort of back in bus – but didn't – was-wasn't new, but I was covered. At night suddenly, and I still had my canteen, but this time I – I didn't put my – my stuff just like put it down, you know, make believe, an-and then they should steal it from me. I learned my lesson very fast. You had to learn, otherwise you couldn't survive. So, at night I hear somebody cries, mommy, mommy, mommy. He had scarlet fever. How did I know, I'm gonna tell you how I knew it, too. And he says – he was burning up. You know, scarlet fever goes with a very high temperature. So then another guy who was sleeping next to me says, who has water, who has – who has to drink, something? So I go over – I get up, you know, I was still new, you know, when I heard somebody crying, it – it bothered me. And I went over there, and I opened his mouth and I put a little drop – a couple of drops of coffee. Oh, he said, oh. And now he felt good because it's – it's cool,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

it's water, it cooled him off a little bit. And then I went back to my place to sleep, and I slept. In the morning – again, they chased us out early in the morning, but this time they made two line – two lines. One group was this way, and one group was this way going. And I came out. Wherever I went, I s – I stopped right there in this – in this place. Suddenly, we were – got a little bit li – if you sit down, we were sitting there and waiting for what's going to be next. Suddenly the kid from last night, happened the same thing. He fell down and fainted again, because the high – the fever, the big fever was burning him up. And again, who has drink, who? He needs some water, who has something for him to drink? So I got up, I still had th – my ca – my – my canteen, you know?

Q: Yeah.

A: And I give him again, but this time I couldn't go back to my old place, so I stood right there. And then the – the Germans came right away, at – maybe in half an hour after, and they said this line this way, and this line remains here. So those people where I was going was supposed to remain there, but then we went into the **D** lager. First of all, we came in, we had bunk beds, no more sleeping on the floor. Wa – the middle, one on the bottom, in the middle and on the top. And there was about six – six kids in one back – on the top six, on the ba – middle, and in – on the bottom six. So about 18 kids in a bunk bed.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Right.

A: It came lunch, you got a – you got a plate, a separate plate, with a spoon, and you got a liter of soup. This time they couldn't cheat you, because you got your own, and – and besides, they had th – if you wanted **[indecipherable]** you – you could repeat and you could go again and they give it – give you another soup, so it's **[indecipherable]**

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I said, my God, what a difference from one place to the next. Okay.

Q: Did you always have to hold on to your plate and your spoon?

A: No, no, no, no, no.

Q: You got –

A: Plates you gave back, they – they wer –

Q: Okay.

A: – there were some kids that used to – that was divided. You had to wash those plates, and they washed it for you, and some people went to the kitchen, picked up the soup, or th – they give you the bread, or whatever, whatever the food was divided. In the morning you had already coffee. There wasn't coffee, it was – they took some, like a corn, and they burned it and they thin – that was the coffee, you know, it wasn't –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Some kind of fake coffee.

A: – coffee like you get. Yeah, fake coffee is right. They used to call it ersatz, in German, it's fay – ersatz coffee, but it wasn't real coffee, just fake coffee. That's the right word there, but i-in German used to be ersatz. **[indecipherable]**

Q: Appreciate that.

A: Okay.

Q: Okay.

A: Well, anyway, let me see. Yeah, okay.

Q: The ersatz coffee.

A: Yeah. We – we came – so now, it – situation improved. But it didn't last too long. What happened? We had the German Jewish doctor. He was in charge of the – of the kids. The – this was only kids, kids tha – between 11 - 12 til – til 15 or something like that. There was – the barrack was lo – all only kids. So he found that one of the kids that I gave him the coffee, had scarlet fever, so he had to report it to the Germans, that. Now today a scarlet fever, you give one injection, and – and it's finished, it's over. Over there they didn't treat you, instead – and I'm gonna tell you what happened with those kids, and what happened with me.

Q: How easily do you think it spread between kids though, at that point? Did a lot of people have it?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Yeah, well, I'm coming –

Q: Okay, okay.

A: – thi-this now, I'm coming right now to it. So as soon as he reported it – so **Mengele** was in charge of the health, the – you know, killing and making all kind of injections and – or taking the person and cutting open without the – without the anesthesia, you know. All those – those good things what he was famous for. So once he found out that there is scarlet fever in barrack 27, I was in the 27<sup>th</sup> barrack, he came in wa – and the next day, must have been nine o'clock, I think, and he had always a sergeant walking with him. He didn't have no gun, but the sergeant had the small pistol on – on the side, I still remember them. So he used to come, and we had to stand naked, and he looked at you. If you had like measles or pimples or something, that means that you had the scarlet fever. And he took one look at you, he said **wshht**, this way. This way meant – because in the back of – this is the barrack in the front, this is the front, this is the back. In the back where the ambulance was standing there and waiting. God forbid if you had anything like pimples or measles or something, they sent you straight in the ambulance.

Q: What is – oh, the ambulance.

A: Ambulance, ambulance, yeah. In German they say ambulance, I still – I still speak German.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: That's okay.

A: A-Ambulance. Now, nobody knew what was happening to you, this was the first time. So he had a co – picked out maybe four or five kids, ambulance. Ambulance went straight around, out, and the crematoriums were right here, put them in the crematorium, gassed them, goodbye. He used to come every day. Every day he used to come for inspection. And this – this time we were in quarantine. You couldn't come in, you couldn't go out. And they used to bring the food, put it down in front of the – of the door, by the door, and we had to take it in. When the ba – the barrels were empty, we had to put them outside. That – that was our job, that you didn't do no work, no nothing because you couldn't – we were not allowed to go outside, only in the barracks. Was a quarantine. One day – **Mengele** used to come every – every morning like, you know Germans, they – they punctual.

Q: Very precise.

A: Yeah. One day we take a look this, he's supposed to be here, he still didn't come here. And somehow you know, you didn't do anything, and I just felt tired, and I fell asleep. **[phone ringing]**

Q: That's fine. **[tape break]** All right, you ready?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay, we're back.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: So, I fall asleep. And you know, we had a blanket this time, with a straw like – a mattress from straw, you know, inside. But there was a blanket over it, and the blanket had like dimples, you know, up and down, th-the – it wasn't straight, smooth. And it left me an imprint on my face. And I was in the middle of – I always liked to be in the middle of the bunk beds, not on the top and not on the bottom, in the middle. And **Mengele** goes through, and I was right here on the end, on the first thing, and he stops right next to me. And he looks, looks, looks, and then he says, come a – **raus**, come outside. Well, he calls me wa – my friends on the top thing, they were crying already, because they – we knew already where you are going. Now imagine, it's like a death penalty, you know. When he calls you, 99 – 99 percent that you are finished. And the barrack, this was the barrack and the length – there used to be horses in those barracks before. So there was like a trough, the horses used to drink from that tro – torf – trough, they call it?

Q: Trough, yeah.

A: Trough, right. So they went, they filled in, where the water was, they filled it in with cement, and then we use it like a table or a bench, we used to sit on that – on the ho – on the whole length, from the barrack. So we used to sit there. So **Mengele** told me to sit down there, he took out a thermometer and put it in under my arms, and he went to inspect for – now it comes to me and says – says, don't – don't pull



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

it too hard, because I was afraid – I didn't know if I had a fever or not, but if he called me out there must be something, because he – so I – I pulled away from it, and I didn't – didn't hold it tight, it should [**indecipherable**]. When he came back, he takes out a temperature, it didn't even pull the normal temperature. So he knew right away what I did.

Q: Right.

A: He's not – he wasn't stupid, that guy.

Q: So this was **Mengele** that –

A: **Mengele**.

Q: – did that, okay.

A: Tha-That's the – the – the – the angel of death.

Q: And you think that he just pulled you aside originally cause you had the imprints on your face?

A: Yeah, on – on that face, right.

Q: Okay.

A: Now what – you know what he did?

Q: What?

A: He sat down on this thing, took me, sat me on his lap, and he was holding me this time like this. I couldn't do no more anything, couldn't do a thing. My heart wa

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

– I e – every beat from my heart, I heard it in my ears, because I knew this is the end. I still didn't know, when he took out the temperature, I didn't know if it was normal or not normal, he didn't tell me anything, he – he didn't – wouldn't tell me anything. Now, he took out a temperature, my temperature was normal. He comes with the funny smile, he says in German, **mach das du verschwins**. Make that you disappear from here before I change my mind. Did I disappear from there. You know what means jet propulsion? Like a jet.

Q: Did he do that to anyone else?

A: I am the first – the only kid that survived from **Mengele**.

Q: Huh. In that camp, or just – you know.

A: In – in that – in that – in that – in **Auschwitz**.

Q: Okay.

A: Because when he took you out already, you were finished. But he – I seen he was standing and waiting, but he wasn't [**indecipherable**] himself, but I said, ah, maybe he-he still – he still has maybe the scarlet fever, but I didn't have anything, I just fall asleep and the imprint left me from that blanket. So that was I went through with **Mengele**.

Q: Were there any other doctors or soldiers around when he was doing the inspection?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: No, only – only – only him and – and a sergeant.

Q: Okay.

A: The two people ca – always used to come in for the –

Q: Okay, okay.

A: – for the inspection. So now, finally, there came a day, and everybo – yeah, okay, now comes an interesting thing. One night I – we went to sleep. And I had a friend, he was sleeping always on the bottom. I take a look. His name was – Hungarian kid, Jewish kid, his name was **Gustie**(ph). I say – take a look downstairs, I said, he's not here yet, I says, what happened to him, he's supposed to be – you know. Waiting, waiting, waiting. Maybe about two, three hours later, I take a look, he comes in with a shopping bag. And I says, **Gustie**(ph), where have you been? I spoke to him Hungarian, because you see, Hungarian Jews don't – don't speak Yiddish. They don't speak je – only Hungarian, most of them. He says, shh, don't say anything, I'll talk to you in the morning. First he gives me a piece of – a piece of bread, and then an apple, and he give me some cake. Said sh, don't **[inaudible]** talk. So, he says don't talk, I'll tell you tomorrow morning, everything. He put it under his bed. People were sleeping, so nobody knew what was going on.

Q: Was it just the two of you at that point?

A: Just the two of me, because I was waiting for him, he is my friend –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Right.

A: – you know, so I wanted to know what happened to him. Okay, so in the morning he told me the whole story. You know, there is, in barrack 13, there used to be the **Sonderkommando**, they used to called themselves **Sonderkommando**. Those people used to work in the crematoriums, they're Jewish people. Each six months they used to exchange them and kill those – those people themselves; they always take new people. Cause the Germans said that they knew too much, and they were afraid it shouldn't leak out. But the whole world knew already, especially the **Roosevelt** and **Churchill**, they knew what was going on in **Auschwitz**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So anyway, so he told me that – I says, where did you get all those things? So he says, I – I went to the barrack 13. That's the **Sonderkommando**, that's what – you see those chimneys, the crematoriums? Because I was there, I still didn't know, I thought they were factories. See, y-you couldn't get out, but there was the wires, you couldn't go on the other side. And – but you seen the chimneys. I didn't know they were crematoriums.

Q: You still didn't know at that point?

A: No, at that time I didn't know. So then he explained it to me that this – this is crematorium. He told me already, because he went there, but he couldn't

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

communicate with those people cause they were Polish Jewish kid – people working there, and he didn't speak Polish, and he didn't speak Yiddish, and they couldn't communicate. And they spe – didn't speak Hungarian. So I says, you know what, I'm gonna go myself, too. I'll go next – he says, it's very dangerous. Because you know, there's floodlights, and they go like – like this. Like this around, back and forth, back and forth. So if you are caught in those floodlights, you are finished, because th-there's the towers where the Germans – Gestapo stands, and they see something moving, no questions asked, they – they shoot you **[indecipherable]**. Could you hold this for a few minute?

Q: Yeah, all right. **[tape break]** Okay, we're ready to continue now.

A: So – yes, okay, I – I listened to his advice what he gave me, and I took it very seriously, because I know that if something goes wrong, I never will be able to come back. So you had to be very, very, very careful. **[interference]** Anyway, next – the next day or two days later, I don't remember exactly when it was, I said to him, okay, I'm leaving right now. And he said, go to the end of the barracks. There is a board, just pull it away, sneak out, go to the left, and you will see barrack 13 in the back, it says 13. That's where you have to go in, just bang in the door couple of times and they – they are out, they're gonna let you in. I said okay, I got the message. And then, when you come to barrack 13, the same way where you put the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

– and there was – the end of the barrack was the bathroom, so – and then the – on the 13 is the same way. Pull the board, first knock on the door, and if they don't open the door, you could do the same thing. But first wait, and if not, you could go in through that board, too. But we – the main important thing was, be very careful when those floodlights go back and forth. When the floodlights go this way, you have to go – move. When the floodlights come back, you have to lay down flat on your stomach, so they shouldn't see no movements.

Q: So you were trying to go back and forth between different barracks at this point?

A: [indecipherable] yeah, b-between, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: I was in 27. From 27 there was all the uneven numbers; 27, tw – 25 - 23, all uneven numbers til you come to 13. So anyway, I arrived there, everything went fine, everything is smooth. I followed very – he – he – he warned me, be very careful with those floodlight, that's the main important thing. Thanks God I made it, I came in. The first thing I opened the door they said, you speak Yiddish? The first thing.

Q: This is when you got to the cre –

A: In – when I – in 13, in barrack 13.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: And right away they – I says yes, I'm a Jewish guy, and I speak Yiddish.

Because the other kid didn't speak, they couldn't communicate with him, so they were like – they make him with the hands, you know, but with me they didn't have no problem, and I could talk with them and everything. So I came in, and everybody – everybody hugged me, you know. I was the youngest kid, they were already big guys, you know, like 25 - 26 - 30 - 40 years old. Okay, first they ask me, are you hungry, you want to eat something? I says yeah, thank you very much, and they gave me the [inaudible] see, they were ba – from the tra – when the transport came in, so the people broke through the – you know, because they thought they going – in the working camps, so they gonna need food, so whatever, they had food. And when they gassed them in the tanks, all the food remained, so they could take it home with them.

Q: So their job was to sort through all of the things that were left by –

A: Right, right, right.

Q: Okay.

A: So then I sat down an-and I was talking with them. So the first thing I asked them, I says, you know, my parents, my mother, my father, my two brothers, I don't know where they are. And, you know – but when he explained it, the crematoriums, I didn't know too much, because he didn't – he didn't understand either what they

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

were telling to him. Then I said – I said, I’m not going to mention anything, I was just going to say, what are those chimneys there, you know? So then one guy come over and sit down, he says, might as well, you are here anyway. Might as well you should know what’s going on here. Those are not workings. Because I thought they were factories, you know? Said, this is not a factory, a factory they – they burn the Jewish people there, and gas them with **Zyklon** gas. And he said, we do the – we do the sh – the pulling out the dead bodies, and all – they used to pull out the teeth, the gold teeth, and they – then they used to sell it to **Switzerland**. I don’t know if you hear about it.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Yeah. So he says, and your parents, he says, they must have gone up there to the sky, up higher, in the crematorium. Because I said, what is a crematorium? I didn’t know what a crematorium means, in those days. So they explained me, give me a good – a good lesson, and they explained me whatever was going on, and he says, and don’t think that we have it so good. We have all the food to eat, but you know, in six months we are next to – to be cremated, and th – and they – they knew about it.

