

Francis Holleman Sperber Holocaust Memoir

I lived in Lwow when the war unexpectedly started (in June 1941). I received a telegram from my parents asking me to come to Drohobycz with my small child. I left everything in Lwow. I was informed that my husband was shot to death. In the meantime it was impossible to return to Lwow. I lived with my parents in crowded conditions on Zupna 29 Street (in Drohobycz). The house belonged to Aunt Sala. In the first days the Ukrainians attacked Jews beating and robbing them mercilessly. They were very happy that the Germans came. Aunt Sala lived in the house with her husband, maid, and two daughters, the older Pola and the younger, Irka.

Very soon the Gestapo sent two Jewish men from the "komitet" (Judenrat) with a letter to my parents notifying them that they would be deported. When I asked why I was not on the list I was told that I am not registered in Drohobycz but in Lwow. Mother cried a lot, Father went to the attic and brought a cord and said that he will hang himself. He knew what awaits him but I calmed him down and told him that this is a displacement to the town of Belzec and there the Jews will live. I promised to write and perhaps the child and I will soon come to see them. They started packing but there was not much to pack because a few days before the Germans and Ukrainians looted a lot of things from them (Raub Akcione). I had a warm blue sweater, which I gave to mother. Mother's sister, Sala who was disabled, was despairing. She was weak from hunger and fear. Sister Rozia, beautiful with blond hair, was acting brave. Some people suggested that she hide with the Poles because she did not look Jewish, but she insisted that she will go with the parents. There was also a small boy, Ludwis, the son of sister Lola who was being raised by my parents. He was in bed vomiting and crying "grandma, grandma." The whole family got together while the parents were packing. The two Jewish men went to other homes, gathered a group of Jews and took them to Sokol, where many Jews lived. The Germans and Ukrainians checked their packages, confiscating all valuables. A few days later I heard that they all were burned in the crematorium. Aunt Sala, her husband, and children were hiding. They had some money to pay the Poles. Soon a law was issued that the Jews had to live together (Ghetto?). My aunt with her family came back home. A couple with three children moved in to the apartment that our parents had left. Their name was Rathow(sp?); daughter Cesia, sons Artur and Elo(sp?). My child and I slept in a corner of the kitchen. My cousin, Irka, 12 years old, gave my Beniu something to eat, but this was not sufficient. Aunt and the family had to go into hiding again. There were rumors that the Jews, if they wanted to live, would have to work for the Germans, but only for a short time. I went to work, gave my child something to keep him sleeping and not crying, wrapped him in a blanket so nobody could see him. I was working on construction, toting bricks while my child slept under boards from morning till dusk. This construction was managed by a Jewish engineer, Bakenrot. The Rathows, who lived with me, also worked on the construction. There was nothing to eat. I got white strings (wicks for candles), and at night I crocheted hats and gloves for the winter. When they were done I went to the market on Mondays, where the farmers from nearby villages came to town. I bartered the hats and gloves for butter and wheat, which I boiled for me and my child. There was talk that all

