

--head to your left, because there's more seats on this side of the theater.

--to welcome you again to First Person. This year's programs have been generously funded by the Woldenberg Foundation. First Person is a public program that takes place every Wednesday, from March through August, at 1:00 PM, here, in the Rubenstein Auditorium. This one-hour program features the experience of a Holocaust survivor.

Within the time period, we'll have a question and answer period. So you'll be able to ask the survivor questions at the end of the program. In honor of the survivor, we ask that you stay, here, for the entire program. So the program officially ends at 2 o'clock. So please stay here for the entire program.

Any passes for the permanent exhibition will be honored on or after the hour printed on the pass. So if you have a pass for 1:30, your pass is still good once this program has concluded. Photography is not permitted during the program. And we ask that you turn off all your cell phones and pagers that you might have.

We're very interested in getting any kind of feedback to our program. So you've been handed two sheets. One is a response form that we'd like for you to hand back. And the other is the biography-- we call them ID Cards-- of our survivor, who will be speaking today. So we want you to take that home, with you, so that you'll remember this special occasion.

What I'd like to do now is begin to introduce our speaker, Charlene Schiff, for today. We've prepared a very brief historical introduction, so that you can have a context about her particular experience. We can begin changing.

The Holocaust was the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry, by Nazi Germany and its collaborators, between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims. Six million were murdered. Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted, for destruction and decimation, for racial, ethnic, or national reasons. Millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners-of-war, and political dissidents also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

The experience of the speaker, Charlene Schiff, you will hear today is one unique account among many. This is a composite portrait of Charlene Schiff's family-- her mother, sister, and father. Charlene's European name is seen on the right of the screen. Charlene was born in Poland on December 16, 1929. She was the youngest of two daughters born to a Jewish family in the town of Horochow.

Thank you. This is a picture of Horochow-- the next slide. That's where her town is located. And the next slide is the picture of Horochow. In the background, you'll see the wooden synagogue in the market square. In September 1939, Germany invaded Poland. And three weeks later, the Soviet Union occupied eastern Poland where Charlene's town was located. Under Soviet rule, Charlene's life did not change a great deal. The most important change she remembered was having to speak Russian in school.

In Germany, in 1949, Germany invaded the USSR and set up a ghetto in Horochow. When they heard rumors that the ghetto was about to be destroyed, Charlene and her mother fled. They hid, submerged in waters of a nearby river, all night as machine gunfire rang out from the ghetto. By morning, others hiding in the river, as well as guards, when they asked around, asked them to come out of hiding, Charlene and her mother ignored those warnings.

For several days, Charlene and her mother stayed in the waters, and sometimes they doze off. One time, when Charlene awoke, her mother had vanished. Unable to establish the whereabouts of her mother, Charlene spent the rest of the war living in the forest near her hometown. Ladies and gentlemen, Charlene will continue this compelling story. May I present Charlene Schiff to you?

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you, Ms Lewis, for your kind introduction. Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. For many years, I searched within my soul to find the reason for my survival. Alas, I have yet to come up with an answer. But I do know I must

bear witness. This is a mandate, my mission, and duty to the millions whose voice was silenced before their time.

The world that I knew and loved so received a death sentence only because it was a Jewish world. Somehow I received a life sentence. I feel imprisoned by my memories, by my past, and destined never to break free from that prison. But I must speak out for all those who never had a chance. It's not easy to do. Time does not diminish the pain. It's like a wound that never heals.

Allow me to share with you some of my experiences during the unprecedented tragedy that befell mankind in the 20th century. My parents, older sister, and I lived in a small town in eastern Poland. The name of the town is Horochow. My father was a professor at the University of Lviv. And both my parents were civic leaders involved in helping the entire community not just the Jews. All sorts of meetings, recitals, poetry readings took place in our home. The door was always open. And everyone was welcome.

When the war started, I was nine years old. Poland was partitioned, with the eastern part going to the Soviet Union and the western part controlled by Germany. The Soviets came in with a lot of fanfare but little bloodshed. I, as a child, did not see any major changes in our lifestyle. My father still kept his position at the university. My older sister and I continued with school.

The official language became Russian instead of Polish. But that is really-- that was not a problem. In our area, most people are bi- or trilingual out of necessity. The borders changed so often that one has to speak more than one language.

