I'd like you to begin by just telling me your name at the time-- you can tell me your name now-- where you were born, and what year you were born.

Shall I start, or not?

Yes, please.

[? I shall start. ?]

Make sure you speak to me me and not the camera.

Very good. Well, my real name is ZdzisÅ‚aw JezioraÅ„ski. My present name, Jan Nowak, was a nomme de guerre. It was the name which I assumed during the war to protect my family. When I was in the West, my family was still in Warsaw.

I was born in Warsaw in the first year of World War II in a pretty well-to-do family. My mother came from a rather wealthy Warsaw family. My father had a travel agency. He died in 1918 when I was four years old.

And my mother was not really prepared to manage her affairs without the help of the husband, so during the big inflation, hyperinflation, she lost everything we had. And we grew up on the verge of poverty.

In a very neat family, I was really brought up by my grandmother and my mother. It was a very religious family. We were we were Catholics, but my mother and grandmother were very liberal.

They were very liberal. And I remember they were always telling me and my older brother that any kind of hatred, or any kind of bias to other people because of their different race, religion, outlook, is a sin. And that had a big impact on us.

I went to schools in Warsaw. And after my matriculation, I left Warsaw and did study in Poznan, because I did want to study economy. And the only faculty of economy was in Poznan.

Were you going to say something?

Well, OK. I did want to be a scholar. And after I finished my university studies and got my graduation, a Masters in economy, I became what is called in Poland assistant to the professor, or if you like, senior researcher.

And after two years, the war broke out. At the time when I was working on my doctorate thesis, I was drafted. I left my writings, my doctoral thesis, on my desk, and never saw it again.

I did participate in the September campaign. I was in the artillery, [INAUDIBLE] artillery unit. And in the middle of September, I was taken prisoner by the Germans at the Battle of [INAUDIBLE]. It so happened that I was in the same transport with the future communist prime minister of Poland, Cyrankiewicz And we both jumped out of the train near Krakow.

And I did go back to Warsaw at the time when the Siege of Warsaw ended. The Germans occupied the city. And I joined my family there. That was the beginning of my life under German occupation.

OK, and I just want to ask you a few questions and clarify something. I think by mistake you said that you were born the first year of World War II. You meant World War I.

Oh, of course. Should I repeat this?

That's OK.

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No? I wish I would be so young.

The other question I had for you, before the war, did you know Jewish people? Did you have contact?

Oh, yes. I had many schoolmates, Jewish [? persons. ?] The man by the name [? Antek ?] Rosenthal was my Boy Scout master. A very close friend of mine was Jan Kott, who is now in the United States. He's my contemporary, professor emeritus of Stony Brook University, a well-known international authority of Shakespeare. He was a very close friend of mine. And I had many other colleagues who were Jews.

Were you aware of antisemitism before the war?

Not in the schools. I don't believe that, for instance, Jan Kott or Rosenthal, or [? Anthony ?] [? Tom, ?] who are Jewish, or [? Yusef ?] [? Handelsman, ?] they [? weren't ?] really in any way felt different from others. They considered themselves Poles. And I didn't witness any kind of, you know, unpleasant treatment.

At the university, yes. Not my university, but the last years, I mean in the '30s, there was a lot of antisemitism at the universities. And Jewish students were requested to sit on a separate bench. They were humiliated. And they had a really bad life. This is the time when I did witness antisemitism. Not in the school.

We [? went-- ?] by curiosity, I remember that we did go in a small group to the synagogue just to see how it is inside. It was something very exotic to us. But I really didn't see much antisemitism.

I remember when I was bad in mathematics, and I had to-- my mother had to hire some student in mathematics who would help me. And there was an advertising, and the young Jew from the ghetto, from the Jewish district, came. And he asked, do you mind I'm a Jew? And I said, it never even occurred to me. I mean, of course I don't mind.

But there was a-- this was a different kind of antisemitism than in Germany. But there were this extremist students organization of the right wing. And that was one of the reasons why I didn't want to study in Warsaw. I didn't like these kind of things.

[INAUDIBLE]

It's [INAUDIBLE], yeah. It was pretty loud.

OK, you need to-- yeah. Do we need to--

We were--

Let's stop a second and wait till this noise-- what is it?

That was--

It's still going on.

I don't believe you will hear it on the tape.

There were two things. One was a plane, but there's also wind blowing against an exterior door, which I won't be able to control.

