

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:05,460

2
00:00:05,460 --> 00:00:07,050
(film slating)

3
00:00:07,050 --> 00:00:11,990

4
00:00:11,990 --> 00:00:20,360
At a certain point, he
sits behind the table

5
00:00:20,360 --> 00:00:22,370
as a matter of where he was.

6
00:00:22,370 --> 00:00:25,760
I am on the other side of
the table sitting as well.

7
00:00:25,760 --> 00:00:28,850
He is in front of me.

8
00:00:28,850 --> 00:00:34,490
And then like with
hatred, frustration

9
00:00:34,490 --> 00:00:38,840
after I gave him
all the material.

10
00:00:38,840 --> 00:00:43,530
Then he says so what can I do.

11
00:00:43,530 --> 00:00:48,060
So what can I do
what I am not doing?

12
00:00:48,060 --> 00:00:49,370
I do everything.

13

00:00:49,370 --> 00:00:51,280

I did everything
what is possible,

14

00:00:51,280 --> 00:00:53,240

so what they want me to do?

15

00:00:53,240 --> 00:00:54,160

What can I do?

16

00:00:54,160 --> 00:00:57,660

17

00:00:57,660 --> 00:01:05,000

So then I also have
anger that time.

18

00:01:05,000 --> 00:01:07,640

19

00:01:07,640 --> 00:01:10,780

Then I gave it
away, close my eyes.

20

00:01:10,780 --> 00:01:13,730

21

00:01:13,730 --> 00:01:16,640

Jews are dying.

22

00:01:16,640 --> 00:01:19,160

There will be no Jews.

23

00:01:19,160 --> 00:01:24,020

What is use having
Jewish leaders?

24

00:01:24,020 --> 00:01:29,180

Let the Jews go to the
most important offices,

25

00:01:29,180 --> 00:01:32,300
Allied offices.

26
00:01:32,300 --> 00:01:35,210
Let them demand.

27
00:01:35,210 --> 00:01:40,670
If they are refused,
let them go out.

28
00:01:40,670 --> 00:01:44,120
Let them stay outside.

29
00:01:44,120 --> 00:01:46,430
Let them refuse drinks.

30
00:01:46,430 --> 00:01:49,310
Let them refuse food.

31
00:01:49,310 --> 00:01:51,440
Let them die.

32
00:01:51,440 --> 00:01:54,680
Let them die slow death.

33
00:01:54,680 --> 00:01:57,140
Let humanity see it.

34
00:01:57,140 --> 00:02:01,700
Perhaps it will move humanity.

35
00:02:01,700 --> 00:02:02,570
And then he jumps.

36
00:02:02,570 --> 00:02:06,500

37
00:02:06,500 --> 00:02:09,800
Madness, madness,
madness, they are mad.

38

00:02:09,800 --> 00:02:10,669
They are mad.

39
00:02:10,669 --> 00:02:12,405
The whole world is mad.

40
00:02:12,405 --> 00:02:15,980
The madness, madness.

41
00:02:15,980 --> 00:02:18,830
They are crazy.

42
00:02:18,830 --> 00:02:22,400
They don't understand anything.

43
00:02:22,400 --> 00:02:25,070
They will not let me die.

44
00:02:25,070 --> 00:02:26,420
They will send two policemen.

45
00:02:26,420 --> 00:02:28,070
They will arrest me.

46
00:02:28,070 --> 00:02:30,260
They will take me to an asylum.

47
00:02:30,260 --> 00:02:32,540
They will feed me artificially.

48
00:02:32,540 --> 00:02:35,030
This is madness, madness.

49
00:02:35,030 --> 00:02:36,230
They are mad.

50
00:02:36,230 --> 00:02:38,960
Everybody's mad.

51
00:02:38,960 --> 00:02:42,990
So I have to do something.

52
00:02:42,990 --> 00:02:45,360
But I don't know what.

53
00:02:45,360 --> 00:02:47,570
So what can I do?

54
00:02:47,570 --> 00:02:53,030
I have to do it, but
I don't know what.