In the summer of 1941, the agreement between Hitler and Stalin was broken. The Germans started advancing in pursuit of their evil goals. Our town was overrun, by the Germans, almost immediately. They came in with their tanks, artillery, and long columns of foot soldiers. The local populace greeted them with flowers and cheers.

Within the very first days, the Germans rounded up about 300 Jewish leaders, my father among them. They had a list, with names, obviously supplied by our neighbors and former friends. Confusion and chaos ensued. Every day, the Germans issued new decrees. They demanded all our precious material possessions-- gold, silver, radios, furs, Persian rugs. They burned all our synagogues, all the prayer books, and all our Torahs. We were ordered to wear a yellow Star of David on the front and back of our clothing.

One day, a van pulled up, in front of our house, and several Germans burst in looking for my father's private library. They carried out all the rare books, among them some priceless first editions. My father's library was known as one of the finest in the entire area. Local people must have told the Germans about it.

Soon afterwards, we were given an hour or so to get ready. We were herded into the poorest section of town. And we took along only what we could carry and had to leave all else behind. We were assigned, then, a space to live. And so the ghetto was established.

The area was completely enclosed, barbed-wire reinforcing high fences. Two gates were our only way to the outside world. A written permit was needed to enter or exit the ghetto. Adults and children, 14 years or older, were ordered to slave labor, each morning, and marched back to the ghetto in the evening. Often, they would come home black and blue from beatings they endured during work.

Those who worked received a meager food ration. Children, like me, received no food at all. Mother and sister shared with me what little food they received. Mother, sister and I shared a room with three other families. We had to build bunk beds as there was not enough space on the floor to accommodate everyone. Straw served as mattresses.

The house held about 100 people. And we all shared one very primitive bathroom and a very primitive kitchen. Slowly and systematically, we were completely stripped of all human dignity. A Judenrat was formed, a committee of Jewish men, who represented the community and acted on our behalf with the Germans. They had to satisfy every whim of the Germans. And they had to carry out all their orders.

In the beginning, my mother and several other women organized a clandestine-- a secret school for children too young

to work. The school was held in an old warehouse in the ghetto. Somehow, the women were able to obtain crayons, some books, paper, and pencils. We read stories, sang songs, and colored with bits of crayon. We looked forward to these evening activities, which took our minds off the horrible hunger we felt all the time. Soon, the money and jewelry to barter for school supplies ran out, and the school fell apart.

Every now and then, at least once a week, there were unexpected roundups. They called them lapanka. People were grabbed before, during, or after work. They were put in a truck and never heard from again. Morale was sagging in the ghetto. There were no newspapers, no mail, no radios, no telephones. We were completely cut off from the outside world.

Much against my mother's wishes, I would sneak out of the ghetto when she and my sister were at work. A group of children got together, and we dug a hole, sort of like a tunnel, that was ingeniously covered. That hole, under the fence, led to the outside world. Now and then, we were able to obtain some food and sneak back into the ghetto. When I say it led to the outside world, I meant outside the ghetto. And that was the world. To get caught, one paid with one's life. But hunger is a rather strong motivator. I must add, proudly, that no child ever gave away the location of that tunnel.

I remember one incident in particular. I bought two eggs, from a peasant, for a small gold and ruby ring. I tried to get back to the ghetto through the camouflaged opening. But before I reached it, I was caught. The Ukrainian guard found the eggs, threw them on the sidewalk, and rubbed my face in them. He yelled at me to get back where I belonged and never to come out again. He was one of the rare kindhearted guards. My bloody face healed. And I had my life.

Several days later, a playmate of mine was caught and murdered trying to bring back a half a loaf of bread. She was not quite 11 years old. The Germans left her body on display, for several days, as an example.

Conditions in the ghetto continued to deteriorate. People were dying from starvation, from disease, from cold, and from sheer hopelessness. Dead bodies were piled up in the streets for days. In my mind, I can still see them. The innocence and purity of their souls transcended the stench and filth around them. I speak for each one of them. I cannot allow the world to forget.

By early spring, the Germans decided to move the Jews to a smaller area since the population dwindled considerably. That section of town hadn't been occupied in several years, and the houses were in great disrepair. Some of the houses bordered a river which separated our town from a neighboring village. Fences and barbed wire were installed on three sides, and the new ghetto became enclosed, as the old one, was except there was no fence along the river.

We were assigned a space, with several other families, in a house right on the river. Rumors started flying that the ghetto would be liquidated in the summer. When I use the term, "liquidation," I refer to it, as the Germans did, meaning that they would "liquidate," kill, get rid of all the Jews. And that was-- the liquidation of the ghetto meant that would be the murder, killing of all the Jews.