OK. I thought there was something up above. Is it gone?

It's behind you and above you. This is the exterior door [INAUDIBLE].

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All right, well if you think it's gone, we can continue.

[? We're still on. ?]

And how much did you know or think about what was going on in Germany, about the Nazism that was really starting to take form, about Hitler? How was that perceived?

Well, I remember when Hitler came to power, they were scared. This was the first time we realized that there may be a war. We knew all he wrote, I mean, and this was considered to be a threat.

I do remember, maybe in '38 or '37, some Jews who escaped from Germany into Poland. I remember when I was on the train from Poznan to Warsaw that I talked to an elderly Jew who just escaped from Berlin who was telling me all about it.

What was the general attitude in Poznan and in Warsaw toward the Nazis?

Well, you know, to us, the Nazis were Germans, and Germans were Nazis. And Germans were enemies. Germans were considered to be enemies.

So at that time, really, we considered, oh, every German is a Nazi. You see? It was oversimplification. But this is how we-- and after all, the support for Hitler was so overwhelming in Germany that we couldn't see any difference.

We considered Germans as a big threat to us. And that's from my young age, because Germans did want to take back the territories which they lost to Poland after the war. And they were always considered the greatest threat to us. But until the end of the war, really, we didn't differentiate much between the Germans and the Nazis.

And this distrust of the Germans was really very separate than their ideas about genocide and--

Well, you know, genocide came late. Remember there were, of course, victims of Nazis in Germany itself. And in Poland, I mean, the number of people that were executed was considerable. I lost my uncle who was executed in October '39.

But this was not genocide in the sense that came later. The genocide of Jews did happen in '42. This is when it started.

There was extermination of Poles and of Jews. But this was not the sort of total extermination of race or religion of people who belong to the race or to a religion. Many victims. There was a German terror.

But early on, it was very clear that the Germans were going to try to eliminate Jewish people in one way or another. But your distrust of Germans the Nazis was more territorial.

Well, as far as the Jews are concerned, during the war, no. Nobody really anticipated that there would be a sort of a total extermination of every Jew. That came later.

We knew that Jews are persecuted, and that they are discriminated, that they are being killed. But the Final Solution in the sense that every Jew had to be killed because the crime he committed was that he was alive, that came later.

Right, I understand that. I was just trying to distinguish between you, as a Catholic Pole, disliking or distrusting or hating the Germans as a separate-- is something separate than because they were persecuting the Jews and other minorities.

Well, they were persecuting Poles. They were, of course. But it was all-- we abhorred it, you know? This was terrible. But we-- and in the first stages, we considered persecution of Jews as the part of Nazis, of atrocities they were committing.

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And of course I felt great, great sympathy for my Jewish friends. I remember when I came back from-- when I escaped from captivity, and we were living in the apartment block. And during the war, people became very close to each other. There were no longer neighbors who didn't know what the other neighbor was doing. We were very close.

And there was an attorney living in our block of houses, a very nice man who was Jewish. And then they were all requested to leave the so-called Aryan district and to move to the Jewish district. And he was struggling with himself.

Should he go to the Jewish district, to move there? Or buy the-- or get the illegal papers and stay outside? Which he felt was much more risky, because this was a violation of law, and every Jew that was caught outside of the district would be killed.

So I remember how this man was fighting with himself. Should he and his family move to the Jewish ghetto, or pretend he was a Christian? And it was-- and he finally decided to go there. And probably that was his end, eventually.

Was there, or would there have been, support among the Polish community for Jewish people who needed to-- who wanted to stay outside of the ghetto and hide?

Well, you know, the best way it was described was by [? Jan Karski, ?] who just said there were people of bad will, there were people of good will, and there were indifferent people. And this is exactly what happened.

The bad people who were denouncing Jews, very often for gain, for money, and people who were risking their lives to save Jews. Both were in minority. The great majority were indifferent people, people who cared only how to survive, how to survive with their families.

And this was not just only in Poland. I mean, the world was indifferent. Even the Jews in [? the US ?] were indifferent. But unfortunately, most of the people cared about themselves. They were indifferent.

But there were great efforts to save the Jews. For instance, I know somebody who was active in some organization that dealt with the Germans. And he was trying to get from the Germans special kind of permits for Christians of Jewish background.