55
00:02:53,030 --> 00:02:55,376
So what to do?

56
00:02:55,376 --> 00:02:57,470
Pacing.

57
00:02:57,470 --> 00:02:59,510
Madness, madness.

58
00:02:59,510 --> 00:03:02,120
This is a mad world.

59
00:03:02,120 --> 00:03:03,660
I have to do.

60
00:03:03,660 --> 00:03:05,820
I don't know what to do.

61
00:03:05,820 --> 00:03:06,740
So what do I do?

62
00:03:06,740 --> 00:03:12,590

63
00:03:12,590 --> 00:03:15,470
I was sitting here.

64
00:03:15,470 --> 00:03:17,510
Just there.

65

00:03:17,510 --> 00:03:18,620

Then he sat down.

66

00:03:18,620 --> 00:03:21,830

67

00:03:21,830 --> 00:03:29,860

Then he began-- became somehow
more rational as if more

68

00:03:29,860 --> 00:03:31,210

friendly.

69

00:03:31,210 --> 00:03:35,200

Yes, he is then-- he did
begin to ask me questions.

70

00:03:35,200 --> 00:03:36,490

How am I doing?

71

00:03:36,490 --> 00:03:38,060

Is it very difficult?

72

00:03:38,060 --> 00:03:40,350

Personal questions.

73

00:03:40,350 --> 00:03:43,480

He knew about my
previous missions.

74

00:03:43,480 --> 00:03:45,610

Is it difficult on me.

75

00:03:45,610 --> 00:03:49,210

Rather more friendly.

76

00:03:49,210 --> 00:03:50,930

Then I left.

77

00:03:50,930 --> 00:03:53,500

Did you think that --

78
00:03:53,500 --> 00:03:55,220
That he was in a--

79
00:03:55,220 --> 00:03:59,020
already in complete desperation.

80
00:03:59,020 --> 00:04:03,130
No, this is the point.

81
00:04:03,130 --> 00:04:08,755
For a moment, I did
not have any doubt.

82
00:04:08,755 --> 00:04:10,060
He is not mad.

83
00:04:10,060 --> 00:04:12,065
He is totally normal.

84
00:04:12,065 --> 00:04:14,980

85
00:04:14,980 --> 00:04:19,779
I did not detect any kind
of what today we call the--

86
00:04:19,779 --> 00:04:22,300
call psychiatry calls --

87
00:04:22,300 --> 00:04:24,490
He was a leader.

88
00:04:24,490 --> 00:04:27,760
Only he was lost
in helplessness.

89
00:04:27,760 --> 00:04:28,540
Helplessness?

90
00:04:28,540 --> 00:04:30,820

Helplessness.

91

00:04:30,820 --> 00:04:37,180

And apparently with my now
report, this showed up.

92

00:04:37,180 --> 00:04:45,100

He looked to me almost
hateful towards everybody--

93

00:04:45,100 --> 00:04:50,260

the Polish government,
the Allies, the world.

94

00:04:50,260 --> 00:04:57,370

It was this total helplessness,
which he couldn't take.

95

00:04:57,370 --> 00:05:01,030

He couldn't control himself.

96

00:05:01,030 --> 00:05:02,560

Then, of course, I knew.

97

00:05:02,560 --> 00:05:06,890

Everybody knew about Zygielbojm
He was a prominent leader.

98

00:05:06,890 --> 00:05:10,780

He was a member of
the council et cetera.

99

00:05:10,780 --> 00:05:14,320

He was a genuine
leader doing his best.

100

00:05:14,320 --> 00:05:18,850

Only in that particular
conversation,

101

00:05:18,850 --> 00:05:24,520

somehow we didn't
establish common grounds.

102
00:05:24,520 --> 00:05:27,535
He was the only man I reported.

103
00:05:27,535 --> 00:05:30,390

104
00:05:30,390 --> 00:05:34,160
It was a long conversation?

105
00:05:34,160 --> 00:05:35,370
Yes.

106
00:05:35,370 --> 00:05:38,700
It must have been long.

