

MICHAEL DROSDOWSKI

Q. IT IS THE 26TH OF APRIL, 1992. WE ARE IN CAEN, FRANCE OUTSIDE OF PARIS, NEAR NORMANDY AND WE ARE INTERVIEWING MICHAEL DROSDOWSKI, PROFESSOR, UNIVERSITY HOSPITAL AND WE ARE GOING TO HEAR HIS EXPERIENCES. HE TODAY IS ONE OF JEHOVA'S WITNESSES, BUT HE IS GOING TO GO BACK IN LIFE IN HIS YOUTH WHEN HE WAS NOT ONE OF JEHOVA'S WITNESSES. WOULD YOU PLEASE TELL US YOUR NAME AND THE NAME OF YOUR FAMILY?

A. MY NAME IS DROSDOWSKI. WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO SPELL IT? D-R-O-S-D-O-W-S-K-I, MICHAEL. AND MY FATHER IS PETER DROSDOWSKI AND MY MOTHER IS CECILE SCHATZ, S-C-H-A-T-Z.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOUR PARENTS WERE BORN AND WHERE?

A. MY FATHER WAS BORN IN ODESSA, RUSSIA AND MY MOTHER WAS BORN IN DUCHEN BESSARABIA.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER APPROXIMATELY THEIR DATES OF BIRTH?

A. MY FATHER WAS BORN IN JUNE, 1895 AND MY MOTHER IN OCTOBER 1898.

Q. HOW MANY BROTHERS AND SISTERS DO YOU HAVE AND IF YOU WOULD, NAME THEM ACCORDING TO AGE.

A. I AM THE ONLY CHILD.

Q. YOU ARE THE ONLY CHILD. ALL RIGHT, WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHAT TYPE OF A TOWN WAS IT THAT YOU WERE BORN?

A. I AM BORN IN PARIS--EVERBODY KNOWS THE CITY.

Q. HOW DID YOU HAPPEN TO BE BORN HERE SINCE YOUR PARENTS WERE

FROM RUSSIA?

A. BECAUSE DURING THE END OF THE REVOLUTION MY FATHER WAS IN THE WHITE ARMY WHICH WAS--HE WAS AN OFFICER IN THE WHITE ARMY, AND THE WHITE ARMY WAS DEFEATED BY THE RED ARMY, SO HE WAS DISARMED IN TURKEY. HE WAS IN PRISON FOR ONE YEAR IN TURKEY. FROM THERE HE WENT TO BULGARIA WHERE HE SPENT A FEW YEARS LEARNING TO BE A CARPENTER AND A PAINTER--WALL PAINTER. AND FROM THERE HE WAS CALLED TO FRANCE BY ONE OF MY UNCLES. MY MOTHER LEFT RUSSIA WHEN MY GRANDFATHER WAS SHOT BY THE BOLSHEVICS IN 1918 AND SHE FLEW TO ROMANIA, WHERE SHE STAYED TWO YEARS. AND FROM THERE AN UNCLE, HOROWITZ, CALLED HER TO BERLIN WHERE SHE STUDIED TO BE CHEMIST FOR FIVE YEARS. AND FROM THERE SHE MOVED TO PARIS WHERE PART OF OUR FAMILY HAD ARRIVED. SO SINCE THEY WERE FROM THE SAME TOWN AND SO THEY MET IN MEETINGS, IN RUSSIAN MEETINGS IN PARIS AND THEY GET ENGAGED.

Q. WHAT WAS IT--WHAT WAS YOUR RELIGIOUS BACKGROUND AT THAT TIME?

A. AS I RECALL, MY FAMILY WAS NOT VERY RELIGIOUS; HOWEVER WITH MY GRANDMOTHER I WENT TO THE SYNAGOGUE IN PARIS SEVERAL TIMES-- I RECALL THAT VERY VIVIDLY--AND WITH MY FATHER, WHO WAS A RUSSIAN ORTHODOX, WE USED TO GO FROM ESPECIALLY AT EASTER TIME BECAUSE IT IS A BIG CELEBRATION IN THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX RELIGION. WE USED TO GO TO THE BIG CATHEDRAL IN PARIS.

Q. I SEE. WHEN YOU WERE A YOUNG MAN GROWING UP, WHAT WERE YOUR INTERESTS--WHAT TYPE OF THINGS DID YOU LIKE? WERE YOU INVOLVED IN SPORTS AT ALL OR MUSIC?

A. I WAS WHEN I WAS A KID BEFORE--BEFORE THE WAR I WAS RATHER

QUIET. I PLAYED AT HOME WITH MY COUSIN NADINE AND ON VACATIONS WE USED TO GO TO THE SEA SHORE IN BRITTANY OR NOT FAR NORTH OF WALDO ON THE ATLANTIC OCEAN.

Q. AND SO DURING THOSE YEARS ECONOMIC TIMES WERE VERY DIFFICULT ALL OVER EUROPE. WHAT WAS IT LIKE FOR YOUR PARENTS IN PARIS AND FOR YOURSELF, DO YOU RECALL 1933 - 1934?