And the Germans said, of course, give us the list. We will give them special immunity. They will be able to move out.

And do you know what happened? In the best of faith, he offered them the list. All of them were arrested and sent to jail and probably executed. But there were efforts to rescue. It was not easy, I will tell you.

I remember my own experience. In the first year of war, we had to allow [? livings, ?] and there was a tremendous shortage of food. So everybody was smuggling food from the countryside, from peasants.

And I was one of them. So I traveled to the estate of my uncle, which was east from Poland, and was getting some butter, or some even vodka, which I would change for something else. And there were trains that were full of smugglers.

And this was, as I say, first months of war. These trains were dilapidated without windows, where the [? glasses ?] were smashed. It was cold and all that.

And I was alone in my compartment. But in the next compartment was a Jewish girl. And there were some typical Warsaw hooligans who started to be aggressive.

And instinctively, she came to me and said, protect me. They are hooligans. And I scolded them and they left her alone. She was sitting next to me.

Now at that time, the Jews were not yet in closed ghettos, but using of the public transport was forbidden. And any Jew caught in the train, in the bath, would be executed.

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And she was a beautiful girl, maybe 19, 20, but with very characteristic Jewish features. You could-- one look, it was enough to know she's Jewish. And she was very thankful, we talked, and said, you know, I have to ask you one more favor.

I said, what is it? Well, when we come to [? BiaÅ‚a Podlaska ?], to the station, we have to go through the [GERMAN] sperre, in other words, exit. And always there was a German policeman, Schutzpolizei, who was checking passengers and documents and all that. Not everybody, but sporadically. [? She ?] said, I would like to take you on the arm so that we go together.

Now, frankly, you know, I couldn't refuse, but I knew I'm accepting risk of life, because she would be recognized. If she was with me, they would take us to the next police station and shoot.

But I couldn't refuse, really. So she took me on the arm, and I didn't look at this German policeman, but I could sense that he was looking at her. And it was a moment of terrific fear.

When we passed, well, she thanked me. She kissed me in both my cheeks. And my knees were trembling under me.

And later, I smuggled the compromising materials across the border with false documents. I was never so much afraid, because it was not written on my forehead that I am a member of the resistance movement, but here it was enough to look at her.

So I very much appreciate people who really were heroic enough to risk not only their own lives but that of families, of their wives, children, and were offering hiding to Jews. It was an act of outstanding heroism.

And frankly, many of them lost their lives. I remember posters with the names of Poles who were executed because they were hiding Jews. And I don't wonder that they were in minority, but there were many of them. I mean, there are at least 6,000 names, Polish names, in Yad Vashem.

Only in Poland people were executed. In Russia and in Poland, people who were hiding Jews were executed. They were not executed in Denmark. They may have been jailed, but never executed. It was only in Poland that anybody hiding Jews was executed.

Tell me a little bit about the beginning of the war in Poland, what you were doing and what Warsaw was like during occupation. But I know that you were in a battle, initially.

Well, I was in the battle initially, but I was taken prisoner, escaped, got back to the city, and lived in the city. Well, you know, first of all, it was a city of unemployed, because all people who were employed by the state lost their jobs, and they had to find some means of living.

The rations, the coupons, were totally inadequate. Nobody could live just from the bread and butter and so on that you could buy for a coupon. So the initial main preoccupation was how to get food. The winter was terrible. What about heating? There was no coal. So these elementary needs of people were occupying us.

But I was trying to get in touch with some underground organization. We did all have a great need to fight on with the Nazis after our defeat in September. But it was only in '41, really, at the spring of '41, that I joined the Polish Home Army. It was a matter of accident, because you had to find somebody in the underground who would trust you and would get you in touch with some people. And as far as I'm concerned, it happened in the spring of '41.

We all lived with-- nobody knew if you would live to the end of the day, because there was a German terror. And it was a blind terror. The Germans would arrest 100 people because of what? Because some German was killed or something happened. And they would be executed.

So people came to a conclusion very soon, it doesn't matter if you are in the underground or not, if you are passive or if you are active in the anti German movement. It's a matter of accident. You may be surrounded on the streets, they [?

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were ?] this, and either deported to Germany as forced labor or to Auschwitz.

OÅ›wiÄ™cim Auschwitz was established in 1940 as a camp for Polish inmates. The first 700 inmates of Auschwitz were Poles, mostly Polish intelligentsia. But we got used to the terror. Very few people were really afraid, because it was daily bread. You simply had to coexist with the possibility that you may be arrested, killed, and all that. It became something part of life.

