

# **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum**

**Interview with Felix Horn  
July 19, 1994  
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## **PREFACE**

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Felix Horn, conducted by Sandra Bradley on July 19, 1994 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Washington, DC and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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**FELIX HORN**  
**July 19, 1994**

04:00:01

Q: I'd like you to begin by telling me your full name and when and where you were born, and why don't you tell me all your names just so we have a it right here at the beginning of the tape?

A: Should I spell it too?

Q: No, you don't need to spell them because it's on the slate. And then I'd like to you tell me a little bit about your childhood and background before the war. Go ahead.

A: I was born in Lublin, Poland on August 8, 1920, son of a middle class family. My birth parents were fairly well to do people, not rich though. My mother was a full-time mom. She used to sing in the path when she was young, but her career ended before I was born, I understand. My dad was a locksmith and son of 1 of 13 children, and when his father passed away he had to assume the responsibilities of taking care of the entire family of 12 sisters and brothers. Naturally, he had to go to work to support his family. That's why he didn't finish school yet. Eventually when he married my mom, he graduated from high school, became a locksmith to survive and to earn a living, and then slowly in coming years he felt a need for education, and going to night school, he became an architect. So I was raised in a middle class family. Very, very happy childhood. I had a sister, was one year older than I was. We lived in a big apartment house belonged to my grandparents. The entire family, over 18, 19 people lived, there all my cousins so we see each other every day. Naturally, as you live with your cousins, one try to outdo the other win, scholastically, otherwise, and this was promoted by the parents, particularly our mothers. Now, I was playing violin since I was four and a half years old. I remember my first violin was bigger than I was. I couldn't hold the violin properly. I recall the tortured nights when they put cork between my fingers to stretch my ridge of my fingers to reach the octave on the violin. Naturally, this was not very promoting to my music career.

04:03:04

I never forgot the tortures, but my mother was thus in heaven when I start playing particularly, the concert, or so we had a quartet; my sister playing piano, my uncle, my youngest brother of my dad playing cello, my other cousin was playing viol

A: There was four people and I was playing violin. Of course, we were playing for friends of our parents. I would rather be outside playing tennis or whatever. But this was a ritual that for years was an understandable thing that we have to do and I liked it actually. But anyway, until I reach the age of 13 I would say, I had the idea that I

want to be a doctor. I don't want to, would like to be a doctor. I don't want to be a musician. I knew I was not Heifetz or Perlman, but my mother would never understand that, and when I told her I wanted to be a doctor, this was like stabbing her in the heart. There were days I refused to practice ... and ... and with time of rebellion, a quiet rebellion. But then I had to do it, so after a day or two I start practicing again. I was going to school of music. Eventually I graduate ... in academy of music, and I was full fledged violinist. In the meantime, my father was involved in expansion of a high school. This was a Catholic high school where the principal was a bishop. I recall seeing him on occasions, walking in his robe in hallways, accompanied by a rabbi with curls, side curls, you know, and this fur hat, you know. To me it was rather odd looking type of a connection here. We lived in the outside of area where normally Jewish people lived, what they call Aryan are

A: It was modern edifice and there were no Jewish people around there. So my parents spoke Yiddish here and there, mostly Polish though. I did understand Yiddish but I could never speak Yiddish. And one day, going back to the principal of the high school, my dad asked him kiddingly, you know what, my son reaching the age now that you have to enter high school. What you think of my son considered being a student in your high school? He said "no problem." As soon as he passes the pre-entrance exam, he accepted. There is no problem. But then my dad replied, but this is a Catholic school and we're Jewish. So, ... the principal replied. We prefer a Jewish student in a Catholic high school.

04:06:05

Believe it or not, I started studying hard. I was a good student and I passed exam and the reality came through. I became the first Jewish student in the highly Catholic school, high school. Well, my days in high school were extremely happy. They were the best years of my life. I never felt I'm different. I didn't look different, but on the street, kids in the area knew who I was. They called me, you dirty Jew. You filthy Jew, for no reason. But my high school I was never approached like this. I was respected by my colleagues. I think they liked me. I was excellent student. I was even assigned by teachers of certain class like French, Latin, geography, history, to tutor my colleagues from the same class that didn't do so well, and all of them went through and passed the exams. So, I was very happy to hear that I was instrumental in helping my colleagues, and it developed a certain type of rapport with them, not because they are dependent on me, but it helped us to bind us together, I would say. And, I was very active in French club which I organized. I was very active in an art club which I organized, and then musical circle too, and then eventually I was nominated by the director of the musical department school to participate in our symphony orchestra in high school, to a point on one day we had a contest in our town of different symphony orchestras in different high schools and this took place in one big theaters in the city, and won the first prize and I was playing solo forget like today and I thought, my mother was very proud of me then. She seen certain things,

you know, that she hoped maybe I would fulfill a dream, and I was glad to give her this kind of satisfaction although, innerly I felt that's not the road of my future. I was just insisting I would do something else and occasionally we discussed this and my mom didn't want me to talk about it about it. And there were different days you respected your parents more and whatever they say, really this was the way it was supposed to be. Maybe I was the first one in our generation in those days, that made quiet rebellion against, quietly, yet in the beginning but persistently pursued further.

04:09:02

Anyway, my school days were really fantastic. Sundays was customarily thing that all boys high school all in uniforms would marching to church. I was in front with the band. I was playing saxophone and clarinet in the band. And then when we arrived in the church, 800 or so students, went up to the church and my road led to the choir, and I was playing violin with the choir. Naturally, I was quite acquainted with the rituals with the prayers for eight years I was in school there and I felt that I'm Catholic, except I was not baptized. I had Christmas tree at home next to Hanukkah. And I had a, had a kind of natural thing to do. No one making fun of this. But then here and there in the city when I went to the park or so, I seen Anti-Semitic remarks, and knowing who I was. One day I remember I was little. We went to the park, wintertime, and one of my dad's employees took a sled. I was on the sled. He was pulling me on the sled. He was a professional wrestler, huge man, muscular man young in his 20s or so. It was a scene, a scene I never forget. Students of the local university, Catholic university attacked an older Jew, religious person with his side curls on, attacked him with sticks at the end which were razor blades. They are cutting off his side curls, and by doing this they chopped off his ear. Blood was flowing and I never forgot. I was a young kid. But they seen us watching them from a distance. They ran toward us, tried to attack us. But my dad's employee was very fast, athletic and so on, he pulled that sled fast and they were falling, you know, in distance and couldn't reach us. But eventually, they blocked our path, you know, and they pinned us against the wall. He made a mincemeat out of them. He beat them so up, you know, that eventually police came in and arrested him. The fact that we were attacked meant nothing. I think he put to jail then. This was one episode I remember. But this never happened in my school though. In school, I was person, that I was not a Jew. I was respected by my teachers, professors, by the priests, you know, by everyone. That's why my memories going back now to those days are really great.

04:12:02

And, I didn't realize at that time eventually, very soon afterwards this connection with my high school and friends, colleagues, classmates, professors would help me survive. So this is about my childhood, very happy with a lovely apartment.

Q: When was that incident with the --

A: This was probably in about '32, '34, 1933, '34, about five years or so before the war. This was not an isolated incident. There were more incidents like this from then on. There was more German propaganda after Hitler came to power in '33. Then you seen people very traumatic. In front of Jewish stores, Polish people standing with signs "do not buy from the Jews, they steal your money." And in spite of this, many people going to Jewish stores, and then they are leaving the stores they were someone taking their pictures and eventually, they were using those photographs, the photographs in those and placing the propaganda with the name of the people who frequent Jewish stores. And I seen all those things. I was already confused. Here I am in Catholic high school. I thought I was Catholic. And to me, being Jewish didn't mean nothing. We are not a religious family although my parents had a kosher home, for one reason. All the Jews had kosher home. They felt that the meat was cleaner, more hygienic. Meat was not bought from a peasant who slaughtered the cattle some place in a barn, didn't know how hygienic was done. So no one got sick from eating kosher meat or so, but that's the only reason. But otherwise, we are not religious. But to explain yet my parents attitude towards me as their son, and to build up my identity although, they were not religious I say. Once a year we going to the little Synagogue was actually somebody's like apartment, where the Jews were praying all day long. I remember that I was little boy then. I couldn't wait until the service was over. There was so stuffy. There was no air conditioning and I would rather to go out and play with the kids, but here I am, stuck with older people, you know, for a whole day until you are allowed to eat. You are not allowed to eat until sundown you know, so for a child, you know, this was ... but food was not a problem really, but those scenes you know, I remember until today. And then to reinforce my identity who I was my parents hire a teacher which they call a Rebbe.

04:15:07

Rebbe is not a rabbi. It is someone whose very well versed in the Hebrew teachings, you know, and the religious laws and so on. And he was coming, I don't recall, three or four times a week to my home, and I remember he was falling asleep while he was reading to me and when he was half asleep, I was changing the book, you know. I was turning over the pages, you know, so we would get faster, you know. And when he woke up, half the book was turned over without him realizing it even. But, I got the touch of it anyway, you know. Not that I learned anything from him. But there is somethings I learned some things, prayers, you know, and but until today I was not very comfortable being in a Synagogue because I didn't grow up in that kind of surroundings you know. But I knew who I was. Then since there was a Catholic schools and there was so many other Jewish students in different schools. None Catholic but state schools who didn't had no formal Jewish education. So once a week one of the professors of Jewish, of Jewish history was coming to our school Catholic school teaching us about Jewish history, talking about the exodus of the Jews from

Egypt and all the uprisings you know, the Jewish history and we, so more or less were not ignorant about those things and then were graded on the base of his report. But I was also graded on New Testament, which I attended, so I was graded on the New Testament and also the Old Testament and religious education, and I had two grades. And this was very happy solution to me until summer of '39, prior to September 1, 1939. Rumors of Hitler Army moving, probably to Poland. We invade Poland. We on vacation at time, summer vacation and of course, most of the Jews belittle the rumors. All Jews all rumor this and that, but as a precaution they decide to cut short vacation and come home. Sure enough, September 1, '39 war broke out. Polish Army didn't last too long, Within less than two weeks, or three weeks. The whole army fall apart. Our government left Poland, first to escape, and only one that stood up yet was Warsaw, was defending self for several weeks. And Germany have a hell of a time, the whole of Poland was invaded already and Warsaw was still fighting. In the meantime the Germans entered our hometown. First thing they did, all the Jews have to register.

04:18:01

All the Jews have to give up their possessions. Their music instruments, piano, grand piano, furs, jewelry, libraries, whatever was of certain worth to them they had to give it up. And of course, means of communications, telephones and radio. Germans were afraid of the local population listening to the radio, to BBC maybe. So we're not allowed to have the radios, and one day I remember my dad came home bloodied up. He was beaten by the Pole and the Germans. He was caught on the street. He was there to do some work you know, some labor work that day and they beat him up as a prepay and sent him home. When I seen this, I seen what was to come here. I recall we sitting together, the whole family at the table, discussing what should we do. It was too late to run. West we couldn't go, wanted us to know that Russia divided Poland with the Germans. The Soviet Army actually came from the East going West and they stopped at the River Bug and the German Army stopped at the River Bug too and our town was slightly west of the River Bug so we were at the fortune to be under German occupation. Some of my colleagues, Jewish colleagues, decided to go eastward, to the Germans. With the blessing of my family, I took a bicycle. My parents provided some cigarettes for me, for this was the best means of bribery and money didn't mean nothing. So if you want to ... were caught by anyone, especially Soviet solders, by giving a carton of cigarettes you buy your way out. There was not documents except the old Polish documents, and took me about a week to reach destination far east in Poland. A little town named Rovno. Why do you go to Rovno? Rovno was a city where my uncle, the younger brother of my father lived, and I thought at least I find somebody a relative of course. I arrived there. My ultimate goal was to enter the school there and study medicine. But I was not accepted, maybe as much as good as I thought I will be. Mainly, because food was a problem. Staying in this small, cramped quarters, you know. He was married. Had one boy, baby boy, and I know it was very difficult for them.

04:21:02

So I try to spare them the problem and I decided to leave and go to Lvov, the Germans call Lemberg, which was a big city, about 250,000 people, site of university, formally under the jurisdiction of Austria, Hungary. Many intelligent people spoke German, and it was just a beautiful city and I was very fortunate to take my pre-entrance exam and be accepted in medical school. Now you have to understand, that I was a refugee. I had nothing with me. I had no money. I had no clothing except what I had with me and I was hungry most of the time. But I still felt ... I always promised my parents I would pursue my education and that kind of an obligation I felt I should fulfill, and for myself too. I always wanted to be a doctor. So I was smart enough to find my way through and I was employed by the school cafeteria. I cleaned the tables. I was getting three meals and then knowing the people, then slowly, I was fortunate enough to secure myself a bed and in a room for students, like a dormitory. And I was paired with another student, also a refugee from my hometown. We became good friends and I was doing well in school.