Q: So this was the first time that you think you might have gotten the gist about where your parents were, that they might have died?



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Yes, yes, that – that – that’s what I – that’s what I – hundred per – well, he told me, and I didn’t find them here no more, so that means – and if they would have gone where I went, I would have met them inside there eventually. Not in one day, but two days, in maybe the next week or two weeks, or three or four. And they weren’t, so I said, that’s what it is, so –

Q: Do you think your brothers –

A: What?

Q: Did – did you think that your brothers had also died at that point, cause you hadn’t seen them?

A: Well, okay, I’m gonna come and I’ll tell you what happened with my mother.

Q: Okay.

A: Somebody told me that story from my mother, but from my father and two brothers, I never heard again. Never, ever again. And then after that they gave me – said take whatever you want fruit, and they give me also in the bag, you know, ba – two bags, he said, be very careful how you go. They warned me too, you know. I says yes, I know already, because my friend was here yesterday – he said – oh, not yesterday, a couple of days ago. He said, but he didn’t speak no Yiddish. He says, yeah, we – we remember him. We couldn’t talk with him, we just say – we talk with the hand and the things. So a little [indecipherable] got out, but the main thing for

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

him, he didn't know what – he didn't tell them that they were wor-working in the **Sonderkommand**, because he couldn't understand what they – what they were talking to him. So now I knew already exactly that over there is the crematoriums, and that's where the people, they going – th-they – they used to call it, to the bathe – to the bathing, and it was showers inside like you go and take a shower, but instead of the shower was the **Zyklon** gas came out. And that's how a lot of people were dying there. Now, when the scarlet fever was over, and we were allowed already, because scarlet fever died down, people were no more sick, we could go outside. And we used to work in the bar – barracks, you know, there was – okay, here – here how what – **Auschwitz** was. When you came in the big tow – big – not doors, but gates, and it says, **Arbeit macht das Leben süß**. Work makes life sweet. That's what is – a big sign said that.

Q: Did you ever see the one that said **Arbeit macht frei**?

A: **Arbeit macht frei**, yeah, you –

Q: It was on there. So there were two different ones.

A: – yeah, you – yeah, right.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Yeah. You see them when you go out from the barrack, you could see in th – in the front. It was right in the front when you came into the – to the barracks. Now, this was – this was our barracks, right? The barracks were going one – like this.

Q: In rows.

A: And then there was a road here, and on the other side was the same barracks, but with the – with the even number or uneven numbers.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And then here, y-you – you went straight, you came out to the gate. And on this side was a lot of times a cappella, you know, music playing, and g – the German Jews from **Vienna**, they had an orchestra and they played. And on the other side the – on the other side was the crematorium, and the crematorium burned the people. A lot of times the Swiss cross, the Red Cross came to a – to inspect – for inspection, so-called inspection. So, you know how funny it was, here they burn people, and here – here they – they played the music of bo – **Goethe** and **Bach** and **Mozart**, whatever they used to play that for the – for the muse – musicians.

Q: Were those very close to each other, the little orchestra and the crematoria?

A: No, no, crematorium was on the other side.

Q: They just – completely different sides.

A: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: This was – here was the orchestra, and here, on other side was a – here was the barracks, on the uneven numbered, then the even numbered, and that was a – an electric fence. And that's – on the other side was the crematoriums.

Q: Okay, so very far away.

A: So here was playing the music, and the thing.

Q: How often did the music play?

A: When – specially when they came there from the si – from **Switzerland**, the Red Cross for ins – for inspection. And now they came over to you and asked you some question, you couldn't say anything bad, because the German is standing right there. You say something bad, yo-you were so much afraid that you were shivering when you see those Gestapo. That's how bad –

Q: Right.

A: – bad they were. But another thing, the ra – the – the Red Cross, right, used to give packages for the inmates, was Russian, Polish, Lithuanian, Romanian inmates, you know. Except, only Jews did not get Red Cross packages. Would you believe that? This is from **Switzerland**, the Red Cross. They knew about it. Now we had – is – what was a Red Cross package? Was a piece of chocolate, maybe a couple of cigarettes, a – some fruit or sa – some cake or cookies, whatever it was, it was a

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

package. But that was a – if you would give me a million dollars, and you would ask me, what do you want, the Red Cross package, or you want the million dollars? I wouldn't take the million dollars, because you – you couldn't do anything with a million dollars there.

Q: Did the be –

A: The piece of bread was the million dollars, because you knew that you're gonna survive another day, because you have enough to eat.

Q: Did the Red Cross people give them to the Lithuanians, etcetera, directly, or did the –

A: Everybody except Jews.

Q: But did the Red Cross people give them to you, or did the Red Cross people give them to the Germans to give to you?

A: Okay, the Red Cross gave them to the Germans.

Q: Okay.

A: And they came with the trucks, and they came in, because in some of the places there were Jews mixed in with the Lithuanians also.

Q: Mm-hm.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: So the Jews had to go this way, and they – only Ukrainians could come, and rush – there were Russians also in the concentration camp; they got a package, but not the Jews.

Q: So the Red Cross may not have known that the Jews didn't get a package?

A: I don't think so, they – they knew quite well what was going on. They – believe me, if they would have wanted to give Jews the – the Red Cross packages, they would have gotten it too, but they didn't care. They were the Red Cross only for the world to, you know – as I said, here is the crematoriums, and here was playing the music. You mean to tell me they didn't know? They knew what was going on in there – over there in the crematoriums.

Q: Were they ever taken over there to see that, or was the camp ever cleaned up?

A: I-I – that, I cannot tell you that, because it – we couldn't even communicate with them, or something, tell them, because we were afraid. If you were – say that – how the Germans treat you, that's it, you wouldn't survive. A-As soon as they – they leave, they – they take care of you for good. Very famous for that. As a matter of fact, when I was working outside, we had to, you know, we plant a little flowers there, and fa – to make – make believe, to show the world that – how nice the concentration camp looks.

Q: Right.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: But they told me what to do, I had to do it. I seen some Arab – Arabs, you know, with the – with the **[indecipherable]** like the Arabs dress with the togas and everything, with those long dresses. There was maybe half a dozen of them, you know. I didn't know who those Arabs were, but I – I knew that it must be Arabs, because I see wit the – the dress, I knew the ho – the Arab dress with the ki-ki – **peyah**(ph), or whatever they call it.

Q: Were they prisoners in the camp?

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: This was the **mufti** from **Jerusalem**.

Q: Oh.

A: He was a friend of **Hitler**. He went to **Berlin**, and asked **Hitler** to build crematoriums in **Israel**. That time it wasn't **Israel**, it was pales – **Palestine**, because he also wanted to annihilate the Jews, because they wanted to take over a-al-all – all **Israel** that ti – all the – the ho – how did I find – that – ho-how did I find out? When I was liberated after the war – you know, I lived in **Germany** – ow – I came to this country in 1950, and I was liberated in 1945, so around five years I lived in **Germany**. So I used to, you know, I used to in the morning, used to get up, used to get the newspapers. I take a look, there was a picture from – from those guys, in **SS**

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

in **Auschwitz**, inspecting. And then a-all the whole story, that the **mufti** ran to **Berlin** from there and asked **Hitler** to build crematoriums to – to kill Jews and – an- and things in – in – in **Israel**. Or **Palestine** in those days. So that – that's – that's – I still remember that. Okay, from there, now a – it came to a point that everybody wanted to get out from **Auschwitz**, from **Birkenau**, because to see that crematorium, every time you looked at it, it reminded you of death. So we said, oh, as soon as you can, just get out from there, get out from there. Now, I made friends, we were three kids, we were holding like in a group, because sometimes you had to be protected from other people. Because sometimes you had a piece of bread, they – they could rip it out from your hands even, sometime. No, you can't blame people, they didn't have no control. Some people had a lot of control. Let's take, for instance myself. I wouldn't pick up something from the garbage that's – was ra – half rotten, something, I wouldn't pick it up, I would leave it. Some people didn't care, they – they took it and – or – or not only that, a lot of times people – the dead bodies, they used to throw them out by the door, and there was people that used to pick them up and bring them to the crematorium. But this is already not in **Auschwitz**. From there, from **Auschwitz**, we went to **Birkenau** – to **Chebene(ph) Trzebinia** –

Q: Yeah, mm-hm.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: **Trzebinia**. There was an oil refinery, and –

Q: How did you – did you go there every day, or were – were you moved there?

A: No, no, no, no, no, no, we moved –

Q: Okay.

A: You see, **Auschwitz** was like in the center, and around **Auschwitz** was different concentration camps. Kat – **Auschwitz, Katowice, Monowice, Buna, Trzebinia**.

And let's say ich – they needed workers, they called up **Auschwitz**, and **Auschwitz** supplied them the workers.

Q: And **Trzebinia** is just a little north of it, right?

A: Tribi – yeah, **Trzebinia** was a concentration camp, we worked in a oil refinery.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: See, the – the Germans used to bring in from rome – from Romanian oil, and they used to refine it for the airplanes to fly, because you know, the airplane needs – you cannot use for airplanes the same oil what's used for a car – the same gasoline, it had to be very fine oil refined. So we used to work in the refinery. But I'll tell you, the – we worked there, but every morning, every morning when the skies were clean, you knew that – that the planes will come and bomb th-the refinery.

Q: British planes, or –

A: British and American planes.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: Now, a lot of times I was standing outside, when I looked up I could tell you the serial number, that's how low they were flying. And they were flying straight across the crematoriums. You know why I'm saying that?

Q: Why?

A: They were flying straight across the crematoriums? Because they – they asked the British, because when they used to go on missions, let's say to bomb in **Romania** and things like this, and they flew through **Auschwitz**, they always used to come back with – with – with bombs. They said, why don't you bomb the crematorium? They begged the British. They said, we cannot interfere with the war efforts, because this takes too much time. Baloney! They were flying – this was the crematoriums, they were flying straight through the cremator – only had to open the cockpit and drop a couple of bombs a-and annihilate the crematoriums.

Q: Do you think they would have killed a lot of other people though, a lot of the inmates?

A: They told them, don't worry, even if you kill inmates or not, they – most of them i – a lot of people were got killed either way, one way or another. The transports used to come in every day. So i-if they wouldn't have the crematoriums, they couldn – they couldn't annihilate so many people in a – in a day.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Right.

A: It wa – would be a harder task for them to do. But like this it was a killing machine, it was a – everything was going automatically like – like today the computers with push button, everything was going there. So they – but the British wouldn't do it. So that's – that's another story. They – they – they could tell the world that it was too much to fly – to go over there, to fl – to go t – and bomb the crematoriums, but they didn't have to go there, they were flying through anyway.

Q: But they would bomb the oil refinery in **Trzebinia**?

A: No, they used to go out further –

Q: They would fly over, right.

A: – further out and bi – I don't know, military places –

Q: Okay.

A: – I don't know exactly what they did, what their mission were. But they used to fly through **Auschwitz** every day, if it was a nice day. So that's – they were lying to the world because they flew – because they said, it takes too much to go to **Auschwitz** with – to fly – but they were going through anyway. All they had to do – and they would beg them. Then they had, oh, we would have killed a lot of innocent people. They said, don't worry about tha – killing innocent people. If – if you were gonna bomb those crematoriums, less people will die.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Mm-hm. Do you think there were any ge – did you see any German efforts to shoot down the planes, or did they just let them go –

A: It was already – that was already in '44, so the Germans knew already that they getting –

Q: Yeah.

A: – not gonna – bec-became a world power, because they were used to saying **[sings in German]** Well, today belongs germ – German to us, and tomorrow the whole world is gonna belong – that's what they used to sing.

Q: Right.

A: Right.

Q: What part of 1944, like middle, end?

A: Well, when I was already – that – when we left **Auschwitz** I was – that – that time, that must have been July, aug – July, August, something like that. Now we were there July, August, September, October, November, December, January the 17<sup>th</sup> we left, because the Russians came already, very, very, very close.

Q: Of '45?

A: Right.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: So – but, I'll tell you one more thing that – what happened in between. One day, it was – I remember it was very, very, very cold, it could be like November, December, you know, in **Poland** it's very cold and very harsh [**indecipherable**]. One kid got lost, because where we – when we went to work they counted us, and when we came in they counted us, in order to know if somebody did – ran away or something. They always watch from – from the guards, you know, we always surrounded by guards.

Q: And this was still **Trzebinia**?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: This is –

A: In **Trzebinia** –

Q: Okay.

A: – yeah, in **Trzebinia**. So, it was – usually, we used to go home like six, sometimes 5:30, it was already nice and dark. But one is missing. So, we were standing there and then come – they called up the headquarters for – and from – in the camp, and the – the main guy, he was a **obersturmfuehrer**, in German that's – was his rank. I don't know whether it was like a major, hul – I don't remember exactly –

Q: Someone high up.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Right, higher up. He was the top guys, and he came running with the motorcycle. And it was also snowing, you know, it was cold. Now you walked in the [crunching noise] the snow was breaking under your feet. And the wind was blowing, and we were standing there and we jumping up and down, because you had to do something, otherwise – so what happened, we were standing at least two, three hours outside, and it – he said, if you can – not gonna find this guy, you're gonna stay til in the morning, and we have to find the guy. So what happened, the guy went in the bathroom, fall asleep in the bathroom. He was so weak, he fall asleep. They did – luckily they didn't touch him even, because when they took him out, he wa – he hardly – he couldn't even walk. They had to shu – drag him to – to walk so –

Q: So the Germans found him in the bathroom?

A: No, no we were there – we were all –

Q: Okay.

A: – we went to look all over, because there was those big tanks, you know. And somebody went into the bathroom, he had to make a pee or whatever, so he fou – he was sleeping on – on the thing. He fall asleep. He was so weak, you know, he fall asleep. So that was a night t-to remember. And then 1945, as I said, January 17, we left **Trzebinia**. That was the death mar – they call it the death march.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Can we go back just a little bit?

A: Yes.

Q: What kind of work did you do in the oil refinery, just –

A: In oil refinery?

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay. That's a good question, which I missed. Number one, the water level in **Trzebinia** was very high, like **Florida**. You dig a little bit, you hit water, right?

Q: No basements.

A: Right, no basement, that's correct. Over there it was also, the water level was high, so they had pipes that runs, you know, t-to – the control there was heated pipes for the oil, they needed so – I don't know exactly. Because when I came already, the oil refinery didn't work. They put up a wi – a-a-after that they came almost every day, as I said, when the skies were nice and clear, planes would come, or Americans, or – or British, they used to come to bomb everything. When they left, we had to clean up again. That's what we did always, clean up, build up a wall, they came and smashed it again. So there was not – no production. But they still did – the Germans still the last moment, didn't give up. So what we had to take – yeah, in the wintertime was very cold, so they had to take the pipes and go down another couple of feet, about six feet. The pipes had to be lowered down into the ground. So

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

when we used to dig up, the water used to come right away. So there was a pump – a pump, and one side was a guy, a kid and me, and we were going up and down like this, and pump the water, that's what we did the whole day, up and down, up and down, til they changed us and some other kids came that also do work.

