

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:08,160

2

00:00:08,160 --> 00:00:11,460

If they were members of
Zionist youth movements,

3

00:00:11,460 --> 00:00:14,945

they were preparing for a life
in Palestine before the war.

4

00:00:14,945 --> 00:00:16,320

They didn't want
to have anything

5

00:00:16,320 --> 00:00:19,020

to do with the Jewish
communities in Poland

6

00:00:19,020 --> 00:00:19,800

or anywhere else.

7

00:00:19,800 --> 00:00:22,630

They would come after
them as time went on.

8

00:00:22,630 --> 00:00:24,060

It was a real rupture.

9

00:00:24,060 --> 00:00:26,280

It was a complete rupture.

10

00:00:26,280 --> 00:00:29,650

You had basically the same
attitude, shall we say,

11

00:00:29,650 --> 00:00:33,420

of the Communist youth who
wanted to create a new society.

12

00:00:33,420 --> 00:00:37,555

They were not going to be
active in Jewish community life.

13

00:00:37,555 --> 00:00:39,180

The B'nais were a
little bit different,

14

00:00:39,180 --> 00:00:42,120

but even there it
was a cooperation

15

00:00:42,120 --> 00:00:44,520

between the Jewish and
the Polish working classes

16

00:00:44,520 --> 00:00:46,320

to build a new society.

17

00:00:46,320 --> 00:00:50,280

The everyday activities
in the Jewish community,

18

00:00:50,280 --> 00:00:53,340

that was not their business.

19

00:00:53,340 --> 00:00:54,150

And when the--

20

00:00:54,150 --> 00:00:56,620

But the B'nais was
their way of life.

21

00:00:56,620 --> 00:00:58,800

The whole way of life, sure.

22

00:00:58,800 --> 00:00:59,880

This was foreign to them.

23

00:00:59,880 --> 00:01:02,040

They wanted to escape from it.

24

00:01:02,040 --> 00:01:03,900

Now, when the Nazis
came and you had

25

00:01:03,900 --> 00:01:07,380
the creation of the ghettos,
everybody was pushed together.

26

00:01:07,380 --> 00:01:09,090
People began to
realize that they

27

00:01:09,090 --> 00:01:12,720
shared the fate of the community
in which they were living.

28

00:01:12,720 --> 00:01:13,620
There was no escape.

29

00:01:13,620 --> 00:01:17,670
But in one way, it was
what they hated the most.

30

00:01:17,670 --> 00:01:19,380
To be part of that community.

31

00:01:19,380 --> 00:01:19,890
Yes.

32

00:01:19,890 --> 00:01:21,090
Precisely.

33

00:01:21,090 --> 00:01:23,200
They were forced into it.

34

00:01:23,200 --> 00:01:26,220
And when they discussed
what to do, some of them--

35

00:01:26,220 --> 00:01:29,130
in fact, there was a
discussion in Vilna Ghetto,

36

00:01:29,130 --> 00:01:31,680
there was discussion
in Bialystok ghetto,

37
00:01:31,680 --> 00:01:34,680
there were discussions
in Krakow--

38
00:01:34,680 --> 00:01:38,550
where people said, look,
why should we stay here?

39
00:01:38,550 --> 00:01:41,580
We have to protect
our own movement.

40
00:01:41,580 --> 00:01:43,620
We have to protect the fighters.

41
00:01:43,620 --> 00:01:45,270
Let us escape to the forest.

42
00:01:45,270 --> 00:01:47,760
Let's fight the Germans there.

43
00:01:47,760 --> 00:01:51,000
And the community-- what
will happen to the community

44
00:01:51,000 --> 00:01:52,320
will happen to the community.

45
00:01:52,320 --> 00:01:54,330
We can't help it in any case.

46
00:01:54,330 --> 00:01:58,590
But there were even some who
said, our aim is Palestine.

47
00:01:58,590 --> 00:02:00,195
Our aim is-- sure.