Q: This is 1939?

A: '39.

Q: And you were how old then?

A: I was 19. And through 1940 I was doing nothing but studying. I wasn't hungry no more, and that's a time that we didn't have no communication with my home, Lublin. I was very bothered with the fact that I didn't know what was going on with my parents and my older sister. There was no way you could communicate there. I sent a few messages through people, peasants they used to smuggle items going one way or the other to the border, but allegedly they never received letters from me, which I later found out. One day who knocks on my door? I open the door. Who is there? My dad. He swam through the River Bug and being pursued by the Germans and the Russians, arrested by the Russians as a spy and he bought his way out, explained he was not a spy, a Jew looking for his son. They let him go. Happened to be a Jewish officer understand. He came to Lvov.

04:24:07

He found me and looked at me and he was crying because I never looked so dilapidated, so abandoned like. And I didn't have a coat. I didn't have a blanket. At night I covered myself with my overcoat, my blanket, but I was not cold. But he didn't get used to this picture because I was always well-dressed and a well-to-do family, and so on and here -- I try to explain to him not to worry about me here. At least nobody is going to kill me here. Nobody was going to shoot me. I still get my



education and I asked him maybe to stay with me, and we looked for ways to bring my mother and my sister to us. There was no way. My dad refused to do that. "There was no way to do that." And he stay with me for a few days only. I remember today, he sat on my coat. A button was missing. He said, if your mother would see that she would be very unhappy. And he got a button someplace and a thread and sew the button on my coat. I never forget those little things ... Then we parted...while I thought I would never see him again. But the meantime life was going on. I was going to school. 1941, July, war again. Germany, in spite of their pact with the Soviet Russia, they invade Eastern Poland and first thing what happened, Ukraine students in the dormitory, Knew who was the Jewish student. They grabbed me, one of my good friends, Ukrainian, grabbed me beating the hell out of me. Forced me to scrub the floor of a pub they had opened up for German officers. From then I was taken to a labor camp in Janowska street in Lvov. It was not a concentration camp, it was a labor camp, but the way they treated us was just like concentration camp. We lying on wooden boxes really. Not in bed, boxes. There was nothing to eat. And we had to be on a field at 5 am. wintertime. If you didn't stand straight, they beat you. They kick you from the front, from the back, from the side. You couldn't go down or they would shoot you. So the awareness of not to go down, the beating always kept me aware of it, to stand up and I was numb. And after a while I didn't feel the beating even and then maybe at 7am. or so we marching to the city to work, and after a few days I thought well, there was nothing to expect. I run away. And, where you going to go? I run away to the dormitory. That's the only place I knew. However, I found three of my colleagues, Jewish students, hiding in the basement. How they escape I don't know, because they went through the building very thorough, using the Ukrainian police with the Germans. We decided to go eastward. The Russians were still not too far from the city, so hiding, going to the fields at night or so. We try to stop some of the Russian trucks so they can maybe pick us up so we can go with them east to Russian. Well, they pointed their guns to us.

04:28:02

They didn't know who we were. They were afraid too. They were running away themselves. So walking about 70 kilometers, mostly during the night, some during the day, especially through the forest so we would not be visible. We reached the town named Zolochiv. It was a town of about 35,000 people, I would say 80 percent Jews. With my luck, wouldn't you believe we walked in at a time when there was a big pogrom taking place. Right away we were caught by the Ukraines, brought us to a square, town square and put in front of a small building which was the administrative building, I understand. Here in front of us were bodies of Jews, piled one on top of each other, dead. They said to line up, four of us, with hands up, and there were about few thousand maybe 2000 to 3000 spectators in the town square, mostly Ukraine. And we seen the SS or Gestapo, I don't remember which. I think it was SS and firing squad. Before you knew you were there, right there and we supposed to be executed. Well, you know, this moment my whole childhood went through my mind. I close my

eyes. I seen everything. I remember first time, I recall any event which was a funeral when I was five years old. From then on, my childhood, my sister, my parents, my high school, the principal, the bishop, everything until this moment and like a movie. I said, that's a very short life though. And I didn't hear nothing. I just became totally numb.

04:30:05

Maybe it's like a self-defense mechanism with your body that if you know that you were facing your final hour, maybe that's what it was. I was never a victim of execution. So you don't know how to behave. It was so quiet, so peaceful, and I didn't hear a thing. And I was totally frozen. There were four of us lined up and I was second from the left. And then after a while, I don't know how long it lasted, I slowly opened my eyes, slowly. I thought, I cannot be dead. Its so quiet and peaceful. Where am I? Slowly, I turn to the left, slowly to the right, mostly with my eyes only, and I seen my colleague to the right. The last one was slumped over on the ground, so I didn't know if he was dead or not. But all my other colleagues, one on the left, one on the right, were standing like myself, erect and still. Slowly I turn more and more and I look around and I see nobody. Totally turning around I look, thousands of bodies on the ground. I don't know what happened. They looked like Muslims praying, you know. And they were all dead. Making a long story short, I found out that two Russian planes came in, seen a gathering with the police and the German and they start shooting and bombing the area. One colleague was killed. We believed he was most likely killed by the Russians accidentally, not by the execution, the firing squad. When see what was going on. The three of us grab my little suitcase, tiny little satchel actually, and run to the river. The pogroms were still going on in the rest of the city. We hid in the river, up to our necks. We took some bushes to cover our heads. We stayed there at least three or four days or nights. Until we frozen to death. We couldn't stand it no more. We were hungry, exhausted. We didn't care. We're desperate and we just didn't care what happened to us no more. So we decided to get out the river, and walking toward some buildings we heard Ukrainians say, Oh, three more Jews not killed? How comes? You know, we kept walking, walking. I don't know how we happened to -- we walked into a hospital, local hospital, happened to be a Jewish hospital. Pogrom was over. Whoever was killed was killed. Thousands of people were killed and they accepted us.

04:33:05

They fed us. They cleaned us, gave us some clothing and shelter and bed and asked us to work in the hospital. But I didn't know what happened to my family. This was a very close-nit family and I had to find out if they were still alive or not. I didn't know how to make contact with the family. So I decided to go back to Lvov, Lemberg, which was my university, and I thought we knew some Polish people there. Maybe somehow they heard something, what happened to my hometown at least. So again,

smuggling our way through, all three of us went back to the Lvov and I did visit one of the families. They didn't hear nothing but they say they will be able to transfer some of my message to the family if I know the address. But I didn't know the address. But there was no problem finding where the Jews are living now in Lublin. After a while, someone came to me, I was staying with those people, the Polish people. The ghetto was not fully forming yet at that time so Jews were moving around, not freely, but they could move around. They had to be at dusk in their quarters, you know. And a Polish fellow came to me and said my father contacted him to bring me back home. He was a cab driver who drove all night, only during the night, so he wouldn't be caught either. He had some false papers on some kind of Polish mission and I went with him back home, leaving my two friends behind, not knowing if we ever see each other, saying good-bye to each other. Driving at night, we arrived home. Of course, I found my family not in the original home anymore. They were moved to a ghetto area which was behind ... the old town, the Jews used live there before, was a gate entrance. You had to go, pass through, show your ID You go could to work through the gate again into the city. My father worked as an architect. Again, he worked for the German railroad, so right away I was a medical student. But he got me a job on the construction of the railroad as a medic. I had a white band with red cross on it. I didn't have nothing else with me. I could do nothing for anybody who got sick. I didn't know nothing about.

04:36:00

Anyway, I was not a doctor yet, but this was a way of surviving, you know. And with him every day to construction and I made a lot of contacts there with many Polish people. I contact some of my school friends and they were happy to see me I was still alive. They ask me what they can do for me. At that time I didn't know what they could do for me. We are not still in the situation very desperate yet ... and ... we were going through several selections what they used to call. Selection was the means of when the Germans coming to the ghetto. One night they arrive, maybe one in the morning. They want to have a grand piano. Where we going to get a grand piano? We were not allowed to have a grand piano. Remember, in '39 all the Jews have to give up all the musical instruments. So they didn't care where to get a piano. Buy it. Where you a going to buy a piano at one o'clock in the morning even if you have the money? So the people had to be taxes, I don't recall the sum of money needed, but early the morning they went to town and they bought a grand piano and delivered a grand piano to the Germans. So we got a reprieve. A month later another selection. People were not necessary for the German government to sustain the war machine were eliminated. They were selected left, and right, left and right, and whoever was not needed were disappeared actually. They took them by trucks and they left, no one knew where they went. We were fortunate. We were still together, the whole family until about April of 1942. In 1942 in April, the rumor was that the Germans are going to move all the Jews outside the city, there special quarters made for us. It's going to be like a summer home for the Jews there. Little gardens we could go till our soil, and

we still working for them. Whoever is working is going to be working. From about 60 or 70 thousand Jews there were only four thousand Jews left then. Mind you, that many Jews were eliminated during my absence when I went East. So I came back there was just about 4000 Jews. We had to march by the foot about 15 kilometers without belongings to new quarters. We took place the little -- village name was Majdan Tatarski.<sup>1</sup>

04:39:06

This was a little village of horse thieves and some peasants. They had a little cattle, like a pig or two, dogs, and you know, and they put the Poles and the Jewish in the apartment balconies. You could see a pig on the balcony and they were not very unhappy about it. They were not used to living in an apartment house, and the Jews were in a little town not far away from the city, about several kilometers away from the city, and this little town was surrounded by empty fields. So was at that time no one thought about it that. This was strategically figured out by the Germans because they won't be able to hide. There are all empty fields around this little town. Unbeknown to us they are building already a concentration camp, Majdanek, which was only three or four kilometers away from this area. Some of my fathers Polish friends were employed as carpenters, came back and told my father. They are building some there, something very suspicious. We are working on it. We don't know what is it. It is some kind of barracks, but maybe its for the German Army, for the soldier or so. But then they building something like ovens, or something. We don't know what it's for and some of the Polish people say, I bet you they crematorium to burn the Jews. And that's how the rumor started. But where you going to go? There is no place to go. And in January I think, January ... No, no I'm sorry, not January. November 9 was total liquidation of our ghetto. Early in the morning the Ukraine Army, not Army, the soldier and the policeman surrounded the ghetto with some Lithuanian policeman too, and they said everybody has to report at different gate and they will be deported to labor camps. That's all that was said. As my wife said in her statement before, my father built a little hiding place by doubling a wall through a hidden door. We could stay there in, only in standing position. This was not a hiding place for a long lasting type of escape or so, hiding. You could maybe hide there for a few hours or so, a day maybe and that is about all. We see the futility of the whole thing. Because the announcement you could hear through the loudspeakers while were hiding. Anybody found hiding after such and such a time, 7 am will be shot.

04:42:01

So your only time to escape now is to get out now. My parents decided to leave and go. They want me to save myself. I took Lucine my friend at that time to my hiding

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<sup>1</sup> **Majdan Tatarski**: or Maydan Tatarski.

place away from her parents because they had no place to hide at all. After we seen the futility of our hiding place there was no point in doing that, and my parents decided to go with the rest of the people. We escaped from this hiding place, went to the attic of the Jewish Administration Building where Lucine's father was still active there, and through the hole in the wall I see my parents and my sister walking with hundreds of people to unknown, to the concentration camp. That's the last sight of my parents I seen. I try to grab my sister to try maybe to escape together, but I didn't know how and where and when. She didn't want to leave my parents. My parents insisted I don't go with them, so I stayed with Lucine, not knowing what we going to do next. And the picture of my parents huddling, holding each other, embracing each other, and the snow falling down called November, early morning, never leave my life, always remember that picture. We still have about two hours time to the deadline. Her father bribed the Ukrainian guard some gold coins and the a fountain pen, a bottle of vodka I think, so he would just ignore us, not to look our way while we try to lift the barbed wire, sneak right under the wire, escape. That's what we did. One of the -- one, myself, my wife, her little brother was about eight or nine years old at that time. From under the wire we run away. We running zig zag fashion. Ukrainian guards and other guards are shooting after us but didn't hit us, and, after running for two, three kilometers we found a Polish peasant who was going home in a wagon, horse-driven wagon. He gave us a lift, you know. He probably suspected who we were because there was no other people in this area. He didn't said nothing then, nothing to us. He pretend that he didn't know nothing.