A. IT WAS VERY TOUGH BECAUSE MY MOTHER GOT A JOB MUCH LOWER THAN HER INTELLECTUAL AND PROFESSIONAL CAPACITY BECAUSE SHE WAS A FOREIGNER. MY FATHER COULDN'T FIND A JOB, AND SO FOR ONE TIME HE WAS CATCHING RATS IN THE--WHAT DO YOU CALL THAT, BENEATH THE STREET?

Q. IN THE SEWERS?

A. IN THE SEWERS, YEAH, AND TO SELL THEM TO THE PASTEUR INSTITUTE. AND WE KEPT, I REMEMBER, HE KEPT THE RATS IN CAGES HE MADE HIMSELF IN THE CELLAR AND THE RATS HAD THE TEETH--VERY SHARP--AND THEY CUT THE CAGES AND THEY RUN ALL OVER THE HOUSE, SO WE HAD PROBLEMS WITH OUR NEIGHBORS.

Q. WHAT WAS THE FEELING IN PARIS, SAY AFTER 1933 WHEN HITLER CAME TO POWER; WERE PEOPLE CONCERNED, FROM WHAT YOU CAN RECALL AS A YOUNG MAN, ABOUT THE TAKE-OVER BY THE NAZI PARTY?

A. WELL, I WAS NOT A YOUNG MAN SINCE I AM BORN IN 1930-- I WAS THREE YEARS OR FIVE YEARS OLD AND I DON'T REMEMBER THAT THESE DISCUSSIONS WERE BROUGHT UP IN MY FAMILY, MAYBE--PROBABLY, BUT I DON'T RECALL.

Q. SO THEN, WE MIGHT PROCEED ON TO 1939 OR SO WHEN HITLER WENT INTO POLAND. DO YOU REMEMBER THEN THE DISCUSSIONS, BECAUSE BY THEN YOU WOULD BE NINE OR TEN YEARS OLD.

A. YES, I REMEMBER VERY CLEARLY BECAUSE MY PARENTS WERE VERY MUCH CONCERNED AND THEY SAW THAT THEY WOULD HAVE TO LEAVE FRANCE MAYBE TO GO TO AMERICA WHERE WE HAD SOME FAMILY, AND SINCE THEY WANTED TO HAVE THEIR HANDS FREE, THEY PUT ME IN A MILITARY-RUSSIAN MILITARY--PENSION, WHERE I SPENT A YEAR, A VERY TOUGH YEAR BECAUSE IT WAS VERY HARD.

Q. NOW IS THAT A SPECIAL TYPE OF SCHOOL?

A. IT WAS A SCHOOL RUN BY WHITE ARMY OFFICERS--COMPANIONS OF MY FATHER. THE DISCIPLINE WAS MILITARY DISCIPLINE.

Q. AND IT WAS RIGHT IN PARIS?

A. NO, THIS WAS ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF PARIS, MAYBE FIVE MILES SOUTH OF PARIS.

Q. OKAY, SO NOW SINCE YOUR BACKGROUND IS SORT OF DIVIDED BETWEEN JEWISH AND RUSSIAN, WHAT HAPPENED WHEN GERMANY--AFTER TAKING POLAND--BEGAN TO COME AROUND INTO HOLLAND, BELGIUM AND THEN INTO FRANCE; WHAT DID YOU HAVE TO BEGIN TO DO IN ORDER TO SURVIVE, YOU AND YOUR FAMILY? WHAT DID YOUR PARENTS DO?

A. WE WERE ON VACATION IN 1939 AND WERE ON VACATION ON THE SEA SHORE IN BRITTANY AND MY FATHER WAS IN THE FRENCH ARMY AND MY MOTHER DECIDED THAT I WOULD STAY WITH MY AUNT AND COUSIN NEAR SAN JOSIA AND I SPEND THERE THE WHOLE YEAR AND WE MET THE GERMANS THERE.

Q. THEY ACTUALLY CAME INTO YOUR TOWN?

A. THEY CAME INTO OUR TOWN. IT WAS A SMALL TOWN ON THE SHORE.

Q. SO YOU WERE STAYING WITH YOUR AUNT, WAS THAT ON YOUR MOTHER'S SIDE OR YOUR FATHER'S SIDE?

A. ON MY MOTHER'S SIDE.

Q. YOUR MOTHER IS JEWISH?

A. YEAH.

Q. DID THAT CREATE A PROBLEM FOR YOU?

A. NO, AT THAT TIME IT DIDN'T CREATE A PROBLEM BECAUSE THE GERMANS WERE NOT LOOKING FOR JEWS AT THAT TIME YET AND MY AUNT DIDN'T SAY ANYTHING ABOUT HER ORIGIN.

Q. SO WHAT DID YOU DO THEN WHEN THE GERMANS CAME INTO TOWN; WHAT HAPPENED TO THE TOWN, THEY JUST TOOK THE TOWN OVER?

A. THEY TOOK THE TOWN OVER. MY AUNT WAS RUNNING A SMALL FAMILY PENSION AND THE GERMANS TOOK IT. THEY STAYED IN THIS HOUSE AND THEY LET US STAY IN TWO OR THREE ROOMS.