is fine, but this was a lie; the Ukrainians and Germans announced it, knowing that some Jews were in hiding and wanted them to get out of hiding places. I left the child at home and went to work. When I arrived at work, there was an announcement that there are new displacements. When I returned home, the child was gone. Before I went to work I dressed the child in a sweater and blue pants. When the Ukrainians came, they took my child and other people from the neighborhood. The child cried "mommy, mommy." A Ukrainian policeman gave the child to a Jewish woman, but she was busy with her own family. I despaired, and did not know what to do. A Polish neighbor who saw it from her window gave me the details. All the Jews were taken to the Court building. Next day I took some cups that my aunt left, a pair of shoes of my uncle's brother and other things and gave it to Polish neighbors asking them for food. I took the food for my child to the Court. They would not let me in and took the food from me. I asked engineer Bakenrot to intervene to get back the child. He said it was impossible, even if he could, in a few days they would take the child again. I was helpless, did not have any money, had only what I was wearing on me. A few days later my uncle's brother cried that I took his shoes, so I had to go to the Poles to retrieve them. A few days later he and his family were killed. My aunt and her family were still hiding with the Poles. The house was empty, everything was robbed. The Rothows, who were communists, committed suicide. I was utterly alone; my heart felt like a stone but I still had to go to work on the construction. I did not feel hunger. I remember mother boiled potato peels and made pancakes. There was no wood for that so we used wood from a fence. Before my parents were deported, Germans came to our apartment and beat father because he could not tell them where the communists lived. He did not know any communists. They placed him on the floor and trampled on him with their boots. Mother wanted to pick him up from the floor, so they beat her up too. We were hungry all the time. An acquaintance made me Aryan papers under the name Urszula Polnibarska (sp). I have kept that document. On the construction site was a Polish man, a bricklayer. He told me that I should run away and he will give me an address where I could hide. Next day I did not go to work. I wrapped my leg to pretend that I am sick. This turned out for worse when a Ukrainian man came to my apartment and asked why I am not at work. He pulled me out of bed and threw me out on the street. This was Monday, a market day. Normally, it was very crowded, but most Jews were gone and there were few people. I begged the Ukrainian to let me go, but he put a pistol to my head and said that if I begged him he would kill me. He showed me dead women with children on every street and told me that I could be one of them. Blood was everywhere. He took me to a synagogue on Zielona Street. There was a lot of Jews with small children; some women killed their children. I positioned myself near the door so that I could easily get out. Engineer Bakenrot showed up and asked if there were any people working on his construction. I was one of the lucky few that got out. All the others were taken to the forest and killed there. I went to a neighbor, a Polish woman, and cried before her. When her husband came in he said that I should run away because at night there will be a new deportation of all the Jews. The man's name was Mazur, he took me to the train station, gave me money for a ticket and returned to his home. I had a book with me and pretended that I was reading it so as not to talk with anybody. I got out in a small town,

Kazmirow(?) where sugar factories were. I went to the address that the bricklayer gave me. The people were his friends. I told them that the bricklayers' wife will come to visit them and I would like to spend the night in their house. They did not know that I was Jewish, but were afraid to let me stay with them. They asked me to go to the priest and get permission from him. It was war and all kind of people could come to the little town. They asked their young daughter to take me to the priest. After a few steps I told her to go home, I know where he lives. Instead of going to the priest, I went to the train station. It was winter; very cold outdoors. I was waiting for the train near the station. There was an apartment building there, the gate was open. I got in and slept a few hours on the steps. Not far from the station I met a Polish man who was a dealer on the black market. He did not know who I was. I spoke Polish well, had a scarf on my head, blond bleached hair and looked like a Polish woman. The conductor looked at my passport and gave it back to me. Soon a Polish man sitting with his wife in the railway wagon, wearing an elegant fur coat, which he probably robbed from a Jew, approached me and asked for my passport. I did not want to show it to him, but since I was "not kosher" I did show him. He said that he knew I was Jewish and I should give the conductor my jewelry. I did not have any. I told him that my husband was a Polish officer killed by the Germans. He let me go. As we got out of the train he again warned me that I am in danger. The old Pole that talked with me before, ran away from me because he was afraid that people will think that he was also Jewish. From this station we had to walk to another. When I came there, the guy with his wife was there. I was hungry, sleepy and tired. I approached them and talked to the wife dressed in a silk coat. I asked her to take me to her house and offered to work as a maid and after the war to give her my parents' property. She said that they live in Warsaw, the Germans live in their building and she can't take me. She asked for my address so she could contact me if she finds some place for me. I told her that I did not have a place and that I was Jewish. She took pity on me and gave me something to eat. Her husband said, "The conversation is finished." I took the train to Krakow. It was winter 1942. I was walking around the station, I had some money with me. I approached the conductor and asked if knows where I could find a place to sleep and he said it would cost money. He told me to wait for the next train when he will end his service and show me where to find a place to sleep. I did not have to wait long before a handsome and well-dressed man with a briefcase approached me and said that there is no need to wait for the conductor; he will show me where I can sleep and it will not cost anything. I did not hesitate and followed him. He told me not to be afraid, that he is also a Jew. I did not look Jewish but he guessed that I was and he was sorry for me. He wished his wife had such help as I had. She went to Warsaw on Aryan papers a while ago and he did not hear from her. I have no idea if it was true, until now I don't know who he was. It was very dark and not a living soul on the street. Jews were already deported. He took me to a building, on the first floor, doors were open, rooms were empty. In the first room was a bed and a man with a big mustache laying in it. He smiled at me; he looked like a gigolo. The man that took me there said that I should pretend that I am his cousin and I came there to get sugar for selling on the black market and it is too late for the train so I had to sleep there. We entered the second room with a green sofa, a table with chairs and a big mirror. The man walked around the

