

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

**Interview with Tadeusz Marchaj
September 21, 1998
RG-50.030*0393**

PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Tadeusz Marchaj, conducted by Katie Davis on September 21, 1998 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.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

TADEUSZ MARCHAJ

September 21, 1998

- Q: This is September 21st, 1998, we are in Arlington, Virginia, and this is an interview for the Holocaust Museum with Tadeusz Marchaj. And if I could just get you to begin. Introduce yourself, say your full name.
- A: Okay. This is -- my name is Tadeusz Marchaj. Yestem -- I -- I cannot talk in Polish. I'm a son of the Stanislawo Marchaj Mulanietch and Neho Marchaj. [speaks Polish]
- Q: I think you just spoke in Polish then.
- A: Oh, Jesus. Sorry. Yes, I -- yes. You see, when I'm coming to my memory, I don't know, somewhere in my mind is everything automatically switched to the Polish language. So now, fine. Marchaj ema in America, and talk English. So, I am the -- a boy born in Poland as the first generation of the Polish people after reaching the independence as a country in the 1918, and ri -- and yet Poland was again a state in 1918. And therefore, being born in '24, I am one of the first generation of the Polish people. We -- this what happened just after the war, and I started to think independently, was that I started to understand the great effort of my parents, and parents of my friends, that they fought to reach this independence. And therefore I found a very -- important for me to learn about the history and fight for the independence. I understand the very big losses in Polish population to reach this goal, to be again independent country. Therefore, I understand very well the need to be educated patriotic, as a patriot. And therefore, a -- from very beginning what I remember in my youth, it was always all events, all occurrences, all anniversary, very enused, very, very touchy. All -- say for example like anniversary of the Polish constitution, the third May, this was the constitution which was written based on the American Constitution, and written by the Tadeusz Kashoushka, who was the friend of Thomas Jefferson. And this third May, it was a very big day in Polish history, every more -- every day, every year. There -- and then we --
- Q: What would people do, why -- how could you tell it was a big day?
- A: Well, it means that especially -- may I make a -- a little bit comi -- to come back to the history of Poland, the society of Poland, to the people of Poland. You have to realize, everybody who want to understand Polish people, and their behavior, you have to assume -- not assume, have to recognize the fact that Poland didn't exist for 125 years. This means six generations of the Polish people were not Polish. You have to realize this fact that people didn't know, after six generations, what does it mean Poland, especially that the -- the recognizing country, recognizing the nation occurred very late in human history in Europe. This is the so-called, the spring of the nation, and in moment -- you have to realize the fact that there was no German, there was no Austrian, there was not Polish people. They were the principalities, somebody was Bavarian, or was the Silesian, was the Galician, was the Pomac. People didn't know yet what does it mean Poland, they didn't know yet what are Germany, they didn't know what are Austria, and so on. History

was the history of the big family, big kings, but not a big country. Big Germany. Germany's a very modern -- modern -- modern creature, I can say. And therefore, when Poland reached the independent, people within the territory, within the border of the so-called thow Poland, they didn't know who are they. There was a -- here in the United States, you can find a group of Polish people gathering somewhere in the center of park, speaking the same language, and asking each other, who are you? They are speaking Silesian. No, I am Mazurin, I am Galician, and I am speaking Galicia. I am speaking Silesian, I am speaking Mazurin. They even didn't recognize they are speaking Polish, because Poland was a -- a totally new element of [indecipherable]. So therefore, you realize this sounded -- it was extremely important for the people who reach, and were at the government, at the steering of the new country, like Pilsudski, Marshal Pilsudski who started to fight for -- for the freedom of Poland. They introduce a very strong, very -- no, they introduce a histor -- education of histor. And at the time, we and my friends in different country -- different part of the Poland, they started to be the conscious who -- what does it mean Poland. What does it mean to be a Polish? Of course, in this development, there was a very big part of the Catholic church. This -- the church was the -- the first unit of the government, yes, to create a -- the -- to create am -- hard, that's the [indecipherable] you see the -- if -- if I would like -- sorry -- if I would like to talk in perfe -- about my profession, I -- I had no problem to find the words, and when I am talking on this subject, I have a problem. So they started to create the conscious -- can I say conscious?

Q: Consciousness.

A: Consciousness of the Polish people, what does it mean Poland, yes. And very big emphasize in this consciousness was a -- that we are Catholic. And really, really there was a -- 90 percent, yes, of suppolld Polish people were Catholic. And therefore, in -- in the -- in the school, ground school, and then in gimnasium, which is a correspondent to the high school, there -- we started to -- not only to be Polish, but to cultivate Polish. And one of these big movement in cultivation of the Polish -- Poland, was scouting. Organization hartseffo, scouting.

Q: Mr. Marchaj, what I'm going to do, is because I feel us moving forward, you're almost a teenager now, I would like to go back a little bit and get even to when you were a little boy, and then we will revisit this idea of how you were surrounded by this new consciousness.

A: Yes.

Q: So, if you could tell us -- tell us about your mother and father. What -- what were they like, and what was it like to be a little boy in their home.

A: Yes. Okay, that's a very, very basic question, because sometimes in America, I'm trying to tell the people that I am a son of the slave. That is a big surprise. And if you would try

to find a definition who is slave? The person which is taken away from home, from country, by some big power, to another country, to be totally without freedom, and to have and obey the rules of the -- this who took him to another country. That's -- I understand the definition of the slave from Africa to America is exactly the same. They were taken away to another country, without willpower, without anything, just to go and obey the law of the lord, yes? So this is my father. My father was from family where it was seven children, and -- four son and three daughters, and this town, land where he was born, Vol-Volbrum, in Poland, had to supply to the tsar of Russia, a soldier, forever. They were taken away from this small town to, in case of my father to Petersburg to be a soldier. Now why this happened, you know, there was seven, four brothers, and there was a gathering of the family, because Volbrum, town Volbrum had to supply X number of people -- soldiers to the tsar. So when there was a tragic meeting in the family, they say, now Miko, Neho, you will go. And he was taken away to Petersburg, and this was somewhere in the -- in 1905, something like that, maybe 10, ist -- I don't remember the date. And so this is my father. My mother was a daughter of the family --

Q: Can you just --

A: With close?

Q: No.

A: Okay, I am moving [indecipherable]. So, therefore my f -- so I mentioned who was my father, and of course, even if I would like to ask at that -- at that time, who you were, probably his answer would be, I am shlos -- Silesian. In spite of fact that he was talking Polish. He had no knowledge about the Poland [indecipherable]. Then he went to the Petersburg, and he was a -- I can tell you, very intelligent boy. He didn't -- he didn't was -- he wasn't there a -- a -- a simple soldier. He was intelligent, so he made advance in his ranking. Of course, that he will never reach the officer's ranking, but he reached the starshina, which means like a sergeant, starshina. Now he was taught not to be only a soldier, or to give the orders to another soldier, he started to be a professional soldier in the armament. He was a perfectly taught how to be with the armament. He was a perfectly taught how to deal with the armament, carbine, guns, and everything, how to repair it, how to build it and so on. So he was out of the service of the soldier, he was in - - somewhere in the kazerna, yes, in the camp, or -- camp somebody [indecipherable] exactly it was Veeberg, which is now in [indecipherable]. And he, when the war came, war -- the first World War, he was not a soldier to be killed.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Yes. Because he knew well all the soldiers, and the first battle that my father faced, it was Tanenberk battle, very famous battle, and he found the only -- he saw the battle after the battle, and he survived this bacca -- the only because he was not in the first line. He was delivering the armament to this killing. And he survive, and then he participate in the

war, later on the -- on the front, and the Austria, Italy, Austria, some went there. And then was captured as a -- as a -- you know -- captured by the -- by the [indecipherable] army, so was the --

Q: By the which army?

A: By Austria.

Q: Austria, mm-hm.

A: And he at that moment, he said that, I am with the Russian, yes? And Austria, they found him very useful. Oh, we get a professional, yes. Let's use him in the manufacturing in Vienna, yes? So he from the status of what is this, gefarn genay, now what is this American English? Prisoner of war, yes? He was no prisoner of war, he was a worker in already a certain industry of Austria. At that time, he met -- he send the letter and contact the father, and father later came, and he made arrangement, better arrangement for him to be almost like a worker, free worker. And awadi -- I have even the -- the picture of this visit that, in my grandfather visit my father. And he was -- and this was the end of the war, I mean, as you know. This is the end of the war, and Pilsudski, Leggionipulski, they started to fight. 120 soldiers get out from Kraków to fight for Poland. Do you realize this fact? 100 very well educated soldiers, under the [indecipherable] of Pilsudski started to fight with the three power European power, Austria, Prussia, and Russia. Fortunately for Poland, all these three powers fought each other, in different combinations. So it was quite -- no, not easy, but 120 soldiers started to bil -- to fight and build the Poland. And in 1918, when the treaty in Versailles, Mr. Woodrow Wilson, yes, was involved to promise Poland independence, and Pilsudski was at the moment leader openly. They gave Poland chance to be a nation as Poland. So I -- do you know [indecipherable] my father, yes. My mother was not the same story, but she was a daughter of the restorator in Slominiki. Is a town of -- very close to Kraków. And they met each other, they start to love each other, and they were married, yes, I -- I don't know, probably 18 or twen -- no, 20 -- 18 - 18 - '18 they were married. And at the moment, my father, being in some way involved -- he was in connection to the -- this military movement in Poland, and he entered Polish police. Police, yes? And he was the -- again, in the county Keldsa, is a part of Poland, he was re-responsible for the armament of the police. He's a -- you realize this was the year 18 - 19 - 20, and now you -- maybe you know that -- that in 1920, Poland was not yet fully Poland, because there was on the east a growing Communist, a Red army attack Poland in 1920, with the full power they invaded Poland just to take Poland into the -- into the Communist [speaks Polish] I -- I said in Poland, in Polish. And at the moment -- you realize this [indecipherable]. Poland, they have two years of independence, two years to build the consciousness what does it mean Poland. They have to fight with the Russian power. Not only Russian, the whole Socialist block. And they were very badly defeated. With Germany and Russian Red army was totally destroyed, which is invading not only Poland, but invading very weak German. This is the very crucial moment in history of -- of the youth. Yes, either you will study some -- some historical period, 1920, you will see

how weak it was at the moment, Europe, to be captured by Communists. There was a -- Germany was -- after the war, was totally destroyed. So, doesn't matter. In 1920 my father fought as a -- as a soldier, again -- Polish soldier against the Communist Red army. Afterwards [indecipherable] Red army was defeated very badly, and the moment even Polish army ended up to the Kiev, very far, far, deep into the Russia. But, doesn't matter. W-We can say that since '20, Poland was a really [indecipherable], yes. So realize in '20, in 1939, 19 years later, we were invaded by Germany, and saw the killing again. But in this period of 18 years, you have mi -- imagination how much we built in Poland. Incredible, incredible. We --

Q: Do you remember your -- tell us what you remember about your father talking about this, about being a soldier, about fighting for Poland.

A: He was very pacifistic, especially -- especially when we were espousing, yes, and we were in some way paramilitary organization. So, a very good education, part of the Polish scouting, was the military decoration, to know everything about military, about the -- the simple behavior even, but without using the weapon, yes? But basically again, how to use the cartography, how to use the geography, how to use the knowledge of the medicine, and so on. This was a paramilitary organization with -- without -- no, with out the -- the leading us to the militaristic -- no, militaristic future. No, this was a -- do you know the founder of this organization was in England, Baden Power [indecipherable]. Scouting was a very broad movement in Europe. And my father was always, but don't think about to fight, because you are only -- you will be only the -- the target of -- to be killed. So he was pacifistic at this moment.

Q: I'm not sure I understand. Is that something your father would say to you?

A: No, no.

Q: Oh.

A: But he -- if there was some meeting in the home, yes, and they will usually, in the Sunday, and we were very, very patriotic. And as you know, in every country there is political issues, yes? So, my father was -- was now oriented more to build the life, to build something good. And he said, "Don't believe in everything what you are teaching you in the school." And he said, "Think independently what is going on." Yes, and he realized this fact that Poland was so fresh, so unexperienced country, that he had a terrible problem. Minority, yes, Belarus, yes, and Cryena. Jewish people, some German, and so on. Even what I can tell you something about the -- how I -- how I lived with my friend, the Jewish people, yes, because as I mentioned to you, my father, and my mother came from the small town, especially later, I was very much more attached to the family of my mother, especially that my godfather was Jusef Meeta, was a soldier of the Pilsudski army, a regular soldier. And he was the vouldoust, a mayor of this small town. And he had a very -- my cousin, yes, were the same age, so during the vacation, either

they were in our home, or I was in their home. So this was like my -- the distance between my br -- I had it one brother and two sister. My brother was six years older. So at that year -- age, say 12, he was 18, there was no contact. So the contact was with my cousin, who was 12, too. And therefore I -- I was very close to the -- to the Titus Kameeta, my cousin, and Barbara Kameeta. Titus, it was his name, Titus Kameeta. And later he was a soldier of the -- too. And it doesn't matter, this is the case that I was in -- attached, yes. In this town -- because I started to tell about the Jewish people, Slominiki, say for example, it was a s --

Q: Which town?

A: Slominiki -- Slominiki --

Q: Which is not the town that you grew up in?

A: No.

Q: But your --

A: Hi -- I grew up in --

Q: -- cousin's hometown.

A: -- yes, cam -- I -- I grew up, because I meant -- I didn't mention this, that my father was responsible for the police department, armament only, yes, in Kelsa, and was a -- like a capital -- county town, county town. This was a -- a 200,000 in -- inhabitant, yes, big town. And so therefore, he -- I -- Slominiki was 6,000, and there was the -- we knew 3,000 Jewish people. Now, that's the very -- that you -- maybe you are interested in some way, that similar way, Jewish people, if you go now back into history, they didn't know Poland. He came maybe when it was the Kasimiro del grossa in the 15th century, when he invade -- in -- invited Jewish people into the very big kingdom at the time, was Poland, yes? And probably his idea was to move to the new territory, which was at the domination of the king Kasimiro, but in very peaceful way. Kasimiro del gressa never fought the war, and the -- at the time, there was a -- the greatest part of Europe under his domination. You know, after ya -- Besarabia -- you know -- you know Besarabia Ukraina into Lithuania? This was due to the m -- marriage -- married his daughter Elsan, they dom -- started to dominate this big territory, but not Poland. This was a do -- domination, then th -- this was the aga -- under the -- under the [indecipherable] it's hard to say. It was a governor -- king, no, under the how do we -- I lost the word. Doesn't matter. The [indecipherable] king, Kasimiro del grossa had the influence into the Lithuania because his daughter was married to the agawar, or something like that, yes? And therefore, he started to enter -- the properties was his idea to introduce a lot of Jewish people, who were the merchant, who were the professional in very many activity, even to -- to make dresses, to -- to -- to make a business, to do something, yes? At the moment Polish

peasant, they didn't know anything about it, yeah? So therefore, and I'm saying, in Slominiki there was a 6,000 inh -- in -- in -- inhabitant, and there was a 3000 Jewish people. Who are they, who were they, yes? Professionals. Business, bakery, and another activity of the merchant, yes. And at the time, when I was in the vacation, I played the game like a kid's game with my friends Jewish. I -- up to now I understand such an expression, hanush kamoyra? Yes, hanush kamoyra, this is the Jew -- Yiddish don't worry, hanush kamoyra. Or a -- or very many su -- such expression, yes? So we were together --

Q: That you learned from your friends?

A: Yes, playing the game. Now, I -- I met them later in the schools, yes, but they have some difficulties, because they -- they were Jewish by religion. They didn't know Poland, and the -- very little of these Jewish boys and girls, they were Jewish. And this was later a terrible disaster for them, when the German entered Poland. They were so distinguished, so different, that the German can very easy separate them from th -- and I am just saying, but that's -- this is the -- I mentioned that in -- in my life, I know very well what it means to be Jewish, yes? You see, in the -- in this -- in this town, you can have it always some curiosity, yes? You can distinguish the curiosity between these people. So I can tell you if there will be -- if there were jokes, or some malicious action, they were not organized, or something like -- because they -- people were very different, so they will make jokes on him, or something, some curiosity, like you know, this is the certain period i-in -- in Jewish that they are bill -- building the shackle -- so small -- small hut, yes? For the -- I don't know, this is the -- to memorize the traveling across the desert since many thousand years ago, yes? So, I remember this, that they -- they -- they -- they people, or see -- or like me, I say what's this, and so on, yes? But this was a curiosity that sometimes you can make a joke, yes? But this was not a -- something that I -- I -- I hate this, yes? It was only recognizing that they are different. Okay, but this is the word what I said, now what I have to go, because I lost my -- my -- my -- my -- my talking.

Q: I want you to just tell a little bit about family life. What was it like at home, what did your mother do, or how much were you at home with your mother and father, your brother and your sister?

A: Yeah. So, of course that my very young period in Keltsa was -- was n-not significant for me, because i -- I wa -- I was seven, so at seven years old, I remember very little about the Slominiki. I remember my friends playing the games and this, or going for fishing, or swimming. Or going to the forest to pick up the berries. And when I -- my really I enter more active life, when I -- when our family move from Keltsa to Warsaw. At the age of seven I was with family in Warsaw. What's happened, my father was transfer from Keltsa to the headquarters of the police in Warsaw to be responsible for the certain manufacturing in the workshop, and equipment which was needed for the Polish police. And at the time, I was already a student of the ed -- en -- be -- of high school, my -- my brother was already in the gimnasium. My -- my daughters -- sisters were in the same --

in different gymnasium for the girls, yes? And in a moment, as I mentioned to you, that -- that contact with mother and father was a very -- very close, but you had no time to be -- for a very long time together, yes? This was only sup -- some days. But, in the morning you go to school, after school come back, workshop -- homework, and that's it. My activities a -- by -- after ou -- after school, I participate in bands to play the corono, yes. Marching bands, and activity of the scouting, yes? And this was a -- three times a week, yes? So this is -- my brother, same real story, yes?

Q: What was his name? His name?

A: His name? Cheslof. Cheslof. He's a very famous name in -- in the work. I -- I will tell you later. And -- and he was already studying [indecipherable] in gymnasium -- my sister was in gymnasium, ri -- yes? My mother was a so-called housewife, yes? That's possible for activity in the home, she had some help, yes, of the -- some maid from her town, who was like a member of our family, forever, Helena Klanofska. And --

Q: Just get you to say the names of your two sisters.

A: Yes, ah, my sister was Yenema, and second Maria. Yenema, and Maria ga -- work in gymnasium that was a -- you -- you have to know that the gymnasium program was absolutely the same in all gymnasium in Poland. There was no differences like here in the United States, that -- where you can study whatever you want. No, there was a program by the Ministry of Education, and the program of every gymnasium are absolutely the same. And somebody can say, ho ho, this was the very fine matter to brainwash the people, yes? Because you have a -- this is to be known for you. Yes, and no, but I can tell you that in my life it was a positive, because this -- this program that was presented to me, I found that this was the very universal program. There was nothing very exaggerated to brainwash a young boy or a young girl. So, this is the time when we were to -- to Poland -- to -- to Rashava at '35, yes? And now is '35 [indecipherable]

Q: Before we keep moving, when you got to Warsaw, where did you live?

A: Aha.

Q: What was the neighborhood like?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: And also, if you could speak a bit about how you observed your faith.

A: Ah. I have the picture. Maybe later I will show you. Education -- my education, because it -- what I remember since 30 -- exactly, exactly '33 to '39 yes, it was that -- being a student. Making the homework, go to the school, come back, make homework. Some certain activity assign from the marching band, and -- and -- and scouting. Is, of course,

vacation, going for the camps. I'm saying this way, this was a very nice, and -- and straightforward activity prescribed by the almost Ministry of Education, yes? So, contact with mother and father was duri -- usually in the s -- Sunday, or -- or something like that. Now, my father, in 1955, yes, he made a decision because of the heart problem, that he has to leave police, not as a rent -- not how to say voluntarily, yes? He's -- he said, "I spending police enough of my life. I am still young." He always underlined this, in spite of the fact that he was 50, "that I have to do something for myself." And believe or not, he was a very successful contractor -- contractor. He started to build homes in Warsaw. Now, we started to live in the part of Warsaw which was so called Saskakampa. This is the very close, the proximity to the -- to the centrum of Vashar, it was two kilometers. And when I remembered -- when we came to this part of the town when my father build the first house, there was a fields -- fields [indecipherable] fields, yes? When, at the end of the war, there was a beautiful, I think most beautiful part of the Warsaw, as a meeting area, like a n -- those were not big houses, small houses. And in this part of -- of war -- of Warsaw, in Saskacampa, my father build the five homes. And our -- we -- we started to be very rich now, very rich. You know what does it mean to be worth in the time -- of course my family [indecipherable] father is a hundred thousand dollars. It was a lot of money. And he -- while he was -- he started to do this? Because he was in -- Michael Marchaj, yes, he was always energetic and full of activity. What he did, he said, there are my town, there are my friends from the young period, and he had work. Let's them be my helper, that I will take them from Volbrum, or Slominiki, I will bring them to the Warsaw, we will build the contemporary barracks, and then we'll start in spring to build the house, and at the end of the year, the home for stoies with -- were ready. And my -- for these people, who [indecipherable] brought -- they took -- physically come here, build the barracks. They -- Helena, our maid, she was a cooker for them, and believe me -- and they were paid very well. They paid not as a salary by week, or something like, they [indecipherable] in this way. If you -- by number of bricks, yes, they get the salary. And they, at the time earned a lot of money in the one summer period. And they -- they get out for the winter, then next spring they came to another place, and do the same. So my father did a lot of this very intelligently, and giving the chance to his friends, and now they were so angry to be again and again, so even then selected another friend --

Q: So angry?

A: Angry -- not angry, no, sorry, a wrong -- a wrong words.

Q: Eager?

A: Eager, yes they were eager to come here again, even to bring a better friends, to do better job, to do more money, yes, because they were in some way. So in this way, y -- we -- we -- I remember this, that in the springtime there was a [indecipherable]. In the -- in the -- in the fall there was a -- a home. And -- so this was that. And the -- at the time, nothing's changed in Marrowshak. The way of life was the same. We -- we -- my father -- I say it was worth a hundred thousand dollars [indecipherable] that he di -- he doesn't have the --

this hundred dollars to spend, yes. This was the -- his building the future that he recognized the fact that money make money. You cannot stop to do this. He was in very big contact with the banks. He had the open credit in -- in the very famous banks in Warsaw. The name of my father was known, and he was a good creditor, yes, yes, creditor. And besides that he build the houses, he made a -- a street, also, with the water, electricity, and sewer system. Everything was [indecipherable] so when my father started in the very beginning of the street, he -- he -- the end was -- is another home, yes. So this was the [indecipherable]. And now, it's come '39 -- 1939.

Q: Before you go there. I am curious about how your family worshipped.