107
00:05:38,700 --> 00:05:40,950
As a matter of fact,
I was embarrassed.

108
00:05:40,950 --> 00:05:43,870

109
00:05:43,870 --> 00:05:47,170
He was keeping me then.

110
00:05:47,170 --> 00:05:49,870
He said that-- he
said I know everything

111
00:05:49,870 --> 00:05:51,220
and he was keeping you.

112
00:05:51,220 --> 00:05:56,080
After his break so then again
he said and then started

113
00:05:56,080 --> 00:06:00,310
to ask me personal
questions, sympathetic.

114

00:06:00,310 --> 00:06:02,740
And then questions
you know about Poland,

115
00:06:02,740 --> 00:06:08,040
about how Bund leader
looked, how Zionists--

116
00:06:08,040 --> 00:06:13,270
they look undernourished,
those human questions.

117
00:06:13,270 --> 00:06:16,700
And then the
conversation was long.

118
00:06:16,700 --> 00:06:20,350
What I don't mention
by the way in my book--

119
00:06:20,350 --> 00:06:22,410
and it may sound cynical.

120
00:06:22,410 --> 00:06:26,230
Remember at that
time, I was a machine.

121
00:06:26,230 --> 00:06:29,380

122
00:06:29,380 --> 00:06:32,380
In the second part
of my meeting,

123
00:06:32,380 --> 00:06:35,980
I was thinking only
about one thing--

124
00:06:35,980 --> 00:06:39,580
if he keeps me
longer, I am going

125
00:06:39,580 --> 00:06:42,820

to be late for my
next appointment.

126
00:06:42,820 --> 00:06:47,170
At that time, all my life
consisted from one contact

127
00:06:47,170 --> 00:06:51,820
to another, from
one man to another--

128
00:06:51,820 --> 00:06:58,600
eating, sleeping, reporting,
if possible coming on time

129
00:06:58,600 --> 00:07:00,010
to the meeting.

130
00:07:00,010 --> 00:07:06,020
All people I was reporting
were very important people.

131
00:07:06,020 --> 00:07:09,670
And I was an
insignificant little man.

132
00:07:09,670 --> 00:07:12,140
My mission was important.

133
00:07:12,140 --> 00:07:16,300
So I kept myself under control.

134
00:07:16,300 --> 00:07:20,530
And this perhaps, it shows that
at that time I was in a way

135
00:07:20,530 --> 00:07:28,960
morally corrupted because
with my previous record,

136
00:07:28,960 --> 00:07:32,260
I took it so to say for granted.

137

00:07:32,260 --> 00:07:37,360

Whoever I saw,
everybody was showing

138

00:07:37,360 --> 00:07:41,380

me respect or admiration.

139

00:07:41,380 --> 00:07:45,340

Everybody was complimenting me.

140

00:07:45,340 --> 00:07:50,050

Second poem, whatever I said.

141

00:07:50,050 --> 00:07:57,280

A few minutes ago, it was like
he didn't want to show it.

142

00:07:57,280 --> 00:08:01,170

He would-- he was suspicious.

143

00:08:01,170 --> 00:08:08,110

And do you think that the
demands you ask from him--

144

00:08:08,110 --> 00:08:11,215

the demands for the
Jews in Poland--

145

00:08:11,215 --> 00:08:14,590

146

00:08:14,590 --> 00:08:19,970

have had influence
on his suicide,

147

00:08:19,970 --> 00:08:22,670

which he committed six months
later as a matter of fact.

148

00:08:22,670 --> 00:08:23,170

No.

149

00:08:23,170 --> 00:08:25,030

Exactly six months.

150

00:08:25,030 --> 00:08:33,130

He committed suicide
on the May 11, 1943.

151

00:08:33,130 --> 00:08:41,140

This was just a few days
after the Warsaw ghetto

152

00:08:41,140 --> 00:08:48,190

totally destroyed as a result of
the genuine Jewish declaration

153

00:08:48,190 --> 00:08:50,830

of war against Germany.

154

00:08:50,830 --> 00:08:53,770

Then only a few days later,
he committed suicide.

