

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Julian Kulski
September 25, 2014
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PREFACE

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JULIAN KULSKI

September 25, 2014

Question: This is a **United States** Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mr. **Julian Kulski**, on September 25th, 2014, in **Washington, D.C.** Thank you very much, Mr. **Kulski**, for coming today, agreeing to share with us your story, your experiences, your testimony.

Answer: Thank you. It's an honor.

Q: I would like to start with getting a sense of what your life was like before the war. So I will ask very basic questions, and from that, we will go from there and build the picture of – that we'd want people to know, to put your story in context. So the first question: what was the date of your birth?

A: I was born on March 3rd, 1929 in free and independent **Poland**.

Q: In what part? What was the town of – village, or city?

A: I was born in **Warsaw, Poland**.

Q: A big village, yes?

A: Yes.

Q: You were born in **Warsaw**. Did you have any siblings?

A: One sister, four years younger.

Q: And what was her name?

A: **Wanda**.

Q: And when was she born?

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A: She was born about four years later.

Q: Do you have a date of birth?

A: No, I don't.

Q: Oh, you don't know.

A: Well, it's ma – in May.

Q: Okay, okay. And your father's name and your mother's name, what were their names?

A: My father's name was **Julian S. Kulski**, and my mother's was **Eugenia H. Kulska**(ph).

Q: What was her maiden name?

A: **Solecka**.

Q: **Solecka**. Can you tell me a little bit about their backgrounds, what kind of family your mother came from, and your father came from?

A: Well my mother, or ca – descends from an 18th century king of **Poland**, **Stanisław Leszczyński**, and my father descends from the chief rabbi of **Warsaw** in the 19th century, by the name of **Dow Ber Meisels**.

Q: No kidding?

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A: A great Polish hero. He was involved in both insurgencies against the Russians, and provided all of arms and support throughout the Jewish community of **Poland** to – in support of the fight against the Russians, and the Russian anti-Semitism.

Q: Isn't that interesting? So few people have such an unusual family connection, or blend.

A: Yes.

Q: So what uprisings would these have been?

A: Well, one was in 1930, and –

Q: You mean 1830.

A: 18 thir – 30, and the other one's in 1861.

Q: I see. And did your father know this rabbi? Did he ever see him, or –

A: No, he knew his daughter, who was her – his grandmother, and it's an interesting story. They were both born in **Kraków**, and she lived in the **Kazimierz**, which was the Jewish section. Her father was the rabbi of the oldest synagogue in **Poland**, in **Kraków**. And as young kids, they met, fell in love, and both families didn't want to have anything to do with them, because one was Catholic family, and the other one was a Jewish Orthodox. And so they had to leave **Kraków** and move to **Warsaw**.

Q: So, explain to me, it was your father's grandmother –

A: That's right.

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Q: – who was – who was –

A: Whom –

Q: – the daughter of the rabbi?

A: That's correct.

Q: So it's a little bit like **Tevya's** family on "**Fiddler on the Roof**," where one of his young daughters, th-the last one, marries somebody who's not Jewish, but a Gentile.

A: Well, he was extremely objective, and she was well-educated, she was English speaking. But when she wanted to marry out of the Jewish faith, that was just too much for a chief rabbi.

Q: So – so, your father's grandfather, what kind of family did he come from? He was the Christian element in this, right?

A: Right. His grand – his grandfather, the husband of the daughter of **Meisels**, was a famous doctor, and he practiced in a town called **Radom** clo – between **Kraków** and **Warsaw**.

Q: So this was – atha – on both sides, educated people.

A: Very much so. Very much so.

Q: Okay. And it also sounds – I mean, one of the questions that I usually ask is, how much of a person's family history was told to them? And sometimes people

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don't have much, because no one talked to them as a little child, but it sounds to me that your father told you very – a lot about your family's –

A: Well, he told me that after the war. He certainly didn't tell me during the war, when I was growing up, when I was 10 years old, 15 years old, because it was too dangerous to know that you had a Jewish ancestor. Because according to the German law, my father was considered Jewish. I wasn't, but – the third generation, so that was kept a secret until after the war. My mother, of course, told me her story, there was no problem there.