A: Ah, oh, yes, I mentioned it. Of course you see that there was a church built in the -- in this part of the town where my father participate a lot. And in the school, yes, as I mentioned to you, there was a program, yes, that y -- y-you can -- you were -- you were taught by the certain rules, and our education in school was in Catholic education to [indecipherable] that we have, and say for example Jewish -- for example Jewish, and -- or ukra -- Protestant, because I was in the -- in the state gimnasium, yes? So it was recognized by [indecipherable] by constitution as that, fine. That is a majority of the students, yes they are Catholic, so we have a catahead yes, in the p -- priest, yes, we were coming and i -- they taught us a certain basic facts, and -- of -- of Catholic church [indecipherable] yes, yes? But, at the time there was such a -- is that somebody was Protestant or Jewish, yes? He was free to go to another -- his own far -- pre -- is his own, no -- activity, yes?

Q: In other words, when you were studying tenants of your Catholic faith, maybe a Protestant or a Jewish student --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- would leave, go to another class, and they would have their own class?

A: No, no. Because there was so little them at that moment, in spite of [indecipherable] population of the Jewish people, it was very -- quite big, yes? There was usually in -- in gimnasium -- government -- state gimnasium, mostly in my class it was three Jewish people, and there was five Ukrainian. Is a -- yes -- no -- what is this in -- belief -- Orthodox -- Orthodox Catholics, yes? So there they -- they did participate at that moment, and this -- what they wanted to do depends on them. Yes -- during the -- of course, that -- when was that, Sunday, yes, and -- and it was summertime. I -- we were very happy [indecipherable] because I played the march band, yes, we march band, so many were to the church, and the gimnasium, went to the church in Sunday, yes? But we -- we -- we -- we have these privileges that we are saying between us, that we don't have to go to the mass. We don't -- we -- we -- we sit on the greens, under the tree, with our instruments, yes. We didn't have to -- to be -- to be in the church, yes, and we listen to this, yes, you know, I am saying we are -- and it was -- you -- you realize this fact, that

this was something which is forcibly to -- to put on you, you are re -- re -- very resistance, yes? So at the moment, to sit on the grass was better than to go to the church, we said. But this was a -- you know, and not very serious abuse of -- I believe, but just young behavior, yes.

Q: How old are you at this point, and what -- what are your ideas? Are you beginning to think about what you might do in your life?

A: Yes. Of course that -- under very big influence of -- for me, was my brother. So he was growing more and more, and he was very seriously, and good educated in the technical school to be a constructor on the planes, yes? Aeronautics. So, of course my dream was of course when I finish in this, my education in the gimnasium, I will go to Polytechnic to be a constructor of the planes, and at moment I will tell you that Poland was in the -- it was very good to build the planes. Really fantastic industry of the military plane and sports plane. Every year the great event for us was the challenges. It was such a competition of the old country, German, Italy, France, and Czechoslovakia the so -- Soviet Union never, there was a competition to fly -- racing, yes? A-Across -- around Europe. There was -- all these plane was [indecipherable] beautiful, beautiful planes. This is the time when the first Atlantic crossing in the opposite direction from east to west, was made by Scarlinski on the plane who was I don't know. The Spirit of Saint Louis was about twice as bigger, you see what I'm saying? You know what speed [indecipherable] remember, Spirit of Saint Louis. Now I can see it in the museum in Washington, and that's was -- it's -- I saw it in Poland, in Warsaw when Lindberg visited Poland and with the san -- Spirit Saint Louis. I remember up to now this -- this especial [indecipherable] but special pattern of the heart of the engine made in circles. You can see this very easy, and I remember this, even this detail, yes. So I -- I was very enthusiastic about the -- the planes, and another even was the gol -- golden Bennett balloon competition in Poland -- in Poland. It was a very, very, very nicely developed Poland, in 15 years of Poland existence. A lot of good teachers, scientists was [indecipherable] by the -- by the society.

Q: You've mentioned several times how patriotic your father was, and how his ideas and what was going on at the time shaped you. Can you tell us a little bit about the things he might have said directly to you, as a son, about that?

A: Yes, but this was -- this was something that I never agree with my father. It went that he was in, at a certain time, not actively, not by his tek -- life experience, in opposition what's happening Poland. You remember the Pilsudski, it was in my -- my god, yes? You believe or not, I have here in my wallet his picture. And because I never forgot at the moment that he and 120 young people started to build the Poland, fight for Poland. Of course that later, this called the first brigade, this wa -- so-called. Piersha brigada, the first brigade. All these people were very educated, very aware people, very good educated people in military and professional. In the process of the development of the country, and administration of the country, a little of these people, very good people, as a soldier, was

not necessary very good to be in government. And my father, because he was more active, and he has a very open eyes as a business man, yes? He say no, these people are not very good. So don't believe everything, you know? And this was in some way in very malicious -- not malicious, how to say distortion, yes? The very famous song of this group of people, yes, was [sings in Polish]. It was such a melody, and it was very often played during these festivities, yes? So my father s-s -- found the song a little bit distortion, he say, "Don't give me everything what they are singing to you." This was always a warning for my father. But politically, he was not a politician, and politically Poland was in statoos nastemi, s-speaking in Latin, the state of to be born, yes? So we -- we have no knowledge what does it mean politics, yes? This new cadre of the people, young people, like a new generation which were growing to reach for this power, never did it, because of the war --

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

A: -- me Greek.

Q: -- and you know, Mr. Marchaj, anything that -- that comes up --

A: -- that's Teddy, I'm Ted.

Q: Tadeusz. This is September 21st, 1998. We are in Arlington, Virginia to do an interview for the Holocaust Memorial Museum. And this interview is with Tadeusz Marchaj. Tape number two. Can you tell us about your involvement with the scouts? What were the scouts?

A: Scouting organization, as I mentioned in the very beginning -- you know the very beginning in the meantime. Well, this was a movement established by the Baden Powell. He was a -- some officer during the first World War, and he had an idea at the time, so far as I remember that people has to do something to avoid war. So this was a -- in some way I -- I mentioned that like a paramilitary organization, but strong emphasize that the war, and fighting will never be used. So shortly is picking the education in the scouting organization, it was rather to present the history of nation, if this -- in Poland there was Polish nation, or in France French, or in England. And this was a -- maybe this is a -- in some way, a -- a contradiction, that we were educated militarily, yes? But there was never presented to us that we will be a soldier. And -- but this -- maybe somebody who -- who in Poland was in the command of this organization in Poland, maybe they have some hidden idea. Let's keep some cadre, some basic people who will be educated patriotically, and paramilitarily, with some knowledge of the survival, yes, in every possible way, and let's to exercise this, yes. So let's go to the forest, let's go to the woods, and do what we want to do. That's a -- in the United States you have this organization up to now. I don't know how the -- how they are calling here, is --

Q: Boy Scouts.

A: Boy Scout, yes, Boy Scout, yes. Same story. And in 90 percent, it was the same, but with some addition in Poland, that we have education in Polish army, yes? But not army, m-m-military education that's safe -- soldier were taught, yes? And you have to know that in -- had the -- one of the Polish town -- I am saying Polish, because it's no more Polish, but he was always Polish, this Lvov. But this is strange, because I don't want to abuse [indecipherable] Cryenian, who claimed that Lvov is L'viv. Because really, Lvov is in Cryena, but it was built by the -- historically, by the people from Poland, from the influence of the kings, and the big town was like a island in the ocean of the Ukrainian people. So, really, it is a Polish town, but is a Ukrainian town. So why I'm mentioning that, in the fight for this -- for this town, participate a lot of young people, with the background of the scouting, the youngest soldier in that time, and were called -- and even there was a very famous cemetery, which was destroyed during the Soviet occupation of

Ukrainia. And now there's a big issue between Ukrainia and Poland, how to rebuild this cemetery, which is a very sanct -- sanctissimus place for the Polish people. And not to abuse the Ukrainian. You have to find the modis revendi between the Ukrainian who hate Poland because of action of these small kids fighting for Lvov, and now this cemetery again. And so they are trying [indecipherable] but I think that -- I hope that there will be a solution.

Q: Can you give us an example of something that you were taught when you talk about paramilitary techniques? What were some of the things that you were taught in scouting?

A: Y-You see the -- it will be hel -- very proper to say that at the time I had no time to think about it. This was a -- scouting was such a big pleasure even to -- to do this or that, and so on, if this is the military or not military. There was a something that is needed, I think, for the young people. And -- and therefore the -- this movement of the scouting, Boy Scouts in America, is still in existence, yes? Or I -- I don't know if it will exist farther, but there is a need for this, and there was a need for us. And what -- what I was thinking, first of all, that anyway, if there was a so-called zbouvika is in Polish, the meeting, yes? Meeting of the -- say, a group of -- is very difficult for me to say, because maybe there is a no -- I cannot translate. Zasta. A -- a group, like sa -- shortly speaking, but the doushina, means a unit of the same gimnasium, was divided in -- in sastempai. Doushina, they consist with say, seven, eight groups of, and every group has a different name, different flags, proportion, different distinction, and so on. So there was, in some way, a very visible military influence into this group. But believe me, I never in my -- at the time, in my mind was a feeling that I will be a soldier, yes? We didn't think about that, but very soon, it's happened that we started to think in this way, when the war came.

Q: Did you learn any skills that you would call survival skills, and what were they?

A: Oh, oh yes, yes, every -- I can tell you that i -- this independence of movement, and -- and the reading the maps. When he -- I remember they lost my camp, that our group shot -- I have to g -- [indecipherable] backwards. My group of -- of this organization was placed or attached to the gimnasium. This was a pack activity of the gimnasium education. I -- my gimnasium was called gimnasium iminya, like airport in New York, here in the Washington D.C.'s, Reagan's and so on. So this group was Iminya Terayousha Raytanna. And it was a very historical, patriotic man who fought in one of the uprising against the partition, and he was very famous fighter. He was captured and executed in Poland. Tadeusz Rader. And -- no do -- Rater, sorry. Raton, it was a fighter, a legal fighter for the im -- for the Polish constitution, during the -- now the -- th-this group was name Iminya Romwilda Trowaguta. Romwald Trowagut. This was the gam -- man who fought in Polish uprising, one of the many of Polish uprising, and it was executed in Sitadella in Warsaw. So, y-you can see, the name of the gimnasium is some fighter. The group of the s-scouting is Amoura Trowguta, and this was the Vuda -- WDH, Vudabashefska Doushina Hertesk. Iminya Rumwilda Trowguta. Number one. We were

the black one in Warsaw. Very good and known Doushina. And now I am coming back to the -- to -- to continue what you aski -- what you were asking me, il -- and this was?

Q: Survival skills.

A: Survival skills. So therefore, the last vacation we had in Lithuania -- now, in Lithuania, but at the time, was Poland. And why Lithuania was Polish, because you have no -- that's the whole Lithuania, I will have no problems with it -- with Lithuania, because you can go to the Central Park in Manhattan, you can find the -- the monument of King Leogarro, with the two swords, and there is written under the pedestal, of this monument in Central Park in Manhattan, that this king, and Queen Yadiveega, it was the first confederation in human history of the two states peacefully. Lithuania and Poland were built now together, big, huge country, yes? So peacefully created, not -- no single blood was flown, yes? So, in Lithuania, of course that after the war, first World War was finished, a lot of small countries claim their right to be independent state. So Lithuania was such a leetva -- whatva -- Estonia, yes? These country were built due to the treaty in Versailles after the war. Now, a very powerful man in this political movement was Pilsudski, who created, as I mentioned to you, there was hundred -- with the two hun -- 120 soldier he went to fight, and he was born in Lithuania, in the territory of Lithuania. And he say, "No, that's mine, and forget it." Yeah, he -- nobody can do this, and he -- if -- he said, "If some -- if the treaty will not accept it, we of Poland, so we will fight."

Q: So you went to Lithuania for the vacation?

A: Yeah.

Q: With the scouts.

A: Yeah.

Q: Is this where you learned some of the skills?

A: No, he -- it means that every s -- I mentioned only that the one of my last scouting -- two months I spend there, the last, but in the meantime I was in manning, previously. But this was the more -- my heart, I was lost there, in Lithuania. This is such a beautiful country, that you have my imagination. And it -- in the nature, the rivers, history. The Polish poetry, like Padameetskavi is one of the Polish biggest poets. He was born there, too, and his biggest poem was related to the Lithuania. His poem -- he opens -- he opens this poem, a very famous poem, Pamapdayoush, he open in this way, [speaks Polish]. I will translate. Leetfo -- my fatherlike -- my -- yes? He, in some way, he is not saying that Leetva was totally not recognize. It was always recognize, yes? But these Lithuanian people -- strictly Lithuanian, they -- they accepted this, oy -- and they are always saying oh, adam mitskabich. He is a Lithuanian, sorry that he wrote in Polish. Yeah, but this is the case. So -- but this is only a certain animosity occurred because of the proud, yes?

Too much proud. And now, personally, yes, I am answering the question. Lithuania is Lithuania. I know that this is the place where he -- Jusef Plusetti was born, and Adam Mitskavich was there, but Lithuania was Lithuania. So maybe you -- on this case you will find my character in some way, that I am not a chauvinist is very -- how to say it? Is not - - I am not a chauvinist, shortly speaking, yes? So, I am open-minded, I want to respect this, and bart -- what I'm saying, that I love Lithuania, doesn't mean that I have [indecipherable] Lithuania is mine. And now, in this -- in this territory, survivor. In some way military education. We get the military map, very accurate, you know, one kilometer was one centimeter. And we get a one Polish zokey -- money. And we get our task force, say. We are going from here to here, in three days. You have to pass these -- all places, and this is the straightforward, not roads, because there wasn't roads, yes? You have a compass, map, money for survival in the case that you can buy something. And you have to pass this route going from the place to place, and you have to get the stamp from the authorities of the village, or some places. There are -- you -- y-you realize this fact, that in every village, there is a so-called vuid. I don't know how to translate it, yes, who -- who is administrator from the government side, yes? Now he had the stamp, he sign it, and so on. And in this way, you have to go by three days, alone, through the forest, from place to place in three days. Of course, we did it sometimes, these routes in the zastiemi, in the very small group, yes, five, six, seven boys. Same [indecipherable], yes? Now y -- this was so-sometimes more difficult because a route was made by the -- our leaders, yes, that you have to cross the river, yes? It was a no mo -- no bridges, yes, you have to find a way that you have to be on the other side, yes, and so on. So this was a survivor. This was a very, very difficult.

Q: How old were you?

A: At that time I was 13.

Q: And how did you do it?

A: I did it. I did it. I can tell you that the one -- no, this -- this -- this last one was -- I was 14, because you see, I now recognize this fact that my route was drawn by our leader through the military exercise polygon. You know what does it mean? A polygon? I don't know how to translate. Evongsplatz in German, which, it be a subject, the -- th -- what is this, the -- that the -- that the military training ground --

Q: Like training school?

A: -- oh, training ground. And I approach my g -- then, and there was a post of the soldier. I say, "Hey, where are you going?" Did you hear what there is going around in here [indecipherable]. And you hear, [makes whirring sound]. The guns shel was passing, and whum! Yes, there was a so-called [indecipherable] it was not a ex -- i-it was a -- the shell was a real shell, yes. So if I would be there, I could be killed. So at that moment I opened my map, and asked to the soldier, he was very respectful for me, oh-oh. So no, no, so you

have to go -- you have to go now this, this, this, and so on. This was another six kilometers more, yes, and I did it, yes. A-A-A-And this was a -- a very big pleasure. Adventure. Adventure not only this, because you see, I -- when I have to go and to sleep, of course I can do this. On the ground, with my, you know, rucksack, yes, backpack. But this is a very romantic [indecipherable] of Poland, that there you have small houses, so-called -- you see, Poland are very attached to the nobilities, but nobilities -- not only very high ranking nobilities, you have a certain gradation of nobilities from grafs and so on, going down, down, down, down, and you have a nobility which we call in Poland shlakta. It means that these were the previous soldier in the kingdom, yes, that they get the certain privileges from the king, including the -- what is this, coat of arm, yes, and name of this coat of arm. And they get the right to build a beautiful houses, small houses. Even -- I don't know if -- if you have a picture of the sort of house that you could see, it was the house where the [indecipherable] was born, and he lived there. Such a small house. And we -- crossing this country, we tried to find such a place. And we get there beautiful -- no -- treatment, yes? But very -- but this is -- was a dying, dying history, yes, when I came to such a house, and there was this sitting old man, and he, "Hey, boy, what are you doing?" And so on. I say, "May I ask you, sir to spend the night here?" Ooh, so at once he called somebody [indecipherable], "Prepare this room for this boy," and so on. And this was such a nice -- and you are [indecipherable] homes full of history, full of different picture, carvings, and so on. Beautiful. So this was the -- my -- my experience of the -- such a -- exercising this scouting.

Q: Tell us about your health.

A: Health, oh. It went that -- I didn't mention very important fact in my life, that being four years old, I was a victim polio, in Kieltsa, there was epitome 17 cases of the -- of this illnesses, and -- and I was paralyzed at the time from the -- the lower part of my body, and -- and therefore as -- as I mentioned is that I have a small compart with my brother, because when I recover, and when I started recover my ability to walk, I was cripple. I was walking in very special way, you know, very big movement from side to side to -- to move the legs in the direction. And step by step, day by day, year by years, my improvement was very big, and -- and I -- I recover almost all my ability to walk, and to this extent that when I was say, 15 - 16 -- this is the occupation time, I had no visible -- visible -- no visible effects of this. And at the moment I remember that when I was trained by the very big sportsman in Poland, the medalist of the Olympic games in Berlin, 1936, he train us to jump. He was a -- a dec -- decathlon -- decathlon. And he exercise us, and all the -- you see this the occupation like maybe we will [indecipherable] to this [indecipherable] in occupation. So I recover, and I was good swimmer, especially because it was given order by the doctors, swim, swim, swim, swim, swim. So swimming give me a chance to build up again the muscle.

Q: Do you know if the other children in Kieltsa were able to recover like you?

- A: Believe me I didn't want it to mention. There was only one. You see, I was born, and my mother told me strictly, "You are not born to us. You are born on [indecipherable] what is written [indecipherable]. "But," she said, "you were born in cap." You -- you know the legend if somebody's born in cap, ifchukgu ouradzoni, it means that he is the very lucky person. I was born in cap. So, and my -- my name would be Woodsian, you know, terrible name, and when my godfather, Jusef Kameeta, who was invited to be my godfather, he say, "What? Woodsian? Never. He will be Tadeusz Kashoushka." So I am Tadeusz, because of his will.
- Q: Think back to when you first began to perhaps hear what was going on in Germany. I don't know if you might have heard it on the radio, maybe your father came home and was speaking of it. Can you tell us about that?
- A: Of course. I have some -- some recognition -- not ne -- re -- not recognition si -- no, admit -- I remember [indecipherable] speaking. When my brother, as I mentioned to you too, he was a student in the aeronautic department, and he was a very good student. He, as a award, he was sent to Paris on the Internationale Exhibition of the Aeronautics, as a student, and he did a -- such a gift from Polytechnic. And he was traveling from Paris to Germany to Poland. And when he was traveling through the Germany, he had a double [indecipherable] and he told me -- these things I remember -- that in Berlin, he was almost abused by some German because he didn't speak German, and is a -- ridiculous that he -- consider him that he's Jewish. And he just had a problem just to get the lead off this followers who tried to -- to -- to -- to do something with him. But I remember this. That's one story. But another story --
- Q: This was someone in a train station?
- A: At the train station in Berlin somewhere.
- Q: Okay, uh-huh, okay.
- A: And -- but anyway, he was admirer of Germany because of his progress technologic. He was -- you understand, he was how to build the planes, and so on, and at that moment, you know, the yoomkers, you know, with big, very famous planes and so on, and was for him, you know, recognized and a-as a professional [indecipherable] were there, good. You -- you -- you follow me?
- Q: Mm-hm.
- A: That's the only one of -- of the Germans he is thinking about. Of course, that -- this the impression about this Volkswagen, you know, this was another story, yes? Jesus, how many cars? You know, the -- everybody has a car, and so on, and so on. So this was this, but the other part of this, he said, "There -- I was almost beaten there, because they consider me that I'm Jewish."

Q: And what was the conversation like between you? Did you speculate about what was going on? Was it surprising?

A: Oh y -- yo-you see, this tension started many -- maybe two, three years before the war occurred. It was a big recognition of the problem that is growing with the German, because demand, you know, maybe you were -- ma -- you rec -- you know where the bigger -- beginning of the aggressive movement on the German was annexia of the Austria. Then was an action of the Czechoslovakia. And this was a very big shame for Poland, that's a terrible. You know, the German enter into the certain territory of Czechoslovakia. Poland enter at the certain territory of Czechoslovakia einder, which Poland claimed that this is the Polish. And this is a shame. I -- I -- even at that time, my father -- oh, my father was terrible. What they are doing? What they are doing, you know? And you know, Czechoslovakia under the big power. And [indecipherable] you see, there was -- this will never happen when Pilsudski was, only now, only now. This was the -- this -- his officer, you know, from the peersha brigada, you -- you follow me? These people did a very bad historical movement. Because later, in few years, we get the same from the Soviet Union. So, y-y-you -- you know that this was a -- and therefore, as I mentioned, this is start to grow our concern, what will happen, how will we -- how will -- we will be -- how will we behaves? And then was the first demand of Hitler, yes? That he want to have the -- a railroad line across the Polish territory from Germany to East Prussia. Then, started to claim the Dansk -- Dansik is German. Absolutely ridiculous because you can call the any time -- any town, you can call it, because the Gdansk is a harbor, was created by the Hunza. Hunza it was a merchant organization who, along the shore of the Baltic Sea, and North Sea created the harbor for the merchant. For the handling, for the transportation of goods back and forth, yes? And Gdansk was built as a harbor in some way by the people -- not the people, by the company -- like you remember that -- what is -- what was Carlotta in the very beginning? Carlotta in the very beginning -- beginning was a company country, yes? So in the same way, Hunza built -- not claim the -- not claim the -- that this territory belongs to, but they started to build the wa -- the town. And with all background, yes? And -- and never consider is that this is the -- wa -- that this was not -- not a -- not a such a country like Hunza. Hunza was a -- it was a company, yes? So this was a -- a very strong -- Hitler said, "This is German." This line has to be -- and is growing, and growing, pressure, exploded in some way, and I was participating in this event historical, and of course, at the time, Minister Beck, owsen minister, made a speech. On the 15th of August, and I have always problem to translate what is Herpen, Herpen is August. So this was the 15th day, and this was anniversary when the Polish -- 120 Polish, under the leadership of -- of Pilsudski started to war, and he said, openly to Hitler in some way, "We will never give you -- our coat to you. We will never give you a button from this coat." I remember this word nyoldami never gozheeka. This button you will never get from us. And this was a strong --

Q: [inaudible] which year?

A: Ee?

Q: Which year?

A: It was exactly '39. I remember I came from the scouting camp, and I went to visit my -- my [indecipherable] parents, as I mentioned, you know, Titusk, Kameeta, and so on, and we -- I was with my godfather, Jusef Meeta. He took us, yes, me and his children who went to the special place in Borna korkoski. A -- a field, yes, special bornia field, this [indecipherable]. And there was this big gathering, and at this gathering owsen minister said, "We will never retreat from this [indecipherable] man." And believe or not, this was the 15th, and 23rd of -- of September. The paratroopers -- not paratroop -- paratroopers, no. The parachuters, yes? The special units of the German army already invaded a very strategic pass in Tutramounti. Because order was given by the Hitler that this is the day to begin the war.