155

00:08:53,770 --> 00:08:55,730

He left a letter.

156

00:08:55,730 --> 00:08:58,330

I have, of course, the
text of his letter.

157

00:08:58,330 --> 00:09:00,550

The letter addressed
to the president

158

00:09:00,550 --> 00:09:04,060

of the Polish Republic.

159

00:09:04,060 --> 00:09:10,510

In this letter he reproached
the Polish government,

160

00:09:10,510 --> 00:09:12,760

the Allied governments--

161
00:09:12,760 --> 00:09:15,150
[DOG BARKING]

162
00:09:15,150 --> 00:09:15,970

163
00:09:15,970 --> 00:09:17,900
[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

164
00:09:17,900 --> 00:09:20,900
[DOG BARKING]

165
00:09:20,900 --> 00:10:45,320

166
00:10:45,320 --> 00:10:47,194
(film slating)

167
00:10:47,194 --> 00:10:49,240

168
00:10:49,240 --> 00:10:54,210
Do you think that as a request
you made to him from the Jews

169
00:10:54,210 --> 00:10:59,480
in Poland are the
direct influence

170
00:10:59,480 --> 00:11:04,610
on his suicide, which he
committed exactly six months

171
00:11:04,610 --> 00:11:07,290
later?

172
00:11:07,290 --> 00:11:09,600
I don't know.

173
00:11:09,600 --> 00:11:15,000

I prefer to think not.

174

00:11:15,000 --> 00:11:17,310

What can I tell you?

175

00:11:17,310 --> 00:11:18,120

But I think yes--

176

00:11:18,120 --> 00:11:22,900

It is not a very comfortable
idea to live with--

177

00:11:22,900 --> 00:11:26,370

as you mentioned and I
mentioned in my book-- oh, yes,

178

00:11:26,370 --> 00:11:29,740

I think about it.

179

00:11:29,740 --> 00:11:35,010

But I defended myself
as much as I can.

180

00:11:35,010 --> 00:11:39,830

But I will tell you
about Zygielbojm

181

00:11:39,830 --> 00:11:46,100

Of course, I cannot escape
it that often I have to think

182

00:11:46,100 --> 00:11:54,320

about what happened to the Jews
during the Second World War.

183

00:11:54,320 --> 00:11:59,300

And it may be a result of
still self-discipline and still

184

00:11:59,300 --> 00:12:03,620

emotional self-defense.

185

00:12:03,620 --> 00:12:10,160

In my memories, even
when I teach my classes

186

00:12:10,160 --> 00:12:17,690

and I have to touch the war
situation in Eastern Europe,

187

00:12:17,690 --> 00:12:25,610

I don't go back to my
memories of the Jewish ghetto,

188

00:12:25,610 --> 00:12:27,110

or of Belzec.

189

00:12:27,110 --> 00:12:29,960

190

00:12:29,960 --> 00:12:31,520

I don't speak about it.

191

00:12:31,520 --> 00:12:32,360

You avoid it?

192

00:12:32,360 --> 00:12:32,975

I avoid it.

193

00:12:32,975 --> 00:12:35,830

194

00:12:35,830 --> 00:12:41,550

When I teach, when I
speak, when I discuss,

195

00:12:41,550 --> 00:12:45,360

when I think myself as you
can imagine for a year,

196

00:12:45,360 --> 00:12:53,790

I had nightmares, and
I disciplined myself.

197

00:12:53,790 --> 00:13:01,230
The Jewish problem during the
Second World War in my mind is

198
00:13:01,230 --> 00:13:07,350
the death of Zygielbojm ,
death of the Zygielbojm .

199
00:13:07,350 --> 00:13:12,960
This is what shows,
this total helplessness,

200
00:13:12,960 --> 00:13:19,770
indifference of the world,
indifference of the world,

201
00:13:19,770 --> 00:13:23,550
and the Jews perishing.

202
00:13:23,550 --> 00:13:29,490
And that Jews perished, and
you have a Jewish leader.

203
00:13:29,490 --> 00:13:30,570
His name is Zygielbojm.