Q: Did you get any breaks for bathroom or food, like that?

A: Well, ba – the food over there, they used to give you a lunch, soup, and in the morning was coffee and they give you a piece of bread with a piece of cheese or meat, whatever. And at night they give you a soup again. So, is manageable. But that's what I said, I never liked to change. Because some people used to change for a cigarette, you know? I said no, I'm not changing, I'm not doing anything, and that's what it was. But, there was an advantage to work with those pumps. You know why? Because pa – people went to work in something, they see a little kid, 12 years old, wo – you know, skinny, bones, so you could count the bones, so they used to throw him a sandwich, or they used to throw him a piece of bread or an apple. One day, I-I was – I was working and a guy, a farmer, he wa – he was – had the little wagon with two wheels and one horse. And he seen me, he had cabbage on the – on the wagon, he threw me a cabbage.

Q: Is this like a Polish farmer that was going –

A: Yeah –



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: – it must be a Polish farmer, but you know, he's – he watch, you know, what he should see, he throw a cabbage. Okay. I took that cabbage, I almost died from that cabbage, cause you know, your stomach is very weak. And I – but I had – we were three kids, and we had a deal between us. If you go to work and you get a piece of bread, we divide it in three pieces. I got my third, I gave to other kid and the other kid. And he got something, we were all together all the time, til liberation we were together.

Q: Hm, wow.

A: Some other kids seen that we get along so good, they also tried – tried the same thing, but it didn't work. Because if you are not honest – like one kid is – we came home, there were the three, he says, oh I didn't – I didn't – today I didn't get anything. The other kids says oh, he is lying, I seen him, he got a piece of bread. That's it. That was finished. So they couldn't trust **[indecipherable]** us, til the last moment we were together, because we were honest to one another.

Q: Did – did you meet these two other boys in the camp, or did you know them before?

A: No, I met them in the camp, in the camp.

Q: Okay, you didn't know them before that?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: No, no.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay, one was from **England**, one was – and two were from **Poland**. Now, from **England**, how did he get into – to this business, in the concentration camp? He went for a wedding, he had an aunt, or somebody got married. So he went to the wedding, but the Germans wouldn't – they caught him, and that's it. It just happened the Germans took over. He came in, but he couldn't get out no more. So they put him in concentration camp. So when we were liberated, he spoke fluently English, because he was born in **England**. But right away, soon after – after liberation, he went to the British embassy and they took him right away, took him back home. So that was after liberation already. That – well, I'll come to the liberation, I'm gonna tell you more in details. Now, okay, so now we were on the death march, they used to call it. As we were marching – was also, January 17 in **Poland** is very, very, very cold. Very cold. And there was twin brothers, two twins. I mean, two kids.

Q: A set of twins.

A: Twin – yeah, twins. And one had an infection o-on his foot, and he couldn't walk. So they dragged him, he dragged him, but then finally he says, it's no way, no way, I can't even pick my foot up, never mind walking. So he sit down, and the guy

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

was a Romanian guard. This guy must have been six feet tall a ver – tall – very tall guy. In other words, he wasn't walking straight, he was walking like this, bent, and he more than six feet. He says, why don't you walk? So the boy says, I can't walk. He took the gun, shoot him right there. You, the brother. He says, I'm not gonna leave my brother. Shoot him too. So that's the reason they call it death march, it was not only one incident, was a lot of incidents, because they call it death march.

Q: Right.

A: As we were walking – we were walking towards **Gliwice**, there was a – a big station, you know, where the trains were going all over – all over **Europe** from the – from that place we had to walk towards **Gliwice**.

Q: How long did you walk for?

A: Okay, w-w-we – we left at night **Trzebinia**, we walked the whole night, and we walked maybe a half a day, but i-in between you were resting, you know. Let's say it came to – at one point they says, okay, and we – we had to go in the field, because the German, the army had always the right of way. Whatever they – if they came, we had to move to the thing. So mostly w-we were standing in the fields, and walking til they – they cleared for us the road. When they are finished, then we started to walk, so we have to wait. So i-it – I think it was a night and a day, something like that, til we a – we arrived already to **Gliwice**.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Did you and your friends survive the march?

A: We were – yeah, li-listen to this, what happened. So then it was – maybe it was 12 o'clock or one o'clock at night, and the Germans said okay, we go to this field here, you could lay down and you could take a nap, and we gonna walk in the morning, continue walking in the morning. But we were there maybe a half an hour, or maybe an hour tops, they said you cannot stay, we have to go – because we heard already the shots from the – from the Russians. The cannons and machine gun, you could hear already they were shooting from far away. But in between, I had – he wasn't my friend, but I knew him fo-for – because we were together in **Auschwitz** and then we came to **Trzebinia**, so I knew – I knew the kid. He was an – he was a little bit older than me, he must have been 15 - 16 - 17, I don't know exactly, but something in that age. And he says he's gonna lay down. I says, don't lay down, because you gonna lay down, you never gonna get up, you gonna freeze to death. You see all the kids, they jumping up and down and do this, and all kind of exercise, because to feel a little bit warm. I don't care, he says, no more. I says – he lay down. I ran to my kids and I told them, and then we to-took some other kids, we grabbed him and we says, you not gonna lay – you not gonna lay down here, because you gonna be liberated, and believe me, the guy was liberated and he wa – just lay down, and we – we wouldn't – he says, if you gonna lay down on, we

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

gonna – we gonna hit you. Don't lay down, because you gonna lay down you know what, you never gonna get up. As soon as we had that fight, suddenly the Germans said, we have to leave right away. So we marched further. He couldn't lay down no more.

Q: Right.

A: And – but we did something else. We, let's say three or four – four guys, or five guys, in the middle, we exchanged. The middle guy was able to walk and sleep, and we were holding like together, you know, and then we exchanged. And then, let's say you were next, you went in the middle, and the other guy, that's how, you know, we exchanged to sleep a little bit. You could close your eyes and relax a little bit.

Q: Hm. How long do you think you did that for? Like an hour or two?

A: Well, til – til in – til in the morning, til you know, til we could – by then we stopped already, in the morning we stopped, and yeah, in between, that's very important. There was, in the gutter, you know there was on s – this gutter on this side, and the middle was the road. I see from far away, I see a big coat laying on the floor, a heavy coat, a winter coat. I says to myself, I'm gonna pick up that coat. Must be a big guy who had that coat, you know, a big, heavy coat. My friend said, are you crazy, you're gonna schlep this coat? But you – you hardly could walk

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

already and everybody could run, you gonna schlep that big coat? I said, that coat is gonna be a lifesaver, remember. And I wouldn't give it up. I said, I'm gonna take. You don't have to ca – if you want to carry it, fine. You don't want to carry it, I'm gonna carry it all the – but th-they helped me out, they – because we three were together. What wer – one did – had, the other wouldn't let us down, you see.

Q: So, it was just sitting on the side of the road?

A: Was laying on the lo – somebody throw it away, I don't know, was a good, heavy coat, really, was this thick of a coat. And it was warm, and –

Q: Hm, about an inch or two.

A: But listen – listen, this coat saved our lives. So when we arrived to **Gliwice**, the Germans put us on – on open wagons, railroad, you know, cars. No – no roof on top.

Q: Just slats, kind of?

A: Nothing, no –

Q: Okay.

A: Nothing. Nothing. Like a – your car hasn't got no roof? Same thing, the railroad has no – no roof. And the snow was this high up inside. So how could we lay down? So the German says, take with the hand, shovel out the snow. With the hand. We didn't have no shovels. We had to do, because you know, otherwise, lay down in the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

snow. Well, I want to tell you something, that the – the death march wasn't as bad as the **[indecipherable]** march, because we – when they put us on those o-open wagons – when the train was standing was not so bad yet, you know, but when that train started to roll, and s – I don't know how fast that train was going, at least I – I'm sure, 40 - 50 miles, and that wind was so strong, you know, that you c – you couldn't breathe sometimes. And in the morning when we got up, more than half of the – of those people were dead. They – they – they died, what do you call that, from –

Q: Frostbite?

A: No – that was worse, worse than frostbite. There – there's a special name, I –

Q: Oh, hypothermia?

A: Hypothermia.

Q: Yeah.

A: They died from hypo – they went to sleep, never got up. So now, with all those bodies, they said, just throw them out. The train was moving, we just throw out, because they running. From **Poland** they – we were going towards **Germany** at this time. So –

Q: How many people do you think were on the march with you? Is it like a couple of barracks worth, or –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Oh, the – the – the – the – there was march from – from different camps also, they – we got together, you know.

Q: Okay.

A: I really don't know, but it was in the thousands, I think. I don't – I cannot give you a number, because I didn't know th –

Q: So, masses of people.

A: – a lot of people were ta – were walking. But as I said, the train ride was worse than the march. More people died on the trains than on the march from hypothermia. Now here comes that coat that I br – brought. We're three small kids – comparing to other people, you know. I – we put down the thing, we covered ourself up with that coat. We're sitting on the snow, still we're frozen sitting, but at least the wind – the wind killed those people. The wind was so cold that they died of hypothermia. And then we just had to throw out the bodies, and – so finally, from there, from – after r-riding on – yeah, and there was – see, the Germans, they – they had a canteen, you know, they get some food, whatever they got, I don't know, but we didn't get anything. And when the train stopped to let us o – beca – there's certain points the train stopped, so we had to go to the bathroom or something. But if not, you s – you could do it on the train, we were ki – it didn't bother – nobody bot – would bother you if you did it. And sometimes you hadn't got no choice. You



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

had to do what you have to do. Nature doesn't ask questions. You have to run, you have to run. So, after that, we came to – we went to **Oranienburg. Sachsenhausen, Oranienburg [indecipherable] Berlin.** So, we stood there for – for about a week or two, but then they had to ship us further, so we wind up in **Bergen-Belsen.**

Q: Where did you stay in **Sachsenhausen**, did you have barracks?

A: Tha – those – the camp.

Q: Okay.

A: And a – it was a la – a camp.

Q: Did – did you have barracks, though, or were you just –

A: Yeah, we had barracks –

Q: Okay.

A: – barrack – at least it was nice and warm there. We – we recuperated a little bit from all that cold, you know? And they give us some food there, so it – it was – it wasn't so bad. You could – we could survive there already. So this –

Q: So you didn't really do anything else there, it was just –

A: No, no, that was really the wa –

Q: – recuperating.

A: – the – the Germans knew that they lost.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: You know, it was towards the end of the – close to the end of the war. Because I was liberated in April 28<sup>th</sup>. So, we left from there the 17<sup>th</sup> January. So January – January, February, March, April. So, we were already close to – January, fe – end of February, be – like beginning of March.

Q: Okay.

A: Then they send us to **Bergen-Belsen**. If I see never – you know, sometimes you ask people, how long were you in the camp? Some guys, oh, I'm fa – I was five years in the camp. Then I ask somebody, how long were you? Oh, I was a year or two years, whatever it is, but I'll tell you one thing, when we arrived to **Bergen-Belsen** – here is the story: I a – we arrived there, it was already like, I don't know exactly, but around four, five o'clock. First of all, we came into a barrack, no – no beds, no bunk beds, nothing. Wherever you are, s-say tha – I – it just happened I was in the – in the corridor like here in – in – in th – in the front, I lay down there. And there was not far, the bathroom was also a little further. One pipe busted, and I got up in the morning, oh everybody was wake up all wet. Now imagine, cold, wet – **[phone ringing]**

Q: Now, pause for a second. **[tape break]** Okay. All right. Okay, we're back. How did the – wh-when the pipe –

A: Oh, **Bergen-Belsen**.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Right.

A: Yeah.

Q: In **Bergen-Belsen**, when the pipe exploded, was it just a pipe of excrement, or water?

A: No, no, no, the pipe busted from the – from the – it was so cold, froze. It froze, the pipe froze –

Q: Okay, okay.

A: – and it – it start shooting out the thing, but I was sleeping, I didn't know. And when I woke up, I was so tired, knocked out, that nothing bothered me. I lay down on the cement, believe me, I slept better than I sleep in in a nice bed here in my house, over there, that's how tired you were. On the cement. Didn't mean anything.

Q: Did the pipe have water, or excrement, or what was in the pipe, everything?

A: From a toilet. I da – I – I cannot tell you. I know it was wet, and it smelled also.

Q: Okay.

A: Whatever it is. I was used to those things. It didn't – didn't even bother me that – but alright, I felt the wet. So, after a couple of hours it dried out and you wen – you were back in business. In the morning, a **kapo** – **kapo** means like an overseer that was – usually the **kapos** mean that, from the group of people they choosed out, and they were cooperating most with the Germans too, you know. So he came with –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

with two Germans, and they had guns, those big guns, you know. And – a ri – I mean a rifle, they call it a rifle here. And they said, we need s – we need about 15 - 20 people, and you gonna get good food, and we need volunteers. So they said good food, I says, oh my God, I'm – I was really hungry, you know, hungry, wet and then thirsty, you name it, anything. So I said okay, I'm going, too.

Q: Did your friends volunteer with you?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: Did your friends volunteer with you? With –

A: M-My – one – from my friends, we got divided for awhile, beca – we got together on the next camps. We met up in another camp. Because sometimes you were standing, and they said, here is cut off, and that's it, you couldn't go back no more. But i – when I came to aux – all right, I'm coming soon ri – to the next camp. So, we were march – **Bergen-Belsen** was a long camp. And over there there were women and children and men together. See, in **Auschwitz**, the – each female was separately, men was separately, children were separate – children from 12 an-and up to 15 or something like that. Here was everything mixed in together. How did I know? Because we walked – I don't know, I – it was quite a walk. I don't know in mile how much it was, a quarter, or a half a mile or something like that. And we came to a barrack, and there was a big grave dug outside. Big, you know, with the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

bulldozer it was dug. And then they went and opened up the door from the – from the barrack. Bodies from the top to the ceiling. Women, children, men, everything, dead bodies. We had to drag out those bodies and throw them in that – in that – to the – in the – that grave. And as soon as they opened up, the stink was so bad that, I didn't have what to vomit, but I just – it came like vomiting. It was – the stink was so bad, it's just – I don't know how – those bodies were rotten already there. And they didn't give you no gloves, no mask, nothing with you. And a lot of times you pulled a hand, and the hand remained in your hand. So, you know, it's – it's unbelievable [**indecipherable**]. And what – what do you think they gave us to eat? Big nothing. We went back, when we came to the c – back to the original thing, to the barracks, we had s – they gave us a little soup, and that's about it. And then they had the nerve to come and say we need more volunteers. You know what I did? I ra – hide myself under – under the barracks. You know, there's a empty space, like this?

Q: Yeah.