Q: In -- in August of '39, after that speech, or perhaps even before it, were preparations being made that you knew of?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: To -- were peop -- I guess I want to ask, what were people expecting, and what were you and your family expecting?

A: You see, this was a only patriotic reaction.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: We will fight. And build up of our -- I have am -- a big feeling about myself, oh I am strong, and I can resist, of course. It was, shortly speaking, it was stupid, yes. It means that megalomaniac. I am using a wrong word. You see, when you are proud, you can build up -- no, no, I am strong enough to fight, and so on. Let's try to fight, yes we will fight. But without -- without calculation, you have to calculate how many planes you have, how many guns you have, how many things you have, with whom you will fight? With the bare hands? Yes, and this was the case. That soldier, Polish soldier in battle in the war in 1939 fought with the bare hands with the tanks. [indecipherable]. No, this is how -- I will tell you, because I -- I was the witness of this, yes. When the Polish cavalry attacked with the -- with the -- with the almost [indecipherable] yes, the German tank.

Q: So tha -- at that point, you knew there may be a battle?

A: Yes. I -- even I remember in my -- my -- in my -- my cousin [indecipherable] because I went apart from this day, because I know, in my -- my uncle -- my grandfather say, "Not ta -- Tad, go back home, yes, because is very bad." This a -- this was the 20th, yes -- yes a -- is not yet first, yes, of September, "you have to go back in to -- to family, because," --

and I know that this is [indecipherable] wrote in this memoir. When the -- when the war is behind it all. To memorize this, and so on, and I wrote. And when I was in Poland, she show -- show -- show me this inscription, and -- and [indecipherable] if you said it was some preparation, yes, there was a -- a mobilization, and the -- there is a -- the soldier had to go, you had a certain no -- documents to be in the certain military units and so on, and slowly Poland prepared to do war, but anyway -- and this came to us as a big surprise, yes.

Q: What was your father doing, and your mother, and [indecipherable] and your brother [indecipherable]

A: Yeah -- oh yes, absolutely, I -- I remember everything this day, this morning. I opened the radio -- no, uh-huh, first of all, I not yet know. It was already the preparation for the war was ordered in some way that -- of course, I know I -- lucky guess, but I knew, everywhere, people are doing up to now, they saying, we -- we tape the window glasses by the paper, yes, to avoid when the blow will hit the glass, and the bomb, and there will be no shrapnels from these glasses, and you will avoid -- first of all, you are strengthening this window, and you are avoiding the splintering of the glasses. So I, at that moment, day before, and at that morning, I was busy to tape the windows. And I opened the radio, and I hear the pom per om pom pom per ad da da da dum. It is Polish anthem playing, and then there will be a -- appeal of the president Ignacio Mashtitski. And I am listening. Today at five o'clock, German army crossed the border. We are in state of war with Germany. I jumped on the balcony, my father was doing somewhere, and I said, "Father," [indecipherable]. I say, "It's a war." He didn't recognize what I am talking about. "What?" I said, "It is a war." And at the moment I remember that his voice burst into the cry, "What?" Once more again he was asking. I say, "Is a war." And he ran upstairs, and was listening, and he said -- because he knew, he knew [indecipherable]. There is no chance, yes? That's end. And of course, this was beginning of the episode of our -- we are calling this rising -- not rising, jammi, because the -- very soon knew, of course, that we saw this first battle fight -- fight by -- by the planes over the Warsaw, this -- you know, this sounds of the machine guns from the area [makes machine gun noise]. This was a fight in here. And then came this morning, a [indecipherable] with brother of my father from another part of Warsaw and bring this big, huge part of the bomb. And see, because there was a, "[indecipherable] bombing? No, that's not true." And he's taking a [indecipherable], "Look at this, what does it mean?" And then was a appeal of the mayor of the -- of the -- after a few days that the eight of September, that appeal to the people that all mens who are able to carry the duty, they have to lead the force in Poland -- Varbarshava, and have to go into the eastern direction. And now, my brother. He was a worker in the Institute of Aeronaut -- Aerodynamics of the Polish -- Polish nay -- Polytechnic, he was the worker at that time, scientist, and -- not scientist, mo -- scientist, yes, part of the -- of the staff of the Polytechnic, and they got the order for evacuation of this institute into the east, too. And he was separately, he -- he [indecipherable] say, "Good-bye, maybe we will see each other," and he gone. And then -

Q: You did get a chance to say good-bye?

A: Oh yeah, yes, he-he came to the home, he was prepare -- he took the rucksack, he would take the -- some blankets, and so on, and he departed with the Institute of Aeronautactics. And I -- I was at that month, as I say, exactly 14 - 15, I begin. And ha -- my father told me he is decision family, we are leaving Warsaw all together. Mother, father, me and two sister. And we started to go, yes, and this was the hour, no, or the saya, no, it's not the saya, this is -- was a -- hard to say, this was big tragedy because hide -- at the moment I saw everything possible that war is giving us. We started to go with the crowded roads, together mixed, the soldier, people. One is going this, another is going this. And so on, in a couple hours they are flying these planes, German, and bombing these, and you can see more and more graves, killing horses and so on. Smell of -- of war. You can see burning houses. And this was a -- because this is -- this was a first experience of this. And we didn't walk too -- very far when we were [indecipherable]. I think it was 17 September. We were in the very small village, Kitchkee, I remember forever, and we get a message from the soldier, that Soviet Union is fighting on the eastern -- our border. Is attacking us from behind. So our departure into the east was useless, yes? So therefore my mother, and my father yes, they made a decision, we are staying here in this village, and we will see what's happen. And Warsaw -- and very soon we -- oh, we -- we had a contact around there, for the first time, you know, my father was -- I considered my father that he is a -- a little bit coward. I always consider his resistance to do something that this the sign of his cowardness, which it was -- which was wrong. And maybe this --

Q: I don't understand? Co-ward?

A: I -- coward, coward.

Q: Coward. [indecipherable]

A: Coward, yes, so. Some sort of coward. H-He sm -- his resistance to do something, to be -- to be patriotic and so on, because he [indecipherable] father, but there was one day, when we -- everything was just in one bigs mixture of the army, this army, Polish army, almost like a partisan war. And in one place we were on -- on the road in some -- a crossing road, and suddenly, unbelievable, Polish army is gone, yes? Cars, cavalry, yes, and the running, and my father, I -- I saw his first time that he jumped because he was a policeman, yes, he was -- he knew what is going on, yes? He jumped on this criss-crossing of this lot, and asks of this commander, "Where you want to go?" And he said, "We want to go there, and there." So [indecipherable] like aragu -- you like be in the Russian [indecipherable] yes? With the commander of the -- at the -- at the corner of the street. This way, this way, yes? So he did -- get, and he stood in this criss-crossing, and he say, "There are German in opposite -- not Germans backwards." It was like this Polish army went like that, but German was on this road, yes? My father was standing and saying, "Go there. Not here, not here, because there are the German." So they -- they

went there. Believe me it was in one minute my -- my father was still standing on this corner, and dshhhooo, they are going the -- the German -- German -- the -- with tanks, and the tanks, and -- and military [indecipherable] armored [indecipherable]. And he had enough time just to jump out from this street. And the people [indecipherable] want some of the action. And then these people entered on the lot where the -- these Polish troops went, in some way creating impression that this road is not used. And German, they was confused, they went to go, and sshooo, went there. Of course, that this was not very long time because they have no chance, yes, and sooner or later there was five. But not at that point. And moment I see, ho, ho, ho, my -- my father is not -- is not a such great coward. [indecipherable] I can say. This is the os -- episode of this. And then we stay as four -- four more days and then we get a message that Warsaw, on the 27th of September, surrounded. [indecipherable] town for -- fort -- this was big tragedy, you know this was how badly was demolished for -- we might -- that's the first victim of my family. A girl, three years old. It was a daughter, it was my cousin, daughter of my -- of brother to my father. He working in hospital by the bombing. They -- they bomb everything. Hospital were not respected. So she was dead. Of course, then there -- we came to the Warsaw, first contact with the German.

Q: What made your father and mother decide to [inaudible]

A: Why?

Q: What?

A: No -- we knew it, yes, already, yes. We get the message that the Soviet Union is fighting on this part. So our -- our looking for the freedom in the east, it was just dreaming [indecipherable] bad -- wrong thing. So why don't we -- let's go home. Come back home, and then fine, we would find what we -- how this new time will be, and we'll see -- and we approach the Warsaw, and there was a [indecipherable] German surrounding the -- in the Warsaw, and -- with the guard still standing, aiming into the Warsaw, and they say, "Where are you going?" In German, and "Home," yes? And they just resp -- not respected the -- kee -- making such a movement [indecipherable]. And -- and of course that -- only this street, not -- not something because you can have some mine -- some -- yes, because there was some prepared by the Polish [indecipherable]. So they have to go only this [indecipherable] and the -- at end of the day, we -- we found a home, not totally -- not destroyed, but there was na -- no window, yes, everything was blown away. And that home was still home, yeah. And this is the beginning of the occupation. Of course, this is the beginning of a new chapter which -- which is a -- very long, because we -- we were, as I mentioned to you that suddenly the whole life was wiped out. No supply, no electricity, no water, this, and so on. So we started -- and winter was very severe, you know, at the time. [indecipherable]. Big frost. But we managed to -- to cover everything, and ha -- ha -- and ha -- and this is the case. So September, October, we started to dream about the school, and I was already in -- visitor the school, asking the professors if we -- when we will started to do something, and so on. Yes, [indecipherable] were enthusiastic,

“Don’t worry, we will very soon begin.” And so on. So we did it. The school started. But -- because there was not even from the German side, there was no yet -- not yet order given. They didn’t know what they will do with us, yes? And -- and after a -- say two weeks of our presence in the school, in the di -- director, Yeski said, “And now we have to wait what the German authorities will give us. But be will contact with us, because if -- if we will have no permission to open the gimnasium, we will do this secretly, yes.” Yes, in Poland, you have the whole education system working in conspiracy, including the university.

End of Tape #2

Tape #3

- Q: This is September 21st, 1998. We are in Arlington, Virginia, doing an interview for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. And this interview is with Tadeusz Marchaj. And it is tape number three. And let's begin where we left off, which was really school, and what was going on with school?
- A: So, as I mentioned, in the very beginning of the occupation, we went to the school, for the very short few weeks, maybe days, it's hard for me to remember. And then, when we came one day, and that director of the school, Yarosh Yishki, his name, and [indecipherable] what's means honey, he was such a sweet man. And he said, "We will be in contact with you, either when will be a commission to do something legally by the authorities, or we will start to teach you in conspiracy." Of course, I think that it was something very hard for me to remember the exactly -- but in the very beginning of the springtime, it was organized by the German, so-called -- I -- I will tell you in Polish maybe, because later I will try to translate it is [speaks Polish] grade two. It means that -- meaning this was that the -- are the schools preparing the student for the profession -- profession. Zebador. It means that this here, the time you can see, yes? That the German established the -- that we can learn something, but only to be a, say, professional, like a mechanics, whatever is, es -- mechanics, I don't know, carpenter, anything. It means that -- meaning of this arrangement was just to -- that description of the future Polish people is to be a worker, slave. And I -- so we started in such a school, but of course it -- the picture were the same. So between the program established by German, there was secretly delivered history of Poland, language Polish, and this what was strictly forbidden from the -- to -- to maintain the identification of the -- identity of the student, yes. We are --
- Q: If it was -- how was it secretly done?
- A: Oh, yes.
- Q: Would they do it in the class, or would -- what were they doing?
- A: Yes, yes, and no. It means that history, and so on, was made on the complete -- we are saying complett -- complete a group of students, yes, assigned by the professor, they were in private apartment, yes, and there was a teacher, yes. But if there was a legal given, say for example this was a -- no, just writing, yes, you know, you have to teach the writing, and -- a-and some grammary, and so on. So in this class, there was a l -- Yensik Poleski with the literature selected for us, almost according to the program established by the Minister of Education in Poland, which Germans say forget it, yes? No, we did it. And besides, at that moment, conspiracy wi -- to do something illegal in the school, it was maybe illegal for the authorities, but it was not illegal for us, because you -- we identify us very easy. We know who we are, and there was no totally for -- not the foreigners no, the strangers, yes? So we know that we are between the Polish student. So this was easy,

yes. It was because I say, but something that was strictly forbidden, like history and so on, we made it in complete, i-i-in -- in -- in totally di-different places, yes. But something were -- was, according to the Ministry of Education, Polish, yes, was made by the professor voluntarily, yes? In spite of the order of the authorities. Because there was no guards standing in the school, yeah. And this is the case. And at the same time, yes, we scouts, our doushina, the first WAGD started to operate. So we had -- we started power gathering, yes, continuously, like nothing happened. But not in the school, but somewhere.

Q: Tell us about that first meeting. Who -- who called it, and what did they say, and did you understand that it was something secretive?

A: Yes. We know each other, yes, very good. And there was a certain hierarchy in our commandant, yes. And there was a meeting, and the first meeting, say for example I was -- I was in the group with the -- the name was lion -- lion, roar, roar. And at this meeting came our higher commander, and he say, "We will do this secretly as previously." Of course that you are now total -- and it was not yet very well, in the very beginning, organized, but the system started to operate that there was a certain schematic presentation. The line of the command, yes. Because there was such a line of command, even in the scouting, Polish scouting, yes. There was a hartsnish, you know, or -- or commandant of the rayon -- region of Warsaw, then you have this. So this was starting to -- and this was the very beginning, there was not yet -- because you realize this fact, who can -- who could do this? We. And therefore, we are the group that we started to operate in 1940, in March, as an organization. We have already more or less established the schematic line of order, yes? But of course, we didn't know what it was, yes? And these documents were collected, and were in storage later by the special emissary, yes, who traveled. Later, was organized quite eerily, the day where the couriers that crossed the borders going through Yugoslavia, Italy, to this way, to search for the -- to deliver the second document. Then when this was established on the military bases, because the intelligence of the -- of the -- of the British, yes, was involved in this, yes, to -- to fight, to use a people certainly, to organize people in Poland as a help -- as a resistance movement. And these certain documents were transferred. And believe me or not that my documents I found not in Warsaw, I found in London, exactly my name and my sowdo -- sudo, yes? Sowdoyen, yeah? It -- it was, and it, up to now. And those documents I have here. And -- and -- and of course that this what was scouting. It was like a signal to the higher authorities, yes, because you -- y-you realize that the Polish government in exile have here the representative in Poland. And they started to organize the very well military organization, yes, military. Spy, and so on. But -- but this scouting, yes, this was like a signal, do something because people are, yes? And --

Q: Explain that? It was a signal?

A: Signal to the higher authorities --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- from the representative Polish government in exile in England, they have here the representative, yes? They have -- it was already -- it is very hard for me to -- to tell you, because I -- I know, and I can find it yes, very easy, i-in -- in the documents -- historical document, yes, how this was established, day by day and so on, and who was the saygoneero grotrovetski, yes? It was the first commandant of the -- of the home army.

Q: But, is what you are saying is that this was somewhat a spontaneous thing, and the fact that it was there was a signal to the powers in exile?

A: Ee, yes, yes, except this was -- y-you have to realize that it was a big chaos, yes, chaos, yes? And -- and there was a -- nothing was -- i-it was completely everything in ruin, military, militarily. Poland as a militare was not existent. But they were a scouting groups in Warsaw, and these groups was very -- very few of them. You see, all together you can -- you can find that there was as about 3000 in Warsaw. But these 3000 give the idea that this is possible to do, yes? And now, Polish government in exile, started to organize this - - from the very beginning, by the nomination of the existing officer of the Polish army, and so on, and this was nominated that he is the -- responsible for this, this is responsible for this, and so on, so on. And these organizations started, but this was one year later, yes? And the system was this, that sharda sheray, yes, in -- with the scouting organization was called gray troops. Like, I -- I can translate in this way, but sheray shalagy. I have this small anchor, there the symbol, symbol of -- of -- of this organiza -- this scouting organization. I -- I maybe -- maybe later I will show you this. And this scouting organization were this more mature, and more responsible authorities, yes? They get contact with everything, and at the moment they fight. This is the case that we are now, this organization from England, this we are recognizing, you know? But we have to re-establish our skin. And they say no, from 18 up, yes? They say. From 18 up, they are recognize as a member of the regular [indecipherable] so-called first what ZWZ. Zionvic Walki Zibronia. And then this or -- this even organization was not yet very well organized. The next step was the Akar, Armia Krajowa. Because the Zedvouszet was another spontaneous organization corresponding to the Farasheragi, but not yet established and connected to the government in London, yeah? Then when government unde -- no, on all these groups found the table to talk -- not to talk, this -- this was not a politic, yes, but to establish the action, yes. And say, for example, that there must be only one organization, yes? So therefore, we were part of the Armia Krajowa. The Akar, Home Army.

Q: But you weren't 18.

A: Yes -- no, no. At the very beginning -- the very beginning, I was 15 - 16 - 17. But, I will tell you that we -- we made a very professional job. First of all spying. Collection of the information of the German army movement. Collection of the information of the location of the army -- German army, storages, and so on. I had -- besides, there was like another

very intelligent sabotage. You see, Germany used such a slogan, All redare meesen rollen feerdon zeke. Always have to roll for the victory. So they give us a signal that we have to do something, that this raider -- that this will -- will not roll. And there was a very small, very nice sabotage, which was easy to do by us -- for us. To see -- to pour the sand into the bearing of the wheels. So every person --

Q: To put the sand into the --

A: Sand into the --

Q: Bearings?

A: Bearings.

Q: Of the wheels?

A: Of the wheels. You know, in the railroad, what is axle? And you have two wheels, and you have here the box. And in this box is a -- a system that is greasing, yes? This. This was easy, quite easy to open on the cap of this, and put the sand. So, if is -- it was possible in some way to do this, we do this.

Q: Take us back. Take u -- take us through that event. You -- you -- when do you leave your house, what are you wearing, who are you with? What time --

A: Ah, what time is it?

Q: Please tell us the story of doing that.

A: Yes, immediate -- we had the gathering -- we have the meeting places. It was everything coded, yes? There was a -- if we use between us, say what will be the meeting, so we said oukashki, or w-whatever, you see? But this was not really my point, yes, exactly the -- where you are -- we meeting out outatka, yes, and ya -- Aldoni Street, yes, no, no. It was one words and we know where to go. The name -- there was no more name. I was boy, yes? Not Tadeusz, not Marchaj. Boy. It was enough to know, aha, that's him. Another story where we participate. The system of the printing, of the legal -- i-i -- illegal publication, you know, it was a such bulletin information Army Krajowa. Bulletin, you know, is information of the Polish army, yes? And then was the messages, articles. It always like a paper, yes? Not very often, not every day, there was every two weeks and so on, but it was printed. Of course, if somebody was caught on this, he has only one chance, he will be killed. By himself [indecipherable]. Y-You know, [indecipherable]. Therefore the transportation this, I unders -- I remember that I was four times use, only because this was from the system of conspiracy, I cannot be used every time in a row. This was distributed, this duty, by somebody, yes? Well, fine, you have to go this and this place, and you have to deliver into this into space. That's it. Even there was no name,

nothing, yes? A s -- small amount of information of this. Even I would be captured, fine, where did you pick up this, yes? At the corner of the street, somewhere in the bushes. One point is done. Where you have to deliver this? Into Dehosh Street in Warsaw, yes, on the stairs. And so on, that's it. And this what I know. And -- and who give me -- ask this order? It was totally unknown for me.

Q: But someone told you verbally?

A: Verbal, yeah, yeah. Of course, that did -- we had i-i -- is -- it was not operatable. Yes, I -- I -- I know the doc -- my -- my -- my leaders, yes, later, when I was -- there was the ranking officer, you know, captain, you know, major, prokor, colonel, from the Polish army, yes? But of course that they were no more -- no, this ranking, if is -- it was a captain, no. He was reach, or he was -- I have here, somewhere. And this is the [indecipherable] and the -- of course that I want to mention to you that the first tragedy -- not a tragedy, but first frightening occurrence. This happen already around the Christmastime in 1940, between '39 and '40. It was a first public execution of the 100 people who are Germans. It was the first, this was a shock. Then, li --

Q: Which -- who were these 100 people?

A: Just from the street, hostages. Some -- could be true, could be not true. Somebody killed a German soldier. Maybe the soldier, sh -- he -- hit each other, yes? And they blame somebody, oh, to some Polish bandit did it, yes? Order was from the certain region commandant, yes? Take the people from this area, and shot them. So, was frightening. Then came another message, yes? The there were another day, at this day, and this place, were killed three of my professors. It was already extermination of the Polish intelligentsia. Three professor from the gimnasium Tarahousharai tanna, yes, in Warsaw. He -- one was a historian, one was -- no, no literature, yes, Polish language, ha -- hard to say, yes. And he was a very nice man, one of these beautiful man who was a teacher of the -- a -- a -- of the physical -- physical --

Q: Education?

A: Exis -- yes.

Q: Do you know their names?

A: Of course, that -- that -- this I can d -- oh this is the -- you -- you see th-this is known. [indecipherable] we knew, and we know now, yes, when and where these people were killed. This is the impielmiree. And this -- this place is very well documented. So even I -
- I -- I wi-will jump to the -- because many, many different ah --

Q: This has been a year, maybe a year and a few months after the beginning of the war, but - or the invasion of Poland, that -- are th -- is this the first time that the Germans are rounding up professors --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- and killing them? That didn't happen as far as you know, any earlier? Because there were these mobile killing units, the Eisengrupen.

A: Yeah.

Q: I don't know if you had heard about that happening any earlier.

A: You see now -- i-is -- is the dow -- this is absolutely political -- not a political, this was the -- on the order of the certain responsible for this action. Some people thought it is of German and Hitler establishment, yes, that what we will do with Poland, yes? First of all, if you are cutting the heads of the leader, you are cutting the heads of the nation. So they was absolutely action which was already prepare and plan. And this action was always in permanent -- permanent -- p-permanent was this action. And Palmieri only was the versy first massive execution. Because later on, if they found this, that this man is very important for us, yes? Take it away, yes? And for this purpose was the Auschwitz. How many people were -- went to Auschwitz? Auschwitz [indecipherable] in the very beginning, this is the '40 -- 1940, and so on. And -- and later -- of course, this is the history [indecipherable] what -- what Auschwitz was for the Jewish people, yes? This is the later phase, yes? This was order given by the German authorities to -- what was this, the final -- this was special name. And -- which is related to the -- to the Jewish extermination.

Q: Fi -- Final Solution.

A: Final Solution, yes. This was -- this happened after America give the -- started to war in Germany. This is '41. The Final Solution I think started in '41, yes? After America started to war with Germany. You see, I don't remember, and I have to read it now, you see, to re -- to memorize this part exactly, but maybe you know, where the massive, Final Solution order to be given. Not in '39, not in '40. This was a little bit later. Because i -- you -- ee -- I remember that in it -- when I was traveling to Slominiki, during the occupation, in the very beginning of [indecipherable], it was almost like nothing happened. You follow me? They suffer in the same way like any Polish people, yes. But then, yes came, yeah, take it away to Kraków ghetto, or somewhere, yes? Or kill them in this place, yes? And [indecipherable] this is the -- here, w -- this order, you know, was probably, when you are starting to -- to re -- to look at these documents, this was in co -- cooperation with the Soviet Union. In the same way, Soviet Union perform action against Polish people, in the we -- east. You know how many intelligentsia. The prisoner of the war, you know, the -- all officers in Polish army, that was captured by -- by Soviet Union

were executed, yes. Why? Well, because when you are cutting the head, you are cutting everything.