room, took off the hat and coat, took out wafers from the briefcase and gave them to me while whispering "Rachmunys a jidisz kind" (Pity a Jewish child). In another room was a stove with a big pot on it. The Jewish man heated up water and I washed myself but I couldn't sleep. The man left for the night and returned after an hour explaining that where he lived the people slept already; furthermore he had to be careful since he is "not kosher" and the people are Catholics. I realized that he would like to sleep on the sofa with me, but I got up and spent the night on a chair, I couldn't sleep anyway. I was depressed, missing my child, having no money, crying all the time and realizing that my situation is hopeless. That could be a giveaway that I was Jewish.

In the morning we left the house, on the street he asked me not to talk to him and walk behind him as if we don't know each other. It was a market day, people were selling all kind of things, fruits, clothing, etc. Some of these things looked like they were robbed from the Jews who were murdered or evacuated. The streets were crowded, people traded Jewish blood. The guy bought me a pretzel and entered a barbershop and I waited for him at the market. After he got out of the barbershop we went to the foothills where a concentration camp for the Jews was being built. The man told me that he does not have a steady place to live and he sent his wife with false documents as a Catholic. To this day I don't know who he was. It seems like an angel sent him from heaven to help me. He suggested that I go up to the construction and ask the foreman for a job. The Jews from the Krakow Ghetto were building barracks for the camp. He said goodbye asking me not to say anything about him. He also said that it would be best for me to enter the Ghetto; what will happen to the other Jews will happen to you. It would be better than wander around without money and possibly be attacked at any time. I approached a Jewish policeman who guarded the Jews and after 4 PM took them back to the Ghetto. He took me to a kitchen where I got something to eat. The policeman's name was Leon Kunz, he was from Krakow, his father was a butcher. I joined his group walking to the Ghetto. I was lucky, because people entering Ghetto from the street were shot. Nobody asked me for papers at the gate guarded by Gestapo. Leon Kuntz was very helpful. Later I learned that he was in the partisans. He promised to take me in May to the forest where his people were. I did not take advantage of his offer. For three months I stayed in the Ghetto. I contacted the Jewish Municipality for help. They gave me a piece of bread. I begged them to give me a job. First I got a job in a brush factory. Even though I was a very good worker, they did not pay me. In the evenings I met with Kuntz, he gave me an apartment in the attic, where his sister lived before and warned me not to open the door to anybody. I was seeing him once in a while. Soon I got a job with a young Jewish woman. I was washing and ironing her laundry. My hands got swollen because I was not used to the hard work but I had good food and money. Her family was deported and her sister managed to send her little boy to America. She was left alone. Once, while I was washing laundry I found a lot of money in a pillowcase. Silly me, I gave it all to the young woman, should have kept for myself. I was glad to be independent. I was very nervous, eating like a hungry animal, spent all my earnings on additional food. The Jewish Municipality found me a new job with a family Goldstein. The wife, Helena, was a beautiful woman, the husband was a tall brunet. They had a girl, Marysia. Two sisters in law with their husbands lived with them. They baked cookies and

delivered them to stores in the Ghetto. I washed the floors and cleaned the apartment. Mr. Goldstein argued with his wife and sisters that they should help me because I did not look like a maid. I told them that I don't want them to feed me for nothing, I must work. These ladies found me another job in the house of Osterwit's, who worked for the Gestapo. They had two children; a girl Zuzia and an older boy. I cooked for them and took care of the children. When poor hungry Jewish women came from the street I fed them secretly; I felt sorry for them.

After three months the Jews were deported from the Ghetto to the camp. Some people escaped through underground channels. I was afraid to do it. While we were marched to the camp, those that could not walk were killed on the spot. I took with me the pajamas from the Osterwits to have something to change in the camp. During the deportation the Germans ordered that small children be left in the Ghetto. The children would be taken care in a nursery. This was a lie. Some mothers did not want to leave the children, they put the small children in a backpack, the bigger ones they tried to smuggle through the gates. Most of time they were not successful. Helena Goldstein held little Marysia by hand and would not let her go. She was shot dead. It was a tragedy; blood of these mothers was all over the place. We were marched to the lager, it was far away. When we arrived I managed to get an upper level bunk so the Germans would not see me when they came for inspection to see if there are children hiding. Next day the Germans were segregating people for work. I heard hysterical screaming; the Germans selected old and sick people for death. They dug out big holes for that purpose. The site used to be a Jewish cemetery before the war. They brought the children from the Ghetto, ordered them to undress and stand around the big grave. Germans and Ukrainians with machine guns killed the children. Some were still alive when they were covered with earth. When it got dark, a 12 year old boy managed to get out from the grave. A Jewish policeman on duty took the bleeding child to a clinic where Jewish doctors helped him. I heard that he survived and lives in Israel.