A: I crawled in, myself with another guy. We said, oh I'm not – I'm not going if they give me the best food on the world. Because wa – that stink was bad, and those bodies – I mean, the bodies didn't bother me already because you seen at the – you seen it all the time. So, I says no, they not gonna get me no more there. In **Bergen-**

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

**Belsen**, we were a short time. I don't know, maybe a week? Tops, two weeks, or 10 days, I really do – honestly don't remember exactly how many days. From there we went to **Horgau, Augsburg. Augsburg** was **Messerschmitt**, we work for the air – by airplanes, you know, wa – in parts. Let's say they give you a part, and y – there was marked here and here a couple of marks, and you had to drill those holes. Now here already was a different – h-here already you were a – in – in – in th – in

**Horgau**, I don't know, I think there was, for prisoners, used to be there before, prisoners, like soldiers, maybe British, who knows? I don't know what kind of briti – prisoners. At least we got – we got already – there was bunk beds, you know, and they give you some food rela – but then everyday – and that's where I met my two friends.

Q: Okay.

A: They were already there, inside. So right away I s – I came in and I was ready – they already knew whats was going on because instead of going to **Bergen-Belsen** they went straight, they didn't make **Bergen-Belsen**, which, believe me, thanks God they didn't.

Q: Right.

A: But there's – that was the worst camp. There's no way that a man could survive there, never mind a year, but even months he couldn't survive that.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Did many people that you were with when you got into **Bergen-Belsen** go with you also to **Augsburg**?

A: Well, this barrack where I went, there, the whole barrack went there.

Q: Okay, from **Bergen-Belsen** to **Augsburg**.

A: From **Bergen-Belsen** to –

Q: Okay.

A: – to **Horgau**. Now **Horgau**, we – we slept there and we were – train took us every day to – to **Augsburg** was the **Messerschmitt**. But what we did, 12 o'clock til one o'clock, the guard that used to guard us inside there, they used to go for – for lunch. So, he was a – was a wooden wall fr-from boards, you know?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So what we did, we – in – in the other s – on the other side, let's say this was the – the wall.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: On this side we used to work, in – in this side they used to keep the parts. Raw parts or finish parts. On the bottom, used to pull away a – a board and used to climb in, and they took out the finish parts and put back the raw parts. Because we knew the Germans, they were – they come back, they come back one o'clock, so we knew that nobody was watching us, so we could do this. So we made like a sabotage, you

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

know? Not to be – so instead, let's say they give you 50 parts to make those holes, so you put back 30 or 40 parts, and we took already made 40 - 50 parts. Because if you didn't make your quota, you didn't get to eat. That was their – their motive.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So, but we fool them, and it was going on – but we weren't there in **Augsburg** either, too long. So –

Q: They never noticed the sabotage, though?

A: No, they – they couldn't know. There were so many parts there, so they didn't know if I took in, or took out, or whatever I did, we made believe, we put the same thing wer – they put there th-the raw – the unfinished parts, we put in the same place, and then we took off the – from – there was, in the thousands and thousands of parts that they di – they couldn't know. If they would have caught you in the middle, you would have had a big problem.

Q: And you only did it when they were on their lunch break?

A: On-Only in the lunch [**indecipherable**] but we had to work very fast. And then we – we came is – so he gave you a little paper that you finish your quota, for in the parts, and you got a – a – a meal. The – the – the meal was – was pretty good, I mean, co-comparing to concentration camp meal, was – was not bad.

Q: What did they give you?



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: We used to get horsemeat sometimes. The horsemeat tastes very good, sweet, or they gave us soup. In the soup a little horsemeat, or things like that, or sometimes they give you a cheese, or – they call it **Blutwurst**, you know, in German. **Blutwur** – you know what **wurst** is? Like salami with blood mixed into it, the –

Q: Yeah.

A: We are not allowed to have blood, you know, Jewish people, the – this is one of the biggest things, that you're not supposed to have blood and – but over there, anything went, so –

Q: You had to.

A: – if they were to give us dog meat, or – or rat meat, or who knows what, they – you had to eat it, because you didn't have anything else. You had to eat what they gave it to you.

Q: So you pretty much gave up on the **kashrut** laws at that point, yeah. You had to.

A: There's no such a thing. No such a thing. You couldn't do anything there. Well anyway, one day they decided – now I'm coming already, this was already to – towards the end.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It must be an end – like in middle April already, something like that. We were s – they told us that we have to go to **Dachau**, because here in **Augsburg** we cannot

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

stay no more, we have to go to **Dachau**. **Dachau** had a concentration camp, **Dachau** had the crematorium. And, what we find out is, they di – wanted to annihilate all the people, and the last time that – because we knew all what was – was going on, and they knew that the Americans were very – coming close, because we – I was liberated from Americans. Some people were liberated from Russians, some people were liberated from British, but I was liberated from the Americans. So, next day they give an extra portion, because they had some leftover, whatever it is, and we are going towards **Dachau**.

Q: Did you have to walk, or did they put you on a train?

A: Walk, walk, walk.

Q: Yeah.

A: No more train riding. Walking. We were walking, I had my shoes, you know those wooden shoes?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: They call it **Holland derkus**(ph), you know.

Q: Little clogs?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: And this rot my foot, it's unbelievable. So I took it and I throw them away, I said, I bar – I cannot walk in it, because it rot my – my foot. You know, if you have a soft shoe, it gives. Wood doesn't give. And if it doesn't give and you walk, you pull your foot and you scrape your foot and it get infected. So I threw them away, I was walking barefoot. They didn't – they didn't care, they couldn't care less what you did, already, it was, you know, they knew already this is the end, this is the end. So we walked til about – we walked a whole day, and at night, maybe we – no, it couldn't be that we walked half, because that's – or maybe it was two days we walked, and then the last night. Because we walked to the middle – to the middle, and we couldn't go no more, because we seen the airplanes coming, and little American planes, those little planes. And used to give the **[indecipherable]**, because they were alrea – we were surrounded already with Americans, but we didn't know that. But I seen the American planes, and th-that – the white star, you know, and I still didn't know if it's American or not, but we knew it was a friendly plane. And the Germans didn't shoot at them, but they were hiding also. When the American – the planes came, they were hiding under the ho – because they had a canteen, you know, like a kitchen.

Q: Mm-hm.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: With two wheels, and there was soup for them, for the – for the germ – only for the army, not for us. For us, forget it, we didn't ha – we didn't get anything. But we've passed by, sometimes, i-in a field or a – find some corn or things. But hardly anything. A matter of fact, there was wheat – people eat – a lot of people were hungry, they chewed what horses eat, what do you call it?

Q: A little grass?

A: Not grass.

Q: Was it cud, something like that?

A: Yeah, something like that.

Q: Yeah.

A: And i-it's – it's very sharp on two edges. Is a point here o-o-on the front and the back. And it punctured their stomach. People died from – the last minute people died from it punctured their stomach. And then they said, do not eat that stuff because it's gonna kill you. Between us, you know? Was doctors there, or people that they knew what – what happens, you know.

Q: What did you find to eat? Or did you find anything?

A: I – I – I – I-I – I tried one – oh, at night we slept in – it was a barn. And we were all three together and suddenly, I take a look, I find an egg. An egg. You didn't see an egg for – for years.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: So you were in a barn, someone's barn?

A: In the bar –

Q: Okay.

A: In the barn. In the barn. Not only me, it was a big barn, it was a farm and we slept on the straw.

Q: Was it like a farmer's barn, was the – the – the [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, but nobody was there.

Q: Okay, no one was there.

A: I don't know, nobody was there.

Q: Okay.

A: No – no food, no nothing, just barn. I don't know what happened to the farmer, he ran away or something, but there was nothing, no food, no nothing, just the barn.

Q: Okay.

A: When I said to mys – I said, hey guys, we three, I says, I found an egg. Oh. So now, how would we break it? So I said, let me bite on it, maybe, you know. You know what kind an egg it was? A false egg that you lay under the chicken, the chicken should lay the eggs. We were so disappointed, I mean, unbelievable. But that's – that's wa – what happened to the egg, the false egg. Anyway, the next night, we slept no more in a farm, but we slept – it was a field like this, and going up the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

mountain, up. So we were up between the wood, and the Germans had their kitchen canteen on – on the – on the field. So here was the f – the field, and here was going up to the mountain, and there was the woods, inside. It was still snow. In April, in **Bavaria** in the mountain, was still – still quite cold. So, we lay down, I still had that coat. The coat –

Q: Wow.

A: – we never got rid of that coat til liberation. So we put down the coat, we lay down on that coat, we three, and in the morning I heard something, I says, you know, I hear some tanks. You know, when a tank comes towards you, you hear that noise it makes.

Q: Right.

A: And I says – and I take a look, I says, no more – I see no soldiers, they ran away.

Q: German soldiers, not –

A: Germans, no German soldiers. And they left the horse with the kitchen, it was – it was like – I don't know the distance, like two distance from here to those streets. Th – and that – that was downstairs was the – the ke – that kitchen. And then my friend says, so maybe we should run, go over there. I says, hey, maybe that's a trap. Maybe the Germans are hiding there with the machine guns. They used to do those things, and you start running, then they start sh – killing you, you know. So let's

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

wait, let's wait. And we were waiting til it got a little bit light already. And then we heard the – the tanks are coming. But we didn't know what c – if it's German tanks or – or American tanks or British, we didn't know anything about it. Suddenly, you could see the tanks coming towards us [indecipherable]. So one guy, it was – we were liberated from black soldiers. See, in those days the blacks were separated, they were not together with the white. Was a whole brigade of black soldiers. And they surrounded us, and they said hold it, don't come towards us. He says, we gonna let you know when. And they si – it wa – the guy spoke German. And, stay there, he says, we'll let you know when it's gonna be safe for us, we gonna let you know that you come – could come forwards. And don't worry, don't run, we have plenty food for you. They knew that we didn't have to eat for – for quite awhile. I don't know how, but they knew. Americans are not stupid, they knew how we were treated, because they seen what was going on.

Q: So you knew they were American at this point?

A: Not at this point.

Q: Okay.

A: Th-The guy spoke German. He spoke beautiful German, this guy. And he says, we are here – we are – you are liberated, and if – just stay for awhile, we get the order – because the planes were circling around and told them that the Germans are

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

here, or hiding there, or hiding there and they used to shoot and kill ger – Americans too yet, in – in the same time. So they were very careful, you know. So they said, stay there where you staying, do not come forwards, do not come for – he – he repeated a couple of times, do not come forwards. So finally said, now it's okay, you could come. There was americ – the am-ambulances, were one or two military ambulances, because right away, some people, they couldn't walk, they have infections, you know, from the walking. As a matter of fact me too, I had a – an infection, I went over there. And one guy, the doctor, spoke Yiddish. He was an American Jewish guy. So he told me right away, he f – they took care of me, a-and –

Q: What kind of infection was it? Just something in the – like gangrene or something?

A: You see – no, no, no, no –

Q: Okay.

A: – no gangrene yet. It was infected, but it was, you know, it didn't look right, my foot, you see, and I was walking barefoot, dirty, you know, from the wa – I didn't have no shoes. I was walking barefoot. Ah, he says, don't worry about it, you have plenty food, we have plenty food for you prepared and don't worry about it. And then – as a matter of fact, I went into a – there was a monastery, all nuns, and they



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

used to take care on the German soldiers, you know, wounded soldiers there. I came in, they send me over there and they washed my foot and they treated me – they were very, very nice lady, all ladies. Th-There – they're doctors, everything i – run from nuns. And I was there about two days.

Q: Did the Americans take you there, or was it nearby?

A: N-N-No, yeah – well, the doctor took me over there and they said they gonna take care on you. Because they had to go further. You see, they took care on us, they gave us whate – throwing chocolate and candies and cigarettes, you know. But the real stuff, later on, because the Germans had to take care, they had to feed us, they had to give us rooms where to sleep. So I went for – for – I was about two days there with the nuns, and they – they gave me to eat, whatever – whatever I wanted, and they were very nice. [coughs] Excuse me. They were really very – treated me very nice. Nuns are nice, you know, they – they ar – they were afraid of their own soldiers, of the – especially of the Gestapo.

Q: Did they have a big hospital, or did you just rest in the monastery?

A: No, they wer – they had a hospi – that was the hospital.

Q: Okay.

A: Th-They work there in – in that – in the – in that place, in that hospital. So they took care on the German wounded soldiers. Now, the German soldiers, they were –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

everybody was running away, they put on civilian [**indecipherable**] those German SS, they took off their uniforms and they put on civilians, because they knew that if they catch you they were – they were in trouble, you know?

Q: Did you recognize any of them from the ones that had taken you on the marches?

A: No, they run away.

Q: Okay.

A: And a-as a matter of fact, in the morning when I got up, nobody was there. But we were afraid to walk, because maybe they're hiding, and they used to do those things, even they used to shoot – kill American soldiers, too. Like this, put on a machine gun, and **zzzzz**, you know, killing e – it wa – for us, definitely they were not afraid to do it. With the American soldiers, they knew that they had a treaty with the thing, they not – were not supposed to have prisoners, you know. But for us they did whatever they wanted to do. So that's where I got liberated, in mickhaus – **Kleynach(ph) Mickhausen**, it was the place where I got liberated. From there, i – the Jewish doctor gave me a note, he says, go to **Augsburg**, there's one Jewish synagogue left in all **Augsburg**, that – to show for the world that **Hitler** wasn't so bad, he left one synagogue, he left in thik – in – in thing. He says, I'll be there too, and I'm gonna say hello to you when I'll come there. And that's where I met him, and – but then I had already – I met a German family, because they told you have to

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

go and they had to give you food, clothing and shelter. And money. That was after the liberation.

Q: Was it just you, or was it anyone else that the German [**indecipherable**] had to take in?

A: Yeah, okay, now with my – my – we were three together. One kid – one kid – this – the guy from **England**, he went right away to the British embassy. I never met him again, because he took him – he told me that he's going straight home to **Britain**. I-I don't remember, it was some – near by **longam** – **Man-Manchester** – I don't know –

Q: **Manchester**? Yeah.

A: – whate – whatever. That's was – was his home. His – his parents there, everybody there.

Q: So you've never talked to him again?

A: Now, my other – other friend, he wa – as soon as he got liberated, he developed a nervous breakdown. He couldn't take the liberty. See, you were always under the gun, wherever you were walking, so he had a nervous breakdown and he – he was in very bad shape. So the Americans took him, and they took him to a – to a place where, you know, to a – to a hospital to treat him, you know. And also, from – from

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

there, he went to **Israel**. And I never met him again, too. And le – like this we were.

That's where we broke off and we got divided and –

Q: Have you even had the chance to talk to them? Or you –

A: No, for the guy –

Q: – just no contact whatsoever?

A: – the guy who – who had the nervous breakdown, you couldn't even come close, he was very wild, you know, he was – he was – somehow, he lived in a different world, you know? He thought that the – I'm – I want to kill him, or – or – e-even they had to – they had to bind his feet and thing when the – the American **MPs**, the military police came and took him to a hospital, even they were afraid. But they – they, you know, took two or three, they bind him down and put his hands in the thing. But he w – he was – he was okay after he was treated in – in these hospitals, and from there he went to **Israel**.

Q: But since then, have you had any contact with him at all?

A: No, I never had any contact –

Q: Okay.

A: – contact with him. But I heard – somebody told me that, because his name was vudok – **Moishe Vodowsky**(ph), I think. W-Was **V-Vodowsky**(ph), **Vodowsky**(ph). And he told me that he went to **Israel**.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay, so you heard through a friend?