Was there much evidence of brutality [INAUDIBLE]?

There was. There was. The people were beaten on the streets and the police would-- Gestapo would come to the house. They would start by beating people. Of course the worst of all was the treatment of Jews.

I mean, it was gradual, you see? First, they were requested to wear David stars, yellow band. Then they were requested to move to the Jewish district. But the Jewish district was not yet closed, so they lived there, but they could move around. Later, it was closed. A wall was built around the ghetto.

And initially, Christians were not allowed without a special pass to go into the ghetto. But the street cars were crossing the ghetto in transit to other districts of the city. And I do remember, you know this was the time when-- probably '41-- when the ghetto was isolated.

And people in the ghetto were simply hungry. They were starving. And the streets were covered by corpses, covered by newspapers. People who died from spotted fever, mostly, or from starvation.

And the family had no means to bury them. They would just put the body on the pavement, cover it with the newspaper, and the car would come, simply from municipal authorities [INAUDIBLE]. Piles of these bodies were put on the car and taken to some common grave.

But the view was terrible. There were people who were like skeletons. Young Jews who really looked awful, I mean, living skeletons. You could see that the people were starving.

When you went through the ghetto on the streetcar, did people ever try to call out for help?

No, because streetcars were going pretty fast. There was no chance to do anything. But some Jews were, in spite of the great risk of losing life, they were coming for help.

I remember, and I will never forget it. I will never forget it. Probably it was '41, when we were living in a good residential area. And a Jewish girl who was no more than 10 came with a small brother who was five and said, we are very hungry. And it was something I will never forget, to see the child say, I'm hungry.

Were you able to help her?

My mother gave her bread, soup, and all that, come whenever you want to, whenever you are hungry. They never came back. Nobody knows what happened.

Did you have any other experiences in seeing what was happening in the ghetto, or knowing about it?

Well, we knew, but later we were isolated. I mean, you could see the groups of Jews who were mostly under the escort of the police going to work. And of course they were trying to get food.

And they were getting food, [? meat, ?] potatoes, and bread and all that. But the police, German police, would take away everything from them and beat them when they were coming back. Still they were trying to get food coming back. But what was inside the ghetto, we didn't know, because there was a wall, total isolation.

Now, your family was able to stay together.

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Yes.

Was there any semblance of normal life for you?

The life is always normal. Even life in ghetto was normal. There were coffee houses. There were theaters, concerts, everything in the city.

Condemned to death, life is always normal, you know? People, children, were playing. Also even in the Jewish ghetto. So there wasn't some normal life, family life. Everybody was trying to get [INAUDIBLE] and for [? his ?] life and all that.

It was a normal life. Life in danger, life in terror, life in poverty and shortages. But it was a normal life, more or less.

Generally, in the community, not with you so much when you chose to go on the underground, was there any support for the German occupation?

Very few. There were always-- you know, in every community you have people who will cooperate, and collaborate, and denounce people. But frankly, you know, it was the Germans who united people, since every Pole was also condemned.

People, because of this terror, they really became very-- they got used to it, but they were united. There was a common anti German front, no question about it. And we had no quisling government, for instance.

And collaborators were shot. I mean, the people who collaborated with Germans were killed. They got sentences of death. And they were killed. The underground was very ruthless with collaborators. It was a risky thing to collaborate with the Germans.

And your government was German?

There was, of course, administration was German. There were some officers from [? city ?] offices. Poles were employed. Germans had no manpower. They used their manpower for war industry and in the front.

So they did use Poles, but it was a different thing to work in the administration. It was not collaboration. It was not considered as long as you are not used as an instrument to persecute others. So of course there were officers, labor officers or municipal authorities. The same was in the ghetto, I mean, the Jews were employed by the German authorities in all kinds of organization.

And your pre-war government?

Was in London. But we did have underground authorities. There was a kind of underground state, which was a kind of moral authority. People did obey the orders that came from our underground government commander in chief of the Polish Home Army of the military underground.

And they were a so-called delegation of the government in London. And they did have considerable authority.

Which was respected by the whole civilian movement?

They were respected. They were respected, yeah.

And the underground worked in conjunction with the government in London?