Q. SO THEY HAD GERMAN OFFICERS AND SO ON, TROOPS, STAYING IN THE REMAINDER OF THE HOUSE?

A. YEAH. I CAN SAY THAT THEY SAVED MY LIFE BECAUSE I HAD AN ABSCESS ON MY ONE OF MY FINGERS AND I WAS OPERATED ON BY A GERMAN SURGEON.

Q. SO THEY ACTUALLY SAVED YOUR LIFE, THAT'S INTERESTING.

A. YES.

Q. WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT? HOW LONG DID THIS LAST? WERE YOU ABLE TO GET BACK WITH YOUR PARENTS?

A. SO WHEN THE GERMANS INVADED THE OCCUPIED ZONE SO IT WAS NO USE STAYING MORE IN BRITTANY, SO I WENT BACK TO THE PARIS SOUTH SUBURB WHERE MY PARENTS DECIDED TO LIVE, BEFORE WE LIVED INSIDE PARIS. BUT IN 1940 MY PARENTS MOVED TO BENURE WHERE A FRIEND OF OURS HAD A SMALL HOUSE AND WE RENTED THE FIRST FLOOR OR THE SECOND FLOOR, I DON'T KNOW.

Q. SO YOU WERE ABLE TO MEET YOUR MOTHER THERE?

A. YEAH.

Q. NOW YOUR FATHER WAS WHERE AT THIS TIME?

A. MY FATHER CAME BACK FROM--HE WAS DISARMED IN 1940 AND HE CAME BACK HOME.

Q. OKAY, SO WAS HE CAPTURED THEN OR...

A. NO, HE WAS NOT CAPTURED, BUT THE WAR ENDED. MARSHAL PETAIN SIGNED AN AGREEMENT WITH HITLER AND IT WAS AT THE END OF THE WAR FOR THE FRENCH ARMY.

Q. OKAY, NOW AS THE PRESSURE BEGAN TO MOUNT, BECAUSE NOW THE GERMANS BEGAN TO LOOK FOR JEWISH PEOPLE SO WHAT DID YOU AND YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER DO IN ORDER TO PROTECT YOU AND HOW DID YOU SURVIVE DURING THIS PERIOD?

A. WELL I WOULD LIKE TO CORRECT YOU BECAUSE IT HAS BEEN SHOWN AND SAID AGAIN LAST WEEK FOR THE TUVEY TRIAL, IT WAS NOT THE GERMAN WAS NOT LOOKING FOR THE JEWS, IT WAS THE FRENCH POLICE FOR THE VICHY GOVERNMENT WHO WANTING TO PLEASE THE GERMANS STARTED LOOKING FOR THE JEWS. AND THE JEWS WERE CAUGHT MAINLY BY FRENCH POLICE AND THE GERMANS USUALLY HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT.

Q. NOW WHAT DID YOU FOLKS HAVE TO DO THEN TO PROTECT YOURSELVES FROM THE VICHY GOVERNMENT OR THE POLICE WHO WERE TRYING TO FIND JEWISH PEOPLE?

A. WELL EITHER TO LEAVE THE COUNTRY, WHICH SEVERAL DID, OR TO HIDE TO CHANGE IDENTITY AND TO HIDE IN THE SEARCH FOR THE JEWS. WELL FIRST THE JEWS WERE ASKED TO REGISTER IN THEIR CITY, AND VERY SOON AFTER TO WEAR THE DAVID STAR WITH JEW WRITTEN ON IT. BUT MY MOTHER WAS VERY CLEVER AND SHE DIDN'T GO AND SHE DIDN'T WEAR THE STAR AND I DID NOT ALSO; BUT MY GRANDMOTHER WHICH WAS

VERY NICE LADY IS THINKING THAT IT WAS MAYBE IMPORTANT, SO SHE WENT AND REGISTERED AND WORE THE STAR AND THE SAME FOR MY AUNT AND FOR MY COUSIN. AND IN SUMMER 1942 THERE WAS A --THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT DECIDED TO PLEASE THE GERMAN AUTHORITIES AND THE JEWS WERE ARRESTED IN MANY PARTS OF THE COUNTRY AND MY GRANDMOTHER WAS NEARLY 70 YEARS OLD AT THAT TIME AND WAS ARRESTED AT OUR PLACE BY THE FRENCH POLICE. MY MOTHER ASKED THEM TO TAKE HER INSTEAD OF MY GRANDMOTHER, BUT THEY DIDN'T WANT AND SHE TOLD THEM THAT MAYBE THEY COULD SAY THAT MY GRANDMOTHER WAS NOT AT HOME. THEY SAY WE CAN'T SAY THAT BECAUSE SHE IS HERE AND WE HAVE TO ACCOMPLISH OUR DUTY AND SHE WAS TAKEN TO THE POLICE AND I NEVER SAW HER AGAIN; AND THE SAME THING FOR MY AUNT AND MY COUSIN WHO WERE IN BRITTANY NORTH AT THAT TIME.