My mother and sister continued their slave labor outside the ghetto. Mostly, mother was digging ditches and fixing roads. My sister had the good fortune to be reassigned, to a huge warehouse, knitting articles of clothing for the German soldiers. Just to give you an example how sadistic and mean the Germans were. One time, my sister was ill. And she couldn't report for work. That meant that we would lose that one day's food ration. And that was very critical. I tried and finally succeeded in persuading my mother to allow me to go instead of my sister.

And so, early in the morning, I got up and joined the ranks of the older girls, who were going into the warehouse, to do their day's work. They showed me where my sister was sitting. And they were all very protective of me. And I picked up the knitting needles. And I think-- I don't remember-- but I think it was a scarf that she was knitting. I picked up the knitting needles and started knitting very clumsily. I was not as efficient as the older girls were.

My luck, usually, we had just-- they, the girls, had only Ukrainian guards, at that time, in that warehouse. My luck was that some of the Germans came to look in and see what was going on. And this one German zeroed in on me. And he started cursing and screaming at me to knit faster and faster. And the more he screamed, the slower I was knitting. And finally, he jumped in front of me, pulled the two knitting needles out of my hands, and stuck one of them into my right

forefinger. I passed out. And that was a dear lesson for me not to take my sister's place. Obviously, we didn't get the food ration for the day. And I ended up with a loss of the tip of my right forefinger. This is just an example of everyday sadism and meanness of the Germans.

Mother had some contacts on the outside. And she tried desperately to find a farmer who would hide the three of us. Unable to do so, she did finally locate two places. One farmer was willing to hide one person and the other two people. It was decided, or mother, in her infinite wisdom, decided that my sister, who was four years older than I, would go into the single hiding place. And mother and I would go to the other place when the time was right.

Early in August 1942, the signs became ominous. The number of Germans and Ukrainians increased considerably. One morning, I said goodbye to my terrific big sister before she and mother marched off to work. We planned to keep in touch while in hiding. How, I have no idea. My mother was to go.

My sister was to go, right from work, to the place mother secured for her. A day or two later, when mother returned from work, we ate our meager meal and started getting ready to escape from the ghetto. Mother told me to put on my best clothes and shoes and to take an extra set of clothing with me. She packed a small bundle for herself and one for me.

She gave me all sorts of instructions how to get to the farmer's place. But I knew how to get to the farmers place because we used to buy dairy products from them, from him, before the war. It was rather scary as I held tightly onto my mother's hand. And we walked out into the stillness of the dark night. Soon, we were in the river.

Suddenly, shots rang out. We ducked and hid in the bulrushes. The shots were sporadic, but we couldn't move. It was very quiet in between. And any sound would have given us away. Early in the morning, other people also tried to reach the river. That was the only way to get out of the ghetto. The other three sides were guarded 24 hours a day.

The sound of machine guns was more regular now. We heard the guards yelling, crawl out, Jew. We can see you. And the Ukrainian, [UKRAINIAN]. We heard babies crying and screams coming from the ghetto. Mother gave me some soggy bread. And it tasted absolutely awful. But she insisted I had to eat it to keep strong.

We stayed in the river for several days. We saw fire and smoke coming from the ghetto. The cries and screams continued. The bullets were whizzing by seemingly from every direction. I kept dozing off and lost track of time. Suddenly, I woke up, and mother was nowhere in sight. I became numb with fear. I don't think I moved for the rest of that day. By then it became all quiet.

I knew I had to make my way to the farm which was in a neighboring village. Certainly, mother would be waiting there for me. I crossed the river and walked most of that night. When I reached the familiar farm, I was led into the barn. I asked the farmer where my mother was. He said he hadn't seen her.

He told me he'd let me stay the day. And then I must go or else he'd report me to the authorities. I pleaded with him to allow me to wait just until my mother would show up. He refused to listen to me. Hanging from his coveralls and looking strangely out of place was my father's gold pocket watch and chain. When night fell, the farmer's wife gave me some bread and an apple and sent me away.

I was dazed and too confused to comprehend what was happening. But this was the beginning of my odyssey. I felt I let my mother down. She couldn't wake me when it was time to leave. She probably went into the forest, where she was waiting for me. That area of Poland abounds with forests. And so logically, that's where I started searching for her. Only what looked very near was usually quite far. It took all night to reach the nearest forest.