48

00:02:00,195 --> 00:02:05,070

We have to protect ourselves
and to protect the Jews--

49

00:02:05,070 --> 00:02:07,230

Our task is to reach Palestine.

50

00:02:07,230 --> 00:02:12,480

I must say, there was certainly
such a view expressed.

51

00:02:12,480 --> 00:02:16,590

But amongst these
youngsters, those

52

00:02:16,590 --> 00:02:19,620

who didn't want to stay in the
ghetto said that the ghetto was

53

00:02:19,620 --> 00:02:23,340

lost in any case, escape
to the forest and save--

54

00:02:23,340 --> 00:02:26,460

for Palestine, for the
future, for whatever--

55

00:02:26,460 --> 00:02:29,070

save the few that
would fight that would

56

00:02:29,070 --> 00:02:32,970

save the honor of the
Jewish name and so on.

57

00:02:32,970 --> 00:02:35,940

The majority, of course,
did not accept this view.

58

00:02:35,940 --> 00:02:38,430

The majority, in the
end, either stayed,

59

00:02:38,430 --> 00:02:39,990
or even if they
went to the forest,

60
00:02:39,990 --> 00:02:43,380
they went to the forest out
of the ghetto, so to speak,

61
00:02:43,380 --> 00:02:46,320
taking with them
whatever they could.

62
00:02:46,320 --> 00:02:52,140
When you go eastward to the
masses of the Jewish partisans

63
00:02:52,140 --> 00:02:54,180
in Bielorussia,
for instance, who

64
00:02:54,180 --> 00:02:57,540
had about 25,000 Jews who
escaped into the forest

65
00:02:57,540 --> 00:02:58,260
to fight--

66
00:02:58,260 --> 00:02:59,770
not all of them
managed to fight,

67
00:02:59,770 --> 00:03:01,590
but 25,000 people escaped.

68
00:03:01,590 --> 00:03:04,020
But they escaped why--
because they were forests.

69
00:03:04,020 --> 00:03:05,247
Because there were forests.

70
00:03:05,247 --> 00:03:06,330
Nowhere else was a forest.

71
00:03:06,330 --> 00:03:07,497
This is the first condition.

72
00:03:07,497 --> 00:03:09,780
And these people
who escaped, you

73
00:03:09,780 --> 00:03:13,290
had whole communities
escaping, families escaping.

74
00:03:13,290 --> 00:03:16,020
This was a different
situation altogether.

75
00:03:16,020 --> 00:03:20,160

76
00:03:20,160 --> 00:03:20,660
Yes.

77
00:03:20,660 --> 00:03:21,710
Go on.

78
00:03:21,710 --> 00:03:24,500
Well, you have to feed
me with another question.

79
00:03:24,500 --> 00:03:30,500
No, no, no, because I said I
thought it was very important.

80
00:03:30,500 --> 00:03:33,410
This was a case of
Smolar for instance.

81
00:03:33,410 --> 00:03:36,770
Well, the case of Smolar,
Hersh Smolar in Minsk, I think

82
00:03:36,770 --> 00:03:38,360

is a bit different.

83

00:03:38,360 --> 00:03:42,320

Hersh Smolar came as a
communist into an environment

84

00:03:42,320 --> 00:03:45,590

which had been Soviet in Minsk.

85

00:03:45,590 --> 00:03:48,620

He found a Judenrat which
was willing to do everything

86

00:03:48,620 --> 00:03:51,380

in favor of armed resistance.

87

00:03:51,380 --> 00:03:55,430

On the other side of the
fence in the Bielorussian city

88

00:03:55,430 --> 00:03:57,770

of Minsk, there was
practically no support--

89

00:03:57,770 --> 00:03:59,900

very little support.

90

00:03:59,900 --> 00:04:02,630

And what they did, what
Smolar and his group did,

91

00:04:02,630 --> 00:04:05,720

together with the Judenrat,
was to organize the people

92

00:04:05,720 --> 00:04:08,330

to go out into the forest.

