

From the Testimony of Alice Meroudas Describing an Aktzia in Lvov, 1942

I'm now talking about the months...I mean altogether, I was only in "Balonowa" for a year, so I'm talking now about autumn '42, sorry, autumn '41, winter '41-'42 and spring '42. And then came summer '42. It was a very hot summer and in August came a famous "aktzia" in Lvov. It was the beginning of the end, actually, that particular "aktzia". It was called "Aktzia Sierpniowa" and it was, I think, perhaps the first "aktzia" on a very general scale. Up to then, they had been limited in scope and people who had work permits were still spared and it wasn't obvious that it was the end, though I think....I mean, people used to still perhaps kid themselves, have the illusions that it wasn't. But on the very first day of that particular "aktzia" they were rounding up children and they came to take me. This was early in the morning and what I remember, and as I said to my mother, we were told to dress and I started dressing and my parents started dressing. I don't know why they had to dress because it was hot, but I suppose they dressed anyway. What I remember saying to my mother, she said to me, "Well, don't worry, there will be no more..." She basically said to me in Heaven there'll be no more "actions" and I'll be happy there and I said, "No, I want to live still." I sort of still remember saying to her, "Well, I don't want to get to Heaven just yet." And then my father was putting on his hat and then the soldier in charge, or not the soldier, presumably the Gestapo in charge, asked my father, "Why are you dressing? You've got to go to work. You've got your work card." And my father looked at him and said, "Well, what would you do if your child was being taken?" The guy turned around and went and left us.

Then there was still a few days of "aktzia" and again, somehow, we escaped, probably because of the position of the house. Also I think the "aktzia" was slowly sort of subsiding. But I remember then very clearly one night when...we had one bed. My parents and I slept in one big bed - I slept in the middle between them - and they started talking about what to do in order to save the child - me. And they decided that because my father was circumcised, it was

to be my mother who was going to go with me and try to hide amongst the non-Jews. And from then on, I think, the “aktzia” stopped, but they were looking towards purchasing false documents and escaping basically.

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