Q. THAT'S THE PLACE WHERE YOU HAD BEEN?

A. NOT FAR FROM THE PLACE WHERE I HAD BEEN.

Q. HOW WAS YOUR MOTHER SINCE SHE TOLD THE POLICE TO TAKE HER INSTEAD? WHY DIDN'T THEY PICK YOUR MOTHER UP?

A. BECAUSE MY MOTHER WAS NOT REGISTERED. SHE WAS NOT ON THE LIST AND THEY WERE VERY ADMINISTRATIVE. MY GRANDMOTHER WAS ON THE LIST, SHE WAS TAKEN--MY MOTHER WAS NOT ON THE LIST AND SHE WAS NOT TAKEN.

Q. NOW YOUR NEIGHBORS, DID THEY KNOW THAT YOU WERE HALF JEWISH?

A. WELL, THE NEIGHBORS KNEW THAT BECAUSE MY MOTHER ASKED ONE OF OUR NEIGHBORS IF THE GESTAPO COMES TO TAKE US CAN I JUMP IN YOUR GARDEN AND THE NEIGHBOR SAID MAYBE YOU COULD JUMP IN THE NEXT GARDEN, AND SO THEY ALL KNEW THAT WE WERE JEWS.

Q. AND THIS FELLOW, THIS MAN WHO SAID THAT WAS ACTUALLY A

GESTAPO?

A. NO, HE WAS OUR NEIGHBOR.

Q. OH, JUST YOUR NEIGHBOR, SO THEY KNEW YOU WERE JEWISH?

A. YES.

Q. DID ANY OF THE PEOPLE IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD TRY TO TURN YOU IN AT ALL--YOU AND YOUR MOTHER IN?

A. I DON'T KNOW IF IT WAS BECAUSE OF US OR BECAUSE OF THE OWNER OF OUR HOUSE, BUT WE HAD A VISIT OF THE GESTAPO ONE DAY AND THEY WERE LOOKING FOR PAPERS AND FORTUNATELY THEY DIDN'T FIND SOME VERY DANGEROUS PAPERS WHO WERE ON THE FLOOR AND THEY WALKED ON THAT.

Q. AS A YOUNG MAN AT THAT TIME, WHAT WAS GOING THROUGH YOUR MIND ABOUT PEOPLE BEING PICKED UP AND, NO DOUBT YOU WERE UNDER SURVEILLANCE, YOUR FAMILY WAS AND OTHER NEIGHBORS, WHAT WAS GOING THROUGH YOUR MIND--YOU'RE SUPPOSEDLY IN A CHRISTIAN COUNTRY?

A. WELL I DON'T RECALL BEING AFRAID AT ALL. I WAS VERY BUSY WITH MY STUDIES. I WAS IN COLLEGE AT THAT TIME AND EVEN WHEN I WAS HIDING I SPENT THREE YEARS HIDING IN DIFFERENT PLACES. I THINK THE PEOPLE WHERE I HIDE WERE VERY NICE TO ME, SO I LIVED THROUGH THAT RATHER NORMALLY BECAUSE I HAD ENOUGH FOOD, ENOUGH CARE AND I WAS GETTING REGULAR NEWS FROM MY MOTHER WHO WAS HIDING IN ANOTHER PLACE ALSO, IN PARIS, SO I...

Q. YOU REALLY WEREN'T TOO CONCERNED AT THAT POINT?

A. I WAS CONCERNED, BUT I WAS NOT AFRAID AND I LIVED THROUGH. IT WAS DIFFICULT AT THE END OF THE WAR BECAUSE WE HAD NOTHING TO EAT IN PARIS BUT BESIDE THAT, BESIDE THE FACT THAT I HAD NO MORE

GRANDMOTHER WHO WAS VERY NICE TO ME AND NO COUSIN WHO WAS LIKE A SISTER TO ME, I LIVED THROUGH THAT WITHOUT DAMAGE.

Q. IF WE CAN GO BACK JUST A LITTLE BIT TO THE TIME WHEN YOUR GRANDMOTHER WAS PICKED UP, WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER AT THIS TIME--WHAT WAS HE DOING?

A. MY FATHER TRIED TO FIND WORK BUT IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR HIM BECAUSE HE WAS NOT VERY MUCH SPECIALIZED. WELL, I HAVE TO SAY ALSO THAT HE DRINK--HE USED TO DRINK QUITE HEAVILY AND IT WAS NOT EASY FOR HIM TO FIND A JOB.

Q. DID THEY EVER TRY TO PICK HIM UP TO PUT HIM IN THE ARMY OR THE ARMED SERVICES?

A. NO, BECAUSE HE WAS RATHER OLD AT THAT TIME AND HE, ACCORDING TO THE LAW, COULDN'T BE ENROLLED TO BE SENT TO GERMANY.

Q. I SEE. NOW, WHEN DID YOU REALIZE THAT YOU AND YOUR MOTHER HAD TO GO INTO HIDING, AND HOW DID YOU FIND A PLACE TO GO INTO HIDING?

A. I STARTED HIDING IN 1941 AND WHEN MY MOTHER HEARD THAT THERE WERE JEWS CAUGHT IN GERMANY AND MY FATHER AT THAT TIME WORKED FOR SOME RUSSIAN PEOPLE AND THEY AGREED--THEY WERE VERY NICE--AND THEY AGREED TO KEEP ME IN THEIR HOME BUT UNDER MY REAL NAME.