93

00:04:08,330 --> 00:04:09,990

And that wasn't
just young people--

94

00:04:09,990 --> 00:04:15,380
anyone could go out, with
arms if possible, because it

95
00:04:15,380 --> 00:04:17,870
was very difficult to be
accepted in the forest

96
00:04:17,870 --> 00:04:20,149
into partisan units
without the arms.

97
00:04:20,149 --> 00:04:22,490
And it was in that
area, the Minsk area,

98
00:04:22,490 --> 00:04:26,000
where you have family
groups that fought--

99
00:04:26,000 --> 00:04:30,860
whole family groups, the
so-called family camps,

100
00:04:30,860 --> 00:04:34,700
like the Bielski
brothers and others.

101
00:04:34,700 --> 00:04:35,390
Yes.

102
00:04:35,390 --> 00:04:42,290
But to come back to the
discussion between the people

103
00:04:42,290 --> 00:04:50,030
of the Jewish youth,
it's important to say too

104
00:04:50,030 --> 00:04:59,280
that some of them said, what is
the use of rescuing ourselves

105

00:04:59,280 --> 00:05:01,820
if there is no Jewish
people behind us.

106
00:05:01,820 --> 00:05:03,000
Yes.

107
00:05:03,000 --> 00:05:06,395
All right, let me
go into that a bit.

108
00:05:06,395 --> 00:05:11,390
You heard a very clear case
of that in September 1942

109
00:05:11,390 --> 00:05:13,760
in Warsaw.

110
00:05:13,760 --> 00:05:18,170
In fact, after the great
deportations from the Warsaw

111
00:05:18,170 --> 00:05:23,900
ghetto, most of the people who
formed the resistance group

112
00:05:23,900 --> 00:05:26,480
thought there was no use
in carrying on any longer.

113
00:05:26,480 --> 00:05:29,660
And they wanted
to commit suicide.

114
00:05:29,660 --> 00:05:34,520
It was Antek Zuckerman,
and Zivia Lubetkin,

115
00:05:34,520 --> 00:05:36,650
and Mordechai Anielewicz,
and a few others

116
00:05:36,650 --> 00:05:39,050

who changed their views--

117

00:05:39,050 --> 00:05:42,230

who said, it is our task
to remain in the ghetto,

118

00:05:42,230 --> 00:05:46,910

because we have to leave the
Jewish remnant of the ghetto

119

00:05:46,910 --> 00:05:49,580

to a struggle.

120

00:05:49,580 --> 00:05:52,670

We cannot leave the
ghetto behind us.

121

00:05:52,670 --> 00:05:59,300

We cannot escape by committing
suicide or by some other way.

122

00:05:59,300 --> 00:06:01,940

In other ghettos, you had
to escape into the forest.

123

00:06:01,940 --> 00:06:05,370

And the people said,
no, we must not do this.

124

00:06:05,370 --> 00:06:08,340

We must stay here because
we are part of the ghetto.

125

00:06:08,340 --> 00:06:10,050

And we must fight
with the ghetto.

126

00:06:10,050 --> 00:06:12,410

And it is an irony
that they decided this

127

00:06:12,410 --> 00:06:15,980

after the big Jewish

masses had been destroyed.

128

00:06:15,980 --> 00:06:17,130

Had been destroyed, yes.

129

00:06:17,130 --> 00:06:19,730

Because while they
were being destroyed,

130

00:06:19,730 --> 00:06:22,430

they had no support whatsoever
from the leadership.

131

00:06:22,430 --> 00:06:24,410

They had no organization.

132

00:06:24,410 --> 00:06:25,430

They had no arms.