Well, there was daily communication by secret radios with the government in London. There were couriers, emissaries. So there was a contact.

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And above all, you know, Polish radio from London and BBC. After all, everybody-- it was daily bread, news from London. Information from London, our programs broadcast from London, it was a source of hope.

Now can you tell me a little bit about the circumstances, how you got involved with the underground?

Well, first I established some contact with some underground paper. But it was sort of a conservative paper, which I didn't like very much. But there was no choice. I mean, I had no other contacts.

But in '41, I had met somebody who had introduced me to the underground. And I joined so-called Akcja N, which was psychological warfare against the Nazis, against the Germans.

We produced German underground press, which was prepared by excellent experts, mostly by Poles who were bilingual, spoke as good German as Polish. And this was-- we were pretending to be German newspapers, which did create a sensation in Germany.

And it was never distributed from hands to hands, because it would betray Polish source. It was distributed by dropping on the floor or inside a book, inside the parcels that were sent to the soldiers in the front, in the restaurants, in the trains.

And my function was to organize distribution of this black propaganda press in Germany. And I didn't know German very well, just a few words. But there were so many Poles who became German, some were Volksdeutsche, who didn't speak good German. It was not so bad, as you may think.

So I had to cross the border of so-called general government, which was central Poland isolated from the rest of Germany [? or ?] occupied Poland. And I had to find agents inside Germany who were distributing this subversive literature, usually a fascinating job.

I traveled under disguise of a Polish railway man and then a German railway man, which was the safest way to travel, with forged documents, of course. And that lasted until the spring of '43. In '43, I discovered the possibility to go to Sweden hidden in the Swedish ship.

Swedes were importing iron ore to Germans and were taking coal from Poland, from Polish territories. And I was put in touch with some people from the underground who could place a blind passenger in the bunker of coal. So I reported to my authorities and volunteered to go in this manner.

And I became a courier. I was traveling with intelligence reports hidden in the microfilms and all kinds of objects. And after some adventures, I did reach Stockholm.

And that was just at the time of the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto. And I learned about it by listening to the Polish radio in London, which was in touch with the secret radio in Warsaw. So they were getting daily reports. And I was very impressed by this.

And I remember I wrote a report about genocide of Jews to the Polish commander in chief and prime minister, General Sikorski, and were urging him that the Allies must make some kind of threats of reprisals to Germans to stop it. And if they will not do anything, well, Poles will be next. I used this argument, that if Germans will be completely-- could, without any penalty, murder 3 million Jews, then next after them would be Poles.

And I know that the report did reach the addressee and was passed on to Churchill. And I was told after the war that it did have some influence. I think that this decision to bring war criminals before the international tribunal was done more or less at that time.

What I was really asking for was to have a kind of bombing, which would be declared as a reprisal for mass murders of Jews. And I remember I used the argument, Americans and British are going to bomb Germans anyhow. Why not to say this is an act of reprisal? No, nothing like that ever happened.

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So I came back from Stockholm, and I was immediately commissioned to go the same route back to London. And at that time, they put me in touch with a man in the underground who was a contact man with the Jewish militant organization in the ghetto by the name of Henryk Wolinski.

And I was under instructions to get as much briefing about the Holocaust-- as it is called now, we didn't use this word at the time-- about the Jewish uprising. And to consider it as sort of a priority in my mission to London. And I did spend much time with Wolinski, who told me all about the problems with even names of some militants.

And I got microfilms. And I was the man who brought to London a report, Å»ydowska Organizacja Bojowa, a Jewish militant organization, written after the ghetto.

And I remember when I was boarding a train, on my way to Port Gdansk to go to Sweden, the messenger came and gave me, I believe it was a battery or something, you know, a battery for a torch, and said you have to take it to-- this is a report. The story of the extermination of Jews and of the Warsaw ghetto uprising.

And it was-- I didn't know, really, exactly what it was until I reached London. Then the film was developed, and it was a very impressive story written by the woman writer called Kahn, K-A-H-N, in [POLISH] "Na oczach Å›wiata," "before the eyes of the world." Which was translated, but I don't believe it was published, because there was very little interest in the kind of atrocity stories at the time.

So this was my mission. I already knew that people in the West do not believe in the genocide on the scale that took place. So I approached a British NCO by the name of Ronald Jeffery, who is still alive. He's in New Zealand. He escaped from the camp, POW camp in Lodz.