A: So, right, right. And the other one, I knew that he went home. So he told me that he's – he's leaving us, he hugged me, we kissed and he went right away to the British embassy and they – they right away said to come and send him home. That's was end of the story to liberation, so this – this is it. Now, if you want to ask me any questions, you go ahead.

Q: When did you meet **William Fuchs**? Is that **Andrew Sellin's**(ph) father? Was he the one that liberated you?

A: That's right.

Q: Okay.

A: That is the one. So now, wait a second, now you got – how – who got in touch with you, **Andrew**?

Q: Yeah, Mr. **Sellin**(ph) got in touch with us.

A: Ah, right, right, right, right.

Q: And he's the son of **William**, right?

A: Okay. Now, he – he – **Andrew** swe – oh, he was unbelievable person.

Unbelievable, what a nice –

Q: **Andrew**?

A: An – no, his father.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay, okay.

A: **William.** Captain **William Fuchs.** He was the captain. He was also there by – were in – by that ambulance, you know, and he spoke Yiddish, too. So right away he asked me, are you Jewish? And then he says, **redts**(ph) Yiddish? Because he spoke Yiddish to me. I didn't speak a word of English in that time. As a matter of fact, when I was liberated from those black guys, I says, my God, those guys must – must be very hot in **America**, they got all sunburned. I didn't know that there were – there – there was black – honest, that's the honest truth. I didn't know there was black guy – black people. Negroes, you know, I didn't know that.

Q: Uh-huh, right.

A: But oh, they were so nice to us, those people. I remember I was stand, they were throwing us chocolate and bread and all kind of things. And then a German came over, he wanted to – he says – he took the bread and stepped on it, he says, instead of giving it to you, and you disappear from here before I'll – he – he rather – stepped on the bread, not to give it to the German, the – because a lot of people died from – from – Americans, the Germans used to kill Americans too, you know. Maybe it was friends that died, or something. So they hated those Germans. So – so now I know how I – how you got in touch with me, because he – he told me if I

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

want to give a report from the concentration camp. I says okay, I says, so – so that's how you got in touch, from that. You know **Andrew**?

Q: No, I haven't met him.

A: Oh.

Q: But he –

A: He's a professor, he – he teaches in college.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, he's very nice.

Q: In – in **Brooklyn**?

A: Yeah. And his mother – yeah, in **Brooklyn**. His mother lives here in – in – in **Miami**.

Q: Oh, okay. Do you see her a lot?

A: Okay, I met Captain **William Fuchs**, I met him when I came to **America**, because he gave me, before he left he gave me his address, and I know he was 323 **Brownsgrupp**(ph), that was his –

Q: Where is that? In **Brooklyn** s – in **New York**, or down here?

A: No, no, in the army – he – he was in air force.

Q: Oh, okay, okay.

A: Air force, 323, he used to fly those big bombardiers, you know.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Right.

A: And he was, I think it was the navigator or something like that. Oh, he was nice. And then when I was – after the liberation, he went in **Pansing**(ph) airfield, and in **Pansing**(ph) airfield, he says, if you want to come – I had a – I met another friend, he was in the partisans, also a Jewish guy from **Lithuania**. So I said, I have another friend with me. He said, okay, don't worry about it, anybody, just come, bring him. And we came there on the – on the base, so he introduced us the hi-hierarch – high officers there, you know, I don't know, in those days I didn't recognize, I think he was like –

Q: Captain –

A: – maybe one star general. He was the head from the whole – from the whole airfield there.

Q: Okay.

A: And they – oh, they treated us nice there. It's any time you want to come in, we have – because in those days the officers eat separately, and the men eat – used to eat separate. The regular army used to be separate. So we always were, we came, we went there, because he gave us the okay to come and eat with them. So they – we were treated – y-you couldn't get better treatment than that. So we were very nice. And then the – so Captain **William – William Fuch – Wil-William** said okay,



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

go to the **Bürgermeister**. **Bürgermeister** is the mayor. In German, the mayor calls the **Bürgermeister**, you know, from a city, the mayor of the city? So he says, go to them, and tell them that you need a room for – he should give you a room. And in case he doesn't want it, he ha – he knew already that we wouldn't get it, just come back and let me know, because from – from the mayor to the airfield was 50 minutes walk, something like that. So we came in, yeah, what can I do for you, he says in ger – we talking in German to him. Says well, we need a room. **Ich habe keiner**, I have no rooms for you. Okay. I says – dav – **David**, my friend says, it's no use to argue with him. Let's go back to well – tell him – to **William**. So we came back, he went and put two guns on his – an-and with two guns he came in. As soon as he seen him, and the Germans, you know, right away he stands in the – in thing. He says, I want you should give those guys a room. **Jawohl, jawohl, jawohl**, right away – right away he had the rooms.

Q: Oh, wow.

A: So –

Q: So you had a room to yourself?

A: Beg –

Q: You had a room to yourself?

A: No, no, with my friend, one room.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay, you shared.

A: But we share – an-and where the officers used to sleep, and it was a big th – there used to be the – they ha – German Air Force used to stay there in those rooms. Now there was an extra room there, so he said – the mayor said, there's one room there in the officers' thing. Said okay, that's good for them. Give – give them that room. So the well was – the captain was sleeping in one side, on the other side of the house, and we – we had the room for ourself i-in this side of the house. So we were treated there wonderful, very nice. Very nice, I – so, when I came to **America**, he came to see me, because I was working in **New York** in the garment center that time. He took me out for lunch, he gave me 50 dollars.

Q: Oh.

A: Fifty dollars was a lot of money.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah. And then, he invited us to a hou – to his house in **Brooklyn**, but he – **Andrew** wasn't – was – wasn't born yet, because he has two b – two boys. The older one – what was the older one's name? Okay, I have it so – when we came there he was a baby, a little baby yet. So, he said –

Q: What year was this in?

A: Beg your pardon?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: What year was this in?

A: This is in 1950.

Q: Okay.

A: 1950 when I came to **America**. So anyway, we came to visit and then – and we had – th-they invited us for – for supper or lun – whatever it is. And then he says to us, we are going – we are going to – to **Switzerland**. Because in those days was the **G.I.** quote, you know. The **G.I.**, whoever wanted to star – to – to study for higher – because he was a high school teacher, he wanted to go higher. In the – the americ – the – the government paid f – the **G.I.** Bill was that time, they called it **G.I.** Bill, and the government paid for everything. For study, for – they gave him money, gave him everything, and they send him to **Switzerland**, to study in **Switzerland**. So he said, come next week, and then I'll – I'll tell you everything exactly what it was. When we came next week, he was already gone, because they somehow – they told him – they – for – a couple of days later that they – he's gonna have to come, you know, because they were prepared, already packed and everything, but somehow they called him up and he said, you have to leave before. So we were there – we came there on a Saturday, and he left already on Thursday. So I came there, I knock in the door, nobody answers the door, so I go next door. It was an elderly lady living there in – in – in the – in the house. So I says, do you know where the **Fuchs**

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

are? **Dillon Fuch**? Oh, they left already. They – sh-she knew already that they left, they left on Thursday. So, since then we got lost, and I – and I went – you know ma – I had another friend who was in the army, that I met, he tried to locate him, because I knew where he – nobody knew, nobody, how to get in touch with him, and I couldn't get in touch with him. So, when I moved here down to – in **Coral Spring**, when I went in the synagogue, there was one guy – I somehow came out to talk, you know, about my – my friend, I said, I – I had a friend, Captain **William Fuchs**, you know, and I – we tried to – he says, I could find that out for you. He says, give me a couple of days.

Q: Was this someone in the army, or –

A: No, no, no, he – he was in the army, yeah, but beside, he had – he knew from the computers. He says, I'll find him, I'll find him for you. And he came back the next week, he brought me the com – the went ou – write-out from the computer, where he was in army, how long, where he lives. But when I f-found – when I got in touch with the family, cause I had the number, everything was with number, I – first – the first thing I spoke to – to **Andrew**. So he says, my mother is in – in – in **Miami**, the live in **Miami**, and my father died.

Q: Oh.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: I was – I was really heartbroken, because – and I passed by his house a couple – when I moved – I moved down to **Miami** first. I passed by his house, and I didn't know that they were living there.

Q: Oh.

A: He was still alive that time. And he died on – on his – he had a stroke. He was handsome, good looking guy, nice, very good, you know. People like – like him, you – you seldom find. Very nice guy, very nice guy. So that's was then, so I invite – invite his wife, came here, **Andrew** came to my house, we invited him, and the other kid lives in **California**, so I didn't met the other t – the oldest son I didn't – I never met him.

Q: When did you find out about where – how to get in touch with him?

A: I find out about, I-I-I should say a year ago, something like that.

Q: Oh, so very recently.

A: Yeah, not – not – not long ago, right, right.

Q: So, had you just moved to **Coral Springs** then?

A: No, I was living –

Q: Okay.

A: – I was living already in **Coral Springs**, but when I lived in **Miami**, I used to pass by their house.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: And I didn't know that he – they are there. I didn't know because I didn't – I couldn't get in touch. If this guy wouldn't get me in touch with them – he got in touch, and my friend, he was in the army, he – he went to the air force base and give them the thing. I had the number where, you know, 323 [indecipherable] where he was in – in the – in that apartment. They couldn't find him either. And he found them in the computer. I don't know how he did it, but –

Q: It's amazing what you can do with computers.

A: So that's how – that's how I got in touch. So now I know how you come in and [indecipherable]. Yeah, that's –

Q: So, can we go back a little bit?

A: Yeah, would you like first to eat something, or drink [indecipherable] okay?

Q: Sounds good, okay. [tape break] Wha – let's go back a little bit. Did you – what was the situation for you after you were liberated? Did you go through the **DP** camps? And how did you – what was your story after that?

A: Okay. As a matter of fact, when **William** came over and he told me that he is leaving now back to **America**, and if I want to go there is a **DP** camp in **Landsberg. Panzing** is the airfield. From **Panzing** to **Landsberg** was not far, about two kilometers or something. I don't know exact, two or three ki – it was very – you

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

could walk it too, you know. So he says, why don't you go to the **DP** camp, and over there they give you room, board, clothing, anything you want. And he says, go see my friend. He had friends all over. The chief of the camp was – he – he knew the chief of the camp there. He says, they're gonna treat you very nice. As a matter of fact, I went with my friend and first of all I said I wanted to see the chief of police, you know. Was o – e-everything was Jewish there, the police, everything was Jewish. So I says, I would like to see the chief, and I told him that I want to see him. No, you can't see him. I said, I must see him, I have to – I ha – I want to see the – the guy, you know. And as I was arguing with the – with that policeman, the chief of police came and said, what's going on here? I says, yes, I want to see you, mist – you know well, Captain **William Fuchs**? Oh, my friend? So, right away I got the royal treatments because he – he send me, Captain **William Fuchs**. Is there anything you need, just call on me, he says. You want – need a room, you want a registration, everything is gonna be taken care of for you and for your friend. So, through him, I got all the royal treatment.

Q: So how long were you in **Landsberg** for?

A: In **Landsberg**, I – I came, as I said, th-this was ninet – let's see, 1945 I was liberated, '46 - '47 – I – I was in **Landsberg** til about '47, and then I found out that I have a cousin, I met a cousin from my – my – my first – from the – my old family,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

I found out that he was in **Lunberg(ph) frumwald(ph)**. That was a city there by **Ravensburg**, someplace around there. So right away I – I got in touch with him, and he said listen, **Saul**, wh-why should you stay there? Come with me. I have a nice room in **Lunberg(ph) frumwald(ph)** and don't worry about anything, just come. So I moved over there. And then he said that he is engaged to a girl already, and that she is going, his fiancée is going to **America**, and once she comes to **America** she is going to send papers for him, for my cousin. And he says, when I'll come to **America**, I'm going to send you the papers and you gonna come to **America**. Because in those days it was already not so bad, you could come with the – it was the **UNRRA**, the – the Jewish –

Q: **UN** relief agency.

A: – the – the – the **HIAS** –

Q: Yeah.

A: – they used to call it. And they helped you out, so – so as soon as they – he came to **America**, they got married, that was all televised, because in those days was a big deal, so Holocaust survivors, you know, got married, there was a lit – it was already on **TV**, and the gro – **Grossingers(ph)**, you heard of **Grossingers(ph)**?

Q: Mm-mm.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Was a big hotel in the mountains, and they – they invited them for the – for their honeymoon, and they were staying there for a week, and so – and af –

Q: They got married before they went to **America**, or when they – when they –

A: No, they – they got married when my cousin ca – arrived to **America** –

Q: Okay.

A: – right away, a day or two, or a week maybe, right away they got married.

Q: Okay.

A: And the **HIAS** arranged it, and everything, the wedding, th-the – was made, everything from them, it was a big headlines in all the newspapers, you know. And after then, after a couple of months, he made me the papers, and I c – that's how I came to **America** in 1950. So that's the end of the story. And I – and I –

Q: So you just took a ship over, and were you with your friend still at that point?

A: When I came to **America**?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: My friend, he – my friend, the – he – the part – he was in the partisan, he went to **Munich**.

Q: Okay.

A: And he worked for the **UNRRA**. He was – he's dra – drove a big truck.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: But he had a bad end, poor guy. He was jumping – he was a very athletic guy, and he was jumping on a board, you know, where you si – into the pool?

Q: Oh, okay.

A: And the board hit his – his back and break his – the spine, and he lived for a couple of hours, and that was the end of – young – young guy, went through so much in his lifetime, he told me stories, you wouldn't believe it, it was scary. He was – he was about five, six years older than me. So that was the end of the story with him. And I told him, I beg him, I said, co-come with me, come, because my cousin has all connections there, it – no, no, no, I want to go, I have a job there and I'm gonna drive the truck, and – but that was a ba – very bad end of him. If you have any more questions, go ahead.

Q: What did you do between '47 and '50?

A: A big nothing.

Q: A big nothing?

A: A big nothing is right.

Q: Were you just in the **Landsberg** camp, or where did you go?

A: Yeah, the **Landsberg** camp, and then I went to **Neuenberg**, and I was there. Th- There was no camp, there was – yo-you lived privately. And f –

Q: Mm-hm. What did you do in **Nuremberg**?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: In **Neuenberg**? In **Neuenberg**, a-as a matter of fact, I – I try – I worked there for awhile. I – I met friends there, Jewish people, and they – they were furriers, you know, make fur coats?

Q: Oh, okay.

A: And they taught me how to – I used to know how to cut – you know, you had to stretch those furs, and to sew them? I used – a-all the – the whole fur coat, I used to know how to put – assemble them together. And they paid me for each coat, I think it was 50 German marks. It was good money, so in a – if I could do it in a day, I could make a whole fur coat. Stretch it out, and – but I didn't have every day a fur coat, but I made two, three fur coats, so it's another 150 doll – **d-mark**(ph), that was already the **d-mark**(ph), was not the **Reichsmark**. In the beginning the **Reichsmark** didn't have very little value, but the **d-mark**(ph) was already – had a good certain value. So I learned how to do. As a matter of fact, when I came here to **United States**, I go – I got a job in the garment center. Ah –

Q: Where? In – in **New York**?