Q: Uh-huh. So, what was her story? Tell me a little bit about that.

A: Well, her story was that she was born in a town called **Mielitz**, outside of **Kraków**, and she – as a young girl she came to **Warsaw**, and went to a ball, and met this handsome, young officer of the Polish legions, who was my father. And they got married, and they stayed in **Warsaw**.

Q: Did she have siblings?

A: Yes. She – she was the oldest of four siblings, and her mother died when she was 11 years old, of **TB**, and she basically brought up the siblings, so she was very maternal.

Q: Which means that even though she came from, let's say, an educated, elite family, she had some duties on her that are not usual for children growing up.

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A: Yes –

Q: They can be quite [**indecipherable**]

A: – yes, was a big – so she waited to have me for about 10 years after the marriage, because she enjoyed the freedom, and being able to travel with my father, to **Moscow**, to **Paris** where the – where he worked. And – but during the war, she had to work as a farmhand, in order to feed us during the war. So she was not beyond being able to do anything that was necessary in life. Hard work.

Q: We'll come – we'll come to that, we'll come to that. Did you know her – your aunts and uncles from her si –

A: Yes, I did.

Q: Yeah?

A: Most of them.

Q: Well, so what were their names, on your mother's side of the family?

A: Well, there was a – a young stepdaughter called **Sofia**(ph), and there was a – another one, actual sister called **Steffa**(ph), and – and a brother called **Stefan**.

Q: Okay, those were from your mother's side of the family.

A: That's right.

Q: What about your father's side of the family?

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A: My father had two siblings, a ya – a sister three years younger, and a brother who was 10 years younger.

Q: And what were their names?

A: Her name was **Stanislawa**, and his was **Wladyslaw**.

Q: Uh-huh, **Wladyslaw**. In your memoirs, which I read, you mention an Uncle **Norbert**. Who was Uncle **Norbert**, in the family scheme?

A: Uncle **Norbert** was my father's tutor during the Russian occupation of **Warsaw**. The s – y-you're not allowed to be taught in Polish, schools were taught in Russian. So my – the family hired this young lawyer. In exchange for living in the apartment, he was teaching the – my father and his sister the Polish history, Polish mathematics and all kinds of languages. So he became the hero of my father, and when I was born, he became my godfather.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And he also married later, my aunt, my father's sister. So he was my uncle, and my godfather.

Q: I see. And when you talk about this Russian occupation, what years would we be talking about?

A: Well, this was up to 19 – eight – 1914.

Q: I see.

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A: A hundred and twenty-five years of occupation by **Russia**.

Q: Okay. And it encompassed **Warsaw**?

A: Very much so.

Q: Okay.

A: Very much so.

Q: Okay. You – so – but some part of your family was in **Kraków**, which would have been part of the Austro-Hungarian empire in the 19th century.

A: Yes, my de – my mother came from Austro-Hungarian emp – **Mielitz**, and **Tarnow**, who are where she was born and brought up, was part of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

Q: A question that is always – I-I've always been curious about, was there a different sensibility amongst people who were brought up in one part of **Poland**, versus another, given the different rulers, and the different policies of those rules?

A: In – in – in some ways, yes. Administratively, militarily. I mean, the Poles had to fight in th-those armies, that were either Russian, German or Austrian. And they were – th-they had different discipline, different ways of fighting. The same thing with a civil administration. So, when **Poland** became independent in 1918, it was quite a problem to start administering the country in one single way.

Q: Yeah, because people had different –

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A: Different backgrounds.

Q: Yeah, different traditions. So what are some of the stories that your mother would tell you about her own family, given that she's descended from royalty?

A: Well, she didn't know much about the – the – her original background. Her stories were more about her parents, and her grandparents.