04:45:04

And where we go from here? No plan, no money, no documents of any kind. First thought was to go to a bishop's palace. This was not the bishop who was the principal at the high school, but the gardener at the bishop's palace. Their son was a friend of mine that I tutored in high school. We knock on their doors early in the morning. When his mother seen me, she cross herself. She said, My God, where is your mom and dad? I said, they left already. What are you doing here? We looking for shelter. Can you help me? She took us to greenhouse. It was nice and warm there but she said, look, you can only stay here until early in the morning because this was Sunday, because next Monday morning the workers coming in they find you hiding, they would denounce you to the Gestapo or the Polish police, and you know what they do with us they find you hiding here? They kill us all. So we stayed there. She fed us, gave me a coat and a jacket, of her husband. Her son was missing in the war. She didn't know where he was. He turned out to be later on in the British RAF. He survived the war, but she never forgot what I done for her son. He passed all the grade because I tutoring him, French, Latin, math, history and she felt very bad. She wanted to help but she was scared stiff and I understood. I don't know if situation be reversed how would I behave? Would I have the guts to hide those people under a death threat? In all honest, I don't know if I could do it. I did understand their motivation and their fears but was grateful, they kept me at least overnight to get our

thoughts together. And then I remember my dad's associate, a Polish fellow. My dad gave him all the shops. Give to him as a present since he couldn't keep it himself. So he inherit all the tools and the machinery, so on, and he not too far away from the bishop's palace. So, early in the morning before the workers arrive, we went there and knocked at the door again, and the same story. He crossed himself. My God, where's your dad? Told him the whole story again. He said, let's go right now through warehouse and nobody will see you.

4:47:59

So he hid us for several days there brought us a little food there, and he gave us names of people to contact in the Polish underground. Maybe they can do something for us. While I was waiting there hidden with her little brother, my wife, without documents, went to Warsaw by train, which was a life-threatening situation, to contact some people who knew how to get the documents. Mind you we have no money, no money. This was name of the game. You're not alive you have no money. She contact some people. She was directed to some hotel where the Polish underground was there and they were manufacturing false documents. Over there she met a friend of her father who was already ... domesticated, so to say. He had his documents. He lived on the Aryan side. He tried to seduce my wife, at that time not my wife yet. Tell her he would help her only if she would stay with him. Of course, she rejected the whole thing and she left him. She came home back with false documents. Now, how do you move from a hiding place broad daylight if your hometown, not too big of a town, but people might know you and you didn't know who was going to denounce you? We couldn't go to the railroad station. The station was surrounded by police and Gestapo, but at least we've had documents, so we are hire a driver with a buggy whom took us to next little town which was about 15 kilometers away, at night. How this man never suspected. If he did suspect, he never said a word to us. Who we were. It was obvious, you know. We were like odd people, odd couple. Myself, little boy didn't look like our son. Too young for that. It was unusual situation so anyone with common sense would know who we are. Arriving in the darkness in a little railroad station and we boarded a train. I was very upset, very nervous on the train. I had documents, but, they're false documents. And after maybe two, three hours ride on the train, all of a sudden train stops. Doors open. German Gestapo, SS walks into each car. Asks documents, everybody's documents.

04:51:00

Well, we are not sitting together. I pretend I do not know my wife, my Lucine, I mean, my friend, in front at that time in case one is caught, maybe other escape and little boy sitting with her, just in case, her brother. And then one of the officers comes in and points out to young man. You, you, you, you. One of them was me. This is it. But there were mostly Polish people there. I was kind of confused. What's going on? Well, they were catching Poles too to send to labor camps you know, to send most to

Germany. Get out they say. So I got out. I line up with a few other people. Maybe one of us young guys -- and go with me. I thought we shot probably. So what happened? We went to the first car and we start going to car to car, through the whole train. They were liquidating all the ... tobacco, food, hams, meats, that the Polish peasants were smuggling to the city to sell in the black market. And we are the people that supposed to carry all the stuff to their cars. And this took about two hours, and at the end this, he gave me a big ham. Payola, and back to the train. And so went back to the train and arrived at midnight in Warsaw. You know by now that we were accosted by a rickshaw driver. We request to go to same hotel that my wife knew about when she got the false papers. This was the headquarters of the refugees. How the Gestapo didn't know about it yet I don't know, but it's the only place we knew of. The ultimate plan was either to make contact to stay in Warsaw proper on the Aryan side, or if not, go back to the Warsaw ghetto which was still big and maybe look up her uncle who lived there. Maybe he be instrumental in assisting us. So we gave him the address where to go but we see he is going to the opposite direction and we ask him, where you going? He said, oh, you know where I am going. I'm going to, you know, I'm going to Aleja Szucha<sup>2</sup> which is known headquarters of the German Gestapo. Why you take us there? You filthy Jews. I'm going to be paid for you very well. And I said, how much can you get paid for that? So we didn't deny the fact anymore. We didn't admit who we are, but it was obvious. I said, look, take whatever we have. We don't have much but whatever we have is yours. What you going to gain? They going to kill us. So, he took my coat, my boots, left me with my socks, scarf, a fountain pen, little money we had, not much, took her purse, everything.

04:54:04

Left us in the middle of the street past midnight, that if we could be caught by any patrol, you know, and killed right away. Anybody moved after midnight was a game, you know, they were shooting. They didn't ask any questions, and we found a way to this hotel. Over there we made contact with some people. We see we have no way of staying outside the ghetto, so we contact a man who was involved in the labor groups going in and out of ghetto. One of them was a friend of my father. He was from my hometown. He knew my father very well. So when he recognized me he said, come in at four o'clock. I will take you to the ghetto when the group is finished working. We arrived there at four o'clock. He took us all, my wife, her little brother, myself to the ghetto. Was a horrifying sign in the picture of the ghetto. I'm not used to it. Even in our ghetto in Lublin, the situation was not as desperate as in Warsaw. There was about 60,000 Jewish living in that ghetto. There were many dead bodies lying in the street covered with newspapers. The stench of the bodies, you know, flies, and people bypassing them like nothing happened, just macabre sight. This is what we came to ghetto for. People dying like this. Better off dead, being shot by German. We found our way to Lucine's Uncle's house. He was very well-to-do person. He was employed

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<sup>2</sup> Alea Szuch A. Szucha Avenue, or Lane.

by American Joint Committee before the war in a very high position. Very wealthy person. They had a little baby girl so we said look, we don't have no place to go. We have no money. We have nothing. Could you help us. So he said, well, I don't know temporarily, why don't you sleep on the floor in the kitchen and Lucine -- her name was Estera at that time -- you sleep upstairs in the attic. He never asked us if we wanted to eat anything or not. We were hungry and we were depressed and devastated morally and broken down, sleeping at nights. Maybe 2:00, 3:00 AM I seen candlelight. I seen waking up at night her uncle and her aunt eating food, you know. They never ask us if we want to eat anything. They didn't want to share the food with us. There was not much food at that time, so they tried not to share it with us. I couldn't blame them really, you know.

04:57:04

But we seen how can we live like this, you know. Then they got the bright idea you cannot live under one roof without being married. Well, Lucine was only 16 years old and he said we have a friend who is a rabbi, a friend of your father -- meaning Lucine -- I'll try to contact. Maybe he marry you since he knew your father. Turned out he was sick at that time with typhus, and so he found another different young rabbi. Without having a ring, without having any proper clothes or suit or a dress for her, we got married. There was a young couple before us. Somehow they got us bottle of wine. We got married. We toast each other with their wine and after the wedding ceremony, which only the two people, the previous couple witnessed and also her cousin -- which survived the war too, he witnessed so till today were the only ones witnessed our wedding. Leaving the ceremony, she run into a lady who recognize her, friend of her mother, who was just out with her husband. So she said, we just got married but no rings. She took the ring off her finger. Why don't you take my ring? Maybe bring you good luck, and she give her ring. And this was our honeymoon in the Warsaw Ghetto. We decided to move out of her Uncle's house. We had to really. We found one little rooms, cramped, with other people. They allowed us to use one bed. There were no mattresses. You just improvise by taking a sack, a canvas type of sack filled with straw and put some towels over it and no sheets. That was your bed and, but I had contacts.

04:59:22

End of Tape #1



Tape #2

05:00:32

Q: Let's got back and tell me the incident in the garage.

A: I have to regress and recall some incidents I would like to mention maybe. When I came back from Zolochiv back to Lvov or Lemberg, when before I met my three other colleagues from medical school. During the one occasion when I was I was caught by my Ukrainian colleague and he asked me -- he forces me to clean the pub, the floor etcetera. One of the days I went to work they asked some people, who's a mechanic? This was a good profession to be in. Without hesitation I raised my hand. I mechanic. I never touched anything mechanical in my life, but many people were doing the same thing, and they took me on the side and one mechanic came in, turned out to be a Jewish boy too, and ten of us we took the police garage. They gave us some quarter there, a bunk bed. They fed us good and asked us to work on their cars. I admitted to the man, chief mechanic, that I have no blind idea about mechanics. He said, shhh, be quiet. We'll help you what we can. I'll tell you what to do. Just unscrew this portion and then oil this part and so on. We'll tell you what to do so don't worry about it. I'm running the show. You do what I tell you to do. Was very nice about it. And so I was there for maybe a few weeks. We're fed well. We're not beaten. The Germans usually say hello to us. The German Police, it was not the Gestapo, this was not the SS. And one day during the evening, one of the German officers approached me in the garage and took me on the side and asked me, is it true you're medical student? And I said, yes. He said look, I want you to be aware of it that as of tonight they're going to liquidate the garage and they'll take you all of you away.

05:03:04

I don't know where, you won't stay here. I want you to know there's a stable on the left wing of the building there, and I will give you something to carry for me to the stable now and I will meet you over there. I was very puzzled with the whole thing but you do obey orders. I went there, I followed him, went there with this big box. Then he show me behind where the horses are placed. there's a little hiding place. You stay there. They will never find you there and at night after they liquidate this garage, and so on. You can stay until next day or so and somehow you have to get out of here and go to town and I'm bring you something. He went, came back maybe a few minutes later, and brought me a whole chicken. He said, that's all I can do for you. I can do nothing else for you. I'm so sorry, and he left. I don't know his name, don't know who he was. I know he was a doctor in German Army. He was not a Gestapo, he was not an SS man, he was not a policeman. He was a physician, very young. In his upper 20s maybe. That's the only benevolent act I have encountered from Germans.

Q: Did you hear something that night while you were hiding there?

A: I heard some voices only, noises, but not very loud, and then everything was quiet. And the next morning gates were opening and closing and cars trucks moving out, and the whole regiment of the police left the compound and there was no one left behind, and I waited until night, following night, and I through the fence I find my way back to the city, to the ghetto area. And I approach some of the Jewish people there and they let me sleep in one the rooms there, and that's next day I went out to the ghetto with the work battalion. And I approached one the Polish people that I knew from before who could contact my father, which I mentioned before. This was on one episode. Then when I came back home and prior to liquidation of the ghetto few days before, I did try to escape. We did know that the ghetto was going to be liquidated completely and I tried to run away, and going under the barbed wire the Ukraine were shooting at me. I was running like a wild beast and they wouldn't have caught me if not the police dog. He grabbed, forgive my French, my buttock, ripped a piece of flesh out and my calf and subdue me. I was bleeding all over. Then I was caught by the Ukrainian guards and they brought me back to the ghetto and handed over to the Gestapo, and they start beating me up.

05:06:19

They were beating me, standing behind me with a -- we call it a peitsche.<sup>3</sup> What it was is actually is a handle made out of leather, hard leather, at end of which like a whip. Actually was a hard, metal ball with points on it. Standing behind me he was hitting me from the front so it was injured, my face actually standing behind me. And I have a little scar and I ... until today I am impaired vision in left eye ... was bleeding from the eye. But I couldn't go to a doctor of course. I will stay like this until two days later until finally, when finally the ghetto was liquidated and I escape again. With Lucine, my future wife and her little brother under a barbed wire, and you know the story then that we were hiding in the bishop palace, which I mentioned before, then went to my father's friend who hid us in a warehouse. Then Lucine went to Warsaw to secure some papers for us. Then she come back. We had the papers all together but no money. Lucine remembered her parents left some jewelry and silver, a candelabra with a neighbor and a friend who lived in the same house. So we went to her and Lucine approached her. Would you mind at least give us one candelabra so we can sell it, maybe find a way to Warsaw so -- and if we don't survive, whatever else my family gave you is yours. She said, well, but, you know, I don't have it in my home everything. Is hidden in the attic and I cannot go to the attic tonight because the neighbors would be very suspicious, what am I doing in the attic. But come tomorrow and I will prepare everything for you. I will wrap it so people won't know what it is. Come back tomorrow at two o'clock. Having a suspicious mind, and you felt a certain extra instinct, like a hunted animal, I just felt maybe the whole thing sounded fishy. Instead of coming two o'clock, we approached the area about noon time, 12:30. Now,

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<sup>3</sup>peitsche: whip.

we're locating ourself across the street from the main entrance to the building that the lady lived, and this area was bombed out, lot of ruins, you know. You could hide very easily there, and behind us was a little street and a small apartment like a street apartment.