Q. SO THEY KEPT YOU IN THEIR HOME UNDER YOUR REAL NAME?

A. UNDER MY REAL NAME, FOR A YEAR.

Q. NOW, HOW WERE THEY ABLE TO DO THAT--TAKE YOU INTO THEIR HOME WITH THEIR NAME AND YET YOU HAD YOUR OWN PERSONAL NAME? PEOPLE DIDN'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS?

A. PEOPLE DIDN'T ASK ANY QUESTIONS.

Q. AND WHAT SCHOOL DID YOU GO TO DURING THESE WAR YEARS?

A. IT WAS THE SAME SCHOOL, HEART AND SOUL, WHICH IS ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE 10 MILES SOUTH OF PARIS. IT IS A VERY WELL KNOWN HIGH SCHOOL.

Q. AND THEN YOUR MOTHER, HOW DID SHE FIND A PLACE TO HIDE?

A. THROUGH HER BOSS. IT WAS A FRIEND OF HER BOSS AND THEY AGREED TO TAKE MY MOTHER AS A MAID FOR THEIR CHILDREN AND SHE WORKED FOR THEM IN PARIS RIGHT UNDER THE NOSE OF THE GERMANS, BUT IT WORKED, BUT SHE WAS UNDER A FALSE NAME.

Q. DID YOU EVER FEEL LIKE WHEN YOU WERE GOING TO SCHOOL OR ON THE WEEKEND, DID YOU EVER SEE THE GESTAPO OR THE FRENCH POLICE PICKING UP JEWISH PEOPLE OR SAY JEHOVA'S WITNESSES OR GYPSIES OR OTHER GROUPS OF PEOPLE?

A. NO, NOT IN OUR VICINITY. IN PARIS, IT HAPPENED QUITE OFTEN IN THE STREETS. I KNEW SOME PEOPLE WHO WERE ARRESTED, BUT IN MY CASE NOT.

Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR MOTHER. DID YOU EVER GET A CHANCE DURING THAT PERIOD OF TIME TO GET TOGETHER WITH HER FROM TIME TO TIME, OR DID YOU HAVE TO REMAIN SEPARATE?

A. WE WERE SEPARATED FOR ABOUT TWO YEARS.

Q. SO DID YOU EVER GET A CHANCE TO TALK TO HER ON THE TELEPHONE A LITTLE BIT TO SAY HELLO?

A. WELL, THE TELEPHONE WAS NOT VERY SAFE SO WE AVOIDED THAT. WE USED TO WRITE LETTERS THROUGH SOMEBODY.

Q. NO DOUBT THESE EXPERIENCES DURING THOSE YEARS HELPED YOU TO GROW UP. YOU BECAME VERY MATURE AT A VERY YOUNG AGE, WOULD THAT BE CORRECT?

A. AT THAT TIME, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO SAY, BUT NOW I THINK THAT

THESE YEARS WERE RATHER TOUGH FOR ME AND LOOKING BACK I, OF COURSE, THINK THAT THEY WERE DIFFICULT YEARS NOT BEING WITH MY FAMILY.

Q. HOW ABOUT GOING BACK TOWARD THE END OF THE WAR. DO YOU REMEMBER THE DAY WHEN PARIS WAS FREED FROM THE GERMAN ARMY?

A. WELL, I REMEMBER THAT VERY VIVIDLY BECAUSE MY--SINCE WE KNEW THAT THE AMERICAN AND THE FRENCH ARMY WAS COMING--I WAS SENT BY MY PARENTS IN A FARM ABOUT 25 OR 30 MILES SOUTH OF PARIS AND WE GREETED THE AMERICAN ARMY AND WE WERE NEARLY ADOPTED BY AMERICAN SOLDIER WHO FED US WITH POTATOES AND BUTTER. I HAVEN'T SEEN FOR FOUR YEARS AND WE STAYED THERE AND THEY WERE VERY NICE TO US. AND OF COURSE THERE WAS A BOMBING AND KILLING IN THE STREETS AND WHILE I SAW MANY PEOPLE KILLED IN THE STREETS.

Q. HOW DID THAT AFFECT YOU AS A YOUNG PERSON WHEN YOU WOULD SEE PEOPLE BEING SHOT AND BOMBS DROPPING ON THEM? WHAT WAS GOING THROUGH YOUR MIND AT THE TIME--YOU WERE PROBABLY 14 YEARS OLD, 15?

A. I WAS 14 IN 1944. WELL I FIND IT AWFUL. I REMEMBER ONCE I WENT FISHING WITH MY FATHER AND THE BIG RAILWAY STATION ON THE WAY BACK TO MY HOME WAS BOMBED, SO WE HAD TO GO BACK BY FOOT ABOUT 20 KILOMETERS, AND A BOMB FELL ON THE HOME FOR YOUNG KIDS AND THERE WERE FLESH ALL OVER THE PLACE--IN THE STREETS AND THIS WAS ABSOLUTELY AWFUL. THERE WAS BLOOD EVERYWHERE.

Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THE CONVERSATION YOU HAD WITH YOUR FATHER AT THAT TIME?

A. WELL, WE THOUGHT OF RUNNING BECAUSE WE WERE AFRAID ANOTHER FLEET OF AIRPLANES WILL COME AND BOMB AGAIN, SO WE THOUGHT OF

RUNNING HOME.

Q. ALL RIGHT, SO THAT WAS WITH THE FREEING OF PARIS, SO WHEN THE TROOPS CAME INTO PARIS, WERE YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ABLE TO GET BACK TOGETHER THEN?

A. YES. MY FATHER FOUND A JOB FROM THE AMERICANS AND FOR SEVERAL MONTHS WE HAD ENOUGH FOOD BECAUSE HE WAS GETTING FOOD PACKAGES FROM THE AMERICAN ARMY, SO IT WAS REALLY SOMETHING.

Q. HOW MANY OF YOUR FRIENDS THAT YOU WENT TO SCHOOL WITH--THAT'S HIGH SCHOOL--IN THOSE DAYS WERE ANY OF THEM AFFECTED BY THE WAR? DID ANY OF THEM LOOSE THEIR LIFE OR WERE THEY ABLE TO GO THROUGH PRETTY MUCH UNSCATHED?

A. NO, I DON'T KNOW OF ANY IN MY CLASS.

Q. THEN WHEN THE WAR ENDED IN 1945...

A. WELL, FOR US IT ENDED IN 1944, BUT THE WAR AS A WHOLE ENDED IN 1945.

Q. HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN THAT HAPPENED? YOU ARE NOW A YOUNG MAN, YOU'RE 15 YEARS OF AGE, WHAT WAS THE ATTITUDE OF PEOPLE?

A. WELL, OF COURSE, EVERYBODY WAS VERY HAPPY BUT WE WERE ALREADY HAPPY WHEN THE FRENCH ARMY ENTERED PARIS IN AUGUST, 1944 AFTER--IT WAS THE WAR IN GERMANY, JAPAN--IT WAS FAR FROM OUR PLACE SO WE WERE ALREADY FREE.

Q. DURING THAT PERIOD OF TIME HAD YOU OR YOUR FAMILY HEARD ABOUT PLACES LIKE AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU, SACHSENHAUSEN, ROBINSBROOK?

A. WELL, SINCE MY MOTHER WANTED ME TO HIDE IN 1941 SO SHE KNEW MAYBE NOT THE NAME OF THE PLACES, BUT SHE KNEW THAT JEWS WERE DEPORTED IN GERMANY, BUT I DON'T RECALL THAT AT HOME WE PRONOUNCED THESE NAMES.

Q. DID YOUR MOM EVER EXPLAIN TO YOU OR TRY TO GET ACROSS TO YOU THE IDEA AS TO WHY THEY WOULD WANT TO PICK YOU UP JUST BECAUSE YOU ARE BORN INTO A JEWISH FAMILY OR HALF JEWISH FAMILY? CAN YOU REMEMBER THOSE CONVERSATIONS WITH YOUR MOTHER TRYING TO...

A. NOT IN DETAIL, BUT PROBABLY SINCE I WOULDN'T GO SOMEWHERE ELSE WITHOUT KNOWING, SHE TOLD ME THAT BEING HALF JEW, AND FOR THE GERMANS IT WAS ANY WAY BEING COMPLETELY JEWISH THEN THE HEREDITY GOES THROUGH THE MOTHER, THAT WE HAD TO HIDE BECAUSE EVENTUALLY THE FRENCH POLICE OR THE GERMAN POLICE WILL TRY TO CAUGHT US.

Q. AFTER THE WAR THEN WHAT DID YOUR FAMILY DO AND WHAT ALL DID YOU DO THEN AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER?

A. WELL, I WENT ON WITH MY STUDY AND I FINISHED THE COLLEGE AND IN 1949 I ENTERED THE UNIVERSITY PARIS SABORNNE, I BECAME TO STUDY TO BE A PHYSICIAN. MY MOTHER REGAINED HER POSITION AND MY FATHER KEPT ON WORKING ON THE SIDE AND NOT DOING MUCH.

Q. SO AS YOUR GOING TO SCHOOL TO BECOME A DOCTOR, DID THE WAR YEARS HAVE ANY AFFECT ON YOU. YOU LOST YOUR AUNT, YOUR COUSIN, YOUR GRANDMOTHER--THEY WERE ALL GONE NOW, RIGHT? DID THAT HAVE ANY...

A. WE KNEW THEY WERE DEAD BECAUSE IN 1945 THE DEPORTED PEOPLE STARTED COMING BACK AND OF COURSE MY MOTHER ASKED AND WROTE TO HEARD THE NEWS FROM THEM AND THOSE THINGS THAT WERE MISSING WE KNEW THEY WERE DEAD AND IT IS ONLY YEARS AFTER WHEN SERGEANT CLAUSFELD ESTABLISHED THE--COULD FIND THE DOCUMENT. THE GERMANS LEFT IN NEAR PARIS IN A CAMP THAT WE KNEW THAT MY FAMILY HAD BEEN KILLED IN AUSCHWITZ.