Q: Mm-hm. What did your grandparents, that is, her parents, how did they support the family, and the same question will be for your father's side: how did his parents support their family?

A: Well, my – the parents were landowners, on my mother's side. On my father's side, they ha – his father married a shoemaker's daughter in **Warsaw**, and they had a hard time, financially. And they – the grandfather didn't help him, because although he married somebody who was not acceptable, society-wise, so did his oldest son **Julian**. And he didn't have anything to do with the grandchildren until my father was 18, when, for the first time, he met his grandparents.

Q: Oh my. Oh my, what family dramas.

A: Yes, yes, it was – vit – typ-typical Victorian rules and regulations.

Q: Yeah. But I take it, because they were educated, they must have spoken more than one language. Is that so?

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A: Oh yes, well, my father spoke – had to speak Russian, and my mother spoke German, and they lived in **Paris**, so they both spoke French. And later in life, they learned English.

Q: Mm-hm. Do you have any earliest memories from your own childhood?

A: Yes, I have a memory of my father saving me from a very cruel German nurse. I was a very ena – independent boy, and didn't always do what people wanted me to do, but what I wanted to do. And the – the nurse was very cruel. She was ta – take me under a bridge and put some hard stones and make me kneel on for – for an hour when I was five years old. So that's my first memory. And one evening she told me sh-she would beat me in the middle of the night, wake me up. And my parents were going out to the opera, and I begged my mother not to go, and sure enough, an hour after they left, or half an hour, she started beating me. And fortunately, my father left the tickets to the ball behind, and entered while she was beating me, and she – he threw her the – out of the building. So he became a great hero of mine.

Q: A sad – I mean, a very sad thing for – to happen to a little boy, but a good way for a parent to appear, you know.

A: Well, it prepared me for what was coming later on. When the Germans came, I wasn't surprised at their cruelty.

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Q: That's so sad, I mean, it's – yeah. What – what kind of family life do you remember? And I mean this in many ways. If you could describe your living situation – did you have an apartment, did you have a house? Where was it, and so on? From the earliest days, you –

A: Well, we lived in an apartment overlooking the **Vistula** river. It's a beautiful apartment on the fifth floor, overlooking the **Vistula** river. And then in 1935, they build a house, specially designed by an architect, a landscape architect, in the suburb of **Żoliborz** of **Warsaw**, and we moved there. So the – most of my memories are from **Żoliborz**, which was a – a new suburb, mainly used by the government and military elite.

Q: Mm-hm. And was it north or west, or south of **Warsaw**?

A: It was north of **Warsaw**, the most northern part of **Warsaw**.

Q: Okay. Was it far – was it – did it take a long time to get into the center of the city from there?

A: No, the communication was pretty good. There were good streetcars, and I used to travel even as a young boy, all over **Warsaw**, on streetcars.

Q: So would it take half an hour, or an hour, to get from your home by streetcar?

A: Oh, about 20 minutes to downtown.

Q: That's not bad.

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A: No.

Q: That's no – that's not far at all. And what kind of a household was it in this house? How many people lived there, did your mother have help? Do a –

A: Well, my mother had three helpers; two women and one man. And besides us, there lived two aunts, my father's sister and also a cousin of my mother's, who was – who came over from **Japan**. She was a Polish consul in **Tokyo**, and brought in a load of Japanese things, music, and kimonos and –

Q: Must have been exotic.

A: – would entertain me as a young boy. So there's a – and she had – th-there were four separate apartments, little one room apartments where these aunts lived. They were really designed for my sister and for me when I grew up, so that we could live at home, but have a – our own separate place.

Q: How clever. I mean, how clever. But it meant that you had not only your mother and your father there, but an extended family.

A: Yes, we had an extended family, and during the war, we had a lot of refugees. Jewish families, Christian families, so that the house was really full during the war.

Q: Tell me a little bit about these aunts. What did they – you mentioned the one who was a consul in **Japan**.

A: Yeah.

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Q: What were the other two aunts like?