05:09:03

Actually, that my colleague from high school lived there. His father was a shoemaker. I was tempted to go there, now stay there maybe and watch the house, but then I didn't want to expose them to this kind of danger either. So I decided to wait on the street behind the ruin, and sure enough about one o'clock we see two police cars pulling over to the curb of the house and two or four Gestapo people got out of the cars and rushed up stairs. Within about 15, 20 minutes they came out and they split. Two people went one way, the other two people went the other way, looking for us. I assume they meant us. We didn't wait too long there. We knew she had denounced us to the Gestapo because of a silver candelabra. And I just remember now talking about Judas sold Jesus and the situation was so analogous to it, you know. But anyway, we didn't know what to do so we run into my friend's house. The parents recognized me right away, what happened? I told them what happened very briefly and shortly. Gestapo looking for us. What going to do? And she very, old lady, you take your coat off. Here, take your shoe off and start putting nails in your shoe, in my heel. She gave a apron to my wife and she was cooking something on the iron stove. Said, you pretend you cooking dinner right now and your little brother, put him to bed. He's asleep. Now we'll cover him up with blankets. There was a curtain separating a one room apartment, a curtain separating the one bed area from the work place and the kitchen, and this old lady took a blanket outside, start dusting the blanket, calmly, quietly. All of a sudden, two people approach her. Did you see Jews here? So she pretended. Jews here? There no Jews here. They all dead. There not nobody here. Whose house is that? My house. My father's working here. My husband's client is here and my daughter is there. She cooking right now, dinner, and they walked inside to see. Didn't ask for the paper, although we did have documents, false. They looked like they didn't believe they would be fresh enough to be so blatantly, you know, or stupid or to stay right near the scene of a crime. And they left the house and start looking for us again. Of course, we didn't wait too much longer. We took off. That's when we went back to the warehouse the same night we took that horse and buggy type of thing to the near railroad station near Lublin.

05:12:12

Well, going back to the ghetto area. So, we lived in one little room and from there I had to go on to work detail. Each morning a group of maybe 40, 50 people gathered in the ghetto area with a leader. The leader was a friend of my father, and with him we're going to the railroad station over there. We're unloading cars. They didn't beat us there but didn't pay us either. Didn't feed us either. The only pay off was I could

take as much coal as I could carry on my back as my payment for days work. So I of course, I put as much coal as I could. I was bent over on all fours practically, carrying the big sack of coal back to the ghetto. It was cold but we couldn't afford to heat our apartment because this was all our food depend on the coal. I was carrying to the third story with some the richer, older Jews you know. We were buying the coal. With the money we collected for the coal we could buy some food. We lived on carrots, cabbage, turnip from which, of course, we got diarrheas. We were sick, stomachaches. There was no bread. We couldn't afford any bread. There was nothing, nothing cooked. There was nothing to cook. And on one of my trips I notice a familiar face in a uniform of a Polish railroad man and I thought, I know this face. And as I said before, you develop a certain instinct. You just aware of your surroundings. Who is around there. Who, is he a friend or an enemy? And finally I approach him. I start working the area he was standing. I said do I know you? Aren't you from Lublin. He looks at me. He said, who are you? I said my name, it is Horn from Lublin. He said, yes. Don't show any emotion. I know you, yes, I am so and so. His name was Lowloc Rice (ph). I said, I know, I thought that was you. He said, pretend we don't know each other, and let's not talk to long. What are you doing here? I said I wanted to get out. What can I do to get out? So he said, why don't you come tomorrow again same time and we talk in details. I can't talk to you now right now. I couldn't wait. I came back to the ghetto with my sack of coal. Next day early in the morning went back to work in the detail group and sure enough he was there. And he said, I can get you out of the ghetto but it cost a lot of money. I said, I don't have no money but, you know what before I left the ghetto in Lublin, my father show me a spot in his shop that he buried a case.

05:15:22

It's a steel case with jewelry, gold, watches, bracelets, my family's jewelry, and one of our friends who was a jeweler. Whoever survivor the war, if ever then you can live the rest of your life on it. I remember that spot. That's the only thing I know. I hope it's still there, but I cannot give guarantees. But I know this spot. If you were willing to talk to your people and they are willing to take a chance, whatever we will find, half is theirs. I need only a little bit to survive. You can take more than half. I will leave it up to you, how much you want. How much you leave to us. He said, let me talk to my people. I said, who are your people? Well, I can tell you that that's Polish Underground, Armia Krajowa, or Home Army. They need money to buy ammunition, arms, etcetera. I don't know if they will go for this kind of deal because it is complicated, but if they will, I'll let you know. I will be here in a day or two. But I don't know what day, but I'll find you. So I was coming to work every day with the hope, my dreams kind of encouraged, maybe he'll find him. Maybe is something work out. Otherwise, I see the doom. Sure enough, one day he's there, again same spot in the uniform. He said, I talk to my people. They went for it, and on such and such a day you lead off. Your leader of your group is part of us. He part of us, our group too. He knows all about it. So you will be snatched too. Make sure your wife goes to work

too and her little brother too. Children were going to work too. No one question anything. And sure enough, at that given early in the morning by carrying a sack of coal to the side, we're snatched by a group of people from the Polish Underground waiting with a car, and then a streetcar. We change streetcars to different streetcar and people were changing to our guards. Our guards were changing. They all armed in case they caught us there would be a fight. And we arrived to a house, to an apartment house which one of the -- not headquarters but one the apartments were the Polish Home Army was meeting was meeting there.

05:18:00

I was surprised. We found maybe 10 or 12 Jewish people there, hiding. I found out that he is helping lot of Jewish people. I looked at it and I met this man. I asked him why do you do that. The first man I seen so definitely show the effort and the risk to help the Jewish people. Why? You like the Jews? He said, no I don't. So why do you do that? Well, I show you. He took me another room. Now listen to it. And I listened. There were noises over the wall, people talking Yiddish, arguing and fighting with each other. He said, what kind of people are you? I'm risking my life and here they start I fighting about, they fighting about stupid things and the neighbors they hear those things. They denounce it and we're all dead. I never see people in danger who do this kind of thing. I don't respect your people. I have no answer to it. What can I say. They're old orthodox people. For some reason they felt they should continue their orthodoxy, their sacred needs. They want kosher food. You know, where you going to get kosher food there? One of the men died, older man died, but he was very religious. What the Home Army did, they put him in a an orthodox kind of a canvas sack. That's how the Jews are buried you know. Not in the coffins, and they threw him over the wall in the Jewish cemetery. They didn't bury him there and but left him there in the Jewish cemetery. And I think this was more than anybody could expect. But this was just one the examples what those people did for us. And, they described the whole plan what we're going to do. First thing, I got the papers as a railroad man and they give me a uniform with a cap, a jacket, slacks, you know, the typical railroad uniform, with documents employed by railroads in Warsaw. And he said, you going to go with a group of few people. One is a Volkes Deutch and I don't follow, Volkes Deutch is a German who lived in Poland for generations, but he still did not lose his German identity. He could be Polish patriot. And this was, one was by your German. He was just an excuse to get all the country German Army. He knew where they are and he had a special privileges as a German citizen really, and he pretend to be always humiliated by the Poles and so on. So it's special right and privileges.

05:21:02

He was our protector on the trip on the rail to Lublin with guarded by two Polish Underground people, armed all the time. We arrived at the scene and sure enough, the location used to be a shack was a street now. The shack was raised. To explain a little

bit yet more about the situation, Lublin was at site where the Jewish POWs from the Polish, from the former Polish Army were stationed there, and they were doing the dirty work for the Germans. They were digging in the ghetto. They are leveling the ghetto. They were removing the door-frames, the window-frames, the door, the hinges, where the Jews were hiding gold and coins, and jewelry, diamonds, everything they could. And they were taking everything apart piece by piece, and they leveled that hut, the little shack. There was nothing ... but I seen the spot. I knew the spot right way. And I said, I'm going to stand up on that spot. That's where it is. But he said, that's a street now. He said, well, okay. We'll come back tomorrow and we left. He took me to one of the people home. I stay overnight. They fed me. They treated me nicely, and next day they took me back to same location. What do I see? The whole street is blocked off, detour. The signs of detour. Broad daylight. A tent is erected middle of the street and the a sign, and A big roll of cable standing next to the tent, the German Post Office and telegraph. And people, helmets and overcoats are digging in the middle of the street right where this thing is, the understand was when they find the case that I described. They lit a torch and this was a sign that they found it. Now, I was hiding across the street and behind a door there was a little window there. There were people passing. It was a big apartment house and I was standing there, and looking through a little window there and watching if they lit the torch. When this was torch be lit, this was a sign for me to get out and mean they got the case and they won't need me no more. They will take me away and we'll go back home and, I am of course, I'm standing there, very nervous, very upset. Don't forget, this my hometown. I could run into somebody I knew, somebody knew me, and this would be the end of it. But I was guarded people with arms, you know, so I knew it wouldn't be easy for anybody, so they told me not to worry about it.

05:24:09

If this happen that Poles recognize me they will fix him right away. Germans don't enter this area anyway. They were not concerned at all, but I was nervous and maybe took about two, two and a half hours, I see them stopping working and one of them reaching down and then straightening out and taking a torch and lighting a torch. And I was sweating and I thought that was a sign. I was coming out right into the middle of the street and here is the case opened up, completely empty, open up empty. I don't know what to say, but at least I knew this was true. They knew that I didn't lie to them. But where's the gold? Where's all the goodies? We found out later on that the Jewish POWs were digging everywhere and they opened this thing and left the empty case there and closed it up. They didn't report to the Germans cause the same day, understand, people are selling watches in the camps of the POWs. Watches and gold they were selling everywhere. Well, this was the end of our trip and I knew we were going back to the ghetto because they did not receive what they are supposed to get. On the way back home on the train we talked about it. We had one compartment. There was no other people there and I said, well, obviously we cannot afford to be out of the ghetto. We cannot pay you people. I want you to understanding that I didn't lie

to you about it. Yes, we know that. You going to send me back to the ghetto? He said no. Why? What would you do in the ghetto? You would perish in the ghetto. Maybe you can help us here on this side. You can work for your upkeep. We'll discuss the detail and come home. So we turn back to Warsaw. And you know the rest of the story. That important fact I omitted that we got married in Warsaw Ghetto and my wife, with the help of the Polish Underground got us a little apartment, one little room. I was hiding there. I did go to a hiding place in the washroom, boarding up the walls of the washroom and creating a hiding door. When you lifted the boards of the wall was a secret door that you open up, and behind the door was a little hiding place accommodating maybe eight or nine people. I built a little bed so we could lie there and so on. Now this part of the building was totally destroyed during the bombing of Warsaw, so there was a way we could have run away from this hiding place any case of a danger, if someone entered the front of the apartment, with a signal which was dissident in the beginning. In case any danger, Lucine would knock on the door twice, and we would know to run. We did have an emergency address where to go, another hiding place through the Home Army, hiding Jews in case of different location. In case of emergency we could find a spot there until situation would clear up. And sure enough one day the janitor became suspicious because Lucine was bringing too much food in her little basket and he thought two women living in that apartment, and she bringing food galore, and he notified the Polish police. One day when she came in from work -- and what kind of work she was doing. She was selling women's nets on the market, flea market and so on. Nobody knew she was Jewish, of course. She had good looks as an Aryan person. She seen policeman at the door. She didn't want to go in so she went to a store in the same building, grocery store. First thing she did was took the key out of her purse. She drop the key in a sack of beans and while doing this the policeman entered the store and arrested her. They when through her purse and ask her where her key. Oh, I guess I lost it. They look on the street everywhere, they couldn't find it. Which is your apartment? What do you want? What do you want? We understand you are hiding Jews. You are accused by the janitor that you bring too much food for two people there. We want to see your apartment. This conversation was very loud going on while they entering the apartment on the third floor, and on stairway we could hear the steps of the boots and the noise and the argumentation. And then my wife said, there is nobody there unless my aunt is. She working too. She is not home yet but let me knock on the door. She knocked twice which was danger signal. And we also had some rabbits in the apartment, just in case some neighbors hear some footsteps, we can always say the rabbits walking around. And they could hear some noise in there. Is there somebody in there? Well, maybe the rabbits. So they broke down the door. They look over. They went to the washroom. They did not discover our hiding place at all, although we are not there no more. They seen the rabbits and said, what are you talking about. And they left, but they took per purse with her, took her documents with them and she stayed without any papers which was like a death sentence.

