When you were meeting with Szmul Zygielbojm, did it take place a long time after you arrived in London?

No. Well now, I arrived in London either by the end of November or the first days of December.

And from the first, of course, moment, I began to report.

I couldn't report to Sikorski. Sikorski was in the United States, by the way,
The Deputy Prime Minister Mikolajczyk,

I began with Mikolajczyk.

Now my mission in London was difficult. What I considered,

I was doing very well, because I understood my role.

In London I was not, so to say, a human being.

I was purely a camera.

A recording machine.

I carried messages from one political party

to another, from one individual to another,

from some political party to the Prime Minister only.

Now those messages very often--

And all this was purely--
Purely memory, purely memory.

I had good memory.

Now those messages, and I knew it, sometimes were contradictory messages.

Socialist Party would say, our vision of future Poland.

This time the working classes will not allow themselves to be manipulated by another dictator like Pilsudski.

We are strong.

The working class will take government, and we are prepared for it.

And we will do it.
Peasant Party, giving messages to the peasant representatives.

75% of the Poles are peasants.

We feed this nation.

We were never allowed to govern Poland.

This time we are ready.

When Poland emerges, Poland will have a Peasant government.

And we will take the fate of the nation into our hands.

Now so I understood this, that I was purely a recording machine.

I was instructed and sworn in by every political party,

by the delegate, by every individual, that I will not comment on their messages.

I might answer the
questions if they asked me,

49
00:03:04,650 --> 00:03:08,490
but on my initiative
I was supposed

50
00:03:08,490 --> 00:03:10,850
to be only a tape recorder.

51
00:03:10,850 --> 00:03:13,095
And it must have been
an horrible experience

52
00:03:13,095 --> 00:03:14,110
at [INAUDIBLE]

53
00:03:14,110 --> 00:03:15,090
I did very well.

54
00:03:15,090 --> 00:03:20,490
There was not a single
complaint against me.

55
00:03:20,490 --> 00:03:25,080
I reported precisely, I
had everything in my head.

56
00:03:25,080 --> 00:03:26,970
I reported correctly.

57
00:03:26,970 --> 00:03:31,200
There was never a
single complaint.

58
00:03:31,200 --> 00:03:37,560
Eventually rumors started
that emissary from Poland,

59
00:03:37,560 --> 00:03:42,000
yes eventually, told
different things
to different political leaders.

But eventually, Prime Minister Sikorski took care of it.

And one of the Council of Ministers, when problems started, just recently,

we received information from Poland.

One leader says, we received recently information from Poland of a different nature.

General Sikorski eventually told me, Lieutenant, we have a problem with you.

But I straightened it up.

Because then I told them, you they do not receive information.
from Poland recently.

You received messages from your own people to you.

And be careful, keep it straight.

Don't say that such is the situation.

We don't know what that individual you have in mind, all of you, told you.

He didn't know himself.

Now at the time, I was firmly convinced this was within my structure.

I was to go back to Poland again.

So I was extremely careful.

Precision, no comments, unless I was
asked for some personal comments,

whatsoever, I must do well.

I wanted to go back to Poland again.

I liked my new [? people, ?] this kind of work.

I think I was successful with this.

I got the highest military decoration, by the way,

for my work.

So now the first days.

Of course, I reported the first I remember.

I have a message to the President of the Republic.

What do you have?

Well, let the President of the Republic
pass the information to the government, where

my instructions were to the President of the Republic.

And I recognize all of this.

I had no difficulties.

Well now, one of the first contacts--

it must have been two, three, four days

after I began to circulate.

Well I was instructed.

Now you have messages.

The Jewish leaders.

Who, who are the leaders?
I said, three individuals.

Szmul Zygielbojm, Dr. Schwarzbald Dr. Leon Grossfeld.

All right, Zygielbojm was the first.

As a matter of fact, I remembered that the message which I carry was given to me in a joint session, Zionist leader and Bund leader.

Could I see both of them together?

Yes, it was the organized.

Schwarzbald did not show up for one reason or another.

I saw him for meeting with Zygielbojm.

Zygielbojm is alone.
I saw him in the government office, Stratton House.

Stop, stop, Stop.

When I entered the room, with my mission, what was also very important is to, so of say, to size up men.
I saw Zygielbojm, a man--

with this kind of man I had no dealings, frankly, very much.

Either in my underground activities, or before the war.

Before the war I entered Polish diplomatic service.

Zygielbojm, first, in every respect, his face,

the way he walked, his gestures, his language,

typically Proletarian.

He could be an unskilled worker.

I didn't know this kind of people--

Really?

--in my life in Poland.
Next, very Jewish.

His Polish was not literary Polish.

Like that Bund leader in Warsaw spoke beautiful Polish, literary language.

Zygielbojm I had before me the Proletarian.

So I was careful.

Did he have a Yiddish accent when he spoke Polish?

Yes.

Yes?

Yes.

And he looked very Jewish.

He looked Jewish, yes.
And the face, you know.
All this.
Nothing refined about Zygielbojm.
How was the look?
Rather smallish, not tall at all.
Not fat, physically.
Nervous, or agitated.
Very nervous?
Well at the beginning, no.
But then during the conversation, oh, yes.
As a matter of fact, most of the time, he was pacing the floor.
When I spoke about the
ghetto and about Belzec,

as a matter of fact, on numerous occasions, I would stop.