A: In **New York** –

Q: Okay.

A: – **New York**, in the garment center. Were – were you – oh, excuse me, were you ever in N-**New York**, in –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: I've been.

A: Yeah?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Oh, so you know where **Times Square** is?

Q: Oh yes.

A: [**indecipherable**] **Seventh** Avenue, that was the garment center.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: So, I'll – when I came to a – to **America**, I stood with my cousin. He was already married, and my cousin was – she was already pregnant. Then eventually she had the little baby boy. And so some friends used to come over, and – because they heard that I came, so they come to see me, hello, the – so my cousin says, maybe you have a job for – for – for **Saul**. So he said, yeah, I could give him a job in – in – in – where I work. Because he was a sa – a something like foreman. Not the higher foreman, the lower foreman. Oh, I could give him a job in the – in the – in the garment center. I said, okay. So I said, what – what do I have to do? Don't worry, tell them that you are a tailor from home. I said, I don't know you – how to – how to hold a needle in the hand. I know how to do some fur – furriers, I worked in – i-in – i-in – in **Germany**, but to sew, I don't know. Don't worry about it, tell them that you are a tailor from home. All right, I says, you want me to tell that, I – I will

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

tell. So I came next week, on Monday. Cause I was here about a week or two, I already started to work. Because the **HIAS** supported me, gave me certain amount of money, and they paid me for a room. And so I was already, you know. But I didn't want they should support me, I wanted to make my own money, you know, I wanted to work.

Q: You were living on your own at that point, you didn't share a room with anyone?

A: No, no, I'm still – no, no, no, I was living with my cousins.

Q: With your cousin.

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: So anyway, I came up the next week, I came to work and I see the bi – he introduce me to the big foreman, and he says, oh I hear you're a tailor from home. I says yes. And they had fun in the back, they were laughing, you know? I le – ha – I heard them something, but I didn't know what was going on there. So the guy says, okay, let me see how you do – do some sewing. So he gives me a thimble, I didn't know where or on what finger to put on even the thimble, never mind to sew. And they were laughing. He said, all right, we had the little fun with you, don't – don't worry about it. You gonna learn – you gonna learn, don't worry about it. Be – I know all about it, what kind of tailor d – you a-a-are. So I says, yeah, **Teddy** – his

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

name was **Teddy**, the guy who – who told me I should be – just tell them that I am a tailor. But, I worked there for a couple of weeks, and believe me, I produced just like anybody else, I learned very fast.

Q: Can you still sew?

A: Oh, yeah. I – I wa – I went and I had the dry cleaning business in – in **New York**.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, so – with my cousin, together. Box –

Q: So that's what you eventually went up and – and did there?

A: Yeah, and that's how I learned – I learned a lot of things to sew in the – in the factory when I used to work, but I worked there for about – I worked in two factories. One in the beginning factory, and then I left because I got into an argument with the – with this **Teddy**, because he thought that because he gave me a job that he could – I could lie for him, and I could do all kind of things, which – there was an old lady, also a Holocaust survivor, and he wanted to get rid of her. So he took me as a witness to the big boss there. So, I see he was talking and he pointing towards me, because they were there – over there and I see that he points towards me. Finally he comes over with the boss, and the boss was, you know, big cigars, you know, all sunburned because he went to **Florida** for the – it was in the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

wintertime. So he says to me, if – if I speak Yiddish. I says, I – I don't speak no English, but I speak Yiddish. So he started to talk to me and then **Teddy** says, and ask **Saul**, he'll tell you that she doesn't want to work. I said, hold it, hold it, hold it. I – in front of the boss, I said, that's not true. I says, she's – she's an elderly lady. She was about 45, something like that, but she looked like a hundred. Skinny [indecipherable] broken, sick. I says, she tries her best, I says, and she wants to work and she does work. And the boss just looked at him like, you know, when he – when the boss left, he comes over to me and says, I'll tell you one thing **Saul**, as long as you gonna work here, you never gonna get a raise, an increase. I says, look, I don't care about your increase and I don't care about your raise. You think I'm gonna squeal on a woman like this? I mean, because you gave me a job, you think you own me? I says, I don't care, no matter what – you want me to leave, you could throw me out. I – I'll leave. I don't even want to – I don't like to say – and I don't like you at all when you do the – you should be ashamed of yourself, I says, you went through a concentration camp, and yo – that's how you behave to an old lady like that? She looks old, but she's 45 something, she's still a young woman, and look what you want to do to her.

Q: So the boss was a survivor also?

A: The – the bo – no, the boss went away.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Okay.

A: The boss was – this was when the boss left already.

Q: Okay.

A: He came over to me, and talked to me like this. But anyway, so I worked – I – I remember I made 75 cents an hour in those days. I made 75 cents, but one day I go over th-the boss's son-in-law, his name was **Howard**. I says, I'm gonna go and ask a raise. I wanted a raise of five dollars. So I go over to the boss – yeah, and I used to make already better garments, you know, and duplicates, you know, samples. And they had to rush them out, sometimes I had to go for lunch, and he says, **Saul**, can't – you can't go because we have to rush out this things because otherwise we wouldn't get the order.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So, a lot of times, instead of going 12 o'clock for lunch, I had to go three o'clock or 3:30, and I used to get headaches, and things like that. So I go over to him and I says, listen **Howard**, I would like to ask you for a raise, for five dollars. I'm sorry **Saul**, I can't give it to you. That's was **Teddy's** work, you know.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So I says to him, okay, I'll tell you what, you don't want to give you a raise, that's fine. Instead of, put me on – put me on work – on piecework like the other



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

guys work. If I'll make hundred dollars or I'll make 10 dollars, whatever I'll make, whatever I produce. I knew that I could make much more than 75 cents an hour. No, I – I'm sorry, I can't do that because I need you here by this table. You are – you be – you – you taught all the – the garments, the – I – I – you know how to make the samples and prepare them, everything, you know, and I ca – and I-I need you here by this table, I can't – all right. So I says, okay, you don't want to give me a raise, you don't want to give me piecework and you don't want to do anything, okay, fine, fine. And I had a headache unbelievable. So I'm going down, suddenly, who do you think I meet? I meet a guy from **Germany** that – way back from **Germany** I used to know from the ca – from the camp, from the concentration camp. **Saul**! I couldn't believe it. I went to eat, and he came into the building. He didn't work there, but he just happened to pass by. H-He almost cried, and I was crying almost. So he s – so **Saul**, so wha-what are you doing? Wha – how – I says **Joe**, his name was **Joe**, in Jewish his name was **Yittel**(ph), I says, I have such a strong headache, I hardly could see out of my eyes. So I told him the story, he says, **Saul**, I have good news for you. I have a partner that I work in – they work for **Hentlie**(ph), and this was **Kolmer Marcus**, where I worked, it was a cheap line, a cheaper line. Let's say for a lady's suit over there, 20 - 30 dollars was – that's about it. He worked for between two, three, 400 dollar suits, **Hentlie**(ph), everything was made by hand.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Wow.

A: So I tell him, listen **Joe**, but you know I ha – I work in a cheap line, I don't know if I'll be able to work in your place. **Saul**, don't worry, you work for me then, you'll be my partner. And I assure you, you're gonna make more than – I made 55 dollars when I left this – this – my place, to come to him. I says, I hope you're – so anyway, I ran over to my boss, and – I called up my boss where I worked, because he owed me one week wages yet. I said, oh, I have a very bad cold, and I cannot – I didn't want – I was afraid maybe I'm not going to be qualified there, and I didn't want to lose a job –

Q: Right.

A: – because I had the job already, and I made 55 dollars, it's better than nothing. So, he says **Saul**, I have lo – I'm overloaded with work. You better come in as – I says, as soon as I feel better, I says. And I talk like, you know, I have – had a cold. I worked the first week with my friend, I made 150 dollars.

Q: Wow.

A: Hundred –

Q: So, were you doing piecework there, or –

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Piecework, piecework. But I had to do on certain things on a garment, he told me, you're gonna do this part, and I'm gonna do this part. And that's all you're gonna do. So I had plenty chance to work myself into it, you know? I was very good, this was – I was – there was a hard job. It wasn't so hard, but it was a – how shall I say, it was a job, a boarding job. He had crisscross because everything was handmade, so you couldn't fold it under, you had to flat – the suit should – it was li – you s – wear a suit like a sweater. It was giving from all the sides. Had no paddings, no nothing. That's why it was so expensive. So I did the – the little – little jobs here – all over the – that suit, it was all – so that was my job, and make the bottoms, that was my job. And he put in the linings. And we worked in a team unbelievable. Same [indecipherable] like we had the team for the three kids, we had three kids. And then they – they seen that I do so good with him, they also start together, but they didn't – they – they worked for awhile, oh, you sit too much on the toilet, you didn't come yesterday. I mean, you know, sometimes you cannot make [indecipherable] you don't feel good.

Q: Yeah.

A: Or la – my – my – my friend had to go someplace, he had the sister that was sick. I never told him hey, you're going too much to your sister. He came an hour later, so what, so he came an hour later. Still. So they tried the same way, but it

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

didn't work with them, so it's also fall apart. With me, til the last moment I work there, I worked with my friend, we made good money. I mean, there was times I went home with 200 dollars, in those days it was a fortune of money. Like today a thousand dollars almost, for 200 dollars, you sh – yeah, right.

Q: In just a week? In just a week?

A: A week, in one week, every week. So then, when I came up to – to collect my – he owed me a week wages, my boss that – my ol – first place. Oh **Saul**, we are so happy to see you. I take out my envelope and I show him, I says, see what I made this week? I asked you for five dollars, you wouldn't give it to me. Look what I made. He almost fell down. But one thing he says to me, **Saul**, any time you need a job, if anything should go wrong in your place, or whatever it is, my door will be always open for you.

Q: That's nice.

A: And he said, I apologize, I should have give you that raise, but it was interference here, and I'm sorry what I did, that I didn't give you the raise. And if he would have give me the raise, I would maybe still sit there in – in that –

Q: Oh. So –

A: So that's a good thing.

Q: So how about –

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Are we still on the tape recorder?

Q: Yeah, we're still on the tape.

A: Oh, oh, okay. [indecipherable]

Q: So how about after that? Like, when did you meet your wife, what did you do, how long were you in **New York** for?

A: Okay, okay. When I was in the dry cleaning business, we used to make also deliveries. And there was a bigger delivery, so one customer calls me up and says, yeah, we have all – we had also a route.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So, my cousin – first I – I was in the store, I – because I-I was the – I knew already [indecipherable] clean, because I took some lessons. I went, there was a – a school from dry cleaning business. And I was already a licensed dry cleaning business, so my cousin didn't know, so I was doing the spotting, and all those things. But my cousin was a presser, because he worked also in the garment center. So – and I did alterations, we had a – a tailor also. And my cousin sometimes – we – the pressers was very bad there, because they were not reliable, they used to come in drunk, or they didn't show up, and they're supposed to be – let's say I opened up seven o'clock, they're supposed to be eight o'clock in the – in the store, they used to come in two o'clock, three o'clock in the afternoon. I says, why are you coming

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

so late? Oh, you don't like me? Pay me out. I said, pay me out with what? I don't owe you anything, I paid you – Saturday I paid you everything to a penny. The guy didn't have 10 cents to go home with the subway. And ca – a lot of times they came in drunk. I says, no, you cannot work drunk. And one day I was very busy by the counter, a-and my cousin went out to eat lunch – breakfast, I mean, in the morning, and I didn't see the presser came in, and went straight – I was so busy in the front with the customers, I didn't even see when he came in. And he was quite overdosed with – he drank – early in the morning already, he was drunk. Suddenly, I hear like an explosion. He pulled the pressing machine out from the place, and he busted the pipe, and the ste – I thought that like – like a bomb exploded. He pulled the pressing machine from the wall out. He ma – he was a very – we used to call him **Herman** the bull, he was such a – he was a big guy, you know, very strong guy. But he didn't know what he was doing. I said, didn't I tell you not to come in drinking? I – I says, you came in, I didn't even see you coming in. So I went, I s – I gave him a dollar, I says, go buy yourself black coffee, and sit dow – he was a very nice guy. One thing he was nice, but when he was drunk, forget it. He didn't know what he was doing. And so I said, drink some coffee first, lay down. When you gonna feel you gonna be all right – I called in right away, because I had insurance. They came right away, they fixed everything up.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: That's great.

A: It was wa – I paid for a whole year of – that's – that insura – that insurance was a blessing from – from heaven. The – I remember the first year was pipes busted. The first year that it was in business, I didn't know that pipes were busting from the water line, and shoot up. And suddenly, we put on the steam, and suddenly it starts shooting out the steam all over. And you couldn't get a plumber there like an emergenc – like a doctor was – in emergency you couldn't get a plumber. But I called them up. About in a half an hour they were there and they fixed me up back in business. A lot of cleaners, they couldn't do anything. They had to wait for a week til they – but this guy, because I told him, because you see he – I had before, when we opened up the business, we bought the business for 5,000 dollars. And – but we were all cleared out, because we put down the money, 5,000 dollars for the whole – for the whole business, we gave them cash, 5,000 dollars. So – what did I want to just – want to say?

Q: About owning your business?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: Or just making money?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Okay. So, we were cleaned out from money, we didn't have no money. So the oil man, because y-you – you need a boiler to heat, because you have steam, you have to – you need steam, hot water to press, and –

Q: Right.

A: The guy says, I cannot give you on credit, I have to pay him right away in cash. I says, what do you mean I'm – I'm not running away, you see, I bou – I just bought this business, I says. Comes end of the month, like – he says yes, but you see, th-the guy ra – who sold the business, he owes him some money. I says, I don't know what the other guy did. I assure you – and in between the way I'm arguing with him, the landlord comes in. He says, **Saul**, what's going on here? I says, the guy don't want to give me – he wants I should pay him right away cash. He says to the guy, fill 'em up, fill up his tank. Come into my office, I'll – I'll give you the money. Uh-huh. So, he s – the guy saved me. Give – paid me out the money. In between the month came by – the didn – end of the month, a guy walks in and he says, oh I see – I had a big sign, just opened up the business, you know. He says, if you need I'll give you a good – a good deal. And I have as – insurance to help you out, and – and I'll sell you – he asked me how much I paid, I think in those days it was in cents, a gallon of – of oil was, you know. He says, I'll give you it 10 cents less, a-and – and – and I'll – I'll sh – tell you something else. You see, now it came out a new law,



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

the high – high pressure boilers have to have a special instrument and a special thing, it – it shuts off the boiler, in case something goes wrong, you know? And that alarm costs about 200 dollars, he said, I'll give you this as a present. And I says, okay, you got a deal. Now, I says, next week, come and fill up my – my tank, he says fine. He came, they filled it up, end of the month he sent – but in between, the other guy came also. He wanted to sell me oil. I says, no, thank you very much, I says, I got a guy that I don't have to pay him cash like you, you remember?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: With my landlord had to pay you the – to fill up for the tank, I says. Oh no, he says, oh, I'm gonna give you cheaper. He gave me 10 cents off, he gives me 20 cent. I says, even if you give it to me for nothing, I says, I deal with this man, and that's it. I shook hands with him, and that's – that's the contract. And that's – til I – we don't – til I [indecipherable] sell that business, I was still with this – with the same guy. And that guy treated me – if we needed a problem – fixing anything, he had plumbing, everything, and he took it care [indecipherable].