She discussed this thing with our friends from the Polish Home Army, and they suggested that one of them would go with her to get a copy of it. And she went to the office. Behind was a gentlemen armed just in case. Without any difficulty she got a copy of ID and she left, no problem. During one of the trips on the streetcar they stole her purse again. She lost the documents again. Same history repeat itself. She went back there and got ID, no problem. I had to occasionally had to run from place to place and I did need ID too, so the Home Army organized arranged for me to go with them to the main office there with my real birth certificate of a person that passed away, young man was two years younger than I really was. His name was Wojick (ph), Felix Wojick. So I assumed his identity. So this birth certificate, I entered the main office and I received a ID without any difficulty whatsoever, with two guards behind me. No one suspected anything and now I was equipped with real documents, and they could check it I was registered everywhere and I was not a Jew anymore. But I had more Semitic looks than Lucine and with a man you know, it was not difficult to suspect something, stop him, put him aside, and take his pants down and know who we are. Because only Jewish man was circumcised and this was the danger spot, but I tried to avoid situation like this. So Lucine was working for the Polish Underground actually, indirectly, and all the hiding Jews were doing the same thing. They were taught how to make woman's hair nets. It was a fashionable thing at that time to do. They were taking the car inner-tubes or truck inner-tubes and cutting into small strips, very narrow strips. Then they could buy white silk and then they are dyeing the silk different colors. Was it a gold, gray, brown or black or navy blue. So making any net color you desire with the orders they receive. So I was taught by the group how to wrap this little string of rubber with a silk. So I was making the elastic, actually. The other group people were making the nets themselves by hand of course.

05:33:00

And somebody design a little cardboard paper how to wrap it around and look very professionally. And Lucine, as having good Aryan looks with another lady, also Jewish person, good looks. They were spreading all over the city, market places and flea markets etcetera, and our life was more or less stable from then on except I was like a prisoner in my own house which I readily assumed and took. I was taught how to do those things and finally our benefactor said, why do you start doing these too and do it on the side and Lucine can sell for you too. So be it. We did. We started to accumulated a little money. We felt a little more comfortable. We were not that poor no more.

Q: Was Lucine's brother still living with you then or is this after. What was it like hiding with him in that little cubicle?

A: It was very pathetic. He was little boy. He was like a prisoner. It was hard for him to understand why he was hiding. He knew he was Jewish. He knew he could not show



his face although he had good Aryan looks, but as a kid they could pull his pants down, they know who he is. So was a sad thing to look at, him to be in hiding all the time. He was pale. He was deprived of the sunlight, sunshine. He couldn't play. I tried to be very near him, put arms around him. He miss his parents. He was at the age he understood. He lost his parents and you couldn't replace it, of course. There were times that he was questioning, asking if he ever going to see them again and so on. He was still a child and on the other hand he was a grown-up, above his age. The political situation just forced the people to grow up very fast. So he was aware of what really the score is and on the other hand, he was only eight or nine years old you know. I couldn't replace his father. I was not old enough to act like a father, but I tried to do best I could. I try to be the disciplinarian. Sometimes he want to do certain things he want to do and so I say you cannot do it and I had to be firm. And he tell, me you're not my father. I said, I know. I don't pretend to father. But you cannot do it because all of us would be in danger, you including. So it was a very tragic thing to see him going through all this thing.

05:36:00

I did not mention that during one of those days that we were together, that we seen, when we run away from the apartment that the policemen arrested Lucine we went to emergency hiding place. That's the time that Lucine run to one of her friends, who turned out to be the mistress one of the German Gestapo man. She knew she was Jewish. She said, what you doing here? She was afraid to tell anything, because we didn't know -- Lucine didn't know who she is now. Is she pro Gestapo or is she going to tell everything where we are and then Gestapo come arrest us all. But she finally told her, look, I am doing this because I am desperate myself to save my life you know. But you know I remember your parents. I can help you maybe. So she, Lucine, told her the whole story that the problem now is we don't have apartment anymore. We stay only a few days. We didn't know what to do. Next we have brothers with us and she said, you know, what this was is this Hotel Polski, Polish hotel, that the Germans with a lot of money taking people and they go to southern France. The letters arrive from those people who went on transport to southern France, writing back to their relatives in Warsaw. Right at the sea, sunning ourself. Life is different. We waiting for visas to go to South America to North America, to the United States and I hope you can join us. And Lucine seen those letters and they are truly letters, except that these people didn't realize this whole thing was a trick. When we wanted to register they said, well, the next transport not going to a week later, but this time it was totally full but if you come up with like \$5,000 actually, and we didn't have this kind of money. So talking to her friend we said, we cannot afford this kind of thing. We want to go. She said but, you know what, your little brother can take with you for nothing, but you have to come up with money. So we said we have no money. So she promised to take her little boy with her, and on given day through, going through certain stages of hiding and before reaching that hotel because you went in there was only Jewish people going in and who was going out, only Jewish people. You didn't

know if Gestapo waiting outside or not so it was a tricky thing to get in and get out of this hotel and one day we delivered the little boy to this young lady who was very nice, and took him under her protection on that trip to so called paradise, southern France. We did receive one postcard from a train in Germany someplace that everything fine from him. It was his writing.

05:39:03

But did he really write what he meant? Was he forced to write it? We don't know, but this was the last thing we ever heard. The final thing what we heard actually after of the war, that the whole train went to Northern Germany near Hannover someplace to a concentration camp and they were all eliminated. So, the whole thing was a stage, a plot from the Germans who knew that some Jews were hiding and they paying for the safety to Polish people, but some running out of money so they had to sooner or later get out. So they have some money left they could bribe their way by paying to go on transport to Southern France. Unfortunately, we couldn't go. We had no money, not that kind of money. So we stayed without her little brother and we assumed the worst because we didn't hear nothing for months to come. We suspected he probably perished, but for sure we didn't know at that time. Life was going on and Lucine was selling her hair nets. I making the hair net and off and on we lost our hiding place due to some suspicions that we had, maybe unfounded, but you couldn't take a chance. So we jumped from one place to another one, always in contact with other hiding Jews, and they had our name and addresses and we had theirs in case their apartment was suspected of being not in order they run to us. And one day one of her schooling girlfriends notify Lucine that her apartment is no good and her husband is going to go to Polish Partisan, but he has to wait a few days and needs shelter. So we took him to our house, our apartment. He slept to with us, one bed, all three of us. And two days later he left us and went to Polish Underground. I understand he perished there and his wife perished too. So we one day we looking again for another apartment. This was a constant situation every few months we looking for another apartment because people are not stupid and they suspect something and if unfounded even, they might suspect it and you can't take a chance. They might call the police or so. One day she met a lady who was a nanny to one of her Jewish boyfriends when she was little yet, and she knew that the lady recognize her already. And they hug and kiss and so and she was a widow. They was peddling some ham, bacon, you know, from store to store. She had one room apartment, little kitchenette, that's all. Lucine told her we're without apartment. She said, why you don't come to me?

05:42:01

She said yea, but, you know who we are? Oh, yes, I know who you are. You know what we doing? Oh yes I know what your doing but, I have to be paid for it. We have little money. What will this cost us? Normally reasonable cost us about 50 to 100 Zlotys per month, and I don't remember. I think we paid her 5 or 600 Zlotys. I'm not

sure exactly the amount. That's what she requested. She was very happy to get that kind of money. She was struggling economically. So we moved in. Move in, we didn't have nothing to move in with. A coat, a jacket, a pair of shoes, and I move my little factory with me. I was making those little hair nets, producing. Lucine was selling it. Now, we have to think about safety. I don't flush the toilet because both ladies, Lucine and this house-lady, were working so I couldn't walk around. I couldn't flush the toilet. I waiting until they came back home not to create suspicious. Floors were wooden. You afraid to put your weight down because the floors were squeaking. Be very, very, careful. I used to walk on the board next to the wall where the floor was more solid and the planks wooden floor planks were not as flexible so without creating a noise. Then this was in the corner of the room, there was a ceramic heater. I don't if you're familiar with European heating system. It's made out of ceramic tiles, squares up to the ceiling almost, and connected to the chimney, and you were heating with coal there. There was a little door, metal door you put your wood or coal this was. Well, I decided to do to hollow out that stove. I disassemble the whole stove. Lucine would bring me clay each day, a little bit in a bag, a little bag. I use a fork and a knife to disassemble without cracking the tiles. Don't forget this was old stove, and from the base on I rebuild the whole stove using clay and water. And I remove the top, the surface, the ceramic tile and I made a wooden planking and put the tile on top of the wooden planking so I would get cover. But you have to heat it so what are you going to do. So we bought a little iron stove with a pipe. The pipe was going right in the middle of the stove into the chimney. There was a little stool and a table next to the stove in case of emergency. I could step on the stool on the table inside the stove. I was sitting like on horseback on the pipe. Only thing I forgot not being professional, what am I going to do if the pipe is going to be hot because the stove is being used for cooking?

05:45:22

Didn't think about it and I didn't think about the possible gases emanating from this contraption. I was not a scientist. I'm not a professional bricklayer or stove layer, whatever. But it served purpose and I hope I would never have to use it. All of a sudden one day we find out that the landlady had a cousin in the village near Warsaw, who one day came in drunk, total drunk, and when he knocked at the door, I had only maybe a minute time to get into the stove. I got in the stove. He came in. They tried to get rid of him, he was so drunk they couldn't. Oh, no. I stay here overnight. I go home tomorrow. So I stayed in the stove all night. When he left following morning, I was totally unconscious, overcome by fumes. They couldn't call a doctor. They couldn't pull me out because very awkward, was way up top to the ceiling. They were two women, one old lady. Lucine was young but alone she couldn't do. I was a heavyweight person and I started moving a little bit, but I was semiconscious and I got out of that stove and they try to breathe in my mouth, artificial respiration, springing water, splashing water on me, and so on, and I come to it and I recovered. This was my first experience in hiding place like this. The other experience, I had,

another cousin, a woman came one day with a little poodle or a dog, small dog. I had no time to get to the stove. There was a cabinet against the wall so I hid in cabinet behind coats and so on. All of a sudden, that little poodle start barking, coming toward the cabinet and barking and barking and barking. Didn't want to leave, and this cousin of this house-lady said, what are you barking? What do you see in that cabinet? Oh, I probably have a little ham there. I'm peddling ham, and so on. He probably want this. So she brought a piece of ham to the dog, give him the ham and he ate it and stopped barking. And there were few episodes like this where I was hiding. But each time I escape without any problems. Until one day our benefactor from the Home Army came to me and said to me, be prepared because the Polish Underground is staging an uprising. In the meantime, prior to this of course, we're located next to the former ghetto. We see the ghetto burning.

05:48:02

We see people dancing and is laughing outside the ghetto walls saying the Jewish bed bugs are frying. Finally, we got rid of them and so on, you know. I didn't hear it myself. I just heard the noise. I heard the explosions in the ghetto. This was the Jewish uprising and we didn't hear no cries. Nothing, just explosions, shots, and then the fire and eventually of course, after almost what? Less than a month, the whole ghetto uprising, went under and the Germans sealed up the area and there was no more ghetto. Then our captain came and said you better start storing some food because there is going to be uprising Warsaw proper. We don't be able to get anything at all. If you have any money left, any savings or so, buy something for it because the money will be worth nothing. Prior to this, he came to us once and he took a loan from us. He needed money to transport some Jewish people. He had no money to save them. So he was selling whatever he could, his own things to pay for the upkeep of those people. We gave him the money. He returned the money to us eventually. So Lucine bought some rings that's all you could buy in the jeweler stores. You couldn't buy nothing else but wedding rings. We ended up with several, maybe 10 or 11 rings which we could not get rid of afterwards. After the war they are worth practically nothing. The uprising started. Our Polish captain said, I want you to be part of our group. We won't ask you to fight directly for us, it's not your fight. I said, your fight is my fight. You saved my life. Whatever you want me to do, I will do. We need somebody to attack the German warehouses to steal the provisions, food for our soldiers and so on. It's under fire. And, I agreed to it immediately, and at night we're a group of five, six people from the Home Army ,Underground don't forget the basements were connected to each house next to each other. They cut through the walls of each house so we did not have to be on the surface, which was deadly, but underground we moving the whole underground city. We moving from one end of Warsaw to the other end underground. And that's how we knew which was the exit where to go, where the warehouses were and when we grabbed the supplies, what we could of course, we didn't have no transportation. All on our backs, you know, and pockets, pants, hands, you tied to your belt, whatever you could.