Q: So the -- the -- do you remember hearing about the death of your three professors?

A: Y -- not so -- not at once, but it was a -- a -- you realize this fact, that massive execution, it was secretly done. But this came to the public knowledge a little bit later. But, what's happen in Palmira, later in the few years later, happen publicly, as the execution of the hostages on the state. And in such a execution of the hostages of the state, was Keit, my cousin. Very shortly -- very short -- no, maybe -- zi -- again, y-you know, it [indecipherable] to do this -- to grab this interview, but you are touching a -- a certain problem that -- that -- that maybe is good to show you, and mention in the very beginning. Now -- now -- no -- no -- maybe next time. So --

Q: Tell us what happened to your cousin.

A: You see, it to -- happened to my three cousin. But one was executed, hanging by head publicly at the very famous place in Kraków. There is a -- a chateau, Tass Vaviddo, very old, you know, maybe thousand years old, mas -- yes? So at the -- at the base of this castle there was executed 20 people by hanging. Two others my cousin just were arrested, they were captured when the prinkit, the information, yes, harsis [indecipherable] from the scouting. He was captured by German on the in flagrante -- the -- the sport, yes? He never -- he -- we knew that he was tortured, yes, to -- to reach the point farther away, yes? No, he just -- he -- he died. Just simply he was tortured to death, and we don't know even where he was. And we have two of them such. This is me -- in Auschwitz is a -- my another cousin ferder my mother. Yes, he died, yes, he was just -- he went to the Auschwitz, and then after, quite a short time, he was -- he vanished, yes, perished.

Q: These cousins are the cousins you used to go visit, and spend summers with?

A: Yes, it means that -- no, no, these cousin -- these cousin that in the summertime, Kitous and Barbara, they were spare, if I can say it. It i -- it is nothing happened to me, but his father and my -- my grandfather -- no, and -- what does this say, I said not the grandfather, he was a godfather, yes. He was when the freedom in the first day of so-called freedom in 1945, he was arrested by the ent over there, and he went for a few years in the gulags in Donbas. When he came back, big man, he was -- weighed 40 pound -- 40 kilos, yes? So he was skin, and this. And he came, he was at least to die here. Yeah. But this is -- what I am saying, another part, because this is after '45.

Q: Right. At this point where is your brother? Do you know?

A: Uh-huh. Of course you know that my -- my brother, you see, besides of the certain -- the problem of the family problem, he was at this age, yes, that he tried to do something on his own, yes. He -- he -- I was dependent on my -- my parent's care, of course that I

work, as a worker somewhere, to earn a little bit money. And my -- my -- my son -- or my son, my brother, yes. He started to work somewhere in the certain company who build something in -- what was the bwonia? Some place they build some roads and something like that.

Q: He came back to Warsaw?

A: Oh yes, yes. He Warsaw. And then in -- of course it -- i -- i -- y -- y -- you -- you can -- of course he was in the conspiracy, university, he studied. In the very beginning he now -- you see, because he -- he left home -- home was always home for every [indecipherable] yes? If he had a idea ha -- I was to do something, yes? He went, and he tried to earn some money, yes. But generally our home was base for us -- for us. And in spite of, I would say, somebody at the age of 26 or something like that, they should be independent. But this was a very special time, yes, that -- that his profession was very good, in the peaceful, when he was working in [indecipherable] army, where you have the [indecipherable] in -- i -- i -- i -- during the war. So there was a -- the -- we tried to accomplished our l-life almost day by day. You see, y -- I say, when I started to work somewhere, yes, that I have [indecipherable] work for half year, yes. And I earn some money, yes, to help the parents. And then, you see, at that moment, this is the case, which is worse to -- to lie about it, how a empty place, when the Jewish people were eliminated in the life of Polish peop -- of Poland, in this vacuum place, th -- another people entered. And they started to make a business, yes, a business, make a life what since thousands of years, yes, Jewish people did all over the world. In some way, this was -- call it opportunity, i-it was a empty place. Suddenly, from -- from the town of Slominiki, 3000 people vanished. We -- this was not action of the Polish people. They were taken away by the German according to this Final Solution, yeah. Of course, that -- what is here the [indecipherable] now I will -- I am antry with something. You see, people always identified the same by allegiance. Majority of the Jewish people in Poland were Orthodox Jewish people. Very -- they established they life in the Orthodox way. You can see, yeah? How? Black suit, a special hat, the -- this now, what is this, paysa -- paysak -- th-the -- the air -- hairs, yes, are long. They -- they were -- even they will try to hide, they were always recognized by Germans. You follow me? Now, in the very beginning there was some promises given to him. Oh, we are sending you to another establishment, and so on. And now I am coming to the very, very special situation, and we -- our family, and Jewish people. In our home, in home that was base of our family -- this was a nine apartment house, there was living a couple, Mr. Majinski, Rudolf Majenski e Stefania Majinska, that was known for my parents. Later I was informed by father, because he was a great conspirator, I didn't know that they were Jews. I -- I knew only when something happened, very dramatic. My father knew it. Now, who was my father? I tel -- I told you, my brother was in organization Armia Krajowa, I was in organization Shara Faragi bayana Krajowa. My sister, one younger sister was in Armia Krajowa. The older sister, she started to be married, so forget it. No, Mother was not, but Father was, and I didn't know. But officially, yes, he was in organization so-called Zhigotta. Where did you hear something like that? Zhigotta was a selected -- is not military organization. The purpose

of -- existence of this organization was to recognize potential enemy of the Polish people in this territory, and protect the people who need the protection in this te-territory. And father -- because my father was a previous policeman, he had a contact with the Polish precinct, because during the war there was a German police, and there was also called a -- a -- another pol -- police which cooperate with German. Yes, big name cooperate. In any country you have to have a police, so it's better to have the police -- Polish police than German police, yes. So this -- in this policemen, there were people and people. Y-You follow me, they were -- because if somebody's in the power, and he want to do this, and this the war time, fine, I -- I'm a god, yes. So he used the power for the wrong purposes. So my father had the, in this precinct, a very -- policeman who were very sure like he Polish, yes. I can tell you that my first shooting with the gun was -- but shooting only for exercise, yes, was I used the gun of the policeman, who gave us ammunition, and he go and try to shoot, yeah. So there. And my father was in contact. So through these people, he knew a lot of the different things that will happen and so on. So first Majinski, yes? Sunday, there came a message from the police precinct, Neho, Majinski sa -- are the -- the conspirator. Next day there will be Gestapo to take them away. Now, you realize this fargit, to be involve, if -- if you will prove it, Gestapo will prove it, yes, that you are hiding these people, physically, yes. Now, say for example that somebody has a hidden place. Fine, at the moment if such a case happen, this family who try to hide these people, bang, bang, bang in spot. In this case, not -- my father was a owner of this home, so in some way again, this police -- because the -- the police shoo the duties, yes? So my father get a message, warned them to get away, because they will be destroyed. And in some way this policeman from the precinct presented this case maybe to Gestapo maybe in such a way that may be presented the Marchaj, Neho is a -- is a owner of this house, and look at this, this pi -- yes. They didn't know. That simple. He and she, they were Jewish, definitely, but I didn't know -- they are Mrs. -- Miss -- Mrs. Majinska, Stephania was the chairman of the very ca -- very known in Poland charity organization for the poor people. The Mr. Majinsky, Rudolf was a -- a doctor, at the age at the time about 70. And you see th -- you -- you have to know that there were cases that some Jewish people met and other Jewish people who were involved in something, and he just send the message, oh, you are this, here, and bang -- zekonds perasi, a-and that's it.

Q: What did your father say that made -- to the police, that made the Gestapo --

A: It means that the message came to the -- from Gestapo to police precinct to prepare action. But by this bypass to Neho Marchaj came from this policeman who knew, get the message from Gestapo that they will be taken away. So now, ma -- Marchaj, as I mentioned to you, he was involved to -- to search for such information, so for a -- my father, police precinct was a source of information, too. Of course h-he had averiman information -- I don't know even, you know, I -- how broad knowledge of my father was. So he -- they were taken away at once. My father found the place. They were taken away about six, seven blocks in the same area, in south Katinpatou, and vanished, yes. The -- the pr -- the wa -- the -- the -- the -- the table in kitchen was arranged in such a way that these people left this place almost half an hour ago, yes? It was a still hot water, this and

so on. And really, next day came, and they found empty, empty, empty room. But of course, all -- me, father, me -- mother not, but me, brother and sister, the -- we get out from this, no -- because we didn't know what -- what will happen, yeah?

Q: Your father hid them?

A: Yes, he arranged the hiding place.

Q: Ah.

A: Yes, so -- and they survived. You know, they survived later, they -- they -- they found son of the Majinsky, Stanislaw Majinsky and Hilda Majinsky, they were living in Saskacampa, and they survived -- all survive. And the next day, they came back looking that this camouflage, yes, that they departed was just coincidence, only maybe they will come back. They came back, the Gestapo, and found the apartment in the same way. So they get the knows, yes, they know -- they knew at the time, yes, that they get out, yes. And at that moment, why my father was badly beaten by the -- by this German -- by Gestapo, and they throw him into the basement. And believe me or not, Stanislaw Majinsky, who was the witness, who came the same day when Gestapo come back again, he came to ask father about something, but he ran to the different apartment. My father was beaten and that's it. Now, what's happen only, and this is --

Q: Were you there when your father was beaten?

A: Beaten, yeah. Only f-from this, you know, from this hatred, you know, that somebody's escaped, they have no proof in some way, maybe as I mentioned to you, maybe in some way Gestapo was involved by somebody from this precinct. Not mar -- Marchaj, he's a owner, and they make it a lot of maybe some movement, Majinsky? They are Jewish? You follow, they -- you can do something if you ca -- if you -- if you want to do something. So happily, yes, happily, it was not very big damage to our family, yes? Now, another story of action of my father. He had a friend. I don't remember now his name, but -- first name, but I remember very good name, Sigoua, who was the machinist of the first class machinist before the war, and first class machinist either are leading the -- in the express train, or the freight train. The -- the -- to -- to -- to -- to be machinist of the express train, obviously has to be responsible man. In same way, if you are making a transport of the freight train, very long, loaded and so on, a first class machinist has to be. One day, and I was witness at that time, he came to our house, and very moved, and he say, "Neho, I was in the [indecipherable]." "What's happened?" "I delivered the transport of people to Birkenau, and do you know, I didn't know that I am going there, because I," -- at that moment very rare, was -- is -- was not yet very public, yes? Maybe such a case is like Sigoua case. Send the message to the world. And he said to my father, "These people went for dead, to be killed. And I saw it by my own eyes. I was inside a delivery train to the -- to the oven." And he described [indecipherable] and say, "I cannot drive now, unless I will do something." And he asked my father. "Please, I want to change my

name, I want to have the document for me and my family. I want to have a place on the next train, but not with the people, but some military train I will derail." And that's [indecipherable] he got a new document, and his name was, I remember Bojenski, they changed name to Bojenski. He left home, took family, and vanished. And as he said, with the transport of the military train to the east, with his -- and for this man was prepare the same, yes? And he derail in this special place, he know what to do, how to derail the train, yes? You know, at the certain point where it was a curvature, and downhill, yes, he just put the full fa -- power, and jumped from the train, and the train [indecipherable]. And this is the history [indecipherable]. So this is what I'm saying.

Q: Did your father -- when did your father tell you that story?

A: This was just after.

Q: After.

A: After. But I was the witness when he was talking about this -- Birkenau.

Q: Oh, you heard that?

A: Yes. When he came to my father, I was present. When he was talking about where he was, and what he did. Because he was -- he suddenly feel guilty, but he didn't -- he -- he never knew, he got a destination point this and this and that's it. They -- they not inform [indecipherable] Mr. Sigoua you are taking the train with [indecipherable] to be -- Jewish people to be killed, no. So this was a -- two occurrences where I know. I can tell you only another, that when my father died --

Q: Just one second. When you heard him tell that story --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- about going to Birkenau, what were your thoughts?

A: Oh, boy. You see, this was a nightmare for everybody. This was a nightmare. You see, i - - especially, you see, I have no thoughts or feeling at that time, but you know, later I was, after the war, one of the first visit to the south when I was again visiting my parents, yes, the -- say, godfather, yes. I visited the -- the Auschwins.

Q: Auschwitz?

A: Auschwitz -- Auschwitz. I visited almost -- I can't -- no, I don't want to be cruel -- not cruel, but to hurt somebody by telling. It was almost hot, because this was in -- in -- I was there in May after the war. So, '45 May. I never was yet at the time in Stutthof when I was a few times ish -- in -- in Birkenau. Oh, Birkenau was absolutely terrible, especially

when -- if you are visiting Birkenau, or Auschwitz, or if somebody is making the picture, movie, it's just impossible. You have to smell this. You have to -- to touch this mad -- this -- this -- everything. But y-you see, that's a -- and what -- what is our reason is just to avoid this, but not by the remembers. Of course we remember, but to do something that -- that people will make a conclusion from remembrance.

Q: But when you heard that story, did you s -- did you and your father exchange any thoughts, was there -- did you know before you heard that story that exactly that was happening?

A: Do you know -- I will tell you something, what's a -- what was the occupation? You are a subject of the German power, not a object that you can do something in reality. You were only a hunted animal. Do you realize how many places is in the Warsaw where 40 people in spot were shot? Dra -- men remember, yes, a special plaque built into the wall. Is over 600. This is only the every day -- daily bread, I can tell you. So this was not a sensation for us at that moment. This was normal, yes? You are -- you were -- you left home going to the town, yes, and suddenly say, very usually -- usually this was the place, your train entered the bridge, and suddenly -- this was always the point where you are crossing a dangerous line, yes? Because very many times, you have to go to the bridge because you have to go from here there. But one end, and under, then suddenly you see the crost by the -- by the police German, yes? And then trains stop and they are coming to the -- get out, you, you, you, you, this way, please, this way, yes? There were special -- we -- we call it buda, vudit, yes, a keester, a case, or I don't know how to translate swo -- the word buda. And they load it, and usually these people who were in such a car, never come back. Now, during the war, lo -- you have to be in some way -- you have to use the authorities of German, and therefore I -- I will mention for you who I was.

Q: Stop you right there, cause I feel like we're getting ready to tell a story, and -- yeah. So we'll come back on that.

End of Tape #3

Tape #4

- Q: This is September 21st, 1998. We are in Arlington, Virginia, we -- doing an interview for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is with -- Tadeusz Marchaj. And this is tape number four. What I'd like to begin with is if you can tell us -- tell us about how the resistance that you were involved in was organized. How did you know when to gather, how did you get assignments? And I want to go through some of these details with you.
- A: I'm trying to memorize -- to recall. The first rule of conspiracy is the secrecy. So, my contact, and everybody contact in organization, where the final solution could be a debt, yes, there were maintained very certain rules. Don't talk too much. If something happens, answer only questions. You cannot go beyond the questions, because you are introducing yourself in very big trouble. Of course, in our organization, yes, we were divided in the troops, yes, so they say we -- we call it a gathering, it's very hard to translate, grupawania. That's a very big unit, grupawania group, yes? What does it mean group? Is a part of the town, group, and this was a grupawania. And this grupawania, this group of certain part of the town was divided in the section, or -- boy, oh boy. Platoons, yes, is better, yes? And each of these platoon have the number, and who knew? Who is in the -- or leader of the certain platoon? It was known to the greater ka -- hierarchy, yes? Probably even in London archives was only all -- not archives, in London possession was known, I'm guessing only, that they knew our grupawania group to even in here, in group grupawania, there was a leader of this, and he knew who is under him. But in general, yes, how is relation, like say for example, as grupawania group to -- to the commandant of the Armia Krajowa. Like Grotrawetski, yes, General Grotrawetski, he was captured, and -- and he was held in the Mauthausen for a very long time. But anyway, he was killed. Then it was -- after him was General Burkomarosky. So this was known for very few people, who is this man, and what is his name? I didn't know -- I knew -- I know now, after the war, who was my -- or when -- when we started the open fight during the Warsaw uprising, no, it was [indecipherable] it was everything open, yes? Because there was a meeting of the -- of the leadership, and they knew this, this, this, and at the moment when they knew what's the name, inu, and everything. Family name. But during the occupation I can tell you that I know my -- my leader of this platoon, I knew who is his -- and of course, I know him. I know who is the -- how say, the second in row, yes. His pseudo name was Hinshaw, and then my -- it was my friends. Friends who are the member of the platoon. And there was as has -- seven -- seven, and everybody has a pseudo, yes, and we know each other. Between us there was no problem, yes. It was a -- I know that he is in my troop, and of course that he is my soldier, yes. And at that moment, of course, sometimes, we exercise, of course, some youth -- youthful stupidity, I can tell you, that we tried to prove how we are very resistance against the pain, yes? We could say, [indecipherable] you Gestapo will touch you, and they will be investigated, and you will be beaten and so on. Did you say who is next to you, and so on, and so on. So I remember that -- of course, as I said, stupidity, because later, when I was really in prison, I don't -- I can tell you, prison in the Communist Poland, and I was investigated for a very long time, I didn't

know myself. I didn't know myself, camut -- how much I can stand. So, you see, what we did, we sometimes, to prove it that I was such a resistance to pain, we -- we -- distinguished the cigarettes on the hand, without crying, yes. You know, very naïve. But we did it, this was the -- no, I -- I call it this is stupidity because -- because the facts where it was, you were in the hand of the oppressors, yes. At that moment is the best way to die as fast as possible.

Q: How did you know these boys? Had you known these boys before?

A: Oh yes, yes. This was the boys from -- I can say, our block, yes. The same -- the same territory, yes, Saskacampa. And say all of my friends in the -- in the block, three, four blocks area. Of course that this is the -- and in these four blocks there was a few platoons. You see, everybody different. And anyway, we knew because we were in same block. And I can tell you that say now we are entering -- we are approaching to the -- to the Warsaw uprising. So I was attached to the platoon, I -- I have to -- to check it exactly, you see, but later I will give you a proper -- proper number. We are assigned to the certain targets for the Warsaw uprising. Fortunate then -- not fortunately, our platoon -- few of them, too, because th -- we -- we were not only we, because there was another. Our goal was too attack the -- the building -- school building, which was the quarter of the SS regiment. You have an imagination that, you know, even [indecipherable] approaching the day, D-day, these are the -- the first of the August, when we started the Warsaw uprising, but you want to touch this problem now, or you want to --

Q: Not -- not quite. I'd li -- I have a few more --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- organizational questions, but I -- but -- but I do want to know that. If you could, just think back and tell us -- give us an example, how would you be told about a meeting, and then how would you be given an assignment, and then how would you do it? If you could sort of walk us through that. Any example.

A: You say it, I'm trying to the -- you see, this is such a -- such a difficult problem. See, I -- I will tell you that I participated as a courier, yes -- not a courier, carrier, carrier of the bulletin informatseeni. This was used like il-illegal publication which were printed, I don't know where. What I know, that this assignment came from my platoon leader, yes? I mean, he say, "Boy, such and such a day, at this and this time, you are going to the street -- Stanislaw Powgas Street. There, in the certain point, there will be a package. You will take this package, and you will carry this package to the -- to the center of the town." I -- I remember which is forbidden, it was -- but then not to remember, but -- sorry is this -- you cannot have a [indecipherable] and you cannot stop to remember certain fact. So wileeta Hoshia Street, and we stare ar -- to the certain point, there will be a box, you put into the box, and that's that.

Q: And -- and when --

A: Yeah. I did it, period. Yeah, now, another story. I -- I know because this is related to my courier activity. About how we are e -- how we -- we will use the authorities German, as a protection. So I work for a few months or half year. I have this document [indecipherable] but I don't remember now that I was a worker in the manufacturer of the electrical batteries, yes? Which were produced for the public, yes. Of course, if this such a c -- such a situation it would be worth to make a sabotage, yes, I would be used. Say, for example, to put something into the mixture of the battery, to make this battery work less after short time, yeah? But anyway, I -- I stop to work this, because I found a better solution for me, and a protection that I was -- it was so cold luft shutz heirbdiest. I am saying in German. It means that the LHD. And this was in translation a service for the -- for the fire department help. The front start to approach Warsaw, so Warsaw was faced it will be bombed, we will have the fires, and so on. So German authorities organized of course in certain way, the fire department, yes, to make this fire department better working. To build the retention in vessels, i - dig in the wall, in the earth, to collect the water for -- to -- for the fire extinguishing. And this service, according to my morality, I can say -- not only morality, but my -- my understanding that my work is not a work that will support German military activity. Because this what we have, what built, it was for the protection of the civilian people in Warsaw, yes. And it was a good protection for the -- another authorities of German, because it had a s -- let's say certain how to say documents, yes? That such and such person is working in department of the -- say fire department in Herakoska traga, yes? Will be s-stamp with the -- with the say vrona, say the German eagle, you know, this hakencroitz? And in the case of the wapanka -- wapanka, that's was very popular way hunting for the people, as I mentioned yes, that there's a bridge, they stop here, they stop [indecipherable] and get out, yes? And they you, you, you. And that moment, say, for example, this was a document that I could show to the Germans, yes, that I am loyal to them, I'm working for the fire department, which is a -- I don't want to use this America -- American expression, a work [indecipherable] for -- my work was [indecipherable] but it was working, by even this was not working so good, because this German who a issue as this special document, they said, "But if you will be in the wapanka," you know, in this stoppage and selection, "in the very beginning, don't show to the authorities, because could happen," [makes tearing sound] "and you are nothing. So, hold it when you will go to -- for the investigation, at that moment, take it. And it is possible, they -- they told us, that if s-somebody from the febia will know that you were captured, send a message to the fire department, and fire department will know what to do." You see, there was in some way, between the Polish people, and even with the German, because who was this fire -- fire fighter from the German side? He was another professional firefighter. He was not there from Gestapo, he was not from [indecipherable], he was professional firefighter, to fight the fire. So they know what to do, yes? And at that moment, these authorities will go to the German Gestapo, or whoever is, this and will reclaim you, unless you are not carrying at the moment weapon, and -- and you are -- you are subject to another activity of the -- of the Gestapo. So this was say where I participate, in ahardai elijli to protect myself. Now -- now what was the

si -- very frightening situation? My father was a conspirator, so -- and I was carrier of the -- of the certain technical documentation or information, or so-called publication. And I was neglecting a lot of safety factors. So when I have a package, which I don't have to deliver, strictly from point A to point B, but sometimes I get it, for the distribution between my friends, yes, in Klaus, and I have to keep it because I -- I couldn't take it and -- and go, no. So I -- I put in different places, yes? I hide it in different places, and I -- I -- I keep it for one, two, three days. My brother was arrested by the Germans, and he was in terrible trouble, yes? On the basis of the certain -- not a military activity, because he was a soldier of the army -- Home Army, but for the -- to earn some money, he was involved in certain activity -- I can tell you, simple. The alcohol distribution, or production of the illegal alcohol, yes? This was against the German law, but not military law. And my brother enter a big problem of this, and he was taken by the German authorities to explain his activity, because he was, according to the German law, he was a parasite in this society. Yes he had to go for the so-called forcible work. He went to the concentration camp, could be sent. But now, how the sociality -- sociality, yes? No. What is this na -- name in -- very famous person?