I did not finish about the pajamas from the Osterwits. When they came to the camp, they were without the children. Somehow they managed to send them to Palestine or Hungary. They wanted me to return the pajamas even though they had money. I returned it to them, I was too proud.

The camp was called Plaszow; on the gate was written Vernichtungslager (Extermination Camp). I was working in a brush shop. There was a family, named Zalzw(?); they were very religious. One of them, an old man, was praying in the shop wearing a talis (prayer shawl). A young German soldier, his name was Hans, saw the old Jew praying and was furious. He called some Ukrainians dressed in dark uniforms, they put the old man on a table and beat him mercilessly until he released feces. The Germans forced him to eat it. They gathered several other religious Jews, tied them to a string like horses and ordered them to run until they all fell down. Then kicked and beat them until they died. Then they buried them like dogs. We were suffering continuously. We had to work without breaks, day after day. Luckily I managed to get a job in the kitchen, so I had plenty of soup and could secretly help others. There was a Gestapo

man, his name was Get (Amon Goeth- commandant of the Plaszow camp). He was very tall and had a pretty face but was a cruel murderer, a sadist. He killed people without any reason.

People were glad that I worked in the kitchen because they knew that I would help them. All the time they brought new transports of Jews to work them to death and then kill them. Once they sent a group of men to work in town, when they came back they were checked at the gate. The guards found a loaf of bread on one man. The penalty for that was that all men and one woman that was in the group were killed. I saw it from a window in the barrack. In my room was also the mother and sister of the woman killed. The poor women cried. It was very hard on them. When people were killed, their clothes were taken to the warehouse to be sold or sent to German families.

Few months later there were rumors of new liquidations. The Germans ordered people to undress and sorted them. If they did not like some, they pushed them aside. They told us that we will be sent to other camps. Those left behind wanted to come with us but they were killed. I will never forget it. I was several times in line to be killed but survived by a miracle. We were taken by cattle carts to Skarzysko Kamienne. While loading the carts, some mothers that secretly had children with them, had to give them away. This was a terrible sight.

We were unloaded to shop B. This was the worst camp. The skin of people working there became yellow because we worked with paints. Once, when I was standing in line, a policeman wanted me to go to another line. Another woman gave him a ring to do it. I did not know what the difference between the lines was, but I had a feeling that it was something bad and started crying. A German came over and screamed at the policeman. The Germans did not like when others did not listen to them and ordered me to get back to my place in line. The policeman did not return the ring to the other woman, and he was a Jew. While we were waiting for the shop B, we were treated fairly. We were given masks and more food because they needed healthy young people. Later, they transferred my group to Skarzysko Kamienne to shop A. We got beds like in barracks. People from Krakow had with them blankets and something to wear but I had nothing. I befriended the sisters of Leon Kuntz; they told me that when the Germans found out that he was a member of the partisans, they killed him. They were not nice to me. They would not give me a blanket,

I slept on boards and covered myself with a coat that I got from Aunt Sala. The women in my room were wealthy, they had always something to eat. Their husbands came visiting them often from Krakow. Soon they assigned us to very hard work on grenades. We were taken to work and back by a young Jewish man. We worked all day on our feet. I was supposed to produce 300 pieces or more or I would be accused of sabotage. I got very sick, my bladder was weak and I had to urinate often. I lost my period, I think they put something in the food to cause it. We worked one week night shift and one week day shift. There was a Polish mechanic on the night shift, a bearded old man who baked potatoes in the smithy and put them near my machine, sometime he brought milk. This didn't last long because I did not go out with him at night so he