Q: That's amazing.

A: That was the – the story.

Q: And how long did you stay with that business?

A: Oh, I stood there in that business, I think, almost when I came to **Florida**.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: When did you come to **Florida**?

A: Seventy – '76. So, til then – til '76, I was in the dry cleaning business.

Q: So you met your wife up in **New York** then too?

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: So, okay, you asked me that question, and I – somehow I jumped to someplace else.

Q: It's okay.

A: Okay, so I delivered – we had a route also, to deliver, but sometimes, you know, it was a big – big delivery, so they asked me if I could deliver it to them. Says okay, no problem. So I came up there and I was talking – she – she had the daughter, I – she was also my customer, and the – the mother was a little bit – the elderly people, they didn't clean much. But a-anyway, she gave me for – her husband was still alive that time, so one suit I had. So I said, okay, I'll bring it to the daughter her stuff, and I'll bring you the suit for – for – for her, for her husband. And I came up, she said, oh, I'm expecting – my little niece is coming from **Argentina**. My wife comes from **Argentina**.

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: I says, little niece? I said, oh. Maybe – I figured maybe, little niece, 10 years old, or something. So then she said, oh, I have a couple of dresses, **Saul**, could you take it for me and – and bring it back to me whenever you – you will be in this neighborhood? I says, no problem. She gave me two dresses, or whatever it was. And it was on a Friday, and I come in and she says, oh **Saul**, meet my little niece. My wi – I said, oh, this is your little niece? She was – well, she was 18 years old, that time, 18 or 19 years old, something like that. She was very good looking girl. I said, oh, this is your little niece? So I says, is it all right if I'll take her and show her around a little bit, and – you know, downtown, or take her to movie? Oh yeah, you could take her anytime you want. So – but my wife spoke a little Yiddish – Jewish.

Q: Uh-huh. So that's how you communicated?

A: Yeah, but sh-she spoke mostly Spanish. English, she didn't speak a word. No-Nothing, no [**indecipherable**]

Q: Had you learned English by this point?

A: Beg your pardon?

Q: Had you –

A: Oh, I ma – my English was already good, I was already a nice couple of years in the – in the country. I have already my own business, so – so then, I s – si – so my wife s-se – I said, you know what? Try talk – she spoke Yiddish. Not too good, but

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

I could communicate with her, because her mother and parents, they spoke Yiddish, too, you see. They come from the same place where I come from, from the Carpathians. So that's how I – I – I got very friendly with them, too, because she – she came from **Russia**.

Q: Mm-hm. Had they moved there before the war? To **Argentina**?

A: No, from a – no, this was after – after war, sh-sh – I think she came in 19 fif – 60 – 60? '59. We got – I got married in '59. So, was – so anyway, I said **Ceil**(ph), okay, the main thing is you have to learn English. I said, either schools here – and she picked it up very fast. Picked it up also very fast. So that's how I met her and I went – we went out, but see, she had a little problem with i – with old people. If she wrote too many letters, you're spending too much money, you know, **[indecipherable]** look – if she brushed the teeth, you put too – too much toothpaste, you know? So I said s – and she told me that. I says, okay, you know what? I'm gonna buy you it – I bought a – a fi – a si – 50 stamps, I says, and you could write 50 letters. If you needed more money, just let me know. And I says, here is some money, you could buy your own things **[indecipherable]** give me this, give me that, I says, don't worry about it. Thanks God I make a good living, I'm all right. And I think after – after a close couple of months, you pass by and there was, on the – oh, I forget this. I'm gonna tell you in a minute, it'll come back to me. You pass by

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

there and they were rehearsing a – a wedding was going on. So he say, oh, you want to see how they get married, how they rehearse for, because they're gonna get married the next day, they – you know, they showed how the ushers go and the – all the steps they have to make. **Burnside**(ph) Avenue, it was on –

Q: Okay.

A: – **Burnside**(ph) Avenue, nice place. So in between we went to watch the wedding, the owner comes over to me, he says, can I help you? And s – and so I says, well, we are not ready yet to get married, but soo-soon. Oh, I have a good deal for you. Listen to this, I have a good deal for you. There was a couple that they had to get – you know, you have to give a down payment. So they – something went wrong with that thing, and he says, I got a deposit, but if you want, you gonna get, instead of the deposit, I will give you much – a very good deal. So I said, all right, let me think about it, I'll think about it. We went home, and I spoke to **Ceil**(ph) and she said, oh su – get married so soon? Yeah. Oh, right, yeah, sure. So I says, all right, talk to your aunt, because she came to her aunt, you know. I says, talk to your aunt, and we'll – we'll see. And then I'll – I'll go back and I'll find out what he wants and I'll make the deal with him. But, I says, I couldn't say it there right away that I'm gonna take it, because I have to talk to you first, too. Maybe – maybe you don't want to get married, I don't – I don't know. So right away, oh, yes. So right

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

away I went back and made the deal with him, and give me a good deal, because comparing, in those days, I think was he charged me 20 dollars for a couple, or for a pers – I don't remember, but such a long time. It's almost 50 years, don't forget.

Q: I know.

A: You don't remember after – all those details.

Q: It's your anniversary this year.

A: Yeah, October

Q: October, okay.

A: October the 10<sup>th</sup> we got married.

Q: Oh.

A: So, that's how we got married, and then we went to – for a honeymoon, also very close, in the **Catskill** mountains. And we have a nice hotel, and we were there for a week. I couldn't – I couldn't stay too long because of the business, but my cousin says, **Saul**, stay as long as you like. So we – we stood there one – one week, or two weeks? I think it was – I can't tell you that, I don't remember, so better don't say anything. So that's how we got married, slowly. We lived in – in **Washington Heights**, and after then we bought a house [**indecipherable**] Parkway section. And then finally, somehow the – I said we – I have enough from the cleaning business, because it was a good business, but I left in the morning, I didn't see my kids, I

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

came home at night, I didn't see my kids. So I said, we had eno – he wanted also get out from this thing, so – and then we had a friend, he said, let's go for a – for a vacation, because the school was closed, it was Christmastime, said, let's go to **Miami**, to **Florida**, from **New York**. So I said, okay, I have a big car, I had an **Impala** Custom, a che – a **Chevy**, a big – it looked like a **Cadillac**. Eight cylinders, you know, in those days. So sh – her husband was a doctor, because they went together in school. **Celia** went with a – with a doctor i-i-in the – in – in the high school there, whatever it is. So that's how we – we knew them, we became friends. So, I was the driver, and we went to **Florida**, and when I came to **Florida**, I says, I love this – this weather, I says, that's the weather for me. Going home we wind up in a snowstorm, and I d – I don't know, in those days I used to get headaches, and I got a headache, so she said, okay, let me drive. But I says – what's was her name? Well, ca – it'll come back soon [indecipherable]. Hi – hi – the husband's name was **Leethor**(ph), and her name I forgot. All right, so she said, I'm gonna drive. I says, listen, be very careful how you drive. You know, you cannot use brakes, because on snow you don't use brakes. So, oh don't worry, don't worry, don't worry. I said, hole – slow down a little bit, you're going too fast, you're going too fast. And as soon as I said too fast, a car comes, and she was on a curve, and we wind up in the gutter. I says, okay. Luckily, they too – had to take us out from that, you know, I

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

couldn't get – I had a shovel, I had everything with me, I had to shovel out first, good, you know, to get out from there. And then we got some helpers, they stopped and they helped us out. I said, don't ever touch my car again, because I said, I warned you, go slowly, go slowly. **Edith, Edith.**

**Q: Edith.**

**A:** I says, **Edith**, I told you, I says. You cannot use brakes on snow. I says, you drive in **New York**, too, you drove in **New York**, I says, it's the same thing here. But here is – it's so bad, and the snow was coming down so strong. We had to stop and to read the sign I had to go and clean out the sign, I didn't know where to go. So I had to clean it out by hand to see – to read this – the sign. So that's how we went. And, big snowstorm. But thanks God we made it back home, and everything was all right.

**Q:** And you moved to **Miami** a few years later?

**A:** No, we – we – we so – we got rid of the business, and in the summertime, the school ended, summertime, we came – we moved to **Miami**.

**Q:** And how many children and grandchildren, again?

**A:** I have two – two boys.

**Q:** Okay.

**A:** Those are my grandchildren.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Oh.

A: There's one – two girls.

Q: Two girls.

A: And this is my – my – my – my grandson, and those are my two granddaughters.

Q: Oh, very – very handsome and beautiful.

A: Yeah, they're beautiful kids, very nice. Now –

Q: Can you go back – oh, go ahead.

A: Yeah. Would you like to sit down, and I'll make you something to eat?

Q: Ask you –

A: Yes, yeah.

Q: – actually, two more questions?

A: Right.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah, qui – go ahead.

Q: Okay. I have two more questions for you, one is –

A: No problem, no problem.

Q: – one is going back a little bit. Did you ever, between the – between coming to **America** and being liberated again, did you ever have any inclination to go to **Palestine**, or **Israel**, once it became **Israel**?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Yes, yes, I had – I wanted to go to **Israel** in those days, because – I didn't want to bring this in because he told me that you are only interested in – in the – from the concentration camps, the stories from the concentration camps.

Q: We like a bit of everything.

A: Okay. So, I was on the ship, on the **Exodus**.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I went illegal to **Israel**. Since you want to know –

Q: No, yeah.

A: – so I'm gonna tell you now. And when I was in **Landsberg**, and – and so – because his father, vel-**Velvil**(ph) – I mean, I called him **Velvil**(ph), his Jewish name was **Velvil**(ph), the captain.

Q: The captain of **Exodus**?

A: Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: No, no, the captain when I was – when I met with the captain –

Q: Oh, okay.

A: – his name was **William** –

Q: Okay.

A: – **William** – **William**, but I – in Jewish, his Jewish name was **Velvil**(ph).

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: Oh, okay.

A: And he spoke a good Jewish, you know, very nice, very good Jewish. So he liked to talk to me because I spoke Yiddish and he practiced his Jewish. So when I – because he says, if you want to go to **America**, I could arrange it for you, or if you want to go to – to **Switzerland**, or to **Sweden**, a lot of people went to **Sweden**, he said, I could arrange it, and every – I says, no, thank you very much, but I want to go to **Israel**. You want to go to **Israel**, I went to a concentration camp, I had enough, I says. I don't want – I'm not looking for anything, I wa – want to go to **Israel**. He says okay, he says, if you want to go, go to **Landsberg**, see this chief of police, and they gonna inform you, because you had to belong to a kibbutz, you know what a kibbutz is?

Q: Mm-hm, little working community.

A: Working community, he says. Because you cannot go on your own to **Israel** illegally, you have to go with a group. So that's her, you went, we – we went on th – with that group – because you didn't – you never knew when you gonna move, it came an order, tonight be ready, so you always had to be on the readiness. So we got ready, and one day he says, okay guys, tonight you gonna be picked up by the **UNRRA**. American trucks, you know, and we were in **Landsberg**, but they – those trucks went all over to pick up not only from – from – from **Landsberg**, from all

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

over around, and we met in certain point in **France**. In **France**, and  
[indecipherable]. And there was –

Q: So, the trucks took you to **France**?

A: To – to **France**.

Q: Okay.

A: From – from **Germany** to **France**.

Q: Okay. And they were American trucks?

A: All American trucks, right.

Q: Okay.

A: Those army tru – big trucks, and they were covered up with the – with covers,  
you know. You see, in those days, **Britain** was against to let in Jews to **Israel**, but  
they let in Arabs. They had a quota. They – 1500 Jews were allowed to go in in a  
month. But the Arabs, if 100,000 wanted to go in – because you see, they had a  
problem in those days, the Arabs, they didn't have no work, and the only thing  
**Israel** was blo – blossoming, blooming, because the Jews started to return, because,  
I don't know, you must read – if you are a Christian, you must read the Bible, the  
old test – you read the Old Testament ever?

Q: Mm-hm.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: So, it says there, that the time will come, and the Jewish people will return to their – to their homes.

Q: Right.

A: And others say in Hebrew it says –

Q: Once the messiah comes?

A: What?

Q: Once the messiah comes you'll return –

A: Right. Not – this – yeah, the messiah is, but even before the messiah will come [indecipherable] and the Jewish ki – children will return to their promised land. So, when I was reading this Bible, you know, I – I believe in the Bible, beca – in the – in the five co – in the five books of **Moses**. And you have the New Testament, we have the Old Testament. So I said, that's the reason I want to se – I said, I am going to **Israel**. But, i-in those days, so the British were against the – because they wanted the Arabs, they favored the Arabs. Now, the Jews, if they smuggled in weapons or something, they went – used to go in the kibbutzim, and confiscate the Jewish weapons and sell them to the Arabs or something like this. But then it came a time that the Jews got a little bit stronger, and they started to fight back the British. I don't know if you remember it when they bombed the King **David** hotel, it was the – the British headquarters in **Jerusalem**, and a lot of British soldiers died. And they

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

started to suffer. You know, first they – they killed Jews and things, but then the Jews hit back, and they – they got the beating, too. So then they decided they had enough, they – too much losses and they said they giving up. But before they giving up, they thought that the – they confiscated weapons from the Jews and gave them to the Arabs, and they took away the weapons from the Jews, but the Jews got weap – different – from different places they got weapons. And they were hundred percent sure that the Jewish people, who in those days, I don't know, a million and – tops a million and a half or something like that, and the Arabs were in the hundred millions. There was **Egypt**, there was **Lebanon**, Syrian, **Jordan**. **Jordan** had a well equipped army with tanks and things. What the Jews, they had a couple of rifles, and things like that. So anyway, the Jews didn't have no choice, but they went in le – illegally, on boats, you know, they came in. This ship, **Exodus** – come, I'll show you something, here.

Q: Okay. Here we go. Let me take the mic from this.

A: Oh, okay. I have to sit, and –

Q: Okay.

A: – I'll show you the picture afterward.

Q: Okay.

A: I forgot we got again the [indecipherable]

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

Q: We can pause and get the picture.

A: Yeah, I'll – I'll show you – I'll show everything.

Q: Okay.

A: So anyway – so they – they thought now, as soon as the British are gonna leave, the Arabs will attack. And that's what they did, really. They knew ahead of times, and they gonna wipe out the Jewish people one, two, three. But, you know, when God promises something, and he watches over you, you could have a billion army, and you have hundred people, and who – who goes out the – the winner is what God wants, right? And then, the British left, and the **U.N.** wa – said they should divide **Israel** half. Half **Jerusalem** for the Arabs, and have half **Israel** for the Arabs. Half **Israel**, half Arabs.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: But the Arabs didn't want half, they wanted everything, the whole thing. And the Jews weren't ready to give them. Now here, **Israel** has nothing, comparing with the **Arab** side. **Jordan** had a regular army trained by the British, with tanks, with airplanes, with all thing, what did the Jew have? Nothing. Couple of tanks or machine guns. But the Czechoslovakian sent help out for the – for **Israel** [indecipherable] **Russia** in those days helped. **America** was – stayed away. Didn't do anything for the – at that time, in the beginning. But, as soon as the British left

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

and the u – unite [**clears throat**] Excuse me. The United Nations declared **Israel** as a state, the Arabs didn't want to agree on anything, and as soon as **Israel** declared a state, that was – the first premier was dur – **Beng-Ben-Gurion**.