Q: Oh, celebrity.

A: Celebrity. He was in -- in -- in Gestapo hand, first, at the very beginning. And there was a very famous, in Poland, sportsman, as I mentioned few hours ago, that train us. It was Aloukelski and Gerouto. Gerouto was the decathlon, and Aloukelski was the javelin thrower, and jumper, and so on. And both were Olympian. And, believe it or not, even Gestapo recognized an Olympian, because he was Olympian in Berlin. And believe or not, he went to this certain ranking officer of Gestapo, Mr. Gerouto Rito, and he say fine, I -- maybe I can help him, yes? It was a very big risk, yes, because he was a Polish, but he has all these documents, and so on, the Olympiada in -- in Berlin, and he went into the jaw of the beast to -- to try to do something in, and he did it. He recognize him, okay, ma -- yavolt, in German, fine. But he's a very bad guy, he's a parasite. He will go for the forcible work. Okay, and we know, yes, perhaps he will be transferred from this prison to that prison. But this other prison was only the holding place, yes? And they were German but not Gestapo. And there, if somebody has again connection between the people -- the people, yes? You can pay the bribery, and he gets free. And this happen. And my brother get out from there. Okay, so one -- one case is okay, but now what to do with this brother? He has to have some -- some documents, yes. So there was a [indecipherable] okay, so you know, I was in the -- i-in the fire department, so just what, I have to do this for you, and you will be a firefighter, and you will have this document, that minimum that you have to have, you know. Because you cannot be -- survive the occupation doing nothing, or -- you see, because this is what the first act where you were stopped by the -- by the German, yes, documents. You are somebody or not, working or not working, useful or not useful. Why? Because they need only to have the hostages, or something. So if you have this, fine, you are in some way prepared. Now, how this related? Of course that this is a meaningless situation, but I'm saying how life was in Poland. I put the -- this certain documents for the distribution in some place that my father found it. And this was

forbidden for me. Oh, reprimand terrible, yeah, if I can find, Gestapo will find, yes? And he was so nervous and preoccupied of this what I did, that he forgot that he has to go with my brother to the fire department chapter of the German police. And in his passion, he put this -- this -- this document that I was hiding, put into the pocket and went -- at the moment brother [indecipherable] and now, let's go, we are going. And they went into the -- what I say? The jaw of the beast. And my brother -- that's the relation of my brother. But they -- they passed some gates, and so on, and he's going somewhere from the fire department, and then he was sit down, and sitting, and something hit, and my brother look into the face of -- of my father, and if he's paralyzed, almost. He found that he has in the pocket something that is that. But quietly he went somewhere when this -- they were approaching of this interview, he put into the basket, garbage basket this, ended out. Of course that means this -- in this document there was absolutely nothing that related to the person, and so on. But this was on the [indecipherable] action of the weapon, or something, how to operate or some -- something. So I'm saying that's the -- this is the -- such a -- traps or occurrences can happen. M -- and of course, as I say, this is a meaningless, this has nothing to do with [indecipherable]

Q: No, but it's telling. It's a telling detail.

A: Telling the -- telling you -- telling you that how is it, yes? You could be in very big trouble. And how to avoid the trouble, and so on. Not that's -- but this is the way how occupation was day by day, that we survived this occupation day by day. Now, e -- e -- e -- you see we are very close to sa -- execution. I knew that somebody will be shot. Even me. You see, our dream of everybody of us was to have a weapon, enough to have a parabellum, or to have some FN nine millimeter, or maybe who dreamed to have a machine gun? How to find it? How to do this [indecipherable]. In Saskacampa, this was a part of -- of the town that was at the Vistula River shore. And along this Vistula River shore, some very common soldier with the shvesta and -- and other service men and women -- service women, make a walk along the shore, usually afternoon, peaceful situation. So we -- this we did what the -- where is the target to [indecipherable] the from the [indecipherable]. So we knew exactly, you know, that we were -- there was our territory, you know? So, first was the scout, yes? What he has? Oh, he has a parabellum. Fine. Besides what? And then on the bicycles, bikes, yes, we drove there. I am talking about -- because I didn't know this, yes, but I was very much involved in -- in such action. As a -- as a security and so on. But the [indecipherable] in particular, and then usually this was a very easy gun, yeah, take it out, and he was very happy to be alive, yes? And get out. But one case was very different. [indecipherable] was -- result was I wasn't this -- now, I am not saying that -- that persecute myself, but for the re-really fact, but because I was in some way still responsible for this, because I -- I participate many times in such a [indecipherable] is going a officer, what he has? FN7 millimeter [indecipherable]. Ah, dream. Seven, it was very small, and very handy. Okay, who is with him? A shvester. Okay. So they drove it, they stop at him, they pull the gun, and this officer at that moment pulled the hand from the pocket of the -- with the hand -- handgun in this, what was not in the holster, yes, but he took it from there. What he want to do

with this, maybe he want to give it up -- up. It doesn't matter for at this my friend who s -
- was standing in there on front of him, he just pulled the trigger, because he didn't know
what he will do. This shvester panics, and with the bare hand, jump on the -- another
friend. Same story, just he pulled the trigger, and it -- it was holding gun to -- to shoot,
and he killed this shvester of the Red Cross, and this officer was the medical doctor. And
both die.

Q: He killed them both?

A: Yeah. In four days, in this place, they brought the 40 people, and shot to death, as the
reparation. Now, few days later, I -- my father called me. He -- I -- I didn't told him
anything, and he, "Tadeusz, tell different -- I am telling you, and you have to tell all
these." And he's mentioning by name this, this, this, this, this. "If this what -- will occur
once again, you and all your friends, you will be executed, because your action was
absolutely not accepted by the authorities, and you found the result what's happened in
this place. This is not a way that you will fight." We get the warning, because --

Q: This was a warning from your own command?

A: My -- our command. But my father knew it. He knew it, and everything. And he said,
"This is not your action. When will be needed weapon, you will get it." And, I will tell
you --

Q: Because you were trying to just get weapons on your own?

A: Yeah.

Q: And it wasn't something that was authorized?

A: No, this was not assign -- yeah, that's was our private -- private action. And this action
cost too many lives. Of course, as a explanation, as a -- some -- to throw out this guilt,
yes, I will say, anyway, these people will be killed. You follow me? Because the
hostages, for the killing, were permanently delivered anyway. So -- but I'm just telling
you that you -- you will understand in no other way we have t-to do. So there was a
legality, and there was something illegal. Like, for example, there was a execution, yes,
yes, there was a legal execution, yes, that I -- what -- what I -- as I mentioned t-to you --
your -- my father was involve to select the people for protection, or select the people to
be eliminated. And one of such elimination I knew that will be done. But again, it was
something done that wo -- shouldn't be, yes? Because it was a history of the yacht arina.
It was on the Vistula River. And this yacht arina has on the board, a radio station. And in
the marina, when this yacht was anchored, was in charge of -- of the marina was Gulka,
his name was Gulka, and it was, without any doubt, yes, known and investigated that he
is a confident of the Gestapo, and -- and he is guilty the dra -- death of the five boys that
were operating the radio station on this yacht, and Gestapo came and they were killed.

One of them jumped into the Vistula River and vanished. And he survived. And the -- after many months of investigation, it was confirmation, and there was given by authorities, acceptance of execution Mr. Gulka. And I knew it. And believe me, I met him every day, many times I was on this marina for another reason, because I have a -- another -- my small boat, and now a man who was shooting, I knew him very well, because he give me this message. "Tadeusz, if you have something, you have to finish the -- the -- some -- if you have some problems with Gulka or you -- the -- yes -- you -- he will be killed." And he came. He executed this Gulka. The dog, who in defend of his master jump on this guy, he killed his dog. But this was, in some way, this is the characters, yes? Character of the people. He was so full of hate, yes, that he did something what he shouldn't do, yes? He went home, and he kill his wife and child in the creek. So you see, character in character, military action, and other military action, you have to recognize that there is a killing which is say, so-called legal by the military norms, but in this case, this is just a simple crime. That's my opinion.

Q: Can you describe any friendships you had within this platoon?

A: Oh, up to -- no, up to this day, of course, of course that. First of all, with the two of them, I was in concentration camp. Marchashu Pariski is one, and Bogedon Palmoski is another one. I -- I can tell you that Marchashu Pariski, who is a doctor, medical doctor in -- in Warsaw, and Bogedon Palmoski is a architect. He was here in America. And he survive. And I can tell you that Matchie, I just took him, grab him from the behind, I say, "Let's go from this camp, and go, and you will be a draftsman." Because he -- he think I don't know how to make drawings. I will teach you. This is the -- on the appelleplatz in Stutthof, when the meekis --

Q: Right. We're going to get to that.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: So another [indecipherable], unfortunately he was killed in accident by car. Zigmund Paloalouk, very famous name from Bizantium, Paloalouk's Bizantium. He is living in Canada. And that's all.

Q: Were you at some point ever trained how to use weapons?

A: I mention you -- I mention you that the first -- th-the first and the only shooting from the gun, it was from the police gun.

Q: So you were never taken out and --

A: No, no, ye-ye-yes --

Q: -- taught how to shoot a gun?

A: -- yes, yes. Oh, of course, that during the -- our lecturing of the weapon, yes, they were delivered, a certain weapon, the -- just how to operate the machine gun, yes? So this was yes. It means that we were familiar how to operate, say, Meisner, Schmeitzer, or another gun, yes.

Q: Can you describe where that would happen?

A: Home, family home.

Q: There'd be some guns in the home?

A: Yes, yes, of course they'd be in hidden place. Yes, it was not on the table, yes, but they were. So now, another story, this was a tragedy, yes, a finishing tragedy because at one time, y -- we -- we -- we pick up the deserter of the -- of the German army, and he was staying for two days in the home of my friend, Raphael Padolski, very good painter e Australia. And there was a mother, father, and he. And now it's happen he get everything -- help from us to depart somewhere, and -- but he was captured. German -- was captured by German. And you -- he know where he stayed, and he brought them, and the whole family was taken away to Mauthausen. Father die, mother survive, and Raphael survive. And now another very, very strange that something happen, that you have to put your -- your future on judgment of the certain situation which could be a deadly. I pick up this -- my order for me, yes fine, go to Raphael, and take the clothes, and everything of this guy, this ch -- this deserter. So I took this everything with me, and instead to go home, I went for my service time into the special place of this LHD, the fire department location, which was located in Saskacampa. And I took this package, and I put in someplace in this -- in this building, a building there was a -- a-abandoned villa by a very rich family in Saskacampa, and there was a -- our station. And fine, because okay, tomorrow morning I will -- I will take it [indecipherable] for hiding, yes? I went to the bed, you know, the bank bed, yes, because you have to stay -- service was to stay for the night. I -- I -- I hear the whisper, yes? People in this room are whispering, and talking [inaudible]. You see that something is -- something happened, and then I hear you, ask Tadeusz, ask Tadeusz. Oh, they found it. If you will believing this, there was a -- 40 person in this room, big, huge hall. And now -- and I -- I -- I know this guys, this man quite -- you know, with the good character, some alcoholics, some this, you know, because there was a -- the selection of these people, not -- not like me, there was the -- a -- like a coincident that they was there. And now I have to answer the question. I have to say, yes, that's my [indecipherable] opened my future to the absolutely unknown person. And I said, "Yes, that's mine." So I have heard only very bad expression in Polish language, untransla -- untranslatable, "Get out from here." And that's it. And blah, blah, blah. So I took it that, and I go home, and hide it, and nothing happen.

Q: Did that mean that you never went back to your job?

A: No.

Q: Oh.

A: No, nothing happened. I came next day after they ansa. So, you see, this was a very difficult time in Poland, that where somebody was a Polish, very rare was a canalya, you know, was a -- a bad man. In spite of fact that I -- I -- I can tell you, that many of them were simple pigs, almost.

Q: But did Poles inform on other Poles?

A: Oh yes, solidarity was. And it was very easy to distinguish what the [indecipherable] saying this was the period of time where you recognize the enemy, because this enemy, it was not the Polish. But this is another period of my time when I was in Communist Poland, and I was [indecipherable] Poland -- Polish.

Q: What you're saying is that during this time --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- Poles were supporting other Poles?

A: Yes, yes. No, I di -- I'm giving you the example.

Q: Yes, yes.

A: An unknown person, [indecipherable] I course, but I -- I took a good -- good point, yes, immediate. Because you see, if I will -- if I would do a different action, and I will say, no, that's not mine, you see what will happen, some provocation, maybe we will have to send the message to the -- to the police, German, and he is finished.

Q: How were you feeling in the middle of these actions? Were you afraid, ever? Some of these sound very intense.

A: You see, we -- we were, in the five years, yes? '40 - '41 - '42 - '43 - '44 - '45, six years, yes, you are all the time aware -- very close to death. There was not normal, nothing was normal. You know, y -- I -- y-you never knowed if you are going to the Warsaw, if will be back. It's because you are entering a simple operation wapanka, and you a -- you are in trouble, terro -- very serious trouble. You see that in -- in Warsaw, there was -- Warsaw was dying as a town day by day, execution by execution, but totally different stories in [indecipherable] which was a act of heroism, yes, and cost Warsaw, a town, and -- of a quarter million people.

Q: So you felt close to death most of the time?

A: Yes, yeah.

Q: Did you feel afraid, or what gave you the courage?

A: Just life, and you have to -- you have to live. You have to -- you have to survive. Therefore I am saying, the same -- the same story about -- is -- was a -- you can't compare, you know, this -- the fate of the Jewish people, yes, that's a totally -- totally different. So therefore, I am saying, if there was a -- if there was a Warsaw uprising in ghetto, they were our troops fighting for Warsaw ghetto. But this was a helpless, this was useless. You cannot fight -- insane -- in the few months later, and this happened to the Warsaw. You realize this fact, that it was a -- around eastern -- no, [indecipherable] holy, holy period, yes, Easter, yeah, I am saying good. It was an end of the ghetto. End. It was the final days where the young desperate people said fine, we have to die, die fighting. And they started to fight. But there was no -- no -- you say -- you see this was a very small scale, yes? If you get main ghetto wiped out, yes, was done without any resistance, yes? You see, as I mentioned to you, there were difficulties for the Jewish people to -- to try to escape, because these routes were available, yes, but they were so different in behavior, in everything, that -- that they just give up, you know, like in this picture that you see -- with the hand up, and I am going.

Q: Did you ever observe any collaboration between the Polish underground and resistance and the Jewish resistance?

A: Y-Y-You see, there was no collaboration in so-called -- call it peaceful -- peaceful, you know -- there was no uprising, no. There was no. Because you see, even for us, we have no collaboration with the Communist resistance, yes? Even worse, we were punished, we were killed by them. We -- as a potential enemy when the Soviet Union will come. Human behaviors, yes, only human behaviors, yes, then -- the troops, which were close to ghetto, and this is the certain part of the Warsaw, we were far away. They fought from outside into the ghetto, when there was a point of fighting, yes?

Q: The Polish troops?

A: Yes, Polish troop. Where there was a --

Q: Your comrades?

A: Yes. Very special troops, yes? They -- w -- they tried to fight. I -- a -- like from the -- from the other side, from the backside of the Germans. But of course, this was without any sham. This was only act of solidarity. But same story, that for us, when we started the war -- abs -- Warsaw [indecipherable] there -- help was six -- 2000 miles away, yes? Or,

was just behind Vistula River, yes? Soviet army. So the fly -- flies -- the planes came from the Italy, yes, or from Britain to drop the armament in the Warsaw. It was one witness of the one fight -- one -- one flight that was shot down. This was a in -- in my eyesight. I -- I have the document, I know the name of these pilots, and the crew, and one survivor was found there. They -- they -- this was a act of heroism, yes, because you have to realize that suddenly plane flying -- I don't know, six hours from Brindisi, somewhere in [indecipherable] or some -- somewhere there, they are approaching the Warsaw, Warsaw is in flame, and he is flying over the roofs of the do -- of the -- of the houses. And he, pilot, he came this thousand miles to drop in the spot, because if he -- he can fly, you know, and drop someone and get out, yes? He was going back and forth, he vanishing the -- in the smoke of the -- of the burning say, and -- and believe me, he did it so many flights, that the Germans at the gun, they knew, aha, he is going the -- we have it, yes? He will come from this point. And I see the one shot from the big anti-aircraft, and hit him in the -- in the tail, and the plane went down, and exploded. I -- I have the greatest -- the greatest feelings of my friendship to this pilot who did it. It was a soldier's duty. You follow me? He was trained regardless if he will be killed or not. It was a very, very act of heroism. No, therefore I am saying that are we [indecipherable] and that's just behind you Vistula River, just in the face sig -- and this happen, you know, that in this troop standing in the Soviet army, at the Vistula River, they were Polish soldiers, yes? And without permission of the commander of the si -- great Red Army, they launch the attack, and started to cross in Vistula River, and they did it, but that's it. They passed the Vistula River. They created the bridgehurt, no German heres, and it was cut off, and died.

Q: I'm wondering -- we were -- we are beginning now to talk about the Warsaw uprising, so if you could go back a little bit before it begins and set the context. What was going on right before it began? You know, in the weeks or two. Did you know something was maybe being planned?

A: Oh, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Yes, oh yes.

Q: Te -- tell us a little bit about it.

A: You see, there was a --

Q: When it was.

A: -- two -- two concepts. This was everything in July happen. June, July, August, September, yes? This was a very crucial point.

Q: The year?

A: Year, '44. And at the -- at the certain day, I think if it was July, I get the order. Mobilization point, go to the mobilization point. We know what to do. We have to have this, this, this, this, this, and we are going to the certain place, and we are ready to go.

Q: What was it?

A: Go.

Q: What was it that you had to have?

A: You know it was that -- no, I am saying --

Q: Oh.

A: -- you have to take the food, medicine, weapon, whatever it is, some clothes, good shoes. We are leaving Warsaw. We are going outside of the walls.

Q: And at that point you did have a weapon?

A: Yes, of cour --

Q: You had been given a weapon.

A: Yes, immediate -- at that moment we are going to the second point where we will get the weapon. Of course that somebody of us had a private weapon, and -- and we -- it -- a decision by the authorities, yes, our Home Army was that we will not fight in Warsaw. We are going into the forest, and we are starting a regular partisan wa -- war. Now came the politic ish. Because so -- fine, we are leaving Warsaw, and Warsaw is open, so some of you in -- will enter like to the old towns, yes? And we will be in the forest. And this, it was political thinking, yes? So it means that there is a capital town of Poland without Polish authorities, yes? There will be authorities brought with the Soviet Union army. This was the political issue

Q: [inaudible]

End of Tape #4

Tape #5

- Q: This is September 21st, 1998, we're in Arlington, Virginia, doing an interview for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview is with Tadeusz Marchaj, and this is tape number five. And you were just --
- A: To leave the Warsaw, or not to leave the Warsaw. So, as -- as I mentioned that is no doubt for me now, but very little I know during the time when this decision was made by the authorities, if -- this I know now, but at that time I know as a soldier of the underground army, Home Army, I have to go somewhere, wherever they may ask me to go. And of course, the -- the -- it was very easy to understand that this is the only one -- one way to go, is that to go to the compinose kapushta over another part of Poland with the forest, and to -- to continue the fight with the Germans in the form of parti -- partisan action. At that moment it was a big motion. I can say commotion in the movement of army. A lot of evacuated, the authorities si -- i -- of German macht, German power. A -- e-evacuation of the unnecessary departments of the army, and ha -- in -- including the -- this was a quite good opportunities to pick up the weapon, because a lot of soldier of the cooperating army with the Germans, were passing Warsaw. Hungarian, Italian, and -- and they were very friendly. That means that for the food or something like that, you can -- you can buy carbines, machine guns, and so on. But this -- this lasted about -- aha, this is the very -- maybe important to mention this was a time when there was a assassination of the Hitler by -- by the -- in Volchance.
- Q: The -- the attempt?
- A: The attempt, yes. And this was a very big excitement, yes the -- oh, maybe this is the crevend of the war. No, it was -- he survive, and so -- so, and then the situation was quiet. In order -- and we are s -- we were ready to go in this so-called point of mobilization, which was aimed in home of my father. And --
- Q: The point of mobilization --
- A: Yes, yes --
- Q: -- was in your house?
- A: -- and because my -- ma -- my troops were very close to us, and this was a -- we had a quite big apartment, so okay, that's it, and this is the point. And then after a few days, they -- not existing is a situation normal, yes, the way things get farther -- further. And it passes one month and then it came the first of August. And we get the message, yes, that we are attacking -- no, first of all, no, we have to for the gathering place. There will be a - - our commander, and everything what is needed to perform attack on the -- on the school full of the SS soldiers. It is exactly at five o'clock, we -- we gather in the apartment of the shistof, his name was Soukoski, and I remember that he was a very devoted Catholics,

Christian, and [indecipherable] the history of Poland, he was -- his name was Soukoski, and he was on the family of the Soukoski who was marshal of the [indecipherable] Napoleon. Soukoski. He was a -- he died -- died in Egypt, in very strange -- in circumstances. Alas, this is not important. History is telling that he was poisoned by Napoleon because he was a big enemy of a -- Napoleon, and -- and -- and he had some plans, who knows? Doesn't matter. We gather, and he -- and I remember when he has said -- asked us, "Please, go to the knees, and really pray to our God." Oh, boy. He use this very old poem, very old poem, probably from the 10th century, when he is praying to the mother of God, [speaks Polish]. I forget it. Doesn't matter. And -- and believe me, this pick up us. We were lifted mora, and we just took our weapon, whatever we have, and we started to go. And we were passing on the way to the -- our gathering place, my home. And at the door was standing my father. And he said to me, "Show me what you have to fight." And I had at the time my private 7FN. He gave me this [indecipherable], "I would rather allow you to go with the bricks in the hand than with this." And he gave me, here is the weapon, and he gave me the parabellum nine millimeters -- shtuon parabellum with very long -- special edition of this, with the long barrel, and 200 pieces of ammunition. I said -- he was not a coward. He knew where I am going, but he didn't say, "Tad, stay home," yes? Believe me -- probably, after my experience now, I will say to my son, "Stay home." We went and we had to approach our point where you had to cross a big, street, and be approaching this street. We know that they are movement of the -- of the armored carrier, light -- light wagon. So we have to pass this street very fast. And when we in group, in some way, we mobilize this big movement, this alarm another post of the German -- the German soldier, and they open fire to us. Believe me, this was a -- a -- so frightening that never in my life experienced something. Because my friends were in the first line and were jumping to the housing. I was somewhere in the middle, and I had to run in the gun's fire. But I couldn't, so I dropped into the tarfofal field -- potato field, and in this field, yes, th-this shooter, yes, they knew that I am there because I was there [indecipherable]. And you have no imagination what does it mean when -- when the shooting is of the bullets is whizzling, yes, above your hand -- head, and you can -- you hear the shots, and -- and bullet sounds, and you can see the potatoes cut. It was -- it was a -- it was just unbelievable. Yes, it was. And we were soldier that we never shoot to the people, to the -- another soldier. And we didn't wa -- we didn't were -- no, we went -- we were not in the real fight. Young chicken. So at last -- no, I found from bravery that I say no, now I am jumping, yes? I jump [indecipherable] nice, and I -- I see the -- I saw the -- the red brick's powder, yes, in front of me, because he shoot at the edge of the house, knowing that I will pass this point. And I pass, and nothing happen to me. And believe me, my first -- first was where I can have a droplets of water. My -- m -- I'm -- I'm telling only to emphasize the fact that everybody could have the same thing. Don't telling me that you can be brave like -- like hero. No, the organs, your body will react in some way -- maybe my body. I went into the appletel. They are still shooting, but a little bit far away. But it is [indecipherable] as you think, my first will was to have an apple and juice. And I climb on this -- on -- on this thing. I take the apple, bite it, and I was in seventh heaven. And at that moment, of course, I became right [indecipherable] yes, a story of bravery, Marchaj, who in spite of the fire, he climbed the tree. That's was a very

bravery man. So no, no, it was not me, not here. It doesn't matter now. Time -- and when I get the sip of the juice, I went down in -- into the building where we have to -- supposed to be. And then was I -- we found the three guys, very professional tadif. The three brothers Rainishevski. Three brothers. You know the -- as special -- as the special cond -- special diversion -- there was a special name, forget it. Doesn't matter, they were professionally killers.