05:51:01

We disappear in the underground. The German looking for us and couldn't find us. We disappear. Then that's how we brought the supplies for the fighting boys you know. Then the Germans seen that the uprising is continuing and decided to do more drastic type of move and they decided to bomb the city. In the meantime, the political situation change all bad. We already knew that the Soviet troops on the other side of Wisla River, which the eastern part of Warsaw.<sup>4</sup> The name is Prague, like city of Prague in Czechoslovakia. People were hiding there that were liberated. We on the western part were not liberated yet. Some Jews thought that in case they have to die now they try to swim through the Wisla River on the other side going east, and they caught by the German fire of course. Some of them try to support themselves with their hands under the bridge, holding on to different pipes and cables, only holding on with their hands cross the bridge underneath to reach the other side, and some of them succeeded. Some of our friends did succeed to do that. It requires a tremendous physical strength to do that unless you accustomed to it. And many people undernourished and weak and so on couldn't do it. Even swimming through the Wisla River in the part of Warsaw which was pretty wide and deep was suicidal, so we wouldn't dare. So we took our fate the way it is. So the German troops start to bombing the city and they done it systematically, street after street, so we knew which street bomb today, so we knew which street would be bombed tomorrow. So running from one type of a block to another block, but the bombing caught up with us finally. We are at our home, our home, our apartment that we stay with the Polish lady which I mentioned before selling ham and etcetera, etcetera. The bomb hit one of our wings and the whole stairway collapsed. Lucine was upstairs. She went right onto the main floor under the rubble. I couldn't get to the other side to save her so I took a plank, a wide plank, maybe a foot wide. It was a corner wing and so I put one end of the plank on the window frame, the other plank was four story and the other window, and all my fours I crossed from one wing to the other one, not looking down. Because if I look down I probably get dizzy and go down, and I was able to reach her area and recover her by pulling her.

05:54:07

I see her legs sticking out and by pulling her, debris and bricks and cement and piece of wood and so on. She sustained fairly intensive injury and her whole right side of the face, ear, neck, chest, breast, right side of abdomen, was scraped from falling debris and so on. Bleeding so on, I was wounded in the mean time. I don't know what from. It was a piece of shrapnel I thought. My abdomen, I was bleeding a little bit but I felt good otherwise. I put her on my back and carried her on my back to the first aid station. There were signs in the city where the first aid station don't forget it was our

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<sup>4</sup>**Wisla River:** Vistula River.

area, the Polish Home Army not the German area yet, and I found my way to what they say is the lazarett.<sup>5</sup> The lazarett and the first aid with the red cross on it. I bring her on my back. I crawl in practically through the door and whom do I find is a doctor. I almost fainted. Then with together with Lucine on my back, my classmate who was my partner in crime and was supposed to be executed by firing squad, he was hiding in Warsaw. He finished his medical school underground. He just whispered to me, we don't know each other, and that was all, I was the only one. Lucine was the only one who get tetanus shot. There was not tetanus for nobody. She was the only one who received it. They tended her wounds and so on. Squeeze my hands and couldn't hug and kiss each other and just wish each other best of luck and we left. And after several weeks, few weeks, I think about a month, the uprising went down under. German triumphed and they announced loudspeakers, all the inhabitants of Warsaw now going to be evacuated to a camp near Warsaw by foot. We walked several kilometers by foot to a little town name Pruszków.

05:56:14

I was wearing my uniform, had my bandages on. Lucine had bandages on and at that time nobody suspected any Jews left, and we approaching the camp we see a doctor there and several nurses. Lucine thought they were nuns. They were not nuns. They were nurse and I told them I am a medical student and one of the doctor said "go to the right, go to the right." This was the building -- I forgot the number of the building. We didn't know where to go to right or not. The first intuition was maybe we shouldn't, but why would he steer us wrong. He is not working for the Poles, not for Germany. As we found a lot of older people meantime getting out of one barrack to another one, and we see an older lady, old lady on a stretcher lying there, moaning, and no one was there. So I grab another guy. Why don't you help me get this lady to the barracks, and we carry the lady that behind us and they thought that we're part of the troop over there caring for the sick and disabled, etcetera. We came to there barrack and we see a lot of elderly people, sick people and so on. And at this time I wonder if we made the right decision cause we know from the ghetto days yet, sick and disabled people are garbage. They going to be destroyed. Why didn't they put us with the younger people? We young people, young really. Younger people just go to Germany to work, but this was no way out. There a guard at the door. If you want to get out, even go to the washroom or something, there some containers and the women and men together.

End of Tape #2

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<sup>5</sup>lazarett: (German). Hospital or clinic.

Tape #3

A: So we looking around the barracks and seeing all the older people we don't know what we're doing there actually. And a thought went through our minds, and maybe this a group of peoples going to go for final resolutions of their problems. Probably Auschwitz or so, and then after two or three nights staying on straw mats on the floor, you lying down one night, you woke up the next night about three feet away because the straw mats were moving. That's how people were talking about, lice, horrible situation there, and they one morning they decided to let us out the of the barracks and direct us toward the railroad track where open cars, cattle cars. While to me this was nothing new. I read it very well and I knew what's happening now. First thought was, we probably going to go to Auschwitz or one of those places. But the young people think maybe this get to Germany for work. But the old people, sick people, people on stretchers and so on that's what they do with us. They seal the cars, but through the upper little windows they actually wired type of upper portion. The car were wired. You could see through and standing on somebody's shoulders you could see outside. I seen there were only two guards, soldiers or what ever, Gestapo I'm not sure who they were. One near the locomotive, the beginning of the train and one at the end. This was not really clear to me what the purpose of this transport. Where are we going? Nobody knew. Everybody was asking the same question. People were squashed like cattle, you know. About maybe close to 100 people in the car. Woman, man, there were no toilet facilities of course, and people just relieving themselves the way they were, standing and so on. And everybody, you know, without any concentration. The fear, you know, not knowing where we going. I was conditioned to it a little bit, and the other Poles weren't. The rest the Poles weren't, so that's the first experience they had. So I was kind of over hand but the final destination was still the same. So what am I going to win here? We going to go together as a Pole maybe, but still. All of a sudden one night one very important railroad stations.

06:03:00

The place was bombed by allies. They destroyed the railroad lengths you know, and the train couldn't go any further. This detained us for about two or three days until they repaired the tracks. And to say there were no food given, no water given, there were no people outside. There was nothing and then the car start rolling again and after unknown number of days, we are arrived in a little town. The name was Jedrzejow a town with maybe 8, 10,000 people and all of a sudden the train stopped. The car doors open up. Polish Red Cross appeared. Woman with band, red cross on it and they directing this car, this car going left, this car going straight, the other car going to the right and we found ourselves in front of many horse carriages, you know, driven by the local peasants. And in front of the carriages there were tables and Polish woman was sitting there registering everybody. They want your IDs. So you give IDs. I was in railroad uniform at this time. My wife was with me and registered, and she assigned us to a certain village, to a peasant that was forced to take us as guests

and to feed us and be responsible for us. And they let us go free. We didn't go in any jail. We didn't go to any concentration camp. No one ever informed us what going to happen, nothing until this moment. We're driven, by, it turn out later, by the mayor of this little village to a different farmer. He brought us there, knocked at the door. Here they are and he left. Of course, we speak very fluent and clean, very intelligent Polish. Peasant Polish is a little different Polish and they hate the city people you know, and he told me right away in slang, "I am not taking freeloaders to my house. I cannot afford you people." I said "I was wounded. Lucine was wounded too, my wife, you know." She was bandaged up. I said, but "look, as soon as we feel better we going to help you. We help you on the farm." He said, "I'm not going to take no body." And, he shut the door. We standing there maybe, most of the day outside. It was cold. Mind you this was already either end of October or so, beginning of November, it was cold, raining.

06:06:02

We hugged each other, standing, didn't know what to do. He refused to take us in and we stayed like this way all night under the little roof, thinking what next. Early in the morning, the mayor of the village appeared there. Allegedly, he knew that we were not taken in by this farmer. He asked us to go with him. We didn't have no luggage with us, of course. So we walked with him. He took us to the only building made out of brick. The rest were huts and he say, you stay in this house now, and the people walked out, the farmer, middle age people. Maybe she was 40, 42, he was maybe 45, with two little kids and very friendly invited us in. Knowing that we were wounded so they give us their own bedroom and bed so we can sleep and rest. She said she making chicken for me, chicken broth and so on and so on. Very, very friendly and accepting us, and feeling sorry for us probably. Well, at this moment I didn't care. I just wanted to lie down and rest. I didn't feel good. I was sick. I was weak. I was bleeding a little bit. All the turmoil and what was happening next and so on. I didn't look beyond that moment. The same night I woke up with a light flashing in my face. Who are you? I thought maybe Gestapo. Right away you know you always live with that fear it's always in your end. And here was a man said, I am from the underground from Home Army in this area, we heard that you people were from Warsaw, uprising from Warsaw, and we just want to tell you we very apologetic we couldn't come to your help. You know, those days you couldn't take a train or trucks or cars to Warsaw to help the other groups of the Home Army you know but he said they couldn't do nothing for us and so on but they make sure not a hair on our head here in this village. As a matter of fact, they hear about the other farm and they took care of him already. They went that night before they came to us. They woke up the whole family, the farmer refuse our entry asked him to strip completely from the waist down. Bent over a trunk of a tree and so on they beat him up with some ... branches of trees and so on.

06:09:02



They were bleeding. They beat up the whole family. The farmer, his wife, his grown-up sons and so on. The farmer beg us to return to his home, but we didn't know. We didn't have nothing to do with them beating them up. But they aware that we're from Warsaw uprising. They thought that we really some important people from the Home Army, which we're not. I was a small fish there, you know. But, anyway I was proud to be one of them and he said they make sure that if we need a doctor they provide medical me care and so on and nothing would happen to us. And believe me our care was the best care any hospital could give us and after I got a little better, I got worse again and I got sick with high fever and yellow jaundice. My nights were horrible. I didn't know what I was talking about. Lucine said I was talking nonsense through my sleep and so on. They were scared I might die, temperature 103, 104, yellow jaundice, you know. Finally, the farmer said I take you to the doctor, I'm sorry. Can't let you dies like this. So he took his two horses, you know, and his wagon, you know, and took me to nearest town. There was Polish doctor there. This town was about 15 or 20 kilometers away. In the meantime, Lucine was very, she recovered faster than I did. and she was very helpful in the farmhouse. She was helping with chickens and cooking and peeling potatoes and bringing in water and whatever was necessary and feeding the pigs, you know. And they liked it very much because they, we didn't have to be paid for it. You know, they just supported us. And they were very grateful for this. It showed the way they treated us. And I was just a victim of this. I was in no shape to do any of it. And I went to this doctor, was on the second floor. I remember like today they had to practically carry me upstairs. I couldn't walk straight. There was a little waiting room. There was no one in the waiting room, but I had to wait. To my left was a little table. On the little table was a little box, looked like from medical instrument something. I glance at the box. There was a label on it. Dr. Grayefski (ph) Praga, Warsaw. Just I notice this that's all. I was still in my uniform. That's the only clothes I had. Finally the door opens up. The nurse calls me in, said Mr. Wojick? I said, yes. And she asked me my history, what happened to me and so on. So I told her the whole story about Warsaw uprising, my wounds. my wife being hurt and so on, I thought maybe a results of this result of my wounds, you know.

06:12:

So they wrote everything down. The doctor comes in and he said what's your name? And I said Wojick. He looks at my uniform. Where you from? I said, Warsaw. Are you a railroad man? I said, yes. Which division, department? I said, we're Prague. You must know me. I was your doctor of the railroad. So I look at him, look at him, look at him. I said, "you're not by any chance Dr. Grayefski?" He said, of course I am. You know me. This name I memorize from this little box on the table. And from then on was such a bond, such a contact, you know. I didn't worry about any suspicions or so. He gave me a shot. I turned back, he gave me a shot. He didn't know who was, nothing else. Gave me some vitamins, some medications and so on. I went back home and from then on I started my miraculous recovery. The people were nice

to me. There were some other Warsaw refugees there, Polish refugees. One was a shoemaker and I felt very uneasy about him. For some reason he look at me all the time and I was worrying if he maybe recognize me from somewhere or suspect who I am. And during Easter holidays he invited us, me and Lucine to his house. He was all alone. I think he was single, but he was middle age person. And we would talked. He ask me questions, where I from and so on. Very inquisitive you know, which school I went to. So I told him, Lublin. I told him the story. I told him all these things which was true. My Polish misled everybody because my Polish was the best, if I brag about it, one thing, I brag my language. I speak several languages my Polish is exquisite. Is perfect, really perfect, literately Polish. They couldn't understand it because Jews don't speak that kind of Polish. None of the Jews. So, but he never said nothing. He was very cordial. Treated us, Polish sausage and this and then apologize he not a good cook, but he done what he could. By being fellow from Warsaw and so on we have something in common, he thought he invite us be the holidays with him. He didn't want to be alone. And slowly I was recovering. Then I got the idea how could I repay those peasants, for they're their ... being so good to us. And I thought since the schools were illegal and schools closed I would organize a secret Polish school. And I suspected that mayor of the village was somebody that maybe I don't know exactly who he was. He was more than just the mayor. And one day I approached him. I said, you know what? I feel strong enough. I like to teach the children Polish language to read.