Q. SO YOU FOUND OUT THEY HAD BEEN SENT TO AUSCHWITZ?

A. YEAH. I HAVE THE BOOK WITH THEIR NAME.

Q. I SEE YOU HAVE SOME PICTURES THERE. WOULD YOU LIKE TO HOLD THEM UP FOR THE CAMERA?

A. YES. THIS IS A PICTURE OF MY GRANDMOTHER.

Q. OKAY, THAT'S YOUR GRANDMOTHER. YOU WERE VERY CLOSE TO HER?

A. YEAH, SHE WAS VERY NICE.

Q. WOULD YOU TELL US HER NAME?

A. ROSE.

Q. WAS THAT HER LAST NAME?

A. IT WAS ROSE SHATZ AND THIS IS MY GRANDFATHER, WHO WAS SHOT IN 1917 BY THE BOLSHEVIC, AND THIS IS MY COUSIN NADIA WHO DIED IN AUSCHWITZ. AND THIS IS MY AUNT, HER MOTHER EDWA MILLER WHO WAS SENT ALSO TO AUSCHWITZ, AND THIS IS AN OLD PICTURE OF MY MOTHER WHEN SHE WAS ABOUT 25 YEARS OLD. SHE DIED HERE IN CAEN. SHE WAS 92.

Q. DO YOU HAVE A PICTURE OF YOUR FATHER?

A. I DON'T HAVE HERE A PICTURE OF MY FATHER.

Q. SO YOU WENT TO PARIS TO BECOME A PHYSICIAN AND THEN AFTER BECOMING A PHYSICIAN YOU WENT ON TO DO WHAT IN YOUR FIELD?

A. I BECAME A SPECIALIST OF BIOCHEMIST SPECIALIZED IN BIOCHEMISTRY OF REPRODUCTION. I GOT MY M.D. DEGREE IN 1962. I MADE MY TUPA TWO YEARS OF POST-DOCTORATE IN UNITED STATES IN THE WORCESTER FOUNDATION FOR EXPERIMENT OF BIOLOGY IN SHREWSBURY, MASS., NOT FAR FROM BOSTON. AND WHEN I CAME BACK I WAS GOT THE POSITION OF ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN PARIS AND AFTER THAT I WAS OFFERED A POSITION HERE IN THE CAEN MEDICAL SCHOOL IN 1966. AND

I MOVED TO HERE AS A PROFESSOR IN 1968.

Q. NOW, ALL OF THESE YEARS THAT YOU'RE GOING TO SCHOOL, YOU'RE LEARNING HOW TO HELP PEOPLE TAKE CARE OF PEOPLE, IMPROVE THEIR LOT IN LIFE. DID THE WAR YEARS AND THE LOSS OF YOUR FAMILY HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH MAYBE YOUR BELIEF IN GOD?

A. AFTER THE HOLOCAUST, I BECAME COMPLETELY ATHIEST BECAUSE OF THE HOLOCAUST, BECAUSE I THOUGHT THAT THERE WAS NO GOD TO TAKE CARE OF THE PEOPLE AND ALSO BECAUSE I SAW MANY NASTY THINGS DURING WAR. MY MOTHER PUT ME SEVERAL TIMES DURING SUMMER VACATIONS IN CAMPS RUN BY ORTHODOX PRIESTS AND WE QUICKLY FIND OUT THAT THIS WAS ORGANIZED ROBBERY. THEY WERE TAKING OUR TICKETS FOR FOOD AND THEY WERE BUYING BUTTER AND SUGAR FOR THEM AND WE HAD NOTHING AT ALL AND WE EAT ONLY CABBAGES. WHEN WE LOST WEIGHT AND WE HAD DIGESTIVE PROBLEMS AND WE--ONCE I COULD LOOK THROUGH A CURTAIN AND I SAW THE PRIEST--A GROUP OF PRIESTS--EATING BUTTER AND MEAT AND SUGAR AND THIS WAS DISGUSTING FOR US SO I DECIDED NOT TO BE IN TOUCH ANY MORE WITH RELIGION.

Q. DID THAT HAPPEN DURING THE WAR YEARS YOU MEAN?

A. DURING THE WAR YEARS.

Q. SO OTHERS WERE NOT EATING BUT THEY WERE USING YOUR MONEY?

A. NOT OUR MONEY, BUT OUR TICKETS.

Q. YOUR TICKETS? THOSE WERE THE FOOD RATION TICKETS?

A. YEAH.

Q. SO WHEN DID YOU BECOME ONE OF JEHOVA'S WITNESSES?

A. I WAS CONTACTED IN THE BEGINNING OF 1966 AND A NICE FELLOW KNOCKED AT OUR DOOR. I WAS LIVING OUTSIDE PARIS IN THE SAME VICINITY, AND WHILE I WAS INTERESTED IN WHAT HE WAS SAYING, SO I

LET HIM IN AND WE STARTED DISCUSSION. AND EVERY TWO WEEKS, BECAUSE I WAS PREPARING SOME MEDICAL COMPETITION, SO I HAD NOT MUCH TIME, SO EVERY TWO WEEKS WE HAD BIBLE DISCUSSION AND IT LASTED ABOUT TWO YEARS. AND IN '68 I MOVED TO CAEN AND THE DISCUSSION WENT ON AGAIN FOR TWO MORE YEARS BECAUSE BEING A PHYSICIAN I WAS RATHER PUZZLED BY THE BLOOD ISSUE. AND I HAD TO DISCUSS--HAD A VERY LONG CONVERSATION WITH ONE BROTHER IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE WHO WAS A PHYSICIAN HIMSELF, AND HE HELPED ME ON THIS MATTER AND IN 1968 MY WIFE STARTED ALSO TO STUDY. AND WE WERE BOTH BAPTIZED IN THE SHABORE IN MAY, 1970.