Q: These are Polish?

A: Polish, yeah.

Q: Polish.

A: Yes. But -- tadif. [speaks Polish]. They were giving them special action to execute -- even the execution, yes? Or special action to assassinated somebody, and so on. So they were very, very brave, you know, it -- they were soldier. And they get out from this building, from these fences, and he -- they started to shoot [indecipherable]. Fine, they jump, they empty magazines, you know, of the bullets, and they came back and say, "Who has ammunition? We are without bullets." I say, "I have." From my father. "Oh, sit down here and load." Yes? And to say sit down, they give me empty this and I started to load, yes? And they get out for another jump, and again this was the -- the lack of professionalism of these three brothers, because they were surprised by the action of the German. German were not in the same place. They were a little bit farther to the left or right, doesn't matter. They attention was to look at these direction and to ge -- fire from the sideway, and the -- suddenly the gates opened, and these two brothers are carrying the third one. Bloody [indecipherable] blo -- blood from the head, from -- yes. And -- and they came and say, "Where are our leaders?" Yes? Because we came to this place, and there was no single person who will be giving the orders what to do. But of course they started to cry, "Where is the sanitary -- sanitary, sanitary," and so on. They move it from another, and took it -- took him to the quiet place, and fortunately he survive, he survive. And it was a one of the oldest of us who was thish free Christopher Soukoski, he took leadership. And he say fine, we have to move this from this point, because we cannot stay here. We have to go to the -- another place, and make a hort. Yes, he was -- you know, he looks like a -- you know, like a -- I don't know, bookkeeper from the pousher, you know, but he -- I will never say that he is able to do this. He organized us, and we went into the second location, and came the first night, and we put the post, you know, and so on, regularly, according to the certain routine of the military action, and we -- we have a rotation in the -- in the -- to be a -- alive, and searching for the possibility of the German attacks, and so on, but they didn't think about it, the Germans. But, this night we hear the Soviet things. They were one kilometer from us. No man's land was between Soviet Union and us. They penetrate our scouts, I can say, jump in they direction. They made a contact with them, and there was nothing whatsoever, some action and action, and so on , no question. And they turn back and went back. I don't know, maybe on this basis, the leaders -- our troop -- aha, of course that our target, this German school full of -- of this,

we never attack this. Of course that there was another attack on the -- on the bridge fet of the -- the Vistula River. Absolutely all of them attacking this day. All, n -- even survivor, even the women, there was not. They try -- this was -- this would be our future, our fate when we do the same to this professional, this arms up to the [indecipherable]. So came a quiet, and maybe they give some information about the movement in the front, and so on. They made a decision, go to the waiting position in your first -- first gathering, so -- in Saskacampa, yes?

Q: Someone -- a courier came, and gave you a message?

A: Yeah.

Q: Somehow.

A: Yeah. Oh yes, yes. Some --

Q: Courier [indecipherable] group gave you a new message.

A: Oh yes, yes. It means that, shortly speaking, during the night --

Q: Right.

A: -- and during the next day, and during the next night, they found themselves, they made a decision to go, that -- give up the weapon, that -- our private weapon, and this which we'll get from this first place, and go to the first location when we left our territory in Saskacampa going into the gathering place in Grokov, yes, where we were, you know, when -- when this shooting occur with us, you know, and --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- especially in -- with me, yeah. But what's happened now? When I came from -- because this is the time that we give the -- give the order us to go home, because this is closer to wis -- to wint -- to Vistula River, maybe we will cross Vistula River, nobody knows. Our -- our situation was this, wait for the [indecipherable]. When I came home, it was a shock in the -- in my home. Sister are crying hysterically, "You're alive!" I say, "Yes." "Y-Y-Y -- our mother is looking your body in the field in Grokov." I say -- "One of a -- your men from your group came back, and he said that Tad, especially Tad, is dead." When my father investigated him, how was wearing, what was he wearing? Describe it. And he start to make fantasy. "I saw," he said, "that he was killed by German with his parabellum." He exactly described this gun that I had, this gun that is -- was given by my father. And that's it. So, my mother was looking for my body, and in the basement I met my father, yes, finishing the coffin for me. So, the coffin for me, it was already built. But I'm still alive. That's was the end of my participation in Warsaw uprising.

Q: What was your mother's reaction [indecipherable]

A: Oh my, you have imagination. Terrible. So we waited for another few days -- not few, this was the 23rd of September, and the -- our territory was surrounded by Germans, as I mention in my beginning of this story. We left, because you had to left, you know? What does it mean, you know? For us, the reality of the Warsaw uprising vanished, yes? We were no weapon, no commands. We did whatever it was -- has -- has to do, and we went into the Pruszków, yes, by the -- by the train.

Q: What did your father, when -- when you went home and told your father about what happened, and that the leader didn't show up, it -- did --

A: Ah, you see --

Q: -- did -- what -- what was his reaction --

A: -- what my react -- shi -- you see, he -- my father was a -- he was a quiet man, he was a -- he can burst sometimes, and terrible, yes? But in -- in reality, he was very quiet man, and he didn't blame me, he didn't do, he didn't complain about somebody. Be happy that you are alive, and that's it, you know.

Q: So what happened then, at some point, were you ordered to surrender?

A: No, it means that at that moment, it was our decision, yes? It means our decision --

Q: Group?

A: Groups, yes, because as I mentioned to you, we came back and then, when we went -- when we give up to the -- to the Germans, at that moment we were almost together, yes? So decision was, fine, what we are doing, yes? The youngest of us, yes, Marix Keptinski, he was so young, that according to this request of the Germans, yes, he was not eligible to get out, yes, he was 16. And he stayed, and Matchie Shapinski, me, Zigmund Paolernuk, mys -- my brother-in-law, Paulo Logansun, we went to the gathering place given us by the Germans, and we lost surrender -- peaceful surrender, not as -- as I mentioned to you, not as a soldier of the Warsaw uprising, because if we surrender as the Warsaw uprising says to be honorable soldier, yes, we will be killed in spot. At that moment I told you this, that the authorities of the army in the west, under the command Eisenhower, they didn't send for two -- almost six weeks, the message to the Germans that they have the three soldier of the Warsaw uprising as a prisoner of the war according to the Geneva convention. This was after six weeks, in spite of fact we were wearing certain distinction bands on the head -- arm bands, bla -- white and red. And at that moment, we should be respected as a soldier. Now, this never happened in first six weeks in Warsaw. Every soldier captured was killed in place. Banded. That's it. Even then, you know, that didn't -

- did was naro -- no rule at all, because the civilian were killed in thousand. They used the civilian as a shield in attack to the certain position of the -- of the fighting soldier in Warsaw uprising.

Q: But when you went to this place to surrender, what were you surrendering as? A -- a Polish citizen?

A: No, [indecipherable] that I surrendered myself to the -- a very big, unknown fate. Yo-Yo -- you -- you follow me? I give up my body, and mind to -- to go somewhere, where German would be leaflets set to us. You want to -- you have to -- simply was pick man between the age this and this has to leave the -- Warsaw. They will be respected as a people, not -- not so -- but there was a -- in this message there was no mentioning soldier, that pe -- men from age to age, they have to leave the [indecipherable]. There was nothing about a soldier. If we will do this -- either, exposed the troops, yes, as we are going, and we are the soldier of the Warsaw uprising, they will shoot us.

Q: Well, so it was a general call for men to be evacuated from Warsaw?

A: Yes, no -- you so -- simple story, they tried to remove the potential fighters, yes, and to find workers for them -- some work in Germany.

Q: Did your father go with you?

A: No. No, he was as -- over the age. That's the one story, and probably at that moment he -- he was not so stupid to go, yes. Exactly. We -- yo-yo-you -- you -- you can -- you see this is a psychological problem for us. After the shock, we saw ourself that we are zero. That - - that our -- we give up everything already, and it was only lucky condition, yes, that we survive. And now, you realize this is after big emotion, and giving up to fight, and suddenly everything collapsed, I have to build up again something without weapon, without the commander. So organize something for what? We saw already what's happened. So, fine, we know that if -- or this we will -- this we'll know at the time very well. That if yee -- you were -- if you want to oppose the Germans at that moment, you are killed. You are dead. So, at that moment we took a risk, yes, to give up ourself into the German hands, but not as a soldier, but as a people that they are asking for. We are the men of 18, get out from here.

Q: So when you got ready to go to that --

A: Yeah?

Q: Did you say good-bye? How -- please tell us about saying good-bye to your family.

A: Oh yes, it was a lot of tears, and well wishing, you see, because at the moment my brother-in-law, who was not in the army, yes, because he was already new married man,

yes, husband of my sister, but anyway he had to go, yes? So he joined us, and -- and other people, too, the neighbors, and so on. It not only we, there was a -- from Saskacampa there was 3000 men had to left -- had to leave, and -- and just taking a chance. Another chance, you see, to say -- to give up your future into the unknown fate. You know? What happened with us? I don't know. It's -- a chance was a 50 - 50, maybe less than 50 - 50, because in the -- in the history that will follow, I had a very little chance, you see? I could be a captured in --in -- I can be locked in the Stutthof, as a inmate, period. And could be treated in -- like a 17,000 last inmate in Stutthof, they were drowned in the Baltic Sea. You know this? Very last group of the Stutthof people were loaded on the barges, and drowned in the sea, wintertime. So -- but there was a lesson, of course. You -- you see, there was a lesson that -- that -- that he -- we -- I get this lesson, that you have to be active. Active. Y-Y-You have to do something that you are thinking that this is proper. Just to give up themself -- I have an idea what I will do. This happened in Pruszków, when we came to the Pruszków, a group of our neighbor, yes, they -- they give up the initiative into the German's hand. It mean that not in such a way that -- to the -- because we were all in the German hands, but they didn't try to make a own movement. You follow me? They say, "Oh, I, now I'm here, okay, I will be here, yes? I will not do anything unless somebody will touch me for -- by the -- by the arms, and get up." We left the Stutthof in the -- of course, that is the coincident -- we left the Stutthof in the first transport, and we made the decision. Now, they are asking us to get out? Yes, we are going. And we get out, and we enter the transport to Stutthof. This other, my friends, I call them. Inie Pavoushevski, come on with us. Yes? No, he say, no, no, no. The next transport went to the Austria. Austria, Gross-Rosen. None of them come back.

Q: Let's go back to your s -- you're standing around, you've been called, you're surrendering, your -- your -- you're following this order.

A: Yeah.

Q: This order from the Germans [indecipherable]

A: May I interrupt you?

Q: Mo -- absolutely.

A: S-Sorry. I never disobeyed the order of my authority. You see, they told me, give up your weapon, go int -- go to this gathering place where you were, and ga -- and li -- wait for the farther orders. Sorry, your farther's orders never come again, yes? Because at this moment, yes, earlier and be -- on the September 23rd, German came and say, "Get out from here." Now -- so, yo-you realize this fact, sometimes I am th -- I am thinking on this subject, and I say we didn't do anything wrong. Because either I will -- we could fight, but maybe it was n -- I can say providence made the -- another decision with our life, yes? At -- maybe they save -- spare our life in this way, and with it, a lot of our life -- in our life.

Q: How did the Germans treat you when you went to this gathering point? What -- what happened?

A: This was a -- you see, there was a very many kinds of Germans. Even they were the certain cooperating army from outside Germany, it's like Ukrainian army, Hungarian army, Lithuanian army, Estonian army. Or this is, I will tell you something, because I met very s -- fast aggression, yes? The men who hire me in [indecipherable] company -- you realize this fact? Men who hired --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- me when I came this, he was a soldier of the Estonian army, and he was in Suchenwald. Okay, so what I am saying -- and they're for. In this case, because the guerilla [indecipherable] was a very high authority --

Q: In Germany?

A: In Germany, yes, very, very. And he -- I -- in some way I am considering ou -- considering him as a -- as a honorable general, because what he said, he -- and promise, he did it. If he give the order to do this, he did it. And he was not the apparachik Hitler Nazi -- you know, like Himmler, or something like that, no. So, but I'm not -- I'm not apologizing him -- making apology for the -- for the action that the -- of the [indecipherable], but when we came to the gathering place, there were army soldiers. Army, not SS, not some -- some unknown people. They loaded us to the -- to the we -- wagon, and we had to wait closed in the wagon for about 60 hours, because at that moment they -- there was heavy fight along the train going to the Pruszków. And this -- this railroad track was passing through the lines of the Warsaw uprising, and Germany. And inside of our train, there were killed people. Probably by the -- by the friendly fire. Because you see, some Polish soldier saw the train passing. Saw the train, German train, so let's shoot them. And we arrived the -- to the Pruszków, and in Pruszków was first to relax, yes.

Q: What was Pruszków, where was it?

A: Pruszków, it was a previous big company, building the -- the machinery, and -- and the wagon, railroad tracks, and so on. This was this, and -- but at the time was totally empty. [indecipherable] manufacture the hose, and everything was empty, and there was only water in hydrants, nothing to sleep, just concrete, railrer tracks, and that's all.

Q: How long of a ride was it?

A: Right?

Q: How long were -- did it take to get there?

A: No, it's a -- from -- from this place where we entered the train, to this, this was about -- waiting time was -- to -- to wait for the free passage, yes? And it was about two hours, and -- and that's it, we were in -- in the -- in the afternoon, ear -- early afternoon, we were -- in early morning, and early afternoon we were there. And of course, you see, this is a story that we get something from mother, this from sister, and so on. I remember after I get there, and now that's -- this was mother. You know, he give me the gold bracelet, you know, maybe you will have to eat -- to use this, and so on.

Q: This is your mom? Your mother?

A: From my moth -- from my mother. A-And I can tell you I sure that I brought it back. All the time I have it with me, in the belt here, under the belt. So, I brought back, and more. Not more in such a case because [indecipherable] myself, yeah. And in the Pruszków, there was a selection, yes? I -- I wasn't there. You see, I -- I even don't know exactly how a -- how long I was this -- very shortly, the 23 and yes, and the morning 25, it is [indecipherable] two days after two days, we -- and we were loaded to the transport, and - - and we reached the Stegna. Stegna. And this was the beginning of the oppression, because at the time there, we found the German superselect Gestapo, with the Topenkoff, you know, the -- you know what this Topenkoff meaning? Skull -- skool, yes? Skool and bones. You know, this is the symbol on the -- on the -- here, on the collars. On the black, white skull with the bones, this is -- was the symbol of SS. And of course we -- we arrived very -- beginning of the night, and with the carol, and of course that I -- I said this was the fright -- frightening, this was in -- inhuman, you know, when this prisoner from the Stutthof tr -- well, he had a smart idea. He tried to penetrate us, and he lose our identification of the -- of the -- of the -- of the prison.

Q: So right when you first got to Stegna, which is Stutthof --

A: Stegna, no, is a -- a railroad station not far from Stutthof.

Q: Okay, okay. I'm just clarifying, okay. So you -- you -- you've arrived nearby Stutthof.

A: Yes.

Q: The concentration camp?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what you're describing is a prisoner from there is trying to kind of melt into your group?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: It means that in the potato field, they were working inmates of the -- of the -- of the -- of the concentration camp, under the guards of the periphery. And one of them started to -- to penetrate this through the potato field, our group. But some boy, he [indecipherable] you know, maybe 12 years old, you know, he showed him, yes? And that morning when he started to run away, wherever -- in what -- in whatever direction he run, he hit the guards. So he run another way. And then this -- this -- he was surrounded closer, and closer, and closer and then was beaten terribly, you know, the carbines were broken on his body. And -- and they last all day, they, believe me, this was like a [indecipherable], yes, for us, and for them, you know. They -- they can do and get a gun and shoot him, and that's it, it's finished in any moment, yeah? No, they did it for -- for us. We get a [indecipherable]. And they took him, you know, the -- you know, dragging him, and then -- then he vanished then. Later -- later, I saw the [indecipherable] of this gun, I saw the execution of this man -- of this man, because he wasn't killed. When he entered the Stutthof, of course, during the night, barking dogs, you know this -- in white uniform, yes, to -- to be s -- visible, you know, in the crowd, with these bats, yes. Sticks, and so we went there, exhausted emotionally, and everything, and it's -- some of us started to realize where we are. I didn't know. I didn't. I didn't know that where I am, but there are people who knew. And the same day, the same night, one of us newcomer, he committed suicide. He went just -- in spite of the warning voices, halt, halt, yes, and then you hear only two shots bang, bang, and he fall down on the -- on the electrical fence. So was killed finally by the -- by the shock, electric fence shock. He was taken away and then the next few days -- two days, we spent on the -- in the open place, sitting on the sound, without weapon, without nothing, just sitting. And there was s -- the -- our older people from our group, fluently speaking English, with the li -- booklets -- no, leaflets from [indecipherable]. They s -- that's for me and [indecipherable] they started to talk to them. They permit them to talk to the authorities of the camp, and they presented this, that we are the volunteer. We came here, and we gave up our person to the authorities, and so on. And I think that you will accept the [indecipherable]. And of course did I mention here in my -- in my s -- letter that probably this was not only this, but they were -- they were overloaded. It came too many persons, and the struthel was not so -- there was a fareetenslager like Birkenau, where can destroy the fi -- 5000 people in day. So -- so -- have a problem, that's a one story. They -- they need me, they need work to be done, somewhere. If you want to build the conce -- any concentration camp as a subcamp of the Stutthof, you have to organize, yes? You have to guard, you have this, and you have the shelter for the guard, you have the kitchen for the guards. Because even if you don't have to think about the inmates, yes, the prisoner. But you have to do this by the guards. So they had not. So this was a probably the case that, fine, let's use it as a worker, yes?

Q: What kind of people were mostly there? Poles, or was it a mix of people?

A: This in this group, exclusively Polish people from Praga. Praga or Saskacampa. This was 5000 people that arrived at Pruszków, in the first transport, that I was in. So probably in 99 percent was only Polish.

Q: But in the whole concentration camp, also?

A: Oh no, no, this was a [indecipherable] concentration camp existed since 1939, when the - when the -- Poland was attacked by Hitler in Gdansk, and this territory, yes, that were captured by Germany, there was a lot of opposition, a lot of Polish patriots, and so on, so they -- again, what I said, the -- cut the head, and you will -- you have a problem resolved, yes, and therefore the most people [indecipherable] were sent to the Stutthof from this territory. And say e -- in the -- in the Stutthof camp -- subcamp in Sofinbaden, there was the people from Poltuleetsa. Poltuleetsa there were ordinary cashoops, you know, cashoora -- cashoop is the Polish people who are calling themselves as a cashoop, they are speaking Polish, but if -- if you are -- if you would ask him, "Who are you?" He will say -- give you the answer, "I am cashoop," yes. But like, say maybe you can go to beautiful places in Zakoparna, i-in Mounting, yes? Who are you? I am Gourat, yes? And if you will -- if you will study this situation here, you will find that who are the gouras in Polish territory who are speaking Polish, and they are very Polish people, yes? They are the stits -- you know, sitz, they travel as a tribe across the Europe, and finish his journey in Scotland. Scottish people are absolutely Polish cashoops. We are dancing in the same way, and they are singing in the same, they are playing the -- the -- no -- pipes, yes? This is the tribe that didn't reach the Scotland, but are Polish now.

Q: When you first got to the outskirts of the concentration camp, and you saw the man who was hunted --

A: Yes.

Q: And then another person who was with you committed suicide --

A: Suicide.

Q: What were you realizing? What was going through your mind about where -- what kind of situation you were in?

A: No, I -- yes, no, not only this, because you know, as I mentioned, you know this -- was a few days later, execution of the men. And I was able, from this position where I was, to see this execution, and to hear the music playing during this execution. Beautiful melody of Lehas. You know, [sings]. I hear it in concentration camp and when the man was hanging. And at that moment, you see, where you were at work -- I am work, you see, I have to leave this place as possible, as fast as possible, to get out, to have a chance at -- and suddenly, they calling for the professionals by -- by the baroof -- baroof --

profession. And I -- I am there, and I say I'm a draftsman, I am [indecipherable] e bin sifener, and they find -- note it this way.

Q: But you weren't, were you?

A: Huh?

Q: Were you a draftsman?

A: Oh yes, yes.

Q: Ah.

A: Yes, I was, you see, a -- during the war, as -- I was the -- say, I did the first degree in my technical education. So I was a good draftsman at that time, and I -- I -- I can do this very well. And at that moment, I capture my friend, Shapinski, come on, you. Are you going to [indecipherable] you. Take a chance to get out from here. Later we will think about it, what to do, yeah. In the same way ask the people to dig that simple -- simple worker. I send -- I -- I told to my -- to my -- to my s -- brother-in-law, "Nietai, get out from here, and you will [indecipherable] you will -- you will have a -- you will u -- use the digging devices, and you will be worker, yes. Get out from here." And so a lot of people, it was about, as I mentioned, about 150 they selected us, and they, next day transported us to the -- another subcamp.

Q: Just in that little bit of a moment, you were really taking kind of a -- a leadership role with people that you cared about, and --

A: Mm.

Q: -- were trying to help. Di -- what made you do that? I mean, you weren't just looking out for yourself [indecipherable]

A: No, no, no. You see, as I -- I -- I -- I would like to live it, we were in the group from the troops, yes, somehow our Home Army troop. We were together all the time. I will tell you then something that -- not that I'm -- to emphasize that I am such a good boy, yes, that I'm so patriots, that I am so friendly to another friends. You see in this concentration -- you know, in the Pruszków, I met Garouto, you remember, the Olympian, that he was - - he'd once help us, and he taught me as a light athletes to throw the javelin, and s -- jumps, and so on. He met me, "Oh, Tadeusz, what are you doing here? Fine. Let's go, and you will be my hemp -- helper." And my answer was very simple. "I am not alone." "How many you have?" "Five." [indecipherable]. "I cannot," he said to me, and I said, "Don't worry, [indecipherable], I -- I will manage." And we went together. So we went into the Stutthof together, and in the first time [indecipherable] I was -- the -- we were

together. So, we left Saskacampa, and we left Stutthof in the same time. And really, wi -- this was my [indecipherable] to exers -- to eck -- to --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: No, exaggerated [indecipherable], I was initiate -- initiator. I was in this game, believe me, I was my father. Yes, I behave like my father. Don't be waiting. You have to be active. Go, search. You -- you have a -- your mobility will give you a bigger chance.

