



DAVID S. HOLICWAY/GETTY IMAGES

Holocaust survivor Susan Taube watches Canadian students attending the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program event at the Holocaust Museum in Washington on Tuesday.

## Students hear Holocaust survivor's story

### Visit to Washington part of Asper legacy

SHELDON ALBERTS  
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In the 62 years since Susan Taube was liberated from a Nazi extermination camp, the horrible details of the Holocaust sometimes dissolve into a jumbled blur of unbearable memories.

But if there's one thing the 81-year-old survivor will always remember, it is the ease with which the Nazis killed. Whether it was shooting an elderly woman for becoming too ill to sweep sidewalks in the Jewish ghetto, or shipping thousands to die in a gas chamber, the Nazis murdered with a casual indifference to their victims' humanity.

"People were killed for no reason," Taube told a group of 250 Canadian students who were visiting the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington on Tuesday.

"They just took the gun, and you were shot."

Taube's harrowing account of a childhood spent living through "different phases of hell" in Hitler's Europe prompted an emotional response from her teenage audience, in Washington as part of the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program.

Many of the students, already deeply moved after touring the museum exhibits, crowded around Taube for impromptu hugs and expressions of gratitude.

"It's really important to meet people like her, because we are the last generation who will get to hear the stories of Holocaust survivors first hand," said 15-year-old Meghan Plotnick, a Grade 10 student from Vincent Massey secondary school in Windsor, Ont.

"It's up to us to carry on the message of the Holocaust to make sure it will never happen again."

For the young Canadians, Taube's speech capped 18 hours of intensive study designed to raise their awareness of the Holocaust and of the need to fight racism and religious intolerance in the 21st century.

"The message I take is that this should never be done again," said Alexander Paolozzi, a 17-year-old from Marshall McLuhan high school in Toronto.

The Holocaust Studies program was launched a decade ago by the late Israel Asper as a way to use history to teach Canadian students about tolerance.

Asper founded CanWest Global Communications Inc., whose media holdings include Global Television and CanWest newspapers across Canada, including the *Edmonton Journal*.

Since the program began, almost 5,000 students from 82 cities have participated.

More than 900 students took part in this year's visit to Washington.