Q. ABOUT ONE MONTH AGO, WHEN YOU WERE IN THE UNITED STATES YOU VISITED THE UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM BEING BUILT. WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS TOWARD A MUSEUM THAT IS AN EDUCATIONAL MUSEUM OF THIS TYPE, HELPING PEOPLE TO LEARN FROM THE PAST?

A. I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT BECAUSE AS TIME IS PASSING BY, WE ARE 50 YEARS NOW AFTER THIS TERRIBLE EVENT, AND I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO KEEP MEMORY BECAUSE IT CAN'T ALWAYS COME BACK AND AS AN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION HELPING PEOPLE TO REMEMBER OR HELPING YOUNGSTERS TO KNOW WHAT HAPPENED AT THAT TIME, I THINK IT IS VERY IMPORTANT. I CAN AGAIN STATE THAT LAST WEEK IN THE TRIAL ABOUT TUVA WAS TAKING PLACE AND IT IS A SHAME THAT HE WAS DECLARED INNOCENT SINCE HE KILLED HIMSELF ABOUT 10 OR 20 PEOPLE WITH HIS HANDS.

Q. WELL, WE WANT TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE BECAUSE IT HELPS. IT IS GOING TO HELP PEOPLE TO APPRECIATE WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUNG PEOPLE, HOW THEY WERE CAUGHT UP, HOW THEY HAD TO BE SEPARATED FROM THEIR FAMILIES, HOW THEY HAD TO GO INTO

HIDING IN ORDER TO CONTINUE TO LIVE AND EXIST. WHAT WOULD YOU ENCOURAGE YOUNG PEOPLE TO THINK ABOUT WHEN IT COMES TO LIFE AND THE FREEDOMS THEY DO ENJOY?

A. WELL, TO SHARE THE FREEDOM AND TO APPRECIATE IT, AND TO FEEL, TO KNOW THAT IT IS VERY FRAGILE AND IT CAN CHANGE VERY RAPIDLY. WE KNOW THAT FROM THE RECENT EVENTS--WHAT HAPPENED IN THE S.S.S.R. AND IN A FEW DAYS, A FEW WEEKS, EVERYTHING CAN CHANGE. IN THE EAST COUNTRY THE SAME THING IN OTHER COUNTRIES. MILITARY CAN TAKE POWER AND CHANGE THE LIVES OVER NIGHT, SO IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO BE AWARE OF WHAT HAPPENED YEARS AGO. THAT DEMOCRACY IS A VERY FRAGILE SYSTEM THAT WE HAVE TO PROTECT.

Q. AS A PHYSICIAN AND A PROFESSOR, WHAT DO YOU THINK OR WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS TOWARD PEOPLE WHO TRY TO SAY THESE THINGS DIDN'T HAPPEN? HERE YOU LOST MEMBERS OF YOUR OWN FAMILY. NO DOUBT YOU LOST PEOPLE WHO WERE YOUR FRIENDS AS WELL BECAUSE THEY WERE JEWISH. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY TO PEOPLE LIKE THIS WHO ARE SAYING THESE EVENTS DIDN'T HAPPEN DURING WORLD WAR II--THAT IT IS JUST AN EXAGGERATION?

A. WELL, BEING A JEHOVA'S WITNESS, I DON'T WANT TO KILL ANYBODY, BUT OF COURSE THIS HAS TO BE CORRECTED BECAUSE IT IS NOT TRUE. MYSELF, I HAVE BEEN IN AUSCHWITZ, I VISITED THE CAMP IN MILKENAU SO I KNOW THAT THIS EXISTS. I HAVE BEEN TO MATHAUSEN, SO I KNOW THE CAMP EXISTS AND I HAVE MET NUMEROUS PEOPLE WHO WERE IN THE CAMP, JEWS OR JEHOVA'S WITNESSES, AND I KNOW DIRECTLY BECAUSE I TALKED WITH THESE PEOPLE THAT WHAT THEY SAW IS A REAL STORY.

Q. WELL PROFESSOR DROSDOWSKI, WE WOULD LIKE TO THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS WITH US ABOUT YOUR YOUNG YEARS AND WHAT YOU HAVE DONE SINCE. THIS INFORMATION, OF COURSE, WILL BE USED BY THE MUSEUM AS PART OF THEIR ARCHIVAL SYSTEM AND SO WE WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO YOU VERY MUCH. THANK YOU.

A. THANK YOU.