204
00:13:30,570 --> 00:13:33,920

205
00:13:33,920 --> 00:13:39,620
And he says I am a
leader, Jewish leader.

206
00:13:39,620 --> 00:13:42,360
There are no more Jews.

207
00:13:42,360 --> 00:13:44,300
I go with them.

208
00:13:44,300 --> 00:13:47,150
They don't need leaders.

209

00:13:47,150 --> 00:13:52,700
The death of a Zygielbojm for
me shows more than anything

210
00:13:52,700 --> 00:14:00,130
else Jewish tragedy of
the Second World War.

211
00:14:00,130 --> 00:14:06,090
About him I speak.

212
00:14:06,090 --> 00:14:09,450
You forced me into
this interview

213
00:14:09,450 --> 00:14:13,500
about the ghetto and Belzec.

214
00:14:13,500 --> 00:14:17,340
I don't go there.

215
00:14:17,340 --> 00:14:21,943
When I have free will,
I do go to Zygielbojm.

216
00:14:21,943 --> 00:14:25,890

217
00:14:25,890 --> 00:14:30,000
I didn't have one
single class in 20 years

218
00:14:30,000 --> 00:14:32,820
of teaching the
course governments

219
00:14:32,820 --> 00:14:37,140
and politics of Eastern Europe.

220
00:14:37,140 --> 00:14:43,110
When I come to
the war situation,

221
00:14:43,110 --> 00:14:46,590
I did not tell my students
there was Zygielbojm.

222
00:14:46,590 --> 00:14:57,780

223
00:14:57,780 --> 00:14:58,280
Well--

224
00:14:58,280 --> 00:15:03,910

225
00:15:03,910 --> 00:15:07,210
You remember his last letter?

226
00:15:07,210 --> 00:15:07,920
Oh, yes.

227
00:15:07,920 --> 00:15:13,680

228
00:15:13,680 --> 00:15:17,400
The letter was friendly
as a matter of fact,

229
00:15:17,400 --> 00:15:21,960
written in a rather
matter of fact way.

230
00:15:21,960 --> 00:15:29,850
No violent recriminations,
very measured style.

231
00:15:29,850 --> 00:15:31,890
It was addressed
to the president

232
00:15:31,890 --> 00:15:39,180
of the Polish Republic but
also to the Allied governments

233

00:15:39,180 --> 00:15:44,840
and the public
opinion of the world

234

00:15:44,840 --> 00:15:50,900
stating what I said,
that Jews perished.

235

00:15:50,900 --> 00:15:53,570

236

00:15:53,570 --> 00:15:56,066
You will go with him--

237

00:15:56,066 --> 00:15:58,940
with them.

238

00:15:58,940 --> 00:16:05,870
And then he hopes that
perhaps his death will arouse

239

00:16:05,870 --> 00:16:10,370
the consciousness of the world.

240

00:16:10,370 --> 00:16:12,260
Oh, I know his letter.

241

00:16:12,260 --> 00:16:19,250
Then he finished the letter
in a very humane way.

242

00:16:19,250 --> 00:16:20,750
Goodbye, friends.

243

00:16:20,750 --> 00:16:23,390

244

00:16:23,390 --> 00:16:27,140
I wish you success.

245

00:16:27,140 --> 00:16:29,390

Goodbye.

246
00:16:29,390 --> 00:16:31,880
Signed Szmul Zygielbojm.

247
00:16:31,880 --> 00:16:33,470
[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

248
00:16:33,470 --> 00:16:36,440

249
00:16:36,440 --> 00:16:38,800
And this was after
the end of the--

250
00:16:38,800 --> 00:16:44,710
A few days after the end of
the ghetto, the Jewish war

251
00:16:44,710 --> 00:16:46,805
against the Third Reich.

252
00:16:46,805 --> 00:16:56,640

253
00:16:56,640 --> 00:16:57,650
[INAUDIBLE]

254
00:16:57,650 --> 00:17:04,680

255
00:17:04,680 --> 00:17:06,230
Well.

256
00:17:06,230 --> 00:17:27,000