Can we pause for a second?

Yeah, sorry.

This is a particularly loud plane, sorry.

It's very noisy.

OK.

Some of them are. We can get by with [INAUDIBLE].

What's all that beeping?

Beeping?

You're not hearing that?

There's kind of a hum. It's a hum.

No, [INAUDIBLE] I'm hearing a beep.

Yeah.

That's what you're talking about?

Yeah.

I don't know where it is.

What is it?

I can't find out where it is. I don't know where it is. And it's with regularity.

Yes, it is. You were talking about Mr. Jeffery.

Yes, so I did know that the credibility of a Pole with the British may be questionable. So I approached a friend of mine, a British NCO, by the name of Ronald Jeffery. An extremely brave young man who escaped from a POW camp in Lodz, lived in Warsaw in hiding, and was very active in the underground.

He was a man of considerable courage, spoke fluent German, and learned Polish. And I told him, Ronnie, write a letter to London Times about the Jews, about the atrocities and all that's going on. And identify yourself, give your number, your regiment and all that. And I will ask that it's microfilmed and we'll send it to London Times.

And it was developed. The microfilm was developed. And the Polish government sent it to London Times. They never published it.

So when I met Archbishop Temple, who was the Archbishop of Canterbury, the head of the Anglican church, he was really a good man. And he was not just asking what can I do for you in the sense which implied I can do nothing. He just asked the question in the good sense, can I do something?

And I said, well, use your influence. You are the second person after the King. He sent my letter to the Times and asked why they didn't publish it. Use your influence with the Times to have this letter published.

And I have his answer. I have his answer here in Washington. The original letter said, Mr. Nowak, I'm sorry, nothing to be done. London Times say they cannot publish the letter because it could endanger the men in Warsaw and the British POWs, which was nonsense.

I mean, he was one of the I don't know how many thousands of people living with forged documents. Nobody could-- how could the Germans find him?

And I told about it Walter Laqueur when he was writing his books. And he approached London Times, said do you have this letter in the archives? And they said no, the letter was destroyed, which is not true. I mean, a letter smuggled from the occupied Poland from a British prisoner of war was a curiosity. I'm sure they would keep it. They didn't want to admit they had this kind of letter and didn't publish it.

Now I want to backtrack a little bit, learn more about the underground, the Polish underground. What motivated you to get involved?

Can we wait for a second?

Oh, airplanes? OK. [INAUDIBLE] be under the flight path too, [? of the ?] airport.

OK.

What motivated you to get involved?

Patriotic duty. I mean, I was a young man. I was the officer. I mean, it was my duty to fight on. That was the motivation of people who joined the underground.

From where did all of these people come?

All walks of life. Absolutely all walks of life. The countryside, the peasants, were extremely well-organized. For

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instance, you know, parachuting with parachutes. They got special committees by the peasants. There were peasant battalions, partisan units, guerilla, intelligentsia. Everybody.

If somebody was not in the underground, he was at least trying to help in some way or the other. But it was a conspiracy of the entire nation, I would say. There were very few people who were not involved in this or other way.

Which does not mean the organization itself, probably there were no more than 400, 1,000 people. But it had a tremendous [? hinterland ?] of people who were supporting it, whether by offering a hiding place or helping in any way they could.

So even if I didn't know a passerby, I could approach him, say look, I'm [? in. ?] Help me.

And it was a fantastic experience. I remember when Germans closed a street because there was some attempt on the-- attack on the SA unit marching through. A hand grenade was thrown.

And I was inside the apartment house with some other people on the conspiracy. And we were told that everything is quiet, we can leave. I was the first one who left. And when I was leaving the house, the Gestapo man stopped me and he said, where did you come from?

And I knew that if I say which apartment, the rest of my colleagues, including my fiancÃ©e, was there. So over his shoulder, I saw the name of a dentist. And I said I left the dentist's room. And I gave her name.

He took me into the nearest pharmacy, picked up the phone, and called the dentist, having my identity card, and said, was a man by this name in your room? [? And ?] so that's the end. He put down [INAUDIBLE]. He said you can go.

She said yes, of course he was. I never saw the lady. She never saw me. But she was in this house. She knew what it's [? all ?] about. So yes, of course he was. He was my patient. He was in my room.