I covered myself with leaves and grass and tried to make some sense out of my situation. I felt so utterly alone. I had to find my mother. There was no more bread. And the apple was long gone. What was I going to eat? Where was I going to sleep? Who would take care of me?

I had to find forests that were close to villages, where I could sneak into a garden, a barn and get some food, then return

to the forest the same night for cover. Darkness was my only cover. Meanwhile, the days turned into weeks, the weeks into months.

The first few months, I met other stragglers from neighboring towns. They all had similar stories to tell. They were also in ghettos and escaped as the ghettos were being, what they called, liquidated. I had many close calls. But one incident is riveted in my mind, because it involved others as well.

There were seven of us, at the edge of a forest, where we ran into each other. We tried to share helpful information about other survivors, about the area, where to get food. Then, suddenly, we were spotted by a group of children. Jews, they yelled with glee, and ran back to the village. There was a small monetary reward for reporting a Jew.

This particular forest had sparse underbrush, so it wasn't very good for hiding. We ran into the fields. It was harvest time. And there were huge haystacks around. We all hid in one of them. Why we all hid in the same haystack, I cannot explain. When the villagers and kids came looking for us, it didn't take long for them to zero in on the one haystack.

They came with pitchforks and made a game of it. They repeatedly stabbed the haystack, laughing and joking among themselves. By the time they tired of their play, I was the only one left alive. They lined up the six mutilated bodies, in a neat row, removing their shoes and clothing. Obviously, they thought they got us all.

That night, I worked all night long and was still in the same forest. There was nowhere to hide. When dawn came, I climbed up a tree and stayed there all day long. Good thing, too, as there was a lot of activity around-- Germans and Ukrainians all over the place.

Another time, I met a group of Ukrainian partisans. Now partisans are groups of people who disagree with the regime at hand. And these people were fighting the Germans and doing things, illegally, to disturb the regime. These were Ukrainian partisans.

And they would not allow me to join, because I was a Jew. I was told to leave that night. But before I did, I appropriated some boots-- one was two sizes larger than the other but no matter-- a shawl, an overcoat, some food, and matches. And so my odyssey continued.

I was on the run, from forest to forest, in search of my mother. During three winters and two years in the forest, I was all alone, except for the encounters the first couple of months. My carefree early childhood, in a small town, in Poland, did not prepare me for survival in the dark damp forests. But the will to live is a great teacher. My first objective was to avoid confrontations with humans, who would either kill me or turn me into the authorities. The second was how and where to obtain some food, so I would not starve to death.

Much of the time, hunger forced me to take chances, which were in contradiction to my first objective. I had to learn directions, without a compass, so I wouldn't end up going around in circles. Another problem was how to start a fire without matches. Rubbing two damp stones together was exhausting and, most of the time, did not produce the expected results.

Out of sheer desperation and indescribable hunger, I started eating insects, worms, and the like. When the cold weather set in and snow covered the ground, new problems arose. Footprints were a dead giveaway. Protecting myself from the cold was very difficult.

In addition, dogs in the villages were always eager to announce my presence by barking loudly and, in some instances, by biting ferociously. In spite of seemingly insurmountable obstacles and challenges, I managed to persevere, day by day. Everything and everyone was my enemy. Every minute of every day and night was filled with terror. I had many narrow escapes. But against all odds, I did survive. I cheated death, which was always one step behind me.

My plea to you, dear friends, together, we must fight what I call the four evil "I's," the evils of indifference, ignorance, injustice, and intolerance. These evils are as pertinent today as they were 50-plus years ago. It seems we have not learned from our past mistakes.

I see many young people here, students, and this message is for you. You, our young people, are our dearest treasure. Our nation is like a tapestry of many colors, different cultures together, all privileged to enjoy the same freedoms. You are our future and our hope. In your generation, we look forward to that tapestry to blend in, perfectly, like a beautiful, colorful mosaic, in harmony and peace, free of hatred, bigotry, and prejudice. My ardent wish, may your generation and our great country serve as an example and beacon for the entire world.

I never found any of my family. I was told my father was taken to the concentration camp in Dachau. Later, I found out differently. Apparently the 300 leaders were led outside my town and shot after digging their own mass grave. Someone denounced my sister. And after parading her naked, she was murdered. No one knows anything about my mother. I have nothing tangible to mourn. And there is no closure to my grief.