stopped giving me potatoes and milk. He wanted me to live with him. Other women did it gladly because at night control was lax. Sometimes people brought me white tape used by those working with ammunition. Since I worked at night, instead of sleeping during the day I pulled the threads from the tape, dyed it black and bartered it for food. When I got sick and was taken to the hospital in Skarzysko Kamienne, the Germans came to decide who has to be taken to be killed. Dr. Margulis, wearing a uniform of a Jewish policeman, approached me and told me to get up from bed and gave me something to eat so that Germans did not know that I was sick. When the Germans came they ordered people to get out of bed. Those who could walk were ordered to the barracks where the Germans made a segregation/selection. Most were like skeletons, they cried and begged for help, but there was no mercy or God. It was tragic. I was also selected to be killed but Dr. Margulis said that I only had a cold and was able to work. A Gestapo man asked me to walk a few steps. Many times I was ready for death. We marched every day to work. If somebody was late they would beat them mercilessly. There was a young Jewish man in the painting shop, a sadist not better than the Gestapo. I heard that he lives in London. I would like to find him. Soon there was a new deportation, nobody knew where. We were loaded to freight wagons. There were no windows, no toilets. It was terrible. We came to Lipsk (Leipzig) where we were assigned to barracks where only women lived. Next day we were assigned to work in the production of ammunition and hand grenades. We worked one week day shift and one week night shift. In the winter we were led to work in Dutch (wooden) shoes, the snow was deep and I did not have socks. I had to walk barefoot not to get behind and be beaten. On the road I have seen people in cars and streetcars. I prayed to God to be one of them. Unfortunately, God did not listen to me. We were not allowed to look at the people who were free to walk. When I finally came to the shop I started crying. One of the supervisors approached me and asked why I cry. When I explained my situation, he brought me a new pair of wooden shoes. When I was assigned to work with Automats, my supervisor was a French mechanic. There were three brothers from Belgium. I did not understand them but he was very kind to me. When he received packages from home he sometimes shared food with me. Once, when nobody was looking, he told me that after the war he will invite me to visit him. We could not talk at work because SS Frauen (women- German) were watching us all the time. They were worse than SS men. It was a hard life. One time we received new work uniforms: pants, jacket, all in a gray color because they wanted the committee(?) to see that people who are working on machines, look fit. When I worked the night shift I could wash my dress. The Belgian man gave me hot water for that purpose. He also dried the dress in the oven. A very nice person. During the day shift at lunch time there was a long line for the watery soup. If there was a potato in the soup I saved it for dinner. It was a camp for women only. Two Polish women were guarding us. On Sundays we did not work. We were called to the tables to check our scalps for lice. If somebody had a dirty head it was shaven. I was lucky and never called to the table because the guards knew that I was clean. One morning there was an alarm, everybody ran to shelters. I saw the leaflets for us dropped from Russian planes. The leaflets stated not to worry, you will be liberated soon. A bomb hit the shelter near where I was, it was a miracle that I was alive. After the alarm was

over, we were checked if nobody was missing. Soon, we were ordered to take our blankets and walk away. From one side the Russians were coming and from the other the Americans. The German soldiers did not want to go to the front to fight so they busied themselves with us. Before we got out of the camp, a commission from Berlin came and all of us were forced to sign some papers. Later we found out that the signature was to certify that we were there because we all were prostitutes and our imprisonment and forced labor was a punishment. During marching from town to town, at night I was sleeping in the fields, on wet grass. With us were prisoners from Hungary and Gypsies. My blanket was stolen and every night it was raining. During the days was very hot, my legs were swollen, my only dress was full of lice. Sometimes Germans from the area, who perhaps didn't know who we were, brought us cooked potatoes and water to drink. My legs were so swollen that I could hardly walk. While marching, we noticed growing vegetables, some women ran to pick some and were immediately shot. Some grabbed a chicken, killed it and cooked on fire. The German soldiers guarding us were old men because the young ones were on the front. The old ones were more humane, left us alone. So passed days and weeks. I hoped that it will end soon. We came to the shores of the River Elba where a big boat and salvation, waited for us. We were divided into several groups and slowly brought to the American site. The second group was bombed and all were killed. I remember trying to join that group, but they did not take me. Next night there were no guards, the Germans quietly disappeared. We slept near a fence when I heard in Russian "Girls get up, the war is over for you." The Russians liberated us. I did not trust anybody, it was dark and I was afraid. In the morning there were no Germans anywhere. I entered a German house and took a dress, a skirt and a sweater. First time in four years I looked in a mirror. A little later I felt loneliness and longing, what will I do with myself? How to start a new life? I was very depressed. The Russians fed us well; rice with meat and other cooked dishes. I was so starved and scared of being hungry that I saved the food for later and had to throw it away when it got spoiled. The Russian soldiers were raping German women and girls. This was their revenge for what the Germans did to them. Soon we started going back to Krakow by foot and on trucks. My legs were swollen, my stomach sick. There were mines on the roads and fields. Several people were killed or seriously wounded. Poles were pulling carts full of stuff from the German houses. There was no control, no police. I couldn't take advantage of it. I only took a few shirts and scarves. In the woods were hiding German soldiers who shot at the survivors. In Krakow a Jewish organization gave us places to live, several people to a room. Those with money bought beds, I slept on a mattress on the floor. I stayed in the room all the time. I was depressed and cried all the time because I didn't have any family. The Jewish organization sent me to a dentist. He noticed that my gums needed an operation because of the damage from all the beating I got in the camps. He sent me to a specialist. I gave them my Polish name; I was afraid to give my Jewish name. It was a serious operation. They sent me home, but I did not have a home, I lied down on the mattress. I was bleeding and didn't know what to do. I met a young medicine student living in the building. He was from Lwow, didn't have any family near and was as miserable as I was. He had a brother living in Italy and studying medicine there. He was very nice to me. Changed my compresses.