You know? This was the kind of conspiracy where everybody was trying to help and assist. I lost a ticket when I was with my compromising material. And I approached a worker who had a season railway ticket, and asking could you please buy me a ticket because I cannot go through the [GERMAN] sperre without a ticket.

Of course he didn't know who I was. He went, bought the ticket, brought me the ticket. I left the railway station safely. So everywhere there was some kind of assistance. That's why we would act.

Did the organization of the underground evolve out of pre-war political organizations?

It evolved spontaneously. They were-- really, secret organizations [? were ?] mushrooming after the defeat of Poland, everywhere. At the same time, the commanding officers were appointed by our authorities in London. And they were trying to unite this whole kind of spontaneous organization into one underground force. And they managed to do so. But the initiative would come from grassroots.

Were there any Jews in the underground?

Oh, yes. I mean, for instance, my schoolmate, a little older, [? Lucian ?] [INAUDIBLE] was very close to me in the organization. [? Yusef ?] [? Handelsman, ?] Professor [? Handelsman, ?] who was killed by the Germans later.

I could name several people. Yes, there were some Jews in the underground movement.

But not a lot.

Not many, because you know this was a terrific danger. The man [? Lucian ?] [INAUDIBLE], for instance, had very Jewish features. Now if he would be caught with some compromising material and tortured, he would betray others. So it was dangerous to have a Jew who could be recognized as a Jew in the organization. But there were some.

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Was there any coordination between the Polish underground and the ghetto underground?

Yes, but not from the very beginning. Because at the beginning, Jews like Dr. [? CzerniakÃ³w ?], for instance, took a position that if we resist, I mean if Jews will resist, all will be killed. If we don't resist, if we simply carry orders, some will be killed and some will survive. This was a wrong philosophy.

And the first really Jewish militant units were formed only after this big wave of extermination at the end of '42. And then they were trying to establish contact with us and to get weapons.

Now, initially, the Polish military were reluctant, because they were not sure if they would fight. But later, they have shown tremendous determination, and they did get weapons. Not enough, not sufficient. They were always complaining they don't get enough.

But also, not only weapons, because we were very short of weapons until the British started really to throw a lot of weapons since April '44. But we were-- for instance, I know that the Poles were giving them contacts to where they could buy weapons from Germans. It was a possibility. There were many German soldiers who were selling their weapons.

And so whatever they had, they got from us. But this was very poor equipment. They were poorly equipped. [INAUDIBLE] pistols and some few guns. It was a very small, very poorly-equipped insurgent army.

Was there any coordination in terms of information?

There were liaison people who were coming from the ghetto, mostly by sewers or other ways, I don't know what. One of them was Antek Zuckerman, but he was the one who was kind of a liaison between the ghetto and the underground. There were some others.

And there was an organized transport of arms. And the man who was really in touch with them was through [? Handel Gorinski ?], [? who ?] was among others. He was the one who was assigned to be a kind of liaison with Jews.

What were the primary goals of the underground? Can you [? sum-- ?]

Fight for freedom. Fight with the enemy. Fight with the Germans for freedom. That was the goal, as in France, as in every occupied country.

Did the ways in which you hoped to achieve that change or evolve as the war went on?

I didn't get your question.

Well, when you say fight with the enemy, obviously you worked in a more political or propagandist end for quite a while.

Yeah. Oh, it was also a kind of struggle, a very important one, psychological warfare.

I'm just wondering if the ways in which you wanted to achieve this freedom or independence evolved, or if you always had kind of a full scale strategy in place of how to do this, both militarily and politically?

Well, of course it developed gradually, but the concept was clear. It was all-out fight on every sector. Psychological warfare was only one of many. But there was urban guerrilla, there were partisan units in the forests, there was sabotage of all kind.

It was an all-out fight with many directions. There were the units that were trying to terrorize the Germans, who were executing Germans. It was a very broad front to inflict as much damage as possible and to contribute to the victory.

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How much information did you have about other operations within the underground?

Not much. Whatever-- only what was published in the underground papers, because the rule was that if you belonged to one cell or one unit, you are not allowed to involve yourself in any other. This was the rule to protect the organization.

You shouldn't try to know more than you have to know, because if you are arrested, you never know how you will-- if under torture, if you will not break down and will not betray others.

It was assumed that the man who was arrested and tortured may tell the Germans, under torture, things about others. So the policy was that everybody had to have his knowledge as limited as possible.

We need to change the tape. Can we turn this light--

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