Q: You weren't in **Israel** at that point though?

A: No, no, I wasn't in i – I came to **Israel**, but I was caught by the – let me – let me just continue –

Q: Okay.

A: – and then I'll come back –

Q: Okay.

A: – with the thing. So anyway, the bri – the – the United Nations, they voted in **Israel** as half – half – we'll divide it half and half, but Arabs didn't agree on that. They wanted everything, and as soon as they gathered the army from **Egypt**, they gathered the army from – from **Jordan**, **Syria** helped out, **Saudi Arabia**, everybody against little **Israel**. But what happened? **Israel**, the – the b – st – yeah – **Egypt**, with **Egypt**, it started first with **Egypt**. **Egypt** said that from now on the Jews cannot use the **Red Sea**, they block – put a blockade against Israeli shipping, because **Israel** had already a couple of ships that used to come, as you know, commercial ships. So since isra – since **Egypt** came out with that tank that – in other words, they stopped the select – you have a job, and they take away from you



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

a job, you cannot co – you cannot – they wouldn't let you live. So didn't have only one thing. They went and instead of **Egypt** attacking **Israel**, **Israel** attacked **Egypt**. And they had already a couple of American Jewish pilots that they used to be in the second World War, went to help **Israel**. And they got a – a couple of planes, and **Egypt** had the big air force already, but **Israel** attacked first and wiped out the whole Egyptian Air Force. That was the main thing what they did, number one. And once they divide – they – they got the air force finished, and **Egypt** got stuck in the middle, where everything was going in the **Sinai**, in the desert, because they were starting to march, but it was too late already for them. And then the tan – tanks came, and **Israel** wiped out the whole tanks, and surrounded **Egypt** and **Egypt** had such a defeat that they just hardly made it alive.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: When **Jordan** seen what **Israel** did to **Egypt**, they started coming down from – from the it – what do you call that?

Q: The –

A: The **Golan Heights** –

Q: Okay.

A: – the **Golan Heights**. See, the **Golan Heights** – have you ever been in **Israel**?

Q: I haven't, but I know the geography.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: You know the geography.

Q: Yeah.

A: Okay. See, the **Golan Heights** goes up like this in the mountain, and then when you come all the way on top is – is **Syria**. From there you could just walk in straight to **Syria**.

Q: So they came in through there.

A: Right. But see, **Jordan** – Syrian, they used to bomb because they used to live by the **[indecipherable]** it's like a swamp, you know, where you step in the ground you could sink in til about here, you know, it's – it's soft land, they call it the **sump**(ph).

Q: Mm-hm.

A: This – th – it's more water than thing and it's – you cannot walk there, you know. So they used – an-and people, the Israelis used to already dry out the **sumps**(ph) and to – to grow wheat or corn, whatever it is. And the Syrians from the top, when they used to – because they had the **Heights**. So they used to shoot down with cannons and things and used to kill a lot of Israelis. Now they said oh, **Israel** attacked **Egypt**, now we gonna attack **Israel**. And they came down with the mountains with the tanks. But, going up on the tanks, when th – **Israel** was ready also with tanks they had already, because they got shipment. **France** helped **Israel** a

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

lot, Russians, Czechoslovakian. So they had already more weapons, and they caught a lot of Egyptian weapons. That's where they made. And also, they called those rockets, the rockets, you know, where they – to shoot up, and wit – that was the **Vietnam** war, I think it was that. But **France** somehow, I don't know, something went wrong between **France** and **Israel**, and **France** stopped delivering – no more weapons, but **Israel** bought from them some boats, speedboats, and they – **Israel** paid for them, but she couldn't deliver them yet, she said the – an – they had a date when to pick them up. And **France** said – wouldn't give back the money to **Israel** and wouldn't give back the boats for **Israel**. So **Israel**, at night, from i – from **France** to **Israel** is not very far. So they had also boats, and they came at night and they kidnapped – kipnap – kidnapped all those boats out. It was – belonged to them. So says, we paid for it, but the – **France** didn't want to give them out. For what re – I don't remember the reason exactly why. So anyway, they took out the boats and that's how **France** stopped giving them no more – no – because they used to sa – sell them **Mirage**, the jets. The French mira – like you have here the – the Americans have the-their jets, what do you call the American jets? The **Phantoms**? **Phantom** jets.

Q: **Phantoms**, okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: So over there the – the brit – the – **France** they had the **Mirages**, and it was a good plane. In those days if – a **Mirage** used to be a million dollars. So, anyway, when **Syria** said now we gonna teach those Jews a lesson, and they planted mines all the way – in other words they knew that the – **Israel** has the tanks that they could come up, and they planted – there was a lot of sand there. And then it was a mir – another miracle happened that that night – they didn't know that – the knew that there was – but they didn't know exactly where the – the mines are, and they went into one place, they were surrounded by the mine fields, and it was very dangerous for them to continue. They didn't know what to do. Suddenly, a – a – a sandstorm came, and blow out all the sand, and you could see the mines, they could see where the mines are laying. All they went, the soldiers, they knew how to handle those things. They picked up the mines, and then they went up, and they – then come the big battle, it was a fierce battle, cause the Syrians, they have very well prepared and fortified, because they were on the top, and the Jews were on the – on the bottom. So you know when you are on top what you could do when – go up –

Q: It's much easier.

A: But finally, a b – very bad fight [**indecipherable**] fight, and the Jews gained that, and they went all the way up, they almost went into **Syria**, but they stopped just in

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

front of **Damascus**. They could have gone inside, but **America** told them to stop, not to go in and they stopped. So then – so then they – they annihilated th-the whole brit – the whole Egyptian army, the whole Syrian army, and Lebanese armies. So one little – couple of people against – against millions. So here, used to say it was a miracle, because God told you that the Jewish people will return. Now, you see, they still did not return completely, because this is not the turning place, you see, now they still want – they still want half of – of **Israel** now. Even they lost everything and they start with the fight. **Israel** wanted to give them everything half.

Q: Right.

A: Like the **U.N** – nited Nations, but the **United States** was crooked too, so – so that's – that's the story is now – you – you seen **Netanyahu** was here. And I don't know what happened, what they – what they arranged something, I really don't know anything about it. So, in another couple of days, when they read the newspapers, you'll find out, more or less –

Q: Yeah.

A: – what's going on.

Q: What about your experiences on the ship?

A: Yeah, I wanted to show you the – the ship –

Q: Okay.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: I have a picture, but –

Q: Shall we take a break?

A: Yeah, take a break.

Q: Okay.

A: Okay. **[tape break]**

Q: All right, I have two more questions for you. The first is that I noticed that you have the tattoo on your arm.

A: Oh yes.

Q: And could you tell us about that.

A: Yeah.

Q: And then could you tell us your number?

A: Okay. The tattoo is – you see, in – when you were in the concentration camps, they – they – that denigrated you so low, that they didn't want to call you by your name, you were only a number. There's a reason they give you – see, this is **B10140** is my tattoo number. That's it.

Q: That's all you –

A: And if you were in that time in **Auschwitz** – as a matter of fact, I had here – where I put it? Oh, here it is. Now, you'll have a chance – you could read it after.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

It's not my name, but the similar people that after the war they got together also, but they had the higher – higher number – yeah, a later number than mine.

Q: Tattoos from **Auschwitz** horror reunite lost inmates. So –

A: Right, right –

Q: So –

A: Somebody – somebody in the synagogue showed it to me, because he seen that I had a number, he says he got it from the computer, so I should read it. So it just so happened that I got it.

Q: So were you able to meet anyone because of your number?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No, there in **Israel**, you know, it's – there's a lot of people that I met –

Q: Right.

A: – with the – with the same numbers. I mean, in – in the sequence numbers. My number is 10,000, their – their maybe is 15,000 or different. Or sometimes you could get even the next number, next – but so far I never met – met those type of people.

Q: Do you have a lot of people that ask you about your number?

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: Yeah, sure, yeah, sure. But there was also numbers – they – they made a **K** and an **L** on your forehead. That was rude. Concentration camp, you know, th – in German.

Q: But did the k –

A: **Koncentrations Lager**.

Q: Oh, okay.

A: The **KL, Koncentration Lager**. You see, I spoke flu – when I came here to – to **America**, I spoke fluently German. Fluently, good. But if you don't speak for so many years, you get s – I still understand, if I have to go in a German store, I could unders – as a matter of fact wh-when I had the dry cleaning business, was a German professor, a lady, very nice lady. She was teaching German. And she – there's the only pe – person she used to come in and talk to me in German, you know, so I was able to talk with her.

Q: Yeah.

A: But now, it's – I'm so rusty and it – even my Jewish starts getting slowly rusty, because we speak only English in – in – in the house. Very seldom – my wife sometimes speaks Yiddish or something. But if you don't use a language often, yo- you get – specially German, I didn't use for a long, long, long time.

Q: I'm sure.



**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: She was my customer [indecipherable] and that. She had a whole family, they used to all come to me, and she was – what was her name? Come back soon.

Q: [indecipherable] think about it.

A: It's one thing, I forget the name, but in a few minutes it comes back. Okay, so go ahead, ask.

Q: One last question –

A: Yeah.

Q: – you were – you were telling me earlier, and I would just like you to say this again, why you like doing this, and why you think it's such a good idea to tell your story when others can't?

A: Oh, oh, I see, yeah. Well, you see, the thing is this. You have to tell the world what the German people did – did to the Jewish people. Now, a lot of people th – the – they were cremated o-or killed, in – i-in the war time, they cannot speak no more, because they are dead. And those people who got liberated, they have the ability to s – to let know the – the rest of the world what was going on, and they should be always on – on the alert, because you never know what could happen. You never know what could happen. Right, take a look for instance **Germany**. It was a culture nation of – who would believe that they would produce such a killer

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

machine and kill 10,000 people overnight? Oh, I forgot to tell you about the Gypsies.

Q: What about the Gypsies?

A: So you want me to tell you?

Q: Yeah, what about the Gypsies?

A: Okay. I was in the **D** camp that time. I was on this side, the Gypsies, they were living with families, women, children, man, they were living together, and I was living the other side of the barracks. And one night, we were already – everybody was asleep. Suddenly they open up the big – see, the front of the barracks were very tall. From here till here, you know – a truck could back up and load in people, it was specially made like this and the doors were quite high up. But see, this door is what – what is, eight feet?

Q: Yeah, about eight feet.

A: That one was about 16 feet, so a truck –

Q: Wow.

A: – big truck would fit in there. Suddenly I heard big commotion, the doors – the doors open up and the trucks start moving – and this is in our barrack, barrack – what is my barrack, twenty – 27, yeah, 27. And then – the Gestapo with – with the dogs, you know, with those shepherds, and out and chasing us into the – into the – into the

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

trucks, and we didn't know f – suddenly nothing, nobody, no warning ma – imagine you're half asleep and suddenly someone comes in with dogs and screaming and hitting you with things. And everybody, we were like panic-strick, you know? And they chasing you with dogs in-into the truck and ra – you know, hurry up, and thi – and one dog, I cou – I have here, it's still a mark that the –

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: I don't remember if this or – let me see, I f – I forgot or – even on what foot it is.

Q: It's okay, you don't have to show me.

A: No, I'll – I'll show – I'll show you –

Q: Okay, okay.

A: – I'll show you, I will show you. I have to see it. Okay, after then I'll – I want to show you the thing.

Q: Okay.

A: And so they – yeah, so thi – this is the barrack right? I was here already, see, right here. They had to go all the way, from all over to push in the – the kids in the thing. There was not one truck, this [indecipherable] trucks, I – I just seen one, and then I see the other – the other – moved in, the other backed in. But then it happened – it was already half of the barrack almost emp – in – in the truck inside, then they get an order, you got in the wrong place. They had to go on the other side,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

on the Gypsy sides, doing the same thing. So they ran in – now they chased you out from that truck, **raus witar**(ph), you know, get out, you know, in German, they – everything was in German there.

Q: Right.

A: We still didn't know what happened here. First they ch – tried to push us into the trucks, now they chase us out from the truck. And everything had to go one, two, three, you know, but – by them everything th – and they hit you with sticks, and with the dogs, you know, they special instigated those dogs. So everybody got wat – we – we were like dumbfound, you know, we didn't know what happened here. We – we just didn't know what was going on. We didn't know anything. Now, they – they – the trucks backed out, everybody got out from the trucks, they go to the other side, and they went to the Gypsies.

Q: Hm.

A: They did the same thing with the Gypsy families. I don't know how many thousand of Gypsies there were there. There was a couple of barracks of Gypsies. They – and the Gypsies were screaming **hilfe**, hil – I mean, help, help, in German they say **hilfe**, **hilfe**. Help, help us, you know, we – I mean, we should go and help –

Q: Right.

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

A: – we – you couldn't – what – what could we do? Help, with what? Wi – they have machine guns, and we have nothing. I don't know exactly the time, but it must have been like 11 - 12 o'clock at night when – when they came to our house, i – to our b-block, and then they went to the other side, and maybe like two, three o'clock everything we – got so quiet, everyth – the trucks turned around, they went here and th – straight to the crematoriums. In one night they annihilated all the Gypsies.

Q: Wow.

A: All of them, women, children and men. Now, what had caused that? I never find out. But that's what happened in **Auschwitz**, and that's what happened in our barrack. So, they made a mistake, first they came to us, and then they got an order they got in the wrong place. They kicked us out again, and then they went on the other side, and in one night they annihilated all the Gypsy populations. They were German Gypsies.

Q: That's awful. Mm, that's awful.

A: Okay. Now, go ahead, ask – ask me the other questions.

Q: Well, do you have anything else to say?

A: You know, sometimes it – it climbs in some new ideas, but more or less I would say 80 percent I – 80 or 70 percent, I gave you what – what I know. And maybe tomorrow I'm gonna go, oh, I forgot to tell you this, or – or like – same thing like,

**Interview with Sholom Rosenheck**  
**May 20, 2009**

see, I didn't even tell you about this, you see? This is, they came in, and you had to sit down, didn't ask you no questions.

Q: Right.

A: Next, next, next and they had those pens you know, pick, pick, pick, pick, that's it.

Q: Well, thank you very mu-much Mr. **Rosenheck**, for doing this with us.

A: Yes, okay.

Q: This has been Mr. Rose – Mr. **Saul Rosenheck** –

A: All right.

Q: – with **Julie Oswald** on May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2009. So thank you very much for having us in your home in **Coral Springs**, and that's it.

A: Well, I hope you spread for the whole world, let them know also what's was going on, how the Germans behaved to people, innocent women and children, what they did. I could tell you more and more stories too, but all right, I think it – for today it's enough. Okay.

Q: Thank you.

A: Thank you very much for coming.

Q: Thank you.

**Conclusion of Interview**