Iancu Tucarman

Because of the heat, most people remained naked. I also took off my coat and my shirt. Inside the car, some would go crazy and jump from side to side like at the circus. When there were only 10 or 12 of us left, the entire floor of the train car was covered with dead people. It was like a mattress they jumped on.

IANCU TUCARMAN

Following the war, Iancu reunited with his father and three sisters, attended university and began a career in agricultural engineering. Now 93, widowed and living in Bucharest, he suffers from health problems such as heart disease and arthritis that would make independent living impossible without the homecare and medical assistance he receives from the Claims Conference. Iancu also receives a monthly pension from the Claims Conference Central and Eastern European Fund that greatly alleviates his situation.

Iancu was 18 years old in June 1941, when German and Romanian soldiers, police officers and ordinary citizens began their pogrom in Iasi. Iancu and his father were rounded up and brought to the police station, where thousands of Jewish men were being shot or beaten to death. In the searing summer heat, the police forced Iancu into the infamous death train to Podu Iloaiei. He was one of the very few who did not succumb to heat exhaustion, suffocation, dehydration or suicide. He spent the rest of the war in forced labor.

My parents, Iosif and Minta Tucarman, and their four children. I am behind my father.

I posed for this photograph in a studio with my sister and cousin.

Here you can see me (first from right) next to my friends Zuli Harabagiu and Lazar Copolovici, a victim of the death train in 1941.