133

00:06:25,430 --> 00:06:30,080

And in fact, in Warsaw Ghetto,
the few arms that they had

134

00:06:30,080 --> 00:06:33,890

were, by pure accident,
found by the Germans,

135

00:06:33,890 --> 00:06:37,040

and the people who were
responsible for it killed.

136

00:06:37,040 --> 00:06:40,790

So there was no physical,
no technical way

137

00:06:40,790 --> 00:06:42,950

of having any kind
of armed action

138

00:06:42,950 --> 00:06:45,270

during the big
deportations in any case.

139

00:06:45,270 --> 00:06:50,340

Yes, I thought you
could consider--

140

00:06:50,340 --> 00:06:50,900

excuse me.

141

00:06:50,900 --> 00:06:54,650

142

00:06:54,650 --> 00:06:58,310

I think the reason for the
failure of the resistance

143

00:06:58,310 --> 00:07:01,730

groups in the summer
of 1942 in Warsaw

144

00:07:01,730 --> 00:07:05,870

to organize a resistance
is due to the fact

145

00:07:05,870 --> 00:07:07,820

that they were still unprepared.

146

00:07:07,820 --> 00:07:10,220

They were still in
that stage where

147

00:07:10,220 --> 00:07:13,460

they were looking for
some way of action,

148

00:07:13,460 --> 00:07:17,780

but they had not identified
yet with the masses

149

00:07:17,780 --> 00:07:20,180

of the Jewish
population around them.

150

00:07:20,180 --> 00:07:24,710

They had not prepared any
means of meaningful resistance.

151

00:07:24,710 --> 00:07:27,320

It was far away from
their whole background,

152

00:07:27,320 --> 00:07:29,765

from their whole history,
from their whole tradition.

153

00:07:29,765 --> 00:07:31,640

And they were living
together as a community.

154

00:07:31,640 --> 00:07:33,110

They were living together, yes.

155

00:07:33,110 --> 00:07:39,200

And the attempts that they
made were just the beginnings.

156

00:07:39,200 --> 00:07:43,490

And then the deportation came,
and the leader was caught.

157

00:07:43,490 --> 00:07:47,990

Josef Kaplan was caught by
the Germans and murdered.

158

00:07:47,990 --> 00:07:50,120

The sack where the
ammunition and arms

159

00:07:50,120 --> 00:07:53,060

which they had collected by
then was taken by the Germans.

160

00:07:53,060 --> 00:07:55,670

And the girl who
transported it was killed.

161

00:07:55,670 --> 00:08:00,050

The organizer Braslaw, Shmuel
Braslaw by pure accident

162
00:08:00,050 --> 00:08:01,910
was caught on the
street and killed.

163
00:08:01,910 --> 00:08:05,030
So by a series of
accidents, any resistance

164
00:08:05,030 --> 00:08:07,400
during the big deportation
was impossible.

165
00:08:07,400 --> 00:08:09,920
And after that, there
were about 55,000 Jews

166
00:08:09,920 --> 00:08:13,100
left in the ghetto in Warsaw.

167
00:08:13,100 --> 00:08:17,520
The Jews realized that the
others had been killed.

168
00:08:17,520 --> 00:08:19,350
They didn't know it before.

169
00:08:19,350 --> 00:08:22,680
It suddenly came to
their consciousness

170
00:08:22,680 --> 00:08:26,850
that all these masses
of people are no more.

171
00:08:26,850 --> 00:08:29,370
And they began
accusing themselves

172
00:08:29,370 --> 00:08:31,830
for having let them go.

173
00:08:31,830 --> 00:08:35,549
And this formed a good
background for the resistance

174
00:08:35,549 --> 00:08:39,960
to get the support
of the 55,000 who

175
00:08:39,960 --> 00:08:45,600
remained for a action of
resistance against the Germans.

176
00:08:45,600 --> 00:08:47,100
There was a real unity.