This is just a microcosm, a small part of the Holocaust. To realize its magnitude, consider the fact that of 5,000 Jews in my small town of Horochow, there were only two known survivors. And one of them stands before you, now, bearing witness and remembering. Sadly, my friend, the other survivor passed away April 29 of last year.

And now a few words about this museum and what it means to me. It is a memorial to the millions who perished, a moral voice, an institution of higher learning. It stands as a powerful witness of genocide born of racial hatred. When the last survivor is no longer here, this institution will be a constant reminder and warning to those who tamper with human rights. It is a place of remembrance, reflection, and renewal. I am especially moved when I go up to the fourth floor, where, on the glass wall of the walkway, my town, Horochow, is engraved among the many other lost communities, Jewish communities. It is one tangible connection to my past.

In conclusion, I'll read a poem that I wrote some time ago. And after that, I would welcome questions. The title of my poem is "I Remember." I wrote it in 1985 for my Yom Hashoah bat mitzvah.

I remember blowing bubbles in the air, rainbow colors also fair, nightingales and jasmine scent, all that love and beauty meant. I remember rainbow colors, no, no more. Guards with rifles by the door, Star of David on my coat. I can't swim. I can't float. I remember a haystack in a farmer's field, used by seven as a shield, then only one of us is left, filled with sorrow and bereft. I remember the bottom of a water well. Did someone see me? Will they tell? And slipping, clinging to the rounded wall, dear God, don't let me fall. I remember being hungry, snow and frost, cold, alone, and very lost. Why go on with such a life, stalked by terror's cutting knife? I remember my heart, by now, an empty shell, from all that pain, from all that hell. It's such a long and awful war. My wounds forever an open sore. I remember Papa's hug and Mama's kiss. Darling sister, I'll always miss. Their loving, sweet, and gentle faces gaze at me from empty spaces. They're gone forever. All is vanished. And my soul to torment banished.

Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

And now I'd welcome some questions from the audience, please. Yes?

[INAUDIBLE]

The question was, how did they make it-- finally make it to America. It's a long story, and we don't have much time, so I'll make it-- give you an abbreviated version. After the war was over-- no, not after the war was over.

I was actually liberated or found by the Soviet Union soldiers. This was when the Soviets were pushing the Germans back. And at that time, my luck, a division of Russian soldiers was somehow going through the forest where I was, actually, in a little grave, dying. I was very ill. And at that point, I was in my own filth. And actually, I don't remember any of it. Because I was so ill.

They worked their way through the forest and, literally, several of the soldiers, literally, stepped on me. They felt there was something alive. And they looked down and found me. And to their credit and my good luck, they cleaned me up.

They took me out of my own filth, put me-- dragged me with them, in their field hospitals, which were tents, in the forests, until they came to the city of Luck, L-U-C-K. There was a permanent hospital. And they left me, in that hospital, with a note pinned to my shirt. I never saw the note. And I don't remember that. But I was told this much later. The note said, and I'm paraphrasing, this is a child of the forest. Treat her gently with great care. And they did. They nursed me back to health.

And when I was healthy enough to stand up on my own two feet, which was a long time, at that time, for us, the war was over. The war was not yet over, because this was in 1944. But in that area, it was over. At that time, most of the few survivors, who did survive, gathered in larger cities. And Luck was a bigger city. And that's where I met the other survivor, who was an older lady. As a matter of fact, she was, at one time, she was a student of my father's.

Anyway, the two of us decided to go back to our hometown, Horochow, and see how many other survivors we could find. And our object was just to find our loved ones. We made our way back to our hometown. And there, we were not greeted very cordially.

The local people resented our survival. They resented it for one reason only-- for greed. They thought that, by coming back, we would claim our houses, our homes, our furniture, our possessions from before. But our aim was only to locate other loved ones. We did not find anyone else. And so the very cool reception told us that we were not welcome there.

This was happening all around and that area of Poland. People, who survived, went back to their homes, to their towns and villages, and were receiving the same very, very cool reception. And so at that time, by that time, it was already 1945, and everyone said, if you want to find your loved ones, friends, go to Germany. At that time, Germany was occupied by the four powers, America, France, Great Britain, and Russia. And so we tried. We made our way, illegally. Because there was no way of transportation and traveling legally. But we did with a group of other people.