When I felt a little better I got together with Dora Hofman, a friend from one of the camps and together we went to a Polish organization and told them that our husbands were Polish officers killed in the war. This organization helped us a little not knowing that we were Jewish. They gave us vouchers to good restaurants; we had a good dinner every day in a different restaurant. From the Jewish organization I got some fruits and white bread. This was a great help. Soon I got a job cooking for some people. I was too weak to work and had to quit. At that time people started registering for emigration to America; one had to have somebody in America to get money and an invitation (affidavit). My sister Sabina, with husband and children, just returned from Russia to Krakow and found me. I was happy to have some family. They were planning to go with a group to Israel. I did not want to go with them because I was not well and under care of a doctor. We parted; I promised to go with the next transport. Slowly, I met several people, some even wanted to marry me. I was not happy with myself. The next transport was going to Munich and I decided to go with them. We came to Munich illegally and not as Jews but as Greeks. At the border, when we were asked something in German we pretended not to understand and we got in. In Munich we were housed in a museum. We got military style beds and waited. In my room lived Pola, a woman from Stryj. Once a man from Lithuania, named Czertok, left money near my bed. When I saw him I gave him the money back. Pola suggested that Czertok should buy us a present. He bought us chocolate, which I have not eaten for many years. Later he approached me and asked to join him and he will help me in everything. Other people were looking for places to live in the camp and I was ready to do the same. I would have food and a place to sleep in the Frimond(?) Camp. Czertok suggested that I try a small apartment in town and if I don't like it I could go back to the Camp. He helped me with my small package to his apartment. I opened the closet and found a lot of good things to eat. He gave me some restaurant vouchers, because food in restaurants was very expensive. Back in Krakow I met a nice man and did not think about him. When I came to Munich there was a list on the wall of survivors, people seeking relatives, etc. Suddenly I found the name of the man that I met in Krakow. From that time he was always near me. In the evening people would come to the Museum to meet somebody. I would come there to have a cup of coffee. When the orchestra came I wanted to leave, I could not listen to music. I got sick again, this was a very painful abscess. The owner of the house where I lived, a German woman, was obligated to rent me a room because her husband was a member of the Nazi party. She was nice to me, she called a nun from the hospital who helped me get better. I heard a man's steps, it was my friend from Krakow. I was embarrassed but he was very nice. A friend gave him my address. He suggested that I move to another place on Alter Hime (?) Street. From that time we were together all the time. Soon the survivors started registering to go to America. My friend had family of his first wife there, who sent him the required papers. I found an address of my uncle who moved to America from Leipzig. He was not very eager to send me the papers, but my friend could already move to America so we got married and he left to America. In meantime I got the papers from my uncle but it was not important. After three months I could join my husband. On June 10, 1947 I came to America. I was very sick, my husband picked me from the ship, uncle was there too but he pretended not to

see me. I did not have an apartment but got a room and board that HIAS paid for. It did not last long, I found a job, did not have to depend on handouts. The life was not easy, I was often sick. After three years I had a daughter. The year 1950 was very happy for me. A few years later I got my own apartment. I worked very hard to give the child a good school, etc. My husband tried hard also. I thank God for this. There is no better place than America.