177
00:08:47,100 --> 00:08:51,990
And the result was that the
Judenrat was neutralized,

178
00:08:51,990 --> 00:08:54,540
the Jewish police
was neutralized,

179
00:08:54,540 --> 00:08:58,590
and the unity came into
being between the resistance

180
00:08:58,590 --> 00:09:01,620
group and the masses--

181
00:09:01,620 --> 00:09:04,000
what was left,
and those Jews who

182
00:09:04,000 --> 00:09:05,490
were left in the Warsaw ghetto.

183
00:09:05,490 --> 00:09:07,560
It turns out the Judenrat
was not even any more

184

00:09:07,560 --> 00:09:09,370
useful for the Germans.

185
00:09:09,370 --> 00:09:10,710
The Judenrat was neutralized.

186
00:09:10,710 --> 00:09:12,420
It just couldn't act anymore.

187
00:09:12,420 --> 00:09:14,500
It was useless.

188
00:09:14,500 --> 00:09:15,000
Yes.

189
00:09:15,000 --> 00:09:19,630

190
00:09:19,630 --> 00:09:20,130
OK.

191
00:09:20,130 --> 00:09:29,480
Now, I would like that we talk
about how it happened here

192
00:09:29,480 --> 00:09:30,300
during the--

193
00:09:30,300 --> 00:09:30,800
Yeah.

194
00:09:30,800 --> 00:09:33,650
Well, let me say, first
of all, one thing.

195
00:09:33,650 --> 00:09:38,690
The knowledge of what
was happening in Europe

196
00:09:38,690 --> 00:09:43,130
reached the whole Western
world, including Palestine.

197
00:09:43,130 --> 00:09:50,630
Until 1942, in a way in which
all detailed knowledge was

198
00:09:50,630 --> 00:09:51,410
there--

199
00:09:51,410 --> 00:09:54,560
you had news about
pogroms in this place,

200
00:09:54,560 --> 00:09:57,350
and then murder in this
place, and ghettos,

201
00:09:57,350 --> 00:09:58,820
descriptions of ghettos.

202
00:09:58,820 --> 00:10:01,490
All this you can find in
newspapers, in the New York

203
00:10:01,490 --> 00:10:08,760
Times or in Palestinian Hebrew
newspapers at that time.

204
00:10:08,760 --> 00:10:11,450
But nobody put it
together into a plan.

205
00:10:11,450 --> 00:10:13,100
It was unthinkable.

206
00:10:13,100 --> 00:10:14,960
It never had happened before.

207
00:10:14,960 --> 00:10:16,950
There was no precedent.

208
00:10:16,950 --> 00:10:21,200
And therefore, people

couldn't accept

209

00:10:21,200 --> 00:10:26,150
the idea of what today we know
to have been the Holocaust.

210

00:10:26,150 --> 00:10:33,260
In Palestine, the real
rupture came in November 1942

211

00:10:33,260 --> 00:10:37,160
when a group of largely women
and children were exchanged--

212

00:10:37,160 --> 00:10:41,300
Palestinian citizens
who'd been in Europe--

213

00:10:41,300 --> 00:10:43,880
were exchanged for Germans
who were living in Palestine.

214

00:10:43,880 --> 00:10:47,600
And this was October 1942
and they left Europe.

215

00:10:47,600 --> 00:10:49,580
They arrived here in November.

216

00:10:49,580 --> 00:10:50,990
They knew everything.

217

00:10:50,990 --> 00:10:55,610
And they told, personally,
the story of the Holocaust.

218

00:10:55,610 --> 00:10:57,590
And there was a
sudden change, you

219

00:10:57,590 --> 00:11:04,640
see, from not realizing what was
happening-- there was a shock.

220

00:11:04,640 --> 00:11:08,510

And the Zionist
leadership in this country

221

00:11:08,510 --> 00:11:13,100

took the attitude that, in fact,
nothing much could be done.

222

00:11:13,100 --> 00:11:15,160

The Jews were lost.

223

00:11:15,160 --> 00:11:18,000