End of Tape #5

Tape #6

- Q: -- we're in Arlington, Virginia doing an interview for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, with Tadeusz Marchaj. And this is tape six. See, so we left you, you are now in Stutthof.
- A: Yeah.
- Q: And you've been there for a day or two.
- A: Day or -- day.
- Q: A day. And what is your physical state at this point, and your mental state?
- A: First of all -- no, what was the -- the physical state, it was just that I was in good shape physics. It means that all these experiences with the exhaustion due to the heat and so on, I can stand it very easy. Mentally, this -- there was a lot of thinking. It was not a -- a devotion to started to think what I will do, what I will do. No, I have to do something. In - - in the possible -- in the margin of my possible ways, yes, to do something. So, I know how to manage, to sleep on the -- on the sand, under the sky. This is something experience, you know, that it -- it was too bothering me, yes, i-it was a -- almost natural, yes. When I was re -- lying on my back, and instead of ceiling, I saw beautiful constellation, I say at that moment, I'm in the camp, but a little bit different, [indecipherable] at camp. It means that mentally I -- I try to relax, and not even to find, in this condition the work that I am still -- i-i-in the nice wert, that around me something that I want to reach there. And therefore, the -- I was able to think only what was needed, what I will do next day, yes, if they will select me, yes, because these -- they were starting to talk about the selection, we had talks about selection. And therefore, when this came, I was absolutely sure who are you, siekner, and I am going to leave this place as soon as possible. What I can do, I took my friend with me, I advise my brother-in-law, and another friend, Zigmund Paolernuk from my troops, to go find. We will use the physical force to dig the earth. And we left. Of course, in me -- in the meantime, I know - - not as I -- as I mentioned this execution and so on, this closed my knowledge about the Stutthof. You know, I know that Stutthof, about the Stutthof you can write in books. Is story of thousands of peoples, and each of the story was the same, yes? Sitting in barrack, and get the piece of bread, go to work, and come back, and so on. Fortunately for me, of course, this a -- my lucky star was shining about me, that I never was a such a person. And I am very pity for these people, and I know immediate what I will say that I saw it, but without pain. It was that I get a knowledge without pain. I was observant, almost, yes? And my faith, it give me the chance to be only in this position, because I knew very well that Stutthof wasn't a nice place to be. And that's all, and fe -- I -- I -- I -- I mentioned in the very beginning, you know, that I was in some way curious when I read this Gittorda Schnyder book, that she probably has the same practice like me. That she didn't fight -- that she didn't find the Stutthof, and Suchenwalda only as a martyrdom.

She took away -- she took away something more. More teaching element, about the humanity, and so on. Little -- I -- I was very surprised, you know, that they tried to save this SS man.

Q: You're talking about an author of a book --

A: Of the book.

Q: -- we should just make that clear.

A: Yeah.

Q: And we don't need to go into that, but the --

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: -- the name of the book is, "The Unfinished Road."

A: "Unfinished Road," and this is the book about the Suchenwalda that we are -- that we will start to talk about this [indecipherable]

Q: So, you're feeling pretty good, and there is an off -- there is a selection, or an opportunity, and you volunteer yourself as a professional draftsman?

A: Draftsman, yes.

Q: Tell us what happens then.

A: So, next day, I think so, this was the day of -- I can look at the date, but this is not so important, but same day that -- August 29th, yes? They started to organize us -- us, and we left on the August 30th. So I was in -- in concentration part here -- in Stutthof, I was five days. I came 25th, and I left 30. And therefore, this was the five days, as I mentioned. What I saw -- I saw the -- oh, I already mention, yes, that it was enough to -- to have a full knowledge what does it mean, and the -- to be in -- with this knowledge, to be free, without experiencing a real life in Stutthof. That's was a big, big, lucky condition that I faced at that time. So we went to the station, Stegna. We entered the railroad track, personal. Free for the open public, not a -- not a --

Q: Cattle cars.

A: Car -- I say -- cattle car, yes. And in very cultural way, we arrived to Leibush. Cultural way because we were sitting on the banks, yes, open doors, open windows. If somebody would like to escape, well you can do this. Even you can do this, yes. But of course that my feeling, and everybody feeling was no, no, no, no, that's is not the time, yes. My

feeling is. Maybe somebody, but nobody make attempt. Where is this -- the Leibush? There was a very loose, small camp, surrounded by the fences, barbed wire, and post towers. And we spend there -- hat there was a first registration. First registration beyond the Stutthof, because in Stutthof we never entered the registration of the Stutthof. Certain notation about the -- about our profession technically was for the special people who were looking for this, but this was not for the authorities of the -- of the camp. So therefore, this is my problem life, that I cannot find the records of my presence in the Stutthof. But doesn't matter. In -- in -- in the first registration, was in Leibush, but there was a very short time, I think that this something lee -- about two days, you see. And from this point they took us to place called Brucie -- Brucie. And there was a official name of this, it was hausencommander -- commander Leibush, commander Brucie, hausencommander SS truppen eebungsplatz, bruce sopienbardai. It means that this complex -- aha, now, of course I can make a digression, that we entered the territory when we were moved from Leibush to Brucie. We can say like a capital town of the pulligol. There was a territory in -- in cashoops, yes, but this was the Polish territory before the war, but as izproisin in Germany during the occupation. And they -- this territory was about 50 kilometers by 40, yes? Big, big, totally secluded. People, if they were living, they throw it away, and they started to build a eebungsplatz, which this means exercising some military action. But not only because I knew a little bit more, because I was a draftsman at the drawings. That was not only eebungsplatz, that was a future launching territory of the rockets in the direction to the north. All orientation of the launching pad were north. It was not to Sweden because this was exactly Sweden in front of this territory, yes. This was probably -- the goal was United States. And of course, at that time, Germans were able to send the rockets V17, from Europe to America, over the North Pole. And of course there was missing only one element, yes? Rocketry was perfect, but there was no atomic head, because there would be a stupidity to send a simple explosive, yes? They were waiting at the time for atomic head. If they will -- if they would have had atomic head at that time, the launching was -- would be Sofinwalda. Yeah, so we came there, first to Brucie, and this was official subcamp of Stutthof. But they have no ability to the people, yes, so the -- they -- this was in s -- in the state of the -- to be born, yes? Start was nastendi to have people and labor camp for this arrangement. And in Bruce was again the selection, and I -- and selection -- in Bruce, a certain people who were for the physical work, like my -- my brother-in-law, Zigmund Paolernuk, they went into the orlik -- in the place orlik, and they started to be a simple worker. And they build the -- they build the hospital for this territory. It was a lot of different -- different section of this territory. I was sent to Zochenbad. In Zochenballid there was a ballitunk. It means that the -- the place where you are -- management place of this -- of this territory, and there was a -- some engineering stop, and we came as a draftsman to make a drawing for them. And as -- as I mentioned yes, that this was the so-called SS from erbiten unken naming number 128. This was the official name. And when we came there, we get shelter in the barracks, which were built already, wi -- ve -- with very little fancies, bar fancies, and a lot of different storage houses for the -- for the any materials, yes, that could be used to build this beauti -- big -- big enterprise, Sofienwalda, SS evungsplatz isproisa. And there were -- we get the -- this card, in number, I -- this is the card that I only -- you

see, I don't know why I have it, and not my friend. This was the escarta. It means that coupon for the food. Why, after it -- it -- about one week, we build our arrangement. We made a arrangement to build a kitchen, and we started to -- to have a cook, who cook for us the food.

Q: In your barracks?

A: In our barracks, within the certain fences, yes, barbed wire fences. But very loose, you know, there was no guard standing, you see? There was another big fence, around bigger area where was the management building, where were the storage houses, and this territory was in some way guarded by the -- by the guards. But very loose, even as you hardl -- shortly speaking, we were treated as a worker. We could get out from our -- from -- from this camp. We can go to the town by permission, written permission, and you see now, after the Stutthof, we were in paradise, you know? You -- what -- what you had to do, you had to work, yes? Of course the food was -- you -- you have imagination, but it was eatable, and was enough. Not die. And treatment was, as I mentioned, on the basis the lord and servant, and German and Polish, yes, so th-th-this was the relationship, but a very -- but it, first of all they -- they recognize our professional. If I make a drawing -- and I remember when I made the first drawing, yes, oh, nice, yes. And they even ge -- they applauded me, oh, very nice drawing, yes? Th-They recognize me as a professional, you see, because they were in the SS uniform, but they were professional.

Q: S-S-So there was a certain amount of respect. Did you ever encounter SS troop -- men who were hostile towards Poles? Just Poles, and --

A: Yes, yes, yes. Y-Y-You see, we had a -- we were mis -- as I understand, because nobody explained me what was our status at that time, but I understand that they don't want to have any trouble with -- with the new development. It was they were happy as is. We are the worker making work, and therefore, why to think about to build the fences, to build the bunkers, yes, for the penalty, and to do some oppressive elements in this -- in this camp, like -- like in stut -- stut -- Stutthof, because there was a just the -- the history of any concentration camp where they try to destroy the people, it was just to -- to key the -- such a condition that the human body weight is going down and down and down. Is a terrible way of thinking about, because this was a technological problem for the German. How to destroy the people. So is easier to destroy the 50 kilograms body than the 150. So therefore the first priority was just to -- to -- to lose the weight. Terrible. You know, what -- what was the Birkenau -- Rejinka this t -- hundreds of barracks where they deliver these people, 5000 a day. What they did in these barracks? They make the easy way to destroy the bodies. From 100 to 50. So this was a -- moral issue doesn't exist at all. There was only technological problem. So we were not in this position, yes? Stutthof was. So we -- we were regular worker. A little later change everything, yes? In the very beginning was -- and now, to -- to give as the feeling that we are not so easygoing Polish people, so we had a visit from the personnel, from Stutthof, and I was beaten by such a SS man, who came to us, and he -- I didn't yet, at that moment to understand his German very

fluently, he started to put me in the corner of the -- of the room, and took a -- a -- a line for the -- for the for measurement, and he push me i-in such a possin that I didn't understand what he wanted from me? What -- what I have to do? And he just tried to put me in the corner and measure what is the dimension of my body to build a bunker. You know what was the penalize bunker for them. Is the three dimensional for the width, and - - and this, and you had to stay there in -- in the standing position for I don't know, two, three, four days, without sitting. So I suffer in the same, you know where? In the Polish prison. Exactly in the bunker. So, you know, the Polish prison -- at that moment if somebody is asking me, they were not better than Hitler, bunkers. So, but of course, this is not the Polish. I said Polish, but is wrong, this was the Communist. Cause the Communist really -- so, he came to us to give us the warning, you are not a free peop -- yes a -- yes, so we had this visit. And this was a very nice, everything, up to the -- of course it -- I -- I presented here in my memoir, you know, the -- the name of the -- of the people that -- which is very interesting to point one, that there was a engineer from Boinies, who was in uniform s -- SS, and -- but was origin Dutch. Now, this was a totally like us, yes, behaves, but not -- not very openly. When we were only with us, he behaves in very special way. And later he vanished. At a certain day, when the alliance of frenzif in the west started to go into the Holland direction, he vanished, and then we -- we have a message, not the message, rumor, that he was a spy. He left the office, taking a document, and he just got out. So, was the Boinies, when I -- I -- I just mentioned it, when I -- when this Robert, SS man, like orengutang, you know, he looks, and he just make the sketch, and put on -- on the desk, to do the drawing. So when I asked the -- my authorities what I have to do with this sketch. At that moment, they say, [indecipherable] he did show, yeah -- so wit -- this was his answer. And -- and then this was up to the November 23. On November 23, in the very beginning of the day, we were awake up -- woke up surrounded by the many guards. And they throwed us from the -- from the barracks. They made a search our body, anyway they didn't find gold, and -- and because I was always with me, and -- but they searched the barracks, they took a lot of things from the barracks, and -- and they force us to build a second row -- second fence. And they read to us the order of the commandant that since today, we will be treated as a political prisoner. And our unsubordination to the order will be penalized at once by the death, but -- and the crossing the border of the guards line, you will be shot without warning. It's like at the big a -- concentration camp, and fi -- but it was given this, and of course everything was cancelled in our -- our walking, our letter, wa -- everything is this. And we were regular prisoner, but again, it was dying [indecipherable] you know, the Third Reich was dying, and this impulse, yes, was given by the -- by the order of the higher authorities, yes, that is --that we are prisoner, but you have to execute this in some way. But, to execute this, you have to have a power, you have to [indecipherable], what I wrote in the very beginning. You have to create a condition of the real concentration camp. And of course, the -- our regime of our work time, walking, correspond mail, and so on, was like in -- in the concentration camp, but there were no pressure. There was not standing by a cr -- crematorium, yes? There was not a standing by oppressor who are waiting to kill you, yes, because there was a -- the only one purpose to be in -- i -- in Stutthof, it was to be killed. Here, we were still worker, treated as a -- as a politisha pratinga, but -- but they

recognized the fact that fine, I cannot kill him because he is working for me, give me the purpose. My presence here was totally different than in Stutthof. And of course, day by day, November, December, you know, Red Army's approaching in the west, is, you know, the alien forces are entering almost Germany. So this is the case when in February, yes, it was a -- oh, was only we, yes, and the poltuleetsa camp, it was a Sofenwalda, we are there. There was a prisoner from the poltuleetsa, as I mentioned, this was the prisoner, political prisoner cashoops, that never try to recognize a power, and authorities of German. You know, they were really Polish people who said no, we are Polish people, and we are not recognizing you as a power. So they send them to the prison. Of course, a lot of them, they recognize this power, and they went into the German army, fighting on the west -- east front. So you see, this was another set -- another chance for the people, yes, to go with, or to go against. You see, they said, I am going against, and they won. They who said, fine, I am going with German, they were loser, because they were forced to be a German with all privileges to be soldier, and to be killed in the name of the Third Reich. So, you see, when I give up myself to the German, I did something opposite were these people in poltuleetsa. Is a very hard to find the choice, wh-what I have to do in my life now? So, this is the nu -- you cannot find the answer what you have to do. This is the -- you, your ability, imagination, and decision.

Q: A-And you're, at this point, you're still with your -- your two friends?

A: Yes, ah, now, before this happened that they locked us as a political prisoner, my friends, who are -- who were Jewish origin, you know, Matchie Shapinski is a Jewish, but -- he was a Jewish, and I know that he was a Jewish, because I know who is a professor Batswell Shapinski, very famous mathematician in Poland. So, I never discuss this problem with ma -- Matchie, yes? We were very good friend, yes, so --

Q: But he was pretending to be Catholic? Or --

A: I never re -- never saw him a -- a -- a -- performing the act of the -- of the Catholic boy, yeah?

Q: Okay.

A: Ahh --

Q: But he wasn't openly Jewish?

A: No, no, oh no.

Q: No, no.

A: No, this is the way that he survive. A lot of the --

Q: He was hiding, yeah.

A: -- fra -- I am saying, it was an terrible story for the Jewish people in Poland, that these Orthodox people were so distinguished, easy to recognize, that even they have no chance to hide themselves, because they were just -- the Jewish know the -- like -- like a looking at the -- at -- at -- at the shape, yes? So you know that this is a shape, so when you look at these guys -- see, here you know he is a Jewish. Y-You see, they were so different that they find a problem to hide themselves. Even to find the hiding place for them. You follow me? You couldn't go to forest on, to find as a prisoner like a partisan. [indecipherable] know how you could do this, where you have the family with the children. So alright, so --

Q: Your friend --

A: -- Matchie, my friend, one day he went -- we -- we are free to go. He went to the place with the scorshishina, and he was at the doctor, and he came back, and say -- said, very sad, "Tadeusz, I have tuberculosis." "Matchie, [indecipherable] what you are talking about?" "No, but maybe I have a chance to get out from this place." "Fine, so I will go to my -- my uncle and -- a-and [indecipherable] this [indecipherable] near Kraków, you know, Slominiki." So fine, okay. The same day I met Bogdon Palmoski. I have tuberculosis. [indecipherable]. You know? And his brother Palmoski, he has the tuberculosis. You know, how brave was this doctor? He's not out for me, who gave they - - them this test -- a test really, how to say, the prognosis -- no, really --

Q: Diagnosis.

A: Diagnosis of this doctor, because German were -- were very afraid this, coo -- tuberculosis for them, they all -- they were very afraid. And because the gia -- German authorities everywhere, yes, for them tuberculosis was like a cancer that ee -- that could spread this cancer by the -- no, congestion, yes, congestion. Congestion? No, not congestion, no. That some illness is -- could be transferred to another person by -- no --

Q: Contagious.

A: -- by virus -- contagious.

Q: Contagious, yes.

A: That, contagious. They -- they were very afraid, the disease of tuberculosis is contagious, forget it. And believe or not, three Jewish boy left Sofenwald. I, of course, at the time, I was serious. I say -- even Balmosi get this. I was a little bit start to think, but I persuaded myself. Tadeusz, you are facing some act of mercy of a person who is giving help. Physically, he could be killed. He made a help for them. I have to respect this. I cannot do something, because probably he bisk -- this -- this -- this doctor was probably a Jewish.

He'd been some way. He covered, I don't know, maybe not the first generation, maybe second generation Jewish. He give it a chance to survive. And they left the concentration camp. So I was, as you can see, the only time that I was together with them, and so then I was alone. Okay, but they get to Kraków, and they have a very good life with the family i -- my family there.

Q: But you're alone in Sofenwalda?

A: Yes. And then came this November 23 [indecipherable] ah, there was a -- I can tell you, I made many attempts, but in different way to arrange my departure from the -- from this. As I mentioned my -- my -- my godfather, Jusef Kameeta, who was before the war a -- a - - a mayor of this Slominiki, yes? During the occupation, he was all -- still recognized by the people of Slominiki as a representative of -- of the society, of -- of this town. And he had a good connection, as I mentioned, connection, celebrities played the role in the life. He approached the German authorities of the SS bowelitung near Kraków -- y-y-you -- you see the same name, SS bowelitung in different place. I was in the hand of SS bowelitung from the [indecipherable] numery -- number 120. Similar arrangement of the -- of the enterprise of the SS, to build something, was near Kraków. And he sent to me letter, before this 23 of November. "Tadeusz, I will ask a help from the authorities of the SS bowelitung near Kraków, to transfer you from this place to another place." And this letter one day arrive, official letter in for me. Not for me, but for the -- is -- is not here. I - - I never -- because I -- I couldn't make this am, but I am just [indecipherable] because these are not how this was played. And this -- this order to transfer person -- Tadeusz Marchaj from there to there came, and yost volga viost called me. "Hey, Tad -- Tadeusz," he was -- he was speaking to -- to -- to me in this way. "You want to go home?" I say, "No -- I can say so." I was talking German. "But you see, I'm a berstubenfeer volgangyos, and if you want to be transfer, this letter has to build -- has to be undersigned by be -- the two rankings higher officer. At the time, I will respect. I will have the right to respect." [indecipherable] this? Between them, there were the some -- some connection, I-I don't know, like a social connection. And he want to be respected, yes, by -- by the other guy, yeah? And this letter went back. So I get this letter. "Okay, I will have touchiga.", my uncle answer. And this letter, with the two highest order officer, came after 23rd of November. I was already political prisoner. So, was another attempt made, that he said ah -- my -- my -- my -- my unc -- my godfather said, "Tad," -- it was yet possible to -- to send the letters, because it was very, very limited. "Can you get you from the prison -- from the camp, because I will send a man who will pick up you, and will deliver you to Kraków. He will have to -- he will have some documents for you," falsified, I don't know, maybe yes, maybe not. You should --

Q: He wrote that in a letter?

A: Huh?

Q: He wrote that in a letter?

A: Oh, no, no, it means that I will send later, when I came back --

Q: Oh, yes, uh-huh.

A: -- it was such a -- because feesay I will -- maybe there will be a -- a -- a visiting -- a -- our friend. Association do have a chance to get out from -- from this, and that was enough for me to understand what they are they trying to do.

Q: As the war is coming closer to an end, how do things change for you, or do they?

A: No, i-i-it means that of course that I'm saying -- I -- I mention only this to say that I was always active, and somebody was -- has to be active to do something, but fail, fail, fail. Now, this is prepare, 23rd is coming, prisoner and -- political prisoner, [indecipherable] moment is everything finished, yes? It means that now I -- is still something that I can do. And I -- what I am thinking, what I did -- I -- in what a condition, I'm -- I am paralyzed, almost, because I entered the room of my authorities, Mr. Rudy -- Rudy Brann, and took a stamp in Blanco, on the paper, with the here, and there, white paper, that I --

Q: Took it?

A: I enter his room --

Q: You stole it?

A: Stole it. I stamp it, and put in my pockets, and maybe I can write here something on this paper as a passport, yes, to get out. But if -- believe me, if this somebody will caught me in this moment at -- in the desk of the serouti brand, they will probably, i-in spite of some friend will kill -- they will kill me, or send to the concentration camp. What a risk I make. Oh, now zlotas. The war is approaching, end is approaching. As I mentioned, they are only -- we are in de -- Sofenwalda, this business is finished. We are at full liquidation, and they liquidate also our camp, and transfer to the poltuleetsa camp, to be together under one command, one -- one rooms, one guards, and so on. And the -- this is the day when is coming the liquidation of the -- of the Jewish women part of the camp. And one day, this is the -- this is the -- this is the -- ah, wait. In the -- yes, yes, this is -- just I mentioned, only February, 1945. We got the orders, yes, we have to go to this place, and to clean a certain buildings where the --

Q: Within Sofenwald?