06:15:05

Little math, geography, whatever I can, and the political situation. Let them be aware of what was going on now. But I have no books. How we going to get books? The area we located was far away from our normal area where we used to live you know. I didn't know anyone there. o he said, "well, I'll tell you. I'll give you a name. You can go to next village." As a matter of fact, on Sunday I go to the town. Maybe I take you with me, in the wagon, and then I don't know want to go with you, to this place, to that person. Just tell them I send you and you tell them what you need. But I said I don't have money either -- "don't worry about that, just don't worry about that. Just tell him what need." I will straighten it out. And I met this person. He looked at me suspicious look, asked for my IDs, my documents. Asked I was from Home Army. I said, yes, I was wounded during the uprising. So he had no reason to doubt me, which was true. I didn't say who I was. He gave me about ten difference books. Polish readings, simple arithmetics, art, crayons, all the pencils, all the little things, erasers. Here I am, educational director. I'm organizing a school. I took the kids together in one house. I told them what we going to do and I told them we have to be smart about it because if the German find out that we have a secret school, they are going to burn the village and we have to have a school. So we taught the kids that each day, one of the kids, they were mostly boys if I remember, will stand guard outside on the top, on the roof of the house. Our village was top of the hill so you can see the road down there in the next town. If the Germans coming to the village, they had to come to this

road. So if you watch this road, you will find out who was coming to the village. Then you can take proper precautions. We told the kids if anything suspicious, right away they disperse each one runs to his own house. Each one runs, takes the book with him right away, there not be a trace left of any educational type material on the tables. And we conduct school very nicely with no problem, with no difficulty. Kids were very nice. They obey. And one day during the classes, all of a sudden a door opens up and two men with hats, long gray leather coats, boots, typical Gestapo detectives walk in. And right away ask me, "Are you Mr. Wojick?" Well, I don't have to tell you how I felt.

06:18:02

I knew this was it, someone denounces me. You come with us. I was ready to faint. Try to regain my composure. Tried to ask him what it's all about. They said "you go with us." I walked out into the hallway, and they stopped. They start shaking my hand. We came in on orders of the Polish Government Exile who found out that someone is organizing a secret Polish education for the children, and we just want to thank you and congratulate you. We want to assure you that the end of the problem is soon. The war is almost at the end. The Germans are losing the war. There was no news. We don't know nothing. The Russian Army is advancing and they should be here within weeks probably, and with this they left. Until today I don't know what happened to that boy on the roof of the house, that he didn't detect the two men walking in there. Could be Gestapo. Anyway, I was continuing teaching then all of a sudden we heard rumblings from the front nearby, the noise of the war. The explosions and the artillery was getting louder, louder every day and of course, our hope was building up each minute. But the awareness that we could lose our lives, the end, the last hour of life was still with me. And I decided one day one of the sons of the neighbor came in. Was a member of the Polish Underground but a different underground what they used to call the N.S.Z.<sup>6</sup> which a Polish nationalist alliance group, together with Polish Hitlerites, they just found in the forest a bunker, a woman, two children, hidden. So they killed them. He came to our house to tell us about it. Thought we would rejoice it, and we had, I had to hear that. And he told us that he's leaving, go west with the Germans because the Russians are coming in. If they catch him he will be sent to Siberia because his group was cooperating with the Germans, of course. And he left. I talked to the peasants, my friends now. I said, "You know, I would like to meet the Russians. Said, please, please don't, and Mr. Wojick don't do that. They won't come here anyway. Don't do that it's dangerous. You don't want to go in the field of action, but I had to go there.

06:21:01

So I was crawling out the village on all my fours. There was a little forest next the

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<sup>6</sup>N.S.Z.: Narodowe Sily Zbrojne. Soviet backed Polish partisans

village and I could see the tanks for maybe, like a hundred feet away, only the Russian tanks. I recognize the star on the tank and I recognize their faces because their head was up out the tank, you know, looking with field glasses where they are or something, and I start getting up, to try to greet them and they start shooting at me. The tank, thank Gods, the they didn't hit me, didn't get near me. You know, I crawled right back, right back to the village scared stiff. Before I knew it the Russian entered the village. They asked for the mayor and asked how many people there was in the village and so on. And I was stopped. They asked me who I was. I speak fluent Russian so I said, "I'm the teacher here." Then the Russian tell him I'm also a Jew. He said, "A Jew. You're lying, there are no Jews here. You must be a spy. How come you speak Russian? Only a spy speak Russian. And the Jews, there are no Jews left. They are all killed." I said, "That's not true. Myself and my wife, we escaped and we hiding under false names." "False names, you must be a spy," and I said, "No, I'm telling you I am Jewish." And he said, wait and minute, and he called another officer. His name was Lev. I remember like today. It was a typical Jewish first name in Russian. Lev, come over here. Take a load of this. This guy telling me he is a Jew. Now, you Jewish. You find out. He comes to me and about 45-year-old man. He said, I am from Leningrad. I'm a plumber by profession. I'm officer in the Russian Tank Division. "Now, you tell me you're Jewish." I said, "Yes." So he start talking me Yiddish. I do not understand Yiddish. "You tell me you're Jewish and you don't understand Yiddish." "I don't. Because my family always spoke Polish to me. My parents spoke Yiddish. I understand Yiddish. I can tell you what you say. But I can not talk. "There's no way. No Jew--If you Jewish, you speak Yiddish." I said, "Believe me. I am a Jew but I do not speak Yiddish." "No, you cannot be a Jew. He might be right. You must be a spy. How come you speak Russian?" So, I told him my story. I was in Lvov medical school, I learn Russian from some colleagues that spoke Russian and I told him and he said that's all baloney, I don't believe one word you say, you must be a spy. Then .I remember a prayer in Hebrew. At that time rabbi that come to my home teach me a few things. I forgot most of it but I remember one prayer. I said, wait a minute. You know how to pray?

06:24:00

He said, well, I forgot. I said, but if I tell you a prayer will you remember that? He said, yes. So I start praying in Hebrew, just the beginning of the prayer. I don't remember too much of it. He look at me, look at me, he start crying. ... He was close to me. He put his arms around me. He embraced me, hugged me, kissed me. Said, yeah, you are Jewish. This was all in Russian. I didn't want the Poles to know that I am Jewish. I asked him that please, I don't want to disappoint them. They were so nice to us. We going to leave the area very soon. He told us where to go, how to get to our home, where my hometown was. I don't have to tell you the good-bye was very sad. ... The village's, the mayor, they want me to stay. They gave me a school. They want me to stay and be their teacher there. They give me a little plot of land next to the school. They--you were good to us. Our kids adore you. Why don't you stay here.

You don't have to worry about nothing and the war is over. Start from scratch. I said, look, my hometown is Lublin. I have to go and put the pieces together. Maybe, maybe, somehow I can find anybody from the family. I don't know where they are, you know. Warsaw destroyed too and I lie a little bit and say I look for a family in Warsaw and so on, and they did understand. And on the way out the mayor squeezed my hand and I do feel he knew who I was. ... And, one morning the peasants, they prepared a little bag for us, food, you know. They made us handmade kind of boots you know, made out of felt and rabbit fur for Lucine, you know. It was cold. We had nothing, no coats, nothing and with their blessing we left. And we walked by foot maybe 80 kilometers cold, winter, 20 below. ... We crossed to a little town, a little village.

06:27:03

We seen a man standing in front of a little shack, red head, he looked typical Jewish. There is a word in Hebrew, they say amcho, amcho means are you one of us? Means are you our people. And I ask him amcho? He look at me he was afraid to say anything. Even the Russian there already. He was still scared. Finally I said don't be afraid. We are, but Lucine don't look at all. And I said what are you doing here? I survive in the forests in the bunker and everybody is killed. I said to him, I don't know what to do. I don't know what to do. I don't have anybody to talk to and the villagers were not friendly to me. I said, why don't you go to Palestine. He said, I don't know what I'm going to do. Anyway, he asked us if we need anything, bread or something? We had some supplies and I said no, and thanked them and we parted, total stranger. We found our way to our hometown and here already was a Jewish committee working, organizing. The first thing we did was approach the Red Cross, try to find out if my wife's little brother survived or not. We knew his name was Kowalski on his papers and there was a name Kowalski as surviving one the camps but turned out to be not him. We later found out that he perished in one the transports at that time and one of the concentrations camps forgot the name near Hannover in Germany. We registered in the Jewish Committee and tried to look for survived who was left. We had a large family, over a hundred people. Anybody ask for is not there. One day I went to my home, used to live, our home. Our whole family lived there. I thought maybe some neighbors, maybe she seen somebody. Anyone survive would come to the place where you were born where you live. You have to start some place. To my amazement they all crossed themselves to see I survived. Most of them very grateful I did survive. Because they were good to my family, my family good to them. We owned the building. My grandfather actually, not my parents, and he said, you know what? One of your uncle, he survived. He was here. He tried to sell the building. I said, how can you sell the building. First, it is not his.

06:30:01

Number two, how can he think about selling something, you know, when you looking

for members of family. You thinking about the house. Who cares? He is in uniform. I knew who it was. It was a younger brother of my father who used to be a lieutenant in Polish Air Force. And they told me where I could reach him. In a small apartment there. When he seen me he put his arms around me, but rather coldly I would say, like, he was not surprise I'm around. More or less. "Oh, that's your wife." "Yes, that's my wife." He introduce himself. He was wearing a Polish officer uniform, looked much like a movie star, and I said, I don't know what do now. Is anybody left? He said, "yes, my younger brother with my other uncle and my father's youngest brother is alive. He is in Yugoslavia. He was a musician. He was right under Marshall Tito. He organized a military band for Marshall Tito in Yugoslavia when he lost his family his little son in Rovno." If you remember, a little town east Poland when I escape from my home and I went to Lvov. This was him. He lost his wife, lost his little son. And he escaped through the mountains, Carpathian Mountains to Czechoslovakia, Hungary, to Yugoslavia. He survived there he might be on his way home now. He's looking for his wife, maybe he finds her. So he said, "that's the key to my apartment." You can only stay there maybe two days because I need the apartment myself. He was single. He was dating already and so on. He needed his apartment and I couldn't get to my house either because other people lived there. My house but I couldn't kick people out of there. So, in meantime, we met other friends of ours from high school yet. Lucine's friend and so on. So we managed to rent a little room someplace and so on, and each day going the Jewish Committee to see whom we going to find because this was a gathering place. That if someone survive, had to go there first and look at the list of registrants. Who is there. Everyone coming home. Unfortunately nobody else came from my family. And one day my uncle asked me, what you plan to do? I said, I promised my mom that if I survive ever I go back to school. He said, if you don't want to be musician you want to be a doctor, do whatever you want to be but pursue your career. And I felt I promises I should do it and that's what I want to do.

06:33:01

So we went to a town. The name is Breslow in Polish. I register in medical school and the first words I was noticing I heard of students. Students themselves saying "another Jewish student." Another, Hitler didn't kill them all and this was in my mind in every place I turn around. I was not used to it because in my high school days the kids knew I was Jewish but never told me you're, a Jew. I knew who I was I. I didn't have to be reminded about it. After the war things were worse. Instead of telling me I'm so happy you survived. Did anyone else survive? Can we do anything for you? Can we help you, books whatever? They tell me another Jew survive. It was like a burden on my mind and I was kind of crowded in this classroom, you know. I didn't feel good there. And I met contact with some other students, not medical school. Jewish students who were architecture, art and so on and we organize a student group in this town who performed music, dancing for the remaining Jewish refugees that came back from Russian. Everyone was coming and going nobody stay in one place. More people coming, some going away, gone to look for relatives and so on. The

borders were open. You can go through in and out nobody ask you any questions. Where are you going? Looking for my mother, looking for my father, looking for my brother, looking for anybody, and everybody understood this. So there was a kind of a chaos on the border but it was not used up as a chaotic type of political purpose or so. Everybody knew this was a purpose of family reunions, and we one day in this group everybody was saying remarks, you know, that we shouldn't stay here. We shouldn't stay here. So we thought maybe we should leave Poland and go someplace outside of Poland. Czechoslovakia, Austria maybe, France, we didn't know yet. So this was in the talkative stages and in the meantime, my uncle didn't show too much a ties to me. And he was doing his things, busy dating and doing other things you know. And in meantime, he was arrested. He was the commanding officer of the Polish Pilot school. Instructor and commanding officer there for stealing a blanket or something, selling on the black market. That was what he was accused of. Could be they wanted to get rid of him too because he was Jewish. They knew he was Jewish see, and was he thrown out. I never found out.

