

Testimony text

Panel 1

Testimony – Tuvia

We lived in the city in a comfortable apartment, together with grandparents and in January 1940, the German authorities decided to create a Ghetto in Lodz. They chose the worst possible place where people can live. A place called Baluty. No sanitation, no running water, no sewerage and people had to move into this place. Before the war approximately 20,000 -25,000 people lived in this area cut no water and life started to be miserable from Day A.

By the time they created the ghetto there were 225 thousand people, Jewish people in Lodz and all of them went into the Ghetto. Can you imagine the situation where from a nice comfortable apartment, you had to move into a single room and some families had 2-3 families in one room. The conditions were crowded, dirty.

Panel 2

Testimony – David

Lodz has the dubious distinction, if I might call it that, of being the first closed Ghetto in Europe and by fate or destiny, the last one to be dissolved in Europe too. And I was there from the start til the last train left Lodz. First of May in 1940 the Ghetto was closed. A non-Jewish person could not enter and a Jewish person could not go out, with the exception of the German Ghetto administration. The worst thing was hunger. Starvation. I do not wish on anyone. To be hungry all the time. From morning to night. From week in, from month in, from year in and year out.

Panel 3

Testimony - Tuvia

People started to die from hunger, from diseases, from diarrhoea, from lack of hygiene. And every day on the way to work we could to see people lying in the streets dead or half dead. Can you imagine a situation that from the 225,000 people that went into the ghetto, 45,000 people died in the ghetto and they are buried in the Jewish cemetery in Lodz, which is the largest Jewish cemetery in Europe. I visited last year and this year with my grandchildren and I found actually the graves of my grandfather and my grandmother. And from both sides, uncles and cousins that had died in the Ghetto.

Testimony - Irma

I had one girlfriend from school with her parents. But eventually, a year and a half later, because they were sent onto Auschwitz. Theresienstadt was not a camp where people stayed permanently. It was a transit camp. And at anytime there was 40,000 people. We had a lot of diseases. We had typhus, we had all awful diseases. We had encephalitis which was brought in by infested mosquitos. I had that sickness and I don't know how I got out of it, but I did. I had a very bad tonsillitis, and a Czech doctor, he was Jewish, he had some instruments, and he took my tonsils out, but he had no medicine to give me like anaesthetics to give me, so he put a clothes peg on my tongue, so my tongue would not go inwards and he took out the tonsils, so.

Panel 4

Testimony about forced labour – Tuvia

We had to work 6 days a week. From 7:30 in the morning until 5 - 5:30 in the evening. I was assigned to a factory that produced children's toys. Wooden, children's toys. And I stayed in this factory from the beginning to the end.

Panel 5

Testimony about Theresienstadt Ghetto – Irma

In each room there were 10 children and 1 older one and one older person. And on the sly, that means we weren't suppose to be taught, people were teaching us. You know, different things. German, and arithmetic and reading, you know. But it was very hard. And you then I had to go out to work. We had to work. I use to work in a small garden, you know like a farm, where they were growing vegetables for the SS, not for us.