A: Yes, in the -- within the Sofenwald, wa -- the -- was get to [indecipherable] Schineder -- Schnyder, and -- and we went and entered this roo -- this part of the camp -- we was totally separated from another. And you see, this is the building, and this is the building -- of course, tha -- sa -- you see only fragment of this -- part of this. But they are there

standing, two big, huge buildings, where the Jewish women were. And -- to clean the -- yeah. Now, when we enter this territory, I say, there's women no more. There is no Jewish women here, yes? The camp is not surrounded by -- by guards, there are a few guards which came with us, were outside, and they give us the order, clean these rooms and so on. And I cleaning this, and walking around this -- this buildings, I entered the room where from the darkness of this room came a -- a woman. So I -- I ask her, [indecipherable] here? What they are doing here, in German, yes? And then she started to -- to talk too fast for me to understand, but I could understand that they are waiting. They're waiting for something. I think they was maybe -- maybe I -- I -- I don't know, now I -- I am trying to -- to fantasy. But maybe these Germans who departed with all these Jewish women -- I don't know, but this was very difficult to -- to -- to -- to understand, because all these women that were in this room, they were sick. Typhoid, and everything, something like that. And they -- they look at me like I [indecipherable] messenger that -- that the war is finished, you see, because they ent -- in they room, they enter not a German. A-A-And I say -- I couldn't say anything. I say -- I get out from this room, yes, and of course, so far what -- what is later explained by another books, that they came a car, this day, they loaded this girls, and they transported to the woods somewhere, and all were killed. So I just wrote to get through th -- that probably I am the last -- last one that saw your friends. A-And that's all. Of course, then, it came at order -- evacuation totally, we have to go. But in one direction, not in the direction when Jewish women departed, or Estonian soldier departed. We started to be moved by an -- under the order of the SS at the time yet, yes, into the direction of Gdansk, to the north. To the direction of that Red Army. And then, when we approach it -- I am talking more or less fast, we enter into the hand of the army -- regular army of the German. And we enter under the command of the German army, and they say to us -- oh, they didn't say in this way, but you are the worker, you will work here, and you will do whatever we will give you to do. And we were the worker to -- to dig the trenches, ditches, anti-tank, in the certain territory of the predictable direction of the Soviet army. Of course, never happened. So whatever I did, didn't work at all. So I -- I -- this is where my clear -- clean -- my conscience, yes, that I -- I was not a helper. So -- but situation was always this, you see, when we transp -- we were transported on foot, and this the wintertime, and we are going against the traffic of the flicklinger, the -- the escapee of the -- all population from the east Prussian. We were surrounded by such a fatije that it was a just impossible to take a risk, because it was such a possibility that I can jump this -- mi -- my surrounding Germans, and to hide somewhere. But the chance was only one, yes? Either successful, or I am dead. There was no -- no other chance, yes, if -- there were -- when somebody was - - was -- if the -- some soldier, and especially the -- especial troops which were -- made the order for any possibility of the desertion -- you see, I could be treated, yes, that I am a German, yes, who'd thrown away the uniform, and he's now at hiding, yeah? So, in every case, I faced the death. So, for me at that moment, my job then was follow up with them. And in this way, I -- I reached the point when we were taken away from the SS, because SS very fast started to vanish, yes, because we were approaching Red front, and we enter into the hands of the regular army. And these were regular hand. I know that they were enemy, our, but they were regular army, like the Polish army who fought German. I -- I

am recognizing any army as a army, yes? And they were German army, but army, not a -- not a beast in the form of SS. And they treated us -- but they warn us, you see, in this direction, there is Soviet Union troops. And there are our troops. Now, if you want to be between them, you will be killed either by these, or by them. It's very simple, yes? So, that's the one story. You know that I mention you, in -- during the coffee break, yes? Believe me, I had a idea to reach the point that we would start to go into the west, because my dream at the time was not to come back to Poland, but to go to the west. I'm honestly speaking. Background of my action was, under this pressure, there was nothing that -- that was waiting for me, because I knew what is there in the Soviet Union, and Communist -- and -- and in this way, I reached the point when we were totally surrounded. The only one way to enter the territory behind the Vistula River, and the depression [indecipherable], we dig the dams, and we let water run into the depression, and we surrounded ourself in -- in Germany. The remnants of the army, yeah, by the water. And -- and the fifth of May came for us the freedom.

Q: And how did it come, exactly?

A: How they come? I saw like a hooves, you know, cribe on the horses, with the flying papasha, you know this? And -- and when I look at this, they were very special animal. You see, a very independent soldier, very -- I can say that there was not command for them at that moment. They enter this territory like a conquistas, yes? Everything, ah [indecipherable] you have the watch, i -- give it to me, yes. Everything was them. And I am not blaming you. Probably I would do the same, you see? But they enter, as I mention, like people not from Europe, exactly not from Europe. This was a -- I remember Polish army. I remember the Italian army who was the prisoner between us later, soldier from the Mussolini army. They came, and I met first military -- first Polish police, who entered this territory, because aha, when the Russian came, and we wanted to go, they say milsha minadda. No, no, no, stay here. Oh, you see, this was a ha, now we are going to Siberia. Believe me, we know exactly. We already get before my -- before Warsaw uprising, that the Polish soldier from the Akar, Home Army, they were -- when they were capture, and not killed, they were sent to Siberia. In the gulags at Heepalago. So --

Q: Did they know, though, that you were from --

A: Oh, no, no, they -- they -- in [indecipherable] Italy --

Q: -- the [indecipherable]

A: -- there was a thousand of people, Russian, Ukrainian, Italian, and Polish people, you see? All the [indecipherable] not the German -- and there was a lot of that such a people, surrounded -- you know, you never hunt the -- the -- the rabbits, or -- or this, when you have the circle, you are circling a certain territory, yes, and you can -- and the -- the people are approaching into the center of this surrounding territory, you see. You couldn't see in the very beginning do -- the -- the animal. And then you see

[indecipherable] and then is a boiling animals inside of this. So therefore, when -- when the -- when we re -- we were encircled by the -- by the army, Red Army, and this army approached to the closer and closer to the sea, you see when I would -- I took the map with me, to understand for you what the big territory was first surrounding, and then the army started -- Red Army started to close it closer and closer to the -- such a small point. So there was a thousand of people, yes?

Q: But when they first came in, what was your reaction? Were you -- did -- did you feel that you were being liberated?

A: No, never had that feeling. Sorry. I never had a feeling that I will liberated, and the first approach was such I want to go home, and I hit the guards of the Soviet Union soldier. No, no, no, there -- it was not looking for me, freedom. And now I -- listen to me. When I then came the opra after three days staying in those woods, which was very comfortable, nice weather, we started to go outside, and press down is a prousht. And there they told us, in Russian but I understand. Go to the vieni commandant -- go to the military commandant in -- in s -- Cherf to get a propouskou. Is a pass -- pass document to go to Warsaw. And this was a trap, because such a pe -- boys like me, the first question they ask you, Atko darry? Where are you -- where are you from? Warsaw. Warsava. Uh-huh. Yeah. Young man from Warsava, who was he being here, in concentration camp? You follow me? They knew exactly. They --

Q: But -- sa -- spell it out, then --

A: Atkou --

Q: If you were a young man from Warsaw, and you were here --

A: Yes.

Q: -- what did that mean for the Russians?

A: For them? For -- for the Russian was one, this is the -- from the Warsaw uprising boy. Wha --

Q: So wa -- and what does that --

A: [indecipherable]. Ah, what does it mean?

Q: What does that mean?

A: We were the enemy. According to them, we were the enemy of the Soviet Union. You will follow me, and therefore, the only one solution for us is there -- to send them to the Soviet Union. You see, because we didn't fight with -- for God's sake, we didn't fight

with the Soviet Union, we fought with German, but all the time, in history of the second World War, sorry, Soviet army was our enemy from the 17 of September, 1939. And then when th -- came in the '45, it was the same army.

End of Tape # 6

Tape #7

Q: This is an interview for the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, and this is with Tadeusz Marchaj.

A: Marchaj.

Q: And this is tape number seven. And what -- what I'd like now is just if you can say very briefly what happened to you in the couple years after the -- the -- the war.

A: Yeah. But before I will answer, I say that my first contact with the Polish authority, which was a platoon of the Polish militia, young boys, maybe my age, they warn me. They give me -- they gave me, in spite of fact that they were Communist, definitely, they give me, "Hey boys, you want to be home? Forget about that you are from Warsaw, if you don't want to be in Siberia." Exactly he told us this. So, I knew that this is the confirmation what I was thinking. Okay, now, after the war, when I was come back home, I found everybody survive. I found already my brother-in-law. I found Matchie Shapinski. I found Zigmund, and a lot of my friends. And I -- we started a new life. Of course, in the -- but of course that we are in the same area, but my family was everything intact. Family, and yet, father, mother, brother and two sisters. The whole war passed away, and we survive. I was the last one. And again, like in my Warsaw uprising, my first day, I didn't find my mother, because she was at the Gdansk, in this territory, looking for my body, because again came some messages that Tadeusz, he work in Sofenwalda, ah, yes, he had the problem with the legs. You know, what is the background my -- my -- polio, he had a problem to walk. Not what -- not me, another has. That doesn't matter, mother came, found me in good, and we started life. Now what's happened to our family? I went into the school. Objectively I'm saying that at that moment, Polish government didn't recognize me as a enemy of Poland, because I never was, yes? I was enemy of the certain system, but when I am not accepting something, it doesn't mean that I am a -- a criminal, to destroy the system that I don't like. So I entered the Polish pri -- Warsaw Polytechnic, and started to education of the aeronautical department. And everything was beautiful. I remember this time forever, as a very beautiful time, because I started to dream -- realize my dreams. I started to fly with the gliding glider aeroplane. Even very famous kokoruznik that killed us at the -- at the fee -- on the field of -- of -- of grines. So I flew this kokoruznik, beautiful planes, absolutely. So I married, but it came -- because you see, at the time was everything occur in Poland. A certain people were in power, but then this power shifted. And there came to Poland so-called verification of the society. So they started to select who are you, what is your background, and if it's not good, get out. At that moment I was the assistant on the faculty of the Warsaw Polytechnic, and there was a first e-e-e-exercise the -- this verification, and I get a paper from the rector, and say sorry he even not pape -- I get a paper, but he called me, and very sadly, he said, "[indecipherable] Mr. Marchaj, you cannot be in the staff of our faculty, and it is not my. This is the order, and I cannot do anything to do." So suddenly, I was cut off from my dreams. And this was a order that even it's forbidden for me to enter the airfield.

Q: And then you end up in jail?

A: No, that's the -- at that moment, you see, what's happened, I started to do this, I started to dream. I have to leave Poland, yes? I have to leave Poland, if legally, or not legally, I will do this. And I started to plan to escape from Poland, very close to Stutthof. Vistula River. The good boats, and to get out of this country, and going with the very -- speed boats, designed by us, designed by the proper, it was designed by us and prepared by us. And these boats were faster than any boats in this area. And we had a very great chance to escape. But, I have the friends who are not very conscious. They st -- shared this -- our -- because they want to participate in our escape, and one of the friends of the friends was a confidant of the -- of the ed -- Polish secret police. And before we -- we make a first attempt to get out to the sea, we tested our boats on the Vistula River going into the -- into the sea, we were captured, and accused of the attempt to escape, in spite of fact that yes, we were thinking about, but there was not attempt, because we were not yet on the way. In -- in -- in front of us was still the dams, different passages sot -- forget it. This was -- this was the first talking. We were -- now, ah -- yeah?

Q: And what were you sentenced? I just want to --

A: Yeah, no, I suppose. When they approach us to be arrested, the first called person was not my brother, who was the older, but Tadeusz Marchaj. Who is Tadeusz Marchaj? Behind you. Okay. They took me first. And accusation was that I am a spy, American Capitalist spy. Because this guy who send the documents to the secret police, maybe to get the order, or a special award, and I was the e -- I was a -- on the faculty of the aircraft engine, and I was involved in the project to design the aircraft engine for the MON. MON, it means that Ministry Obbronin Nardova. Minister of the Defense. Such accusation, being the project [indecipherable] the designer of this, it was very easy to say, yes, quite probably, let's tested him. And I was eight months investigated.

Q: Okay, then if we can just -- cause I'd like to finish this in the next minute or so --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- just that, what was your sentence, and --

A: One in three -- I was sentence -- after eight mis -- months of investigation, I was sentenced to one year and three months. And, of course, when I get out from this, I couldn't find a job, I was black sheep in Polish society. So again, I have to wait for the stalindai, and when the stalindai and chen -- there was some change, I start a -- can enter agains into the society, into the science work, and I started to work in Institute of Physic Polish Academy of Sciences in the cryogenic department. But again came the same. I don't know for what reason, yes, they said no, you cannot go there, you cannot go there. You can go dwe -- and so on. There was a -- again some oppression, yes? Political. And

at that moment, I said to my wife, Festa, "If you would have a chance, go. Take the children. If you will get it, fine." And it was such -- of course paid with the money, yes, it was -- I was hostage. So she went to Switzerland, and then to America, to f -- he had a -- she had a family, and I was the hostage. And three years I tried to -- every possible attempt. You know, I tried to -- to bribe in very special way, the daughter of the -- of the secretary of the Communist party, a very nice girl. And she promised that there will be no trouble. And then no, came again -- and this is what's happened here. Maybe as a -- as a shock, because this is a -- we are stuck in the very big story --

Q: No, we [indecipherable]

A: This is my brother.

Q: No, I know, and -- we c -- if you could just tell it really shortly, cause I just wanted to get this at the end.

A: Yeah, I understand. So -- no, toe -- I will -- I will not touch. Anyway, there was some -- my -- my brother was the very famous writer on the subject of aerodynamics, and hydrodynamics [indecipherable], and he's considering the word is a number one on the subject. And he was a professor in the Southampton University in England. So, his work in -- in England, yes, created a problem for him. I was a hostage for my brother. But my brother was thinking the same what I was thinking, and he didn't share this problem with me. He is tr -- he was trying to stay in England [indecipherable]

Q: Your brother?

A: My brother. And he did it. But when he did it, made a decision to stay in England forever, I already escape, and I was in Venice.

Q: Y-You escaped in 1968, right?

A: In 1968. So in 1968, my brother made a decision in England, stay in England, and I made a decision and I did it, and crossed the border six, that he wrote to me a letter only that it was well done. That's what.

Q: So that, hopefully you'll get a chance to tell that at more length. Is there anything about the actual war that we didn't touch on, that you think you should say? The war, or liberation?

A: You see, I was, as I mentioned to you, very patriotic, educated human beings. And I didn't do anything wrong against my country, even the Communist country. I did everything possible for my Poland, yes? But I try to be somebody in -- in -- in Poland Communist, and I was. I was a good student, I was starting to work. I was very positive man, in every possible way. But this burden of my Home Army, and participant in the

Warsaw uprising, at once a thousand of people was eliminated from the -- to share the pleasure to build a po -- Poland. It's just a sacrifice. The -- we were the junk that has to be taken away forever. Then, don't hear about it. Don't -- don't recognize he was a human beings [indecipherable] have the imagination that the Hitler is a nice person comparing with Stalin. How many own people he killed? Oh m -- I am not saying about Polish, Jewish, German, everybody. So therefore I am say -- I -- I have no shame that my opinion is this, sorry. And anyway told -- I am telling you, when I was in prison eight months investigation, I never was in such a condition. You have no imagination what does it mean what the torture you could create to other person, only because he's a political prisoner -- political enemy. [indecipherable]. I -- I was in the prison for one -- eight months, and I was in the elite of the Polish society to be destroyed. Of course, oh no, no, th -- they were very -- they have a lot of time to do this. German kill you at very fast, bang, bang, bang, is gone. No, you can stay in prison forever, you know, it is that the prisoner penalty was very open for life, for life, for life. 15 year, oh, ho, ho. We are -- we are joking at that moment, you know, what -- what did you get? Ah, five Sundays. Five Sundays, so you think you are there five week? No, this the Sunday -- big Sunday, you know, where it -- Easter Sunday. Five Sunday. Fifteen years, this was a joking, but e-e-e-even being in -- in the prison, you have to make a joke about, because y-you would not stand, oh, how many person they lost common sense? Sta -- it started to be [indecipherable] yes? You know, sitting like -- like -- like bird, you know, with the eye in one spot, and he could sit in this way all day and night. You have to put him down to sleep. That, oh how many this person I saw. I don't know, this is like a -- I don't know why this happen. Why this particular illness, mental, and this is -- I saw it.

Q: Mr. Marchaj, maybe now you could share some of the photographs?

A: Okay. Okay. Oh, I -- I have a very little photographs. I have a very little here.

Q: And maybe the map that you drew of Stutthof?

A: Yes, yes, you see, this is the --

Q: And then you can show us some of your documents, too.

A: Okay.

Q: But, you know, we'll start with the photographs.

A: Photographs. Yes -- no, it means that what I have here, you see, is e-everything what I have here, yeah, because I -- see where I have more is the archives of the Polish secret police. My all memoirs from the Stutthof, they are there. When they arrested me, they took it.

Q: Oh, you kept a memoir at Stutthof?

A: Yes. What I came from Stutthof, I -- I -- I have with me.

Q: Oh.

A: And then I have home. When I arrested first time, all these documents, everything was -- what was in my possession, they took it away.

Q: Huh. And you could never get it?

A: I told you that it's a probably in the archives, i-in the special pi -- special files.

Q: But you'd have to really look for -- for them?

Q: You know what we'd like you to do, if you could, you're going to sit in this chair now.

A: Okay.

Q: We're going to put your pictures over there. And then as we put things up, you can describe what it is that we're looking at.

A: Yes.

Q: And I'll just put this right back on your tie.

A: Yes [indecipherable] very small is -- here I have a more what -- not this kind of picture. They are very -- so is very to -- to see, but maybe --

Q: The camera can get in pretty close.

A: Okay. I -- I know that the photograph is -- is making now the miracles. I-If you will go to the -- to the library, good library, you can -- and the -- you can search for the Marchaj chesswa. They are -- there should be a file books on this subject.

Q: Mr. Marchaj, they would like you to take them each out.

A: Uh-huh, okay.

Q: And then they'll put it on that board.

A: Okay, sure.

Q: So, tell me what we're looking at here.

- A: A -- A -- here is the picture of my grandfather, and father. Sitting is the grandfather, standing is my father who -- who was a soldier, prisoner of the it's army. And he was captured by Austrian, and he started to work as a Polish person, origin from Poland, but hard to say Poland, because at the time that was not yet Poland. But anyway, he was a professional, and worked for the -- a manufacturer of the -- of the guns. And my grandfather came to Vien, to help him to be a free man.
- Q: Can you just say your gran -- I don't believe you've ever said your grandfather's name.
- A: Anthony. Anthony Marchaj. We -- the First Communion, 12 years old, a -- ba -- ba something --
- Q: About 11 or 12.
- A: 11, two -- maybe I -- maybe behind is something, but I'm forgot -- no reason, yeah, he is about 11 -- 11 years, because it was '33. '33 is -- no, nine, yes.
- Q: It's possible.
- A: No, no, 10 -- 10 -- 10. Ah, this is my father, probably the same period when he was a -- with the grandfather, but maybe a little bit, two or three years older, yeah. My daughter --
- Q: [indecipherable]
- A: Oh, yes, this is the ba -- oh yes, it's a nice. Okay. Here me -- that here is the family of my mother, where is the grandfather, grandmother, and my father sitting close to the grandmother. And there is already, on this work is a my brother, the sitting and -- and -- and the -- and the -- on there, yes, more or less in the middle, and there is my sister, older, with the cocard, what is this, a -- no? Something in the -- in the hair, you know, the bow - - bow, yeah? And my younger sister is on the -- is holded by my mother. And I am not yet on this world. I was --
- Q: Okay.
- A: This is -- these are my friend from the same group of scouts, yes? There is a -- I am sit -- I am there, there is my friend Guyeski Hanyak, is Tadeusz Krofchik, and Bolek Gut. Hm?
- Q: [inaudible] some of the boys you went to concentration camp with?
- A: No, no, none of them was with me, sorry.
- Q: Okay, next one.

- A: Some time during the occupation, you have a chance to be in the nature. We -- we are now here on the Vistula River, sailing in peaceful world. And around us is a big coshmak, you know, dreadful -- not dreadful reality of the war, occupation. This -- here is the -- in the very -- I will show you because this is the very famous fighter during the Warsaw uprising, and his name and -- his code name was Antek Rospilage. Very famous person in the Warsaw uprising. Very -- Antek Rospilage was very famous because he perform a lot of military action during the Warsaw uprising, and he was killed.
- Q: Okay.
- A: This is the beginning of the war. I am a student in gimnasium in Midia Tadeusha Raytanna. I think that I am watching now the -- some aircraft periodics, I think so.
- Q: Okay, who do we have here?
- A: Ah, here is my mother and father, in very nice day. I think that there was a willyo -- anniversary of his -- their marriage. And they -- I think that my mother is holding some flowers that my father gave her at that time. The -- in the background, you know, I -- this is a maybe not significant for you, but for me is very significant. You can see a tree, a lone tree. And this is the tree which was carrying a plate, and there was written, I say [indecipherable] in Poland [speaks Polish]. It means that this is the tree of the -- of the forest, a very famous battle during the Warsaw uprising, when Koshoushkou was fighting. And this -- this was the last tree of this forest. Maybe this is a legend, but I know, as a reality.
- Q: Okay.
- A: I -- I -- I -- yes, I can say that this girl and boy, they were like my brother and sister, but they are cousins. I was very close to them, and they are the daught -- children of my godfather, Jusef Kameeta.
- Q: Maybe 1905 -- 1910, or do you know?
- A: Na -- yes, yes, what I will tell you, my mother was an enthusiast of the Socialist, you -- but do you know what the Socialist?
- Q: No.
- A: Before Communist, you know, there was a such a movement in the year before Lenin and Stalin, of course.
- Q: Uh-huh.

A: And there was a very popular [indecipherable]. And -- and my mother, I know, many, many times she re -- reminds me that she was a very young girl, and he had a [indecipherable], what is this flag in the hand, a red flag, yes? And sing the very famous song of the -- a Socialist song. It was a very romantic, yeah.

Q: But this picture, what do -- what do you know about this picture?

A: No, I -- I say, this the -- probably this -- this [indecipherable]

Q: Okay. And that is your mother?

A: Mother.

Q: Okay, who we looking at here?

A: That's me, and I am here a student in the Poland -- in Warsaw Polytechnic. It is a year 1948 - '49. I was the assistant to the faculty of the Warsaw Polytechnic. Pikken. I -- I got this at this moment, a few minutes ago, the American citizenship. It is 1974, I think. Yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: And, when we came to the United States, we came as a escapee.

Q: Right.

A: Yes. And there was already a decision made by my wife that we will n -- be no married -- married --

Q: The first wife

A: First wife.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And we lived together for one year without married, because at the time I was not yet divorce. So a smart officer of this court found -- called me, you know, I found something in your documents, that you committed legally adultery, so your -- your citizenship, we will get in a one year postponement because this much yours in legal -- no, it was -- you were legal adulterer. How you like?

Q: Well, you could still be president of the United States, then.

A: Yes, yeah. Be -- on my card --

Q: Well, hold on, we just haven't quite finished with this, or is it not working? Maybe it's not working. Why don't you just -- just show it as it is, I mean, we'll ma -- we'll try to get it into his file.

Q: Okay.

A: Oh, if you want, this is the [indecipherable] to take it. This is my --

Q: Hold on just a second, Mr. Marchaj.

A: I'm sorry.

Q: If you could just say [indecipherable]

A: Ah, to do -- to ta -- to talk about this, yes?

Q: Just -- well, yeah, just --

A: This is the place of the general view. The territory is within the -- say one kilometer by 700 meters high width. And you can see at the top there are the two camps, one is the poltuleetsa camp. The other, close to them, there was a place where the Jewish women lived in the -- hard to say, like a vacation wooden houses, but very, very lousy, yes. And they have to spend and live in this territory, winter, and the very bad weather. Then they were transfer at the end, so say maybe October, yes, into this building, you see this recba -- red -- red brick buildings on the left side. And I visited this building when I met the last sick woman in the basement, or in some room that was totally dark. You see, now, I am thinking that maybe -- maybe somebody give him the chance to escape, but it was just impossible, they were too sick. Okay, this -- here is this part, is the -- our Warsaw, Poland barracks in ma -- and storage houses at the railroad. And this is the insert of this house where there was a management, and I work as a draftsman.

Q: Okay. You know, I think that we'll stop here.

End of Tape #7

Conclusion of Interview