Say, why don't you talk?

You came here to talk, so talk.

From the very beginning, we didn't start off well.

I entered the room, he got up, we shook hands.

And he asked me, in a rather sarcastic way, Mr Emissary,

I was told you want to see me.

What do you want?

I answered, Mr Zygielbojm, I don't want anything.

I have messages, and I am
supposed to give you messages.

180
00:12:14,960 --> 00:12:19,730
They concern the Jewish matters in Poland.

181
00:12:19,730 --> 00:12:25,010
And I am going to see Dr. Schwarzbald

182
00:12:25,010 --> 00:12:27,320
and I'm going to see Dr. Grossfeld.

183
00:12:27,320 --> 00:12:30,410

184
00:12:30,410 --> 00:12:34,040
Says, Jewish messages?

185
00:12:34,040 --> 00:12:35,470
So who sent you here?

186
00:12:35,470 --> 00:12:38,140

187
00:12:38,140 --> 00:12:44,110
I had a meeting with Bund leader and Zionist leader.

188
00:12:44,110 --> 00:12:47,780
They introduced themselves in this.

189
00:12:47,780 --> 00:12:55,330
He looked at me, well, you don't look Jewish to me.

190
00:12:55,330 --> 00:12:56,990
They sent messages?

191
00:12:56,990 --> 00:12:59,050

This is a verbatim transcript of spoken word generated with 3Play Media. It is not the primary source, and it may contain errors in spelling or accuracy.
Are you Jewish?

No, I am not Jewish.

All right, so what?

Now, I gave him the messages one after another,

as I described previously.

Gave him all the requests.

All the requests, yes.

He interrupted me several times.

But I know all of this,
I know all of this.

At that moment, I didn't realize he did know through the radio, through dispatches, et cetera.
He was not impressed.

Not impressed.

Not impressed.

But I know all of this.

So then I say, well, the Jewish leaders

organized for me to visit in the ghetto, one

visit in the Belzec camp.

And my instructions are to report on this, particularly

to the Jewish leaders.

Says, oh, Jewish ghetto?

Belzec?

How did you get there?

He said, ghetto?
It'd be Warsaw ghetto, and then Belzec.

Yes, but he said, Jewish ghetto?

Belzec?

No, no.

Jewish ghetto in Warsaw, and then Belzec, Camp Belzec.

And he says, well, you were there?

How was it organized?

Who organized for you?

I told how actually it was organized.

And now I give him the material.

You give him the--
Information, what I saw.

At that time, I was doing well.

I was a machine.

I just reported very often with closed eyes.

I didn't, sometimes, want to see to whom I was reporting.

You didn't want to see.

What?

You didn't want to see the people you were reporting.

Sometimes, yes, I didn't want to see.

I was closed eyes and I was just--

I was conditioned very well.

It was not my first mission, as you
know, from my curriculum, war activities.

Now with Zygielbojm, when I began to describe this,

he got up, and he paces the room.

Most of the time, now he paces the room.

Sometimes, I would stop.

Why did you stop?

Talk, this is why you are for here.

All right.

I controlled myself very well.

Then he started to ask me questions.

I describe Jewish ghetto, and those children, and the Jews,
and the dying Jew.

Did you talk to any of them?

I said this was not my business.

I didn't talk to any of them.

Why didn't you talk to them?

Are you not interested what, how they felt about it?

It was altogether rather something like a challenge,

you know, against me.

He was aggressive.

Oh, yes.

Oh, yes, and rather unfriendly.

I said, Mr. Zygielbojm, this was not my mission.

I talked to the representative of the Bund, the representative
of the Zionists in Poland, not to the Jews in the ghetto.

I was not interested in talking to them.

This was not within my instructions.

Are you interested so much in the Jewish problem?

I said, I don't know, Mr. Zygielbojm.

I am, now I don't know in what I am interested.

I lost myself.

I'm not interested in anything.

I was sent here to report.

At a certain point, I got upset.
you have no right
to ask me these
kind of questions.

You want to listen to my
report, listen to my report.

If you want, I
will go on with it.

All right, so talk, so talk.

Talk, man.

Talk, man.

He called me in most instances,
Mr. Emissary, Mr. Emissary.

But rather sarcastically,
Mr. Emissary.

Now talking about, again, ghetto
in Warsaw, camp in Belzec.

Did he ask many
questions about Belzec?

No, he was walking.
Did he seem to be--

And then I saw him, something like disintegrating.

Apparently this he didn't see himself, what I saw.

So then he started to ask me questions.

Some of his question.

How did you feel about it?

My answer was, I had no feelings.

I'm not interested in my feelings.

And again, I would interrupt him.

Mr. Zygielbojm, you have no business
of asking me those questions.

Do you want to listen to my report?

All right, talk, man.

Talk, talk.

Walking, like.

A little like, mad.

Nervous, mad.

Nervous.

Disintegrating almost, minute after minute.

But he sits down.

He gets up.
Well then becomes the point, after ghetto and Belzec.

Before, he interrupted me several times.

I know all of this, I know all of this.

So then he says.

(film slating)