We made our way via Krakow, which was Poland, then Bratislava, Czechoslovakia, Vienna, Austria. And we finally ended up in Munich. There, in Munich, we were put in what they called DP camps. DP stands for Displaced Persons camps. These were organized by the United Nations Rehabilitation and Relief Agency. At first, they put everyone, who gathered there, into the same displaced persons camps. But that became rather unhealthy for one reason.

We were not the only ones who were fleeing from our homes, from our home towns. The other people, in addition to survivors, were the people who collaborated with the Germans. And they were afraid of retribution at this point. And so they were also fleeing from their respective towns. And so at that point, there were many Jewish survivors, who did run into their former tormentors, and many very unhealthy confrontations took place.

At that time, they separated us. And the Jewish survivors were put in separate DP camps. These DP camps were very primitive. But they were not like concentration camps. We did not have to fear for our lives. What was happening? We were accepted into these camps.

And to get into the camp was rather traumatic for me. I recall that getting into the first camp, I had to go through, what they called, a disinfection. And that was for my own good. Because we were all filthy and undernourished and underdressed and everything else was very negative. They told us to undress. And it didn't matter where you were and if there were men and women.

You had to strip, completely. And then they put a hose on you. The hose had-- I mean they put a white powder. And that powder had an odor that I can still smell today. It was like sulfur, like rotten eggs, everything that is very objectionable. And as I said, I can still smell it today. And they put that hose on you. And I think every pore of your--

[AUDIO OUT]

--assigned a bed, a little bunk bed, and like a little foot locker. You were given-- we were given a towel, a little piece of cloth. For the first time, I'd received a toothbrush and toothpaste-- the first time in five years-- a cake of soap. And food was still rationed, but it was almost adequate. We had a shower once a week. Otherwise, we had cold running water.

And it was livable.

I remembered, at that time, the address of my grandmother, who was living, who emigrated to the United States. Her address was 231 Echo Place, Bronx 57, New York. I'll remember that to my dying day. I wrote a letter to her and told her I survived. And I would very much like to join her and the rest of the family in the United States.

You see, what was happening? My father was one of five siblings. He was the only male, so he sent out his four sisters and his mother, first, to the United States. And my father and his family were to join them, but, unfortunately, the war precluded that. I received an answer very, very shortly after I sent my first letter.

My grandmother was not alive at that time, but the rest of the family did get together. And they sent me an affidavit, which verified the fact that I would not become a burden to the government, and so to allow me to join them in the United States. With these papers, very assured of myself, I went to the consulate and was already getting ready to move, to go to America.

But that was not to be. Red tape and whatever, it took three more years, after the war, before I was allowed to join my relatives in the United States. I arrived here in June 25, 1948. And that was to start a new life.

Yes?

Did you find that you were discriminated against in America?

The question was, did I find discrimination in America? No, I didn't find discrimination in America. But, in the very beginning, I found that people were not interested in my story. And I was not ready to share my story. Or the survivors were not ready to share their story. But, on the other hand, the people here were not ready to hear it.

But no, I did not find discrimination. As a matter of fact, everyone was very helpful. It was very difficult for me. I spoke many languages, but I didn't speak a word of English. And my wonderful relatives did the one thing that I resented in the beginning, but it was the best thing for me. They enrolled me. I came on June 25. After the 4th of July holiday, I was put into Columbus Central High. And in September, I enrolled at Ohio State University with a third grade education. Yes? Yeah.

Personally, I just want to say, thank you, on behalf of this audience and future audiences for letting us hear your story. The humanity and emotion of it has given breath to a great tragedy in history.

Thank you.

But I want to ask you, what did you feel like when you heard that the war was over for the first time?

Well, when I heard that the war was over, I was relieved. Because it would give me a chance, at that time, to look for my family. I did not-- and friends. I could not believe, at that time, that the massacre was of such great proportions. And to this day, it's very hard to actually think that this was a reality. And unfortunately, it's 50-plus years later, and we are still facing genocide. And we are facing many, many problems on this little planet, where we must learn to live and be together, in harmony, in peace. Yes?

During the time that you were hiding, is when most young girls go through puberty. I was wondering if your reproductive system was affected [INAUDIBLE]?

I'll answer the second and that will explain the first question. My husband, whom I met, here, in the United States-- and I must say, he pays me to say that. But if you'd line up a million men, I could not have selected a more wonderful mate. And together, we have a wonderful son. And I'm the grandmother of two terrific grandsons. Does that explain?

[APPLAUSE]

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