06:36:01

I know he went to jail, maybe two years in jail. In the meantime, I was without any money and so on, so I decided to sell my house. It was a beautiful building. But I didn't have nothing to live on. No suits, no dress for my wife, nothing. So I approached somebody who was an attorney. If you have any customer for the building and said, yes, and found a butcher, Polish butcher want to buy my building. I said, why you pay the building? Everything is nationalized by the Soviets. You cannot own it. They said I know, but I made so much money during the Germans times, illegally slaughtering cattle and so on, I had all this cash lying around. I won't benefit. Maybe someday my kids will benefit from it. They'll have the building at least. I said, okay. I sold it for \$1,000. The attorney took \$400 so I was left with \$400 American dollar which was a fortune. I buy a new suit. The only picture I have right now is in the museum is with Lucine when we both were dressed. She bought a new hat. I bought a suit and shoes and we are in the park, and our kids look at the picture, Dad, you don't look like you just survived the war. You look like you came from a country club. I was shaven, lean, smiling, pale maybe, but smiling. I said, look, we're young. We cannot bring back what we lost. We can live with the past, we can live with our memories. We can start from scratch and build our home again from the beginning. So that's what we did. I bought her a delayed wedding present. I bought her a ring, small ring and a watch, gold watch with the money and one day the whole group, with the help of Bricha. I don't know if you know who Bricha is. Bricha is the Palestinian underground agency which is helping the Jews escape from Soviet Russia coming to Poland want to go to Palestine. They were smuggling those people, those young people to Palestine. With their assistance we crossed the border one cold night in November, 1946. The only thing I took we me is my student papers, my books and so on in case I ever go back to school and to save my papers. And on their advice they took us to Vienna. We met a lot of Jewish students already, Americans, first time

I seen Americans, life full of music and laughter. I didn't know what it was. I didn't know how to behave. I was afraid of this thing. I thought it was sacrilegious; to laugh and to smile and go to night clubs, coffee houses.

06:39:09

I couldn't cope with it. I wasn't ready for it you know. But we stayed together the whole group for about 2 year and one when his own way. They graduated -- one architecture, one electrical engineer, few medical students. One boy couldn't cope with the situation. Went back to Poland, Jewish boy. Didn't know what happened to him. And, then each one went his own way. With the help of the American Joint Committee we getting a stipend to pay for our tuition. To my amazement when they accepted me to medical school they accept all the papers translated by the Jewish Committee in Vienna found out I need my high school diploma which I didn't have with me. I didn't know what happened to it. But my high school still stand. I wrote to Lublin. They sent me a copy of my high school diploma. For whatever strange reason, I had 6 years of Latin and a degree of Latin was a dash, like I never had Latin. The professor looks at it. I'm sorry everything is in order but you have no Latin. You have to take a pre-entrance exam in Latin. I said you know if after all these years I don't know if I remember too many things and my German was very poor. I just started learning German. What language do you speak? Polish, Russian. Okay. You speak Russian. I speak Russian. So he give me two days to come back and take an exam in Latin in the Russian language which I did and I passed it. He said, I want to know if you ever took Latin. It is not exam for grading. I want to know if you were acquainted with Latin, if you remember something and so on, which I did many things. And he was satisfied. He gave me a passing grade and here I was back in medical school. So, we struggled quite a bit. It was very difficult financially, but the Zionist Organization in Vienna, helped us out. They rent a school for the whole group of us. And we lived in that school. They fed us, warm, you know. They gave us blankets, gave us suits, you know, from American Joint. We felt like human beings. We did regain our dignity, slowly, and one day somebody came to us and said, you know what? I just came back from the British Zone in Germany and I was on a train to Germany. Run into somebody who is a relative of yours. So I said, what? What's his name? So, he mentioned first name Baruch, Baruch. I don't have anybody in my family named Baruch. Then Lucine remembered, you know what, that my cousin, who was our only witness on our wedding in Warsaw ghetto.

06:42:04

He must be him. Well that's the address. We wrote a letter to him. He wrote back. It was him. He survived the concentration camp in Germany. He made contact with an aunt in New York City. It was his real aunt. It was my wife's second line aunt actually because the aunt with the baby in the Warsaw ghetto that went to the Hotel Polski was her sister in New York. But we wrote a letter to them. We didn't ask for anything,



but they start showering us with gifts, packages, food, chocolates, cigarettes. I didn't smoke. I was selling on black market. He, her uncle asked me if I needed anything. He can send me to Vienna. He said, "do you want papers?" I try to get you papers to come to United States. But first you have to graduate and get your diploma. Don't you ever come to the States without diploma. You'd be nobody. If you be medical doctor then you be somebody. Your future be assured. As difficult it might be for now, I remind you of a family in New York, mind you, people I never met, I never knew, Lucine never met, never knew. She knew of this them but was a distant family through marriage of her uncle. He start sending me packages of certain things, medication. I sell on black market. And we live like kings then. So after graduate medical school, we throw a party for maybe 50 people, our friends and so on like one family. We became one 93 family all the refugee, students and their relatives were all one family. They substitute for our lost brothers and sisters. Their parents were our parents. We used to call them mom and dad, you know. Some of them fortunately survived, some parents of my colleagues. They were very good to us and it helped us to regain our composure you know and maybe regain faith in humanity. And slowly we registered in American Embassy, and here we met a little difficulty with one lady. This was the time of Korean War. We registered with all the proper documents. We got a visa to enter United States. The only thing still, I didn't finish my final exam to get my diploma. She said, you have a deadline to meet. You have to go right now. You have three weeks time to go. What am I going to do? I cannot get my diploma in three weeks. My final exam is not until a few months from now on. She was very annoyed with it. She said "I have my son fighting Korea and you have a chance to go to United States and you refuse to."

06:45:03

I said, "look, I'm not refusing. And I try to explain to her where I stand, what's the problem." She was not very compassionate, couldn't understand, and said, well, if that's how it is, then you might lose your entry. I said, well, if that's what's going to be, that's what's going to be. If I go there now I be nobody. I only ask you to allow to finish my studies. It's only a few months, can you ask for an extension? No, I can't. So we walked out. This was the end of it. We are very depressed, upset and depressed. We worn out. I didn't know what to do. I knew we could not stay in Vienna because foreigners were not allowed to stay and practice in profession. You could only study. And the one day we get a note, a letter from the embassy to report to the embassy. It was a different person. It was a man, A different lady and they are telling us that we got our visa extended and when do we think we can go. Is our time to go. When can we go? We can go any time now. I just graduate and got my diploma. So, I don't know what happened. Either this first lady had second thoughts. Maybe she was bitter that her son was in Korea fighting. I felt very bad for her. I was very sad but, maybe she did understand my problem and quietly maybe she helped me. I don't know. I never seen her. I wish I would. And we packed and went to the States. We arrived in New York. We are greeted by my wife's family. They treated us

very nicely. They were very well-to-do people. And they were very instrumental in our well being and he asked me, what can I do for you? You need money, tell me. I said, look, I'm young, I have ten fingers, I have both hands, thank God I am not lame. I want to work. I do the right thing to do, only I need advice. And we survive. We survived so far. I didn't want nothing from them and I know he told me, you know, Felix, you're the only relative -- we brought quite a few from Europe -- you're the only one that never asked for money. I said, you know what? It is a very strange thing. I learned from the past several years to do without money. I survived. If you have less, you do less. You did what you could without money and this is not the most important thing.

06:48:03

We have goal ahead of us, a purpose in life. I want to start as soon as I could. We want to leave New York. It was a jungle. Too many refugee and I wanted to mingle with American people. I didn't know any English, I want to start learning and I want to get on my foot all by myself without any assistance. So went to the Jewish Committee in New York. Where should we go? We opened a map and the social worker put her finger on the spot. And she said "that's Rochester, New York. What about that?" That's fine wherever it is. We went to Rochester, New York. Nice, cultural town with a decent school of music, beautiful medical schools and so on. Got acquainted with proper people. We got refuge from a German Jewish family. We stayed with them for several months. They were beautiful people. Very nice to us and right away I got acquainted with the hospital. The chief of the hospital was a Jewish fellow, Dr. Stapens (ph) who was fascinated with my stories. He wanted to know. He supposed to ask me medical questions, if I equipped to start, what my internship. Mind you, not speaking English was very difficult to establish that fact. He spoke some German, very little, but one the chief surgeons was fluent in German so he called him in, and the three of us sitting in his chambers in medical school and talking German and what he was asking my whole story.

Q: Tell me about going back and going back to the woman with the candelabra?

A: After we come back to Lublin, we couldn't forget that lady, that she was selling us for a silver candelabra to the Gestapo. How could a person who was a neighbor for years. Her kids grew up with my wife Lucy, a neighbor. She was a patient of my mother-in-law, who was a dentist. How could she? Could I do the same to anybody? So I came -- we both came to her--we confronted her. She became pale like a ghost. She went down on her knees. She crossed herself. She didn't believe, that's us, that we survive. She didn't know, she probably thought maybe they caught us that famous day that she called the Gestapo on us. And I said, "you sold us to the Gestapo and here we are."

06:51:08

Now your life is at stake. Don't have to do is point a finger, what you did to us and you be sentenced immediately, swift justice. They shoot you right away. She begged us, she was crying, screaming to spare her life in the name of her son and her departed husband, who died in the meantime, arrested allegedly by the German and so on. I couldn't do it. My wife inquired to some friends what can be done, if anything. I wouldn't let them be killed but I felt she should be aware of what she did and they told my wife. Unless she has witnesses that we're there at that time, there is nothing she can do. But the fact that the woman went through facing us was enough of pay back, what she owed us. I don't know if she's alive or not but if she died by now, she died with the fact what she tried to do to us. That day Christian blame the Jews. Crucify Jesus or Judas selling Jesus for silver. She tried to do the same thing only she had killed Jews doing that. If she was a religious person, real Christian, how could she do that? Where was the church all the time. Single people, priests did help us. They help us to get the real birth certificate. You need ID. Fakes were no good. They checked it right away. But we received through the Home Army the real birth certificate. The church was instrumental in helping us. There certainly was a certain group of Polish people, definitely the intelligent people, people-- the real Polish patriot who knew who the real enemy is, not the Jews, and the little shopkeeper in the village or so, and the milkman, the Jewish milkman was not a dangerous person to the Pole, and the intelligencia the Jewish professionals, doctors, lawyers, CPA, and so on. What a threat to the population? None. No one, maybe more or less. That was a little jealousy, maybe because the Jewish professionals lead a more, extravagant life, maybe and it was striking something easy, visible. See, the Jews were traveling abroad overseas, etcetera, etcetera. Most Poles, even the ones that could afford it. They didn't do these things. So there was certain differences, that the Poles did resent and I won't go into details. I'm not a social workers and I never did any studies on the subject. This is just my person observation.

06:54:00

But my thanks are due to some people. We did survive thanks to some Polish people. And we grateful to the Polish Home Army, the leaders, the people directly involved with us who saved many other Jewish people, poor people, without any compensation. Risked their own lives, and I said it before, could anyone of us? Try to inspect my own soul. Could I do the same thing? What those Polish people did? I honestly don't know. I was never a hero. Maybe I'm a coward, I don't know. But, they were heroes in my eyes, they were. Maybe they were cowards too. Maybe, they're running only because they're human beings, and I remembered the words of my friend who said, "I don't like you Jews. I do it because I--nobody was going to help you."

He was a humanitarian. He meant he was upset. He was upset and was angry that they were arguing and in the Jewish -- in the Yiddish language where the neighbors could hear and jeopardizing his life, his whole operation, his whole army. So I

understand. But in order to understand my early days, my high school gave me a lot of happiness, the Polish people. I was their Jew maybe, but I never had a bad word from them, never. The only complaint I might have when I was young, I never dated Jewish girls, and many Jewish girls felt I am a snob, or I don't know. I only dated Polish girls. Because I was more comfortable with them because I was raised with them. I grew up with them and I was more at ease with them, and I was not comfortable with the very religious Jews. Because I was ignorant about the Jewish religion and the prayers, and so on. My parents did the best they could to instill in me, but they were themselves not guilty of that. They never give them that proper education, Jewish education. And I don't know if I should blame them for that or not, because we're the orthodox people the right people, or less orthodox or the less religious people the wrong people who should be sentenced to die just -- they were serious religious orthodox, orthodox people going to their death. They were the real heroes. They were going there with the words in their mouth Shema Yisrael means, that's the prayer for the dead. They were heroes. They didn't run. They didn't try to dodge or nothing. They were killed right and went to their graves right in front of them. I think they are the brave people. Are we the heroes? No. I think we survive by accident, instinct maybe. But, we're here.

06:57:01

We have to build our life again from beginning. We have a nice family. We are a special family. I think, everybody my not think that way. We are very close, our children. They are very close to us. We talk to each other every day. We are fortunate we're in the same town. We are 15, 20 minutes away. We are blessed with three and a half -- half is coming, the fourth one is coming -- grandchildren. We have three granddaughters, fourth on the way. I gave the promise to my parents that we try to be decent, honest. ... We never ask anything from anybody. We didn't have any, we did without it. We're not a burden to society. We grew up. I'm proud of my children. I feel they are decent citizens and I feel as difficult as it is to talk about it absolutely must, we don't know how long we'll stay here. If you have the history deniers, the lies spread now. Whatever good this will do, it's a living testimony. It happened. Thank you.

Q: Thank you.

06:58:44

End of Tape #3  
Conclusion of Interview