A: Well, th-the – th – my – my – the other aunt was my father's sister, who was an intellectual and a historian, and – and interested in poetry, and interested in architecture so that she – she got me interested in architecture, an early stage.

Q: Mm-hm. And was there another aunt?

A: Well, there was another aunt during the war.

Q: I see.

A: Who was a – a – a refugee.

Q: I see. Did you go to school?

A: Well, one – one of – yes, I went to school before the war.

Q: Okay.

A: There was a school not far from my house, I would be able to walk to it, and back.

Q: Do you have any memories from school?

A: No, except I didn't like it.

Q: Was it a public school, or –

A: It was very much a public school, because my father felt that he was a – very interested that I not be brought up in an elite environment, and was – there were a

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lot of poor boys, from poor backgrounds, who gave me a hard time. But that's exactly what my father wanted, to strengthen me.

Q: Was your family religious?

A: No, not – well, yes and no. My mother's side was extremely religious, my father's side was not.

Q: And do you think – what would be the reason, you would think, that they were not?

A: Well, my father was against the – what he felt the Catholic church was holding back, the social progress. And he was very interested in equality, and in everybody having the same rights. This was something that he fought for during the first World War, was for – not only for **Poland's** independence, but also for – give everybody the opportunity and equality. And he felt the church was in – is – in – i-in – like in **France**, where he studied, was holding them back. He was also very much against anti-Semitism, so that was one of the reasons he – actually, he became em – a Mason, and he was very much interested in development of **Poland**, the social and economic and physical. And then when he became the mayor of **Warsaw**, of course, he was able to put these plans into execution.

Q: And – and, was your mother religious?

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A: My mother was religious, and my grandmother was extremely religious. So, I – but my father decided to baptize us in Protestant church, and – and told us that when we were 21, we should choose the religion, will we want to be Jewish, Christian, Catholic, or Protestant.

Q: Really?

A: And th-that really gave me a very difficult time when I was growing up, because I was – I had to make that decision. For about four or five years, I really strove to try to find out, and I never did find.

Q: That was going to be my next question.

A: Right.

Q: Yes.

A: I s – I'm a Christian, yes, I guess, but th – I'm –

Q: Yeah.

A: – very proud of my Jewish background, I'm proud of my father, who was a Mason, and a freethinker. So I've been very fortunate in my inheritance.

Q: And the values.

A: You're right –

Q: It sounds like also the values

A: – in my values, right –

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Q: Yeah.

A: – which my father –

Q: Tell me a little bit about your father's career. How did he start out, how did he progress to the point that he held the positions that he did?

A: Well, my father was – his mother, the shoemaker's daughter, was a socialist and an **[indecipherable]**. She was in the underground, against the Russians. So he was brought up in his home in very patriotic Polish background. They had secret press there, they had arms in the apartment when he was growing up. Then, he wasn't able to go to university in **Poland**, so he went to **Belgium** to study engineering. And then he interrupted his studies, because the first World War started, and he joined the **Pilsudski's** legions, and fought against **Russia**, and was very badly wounded on the Ukrainian front. He was shot through by the machine gun, through the stomach, and was in hospital for about six to eight months. And it affected his whole life, his whole nervous system. It's a – the only reason he survived, because was very cold winter, it was January, and he froze on the – on the front, in the – but then he came, after the war, and then soon after was the Polish-Soviet war, which **Poland** won. It was the – one of the two countries that ever beat the **Soviet Union, Afghanistan** and **Poland**. And he was back in the army, he was in the intelligence service, military intelligence, and he was very close to **Marshall Pilsudski**.

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Q: So let it – let me interrupt. For many people, some of these events are not going to be familiar, so I'd like you to tell me the dates. When was this Polish-Soviet war, when did it take place? And tell us a little bit about who was mi – **Marshall Pilsudski**.

A: The – the Soviet-Polish war started 1920 - '21. It was an attack of **Lenin**, of trying to take over **Europe**, so that **Poland's** newly formed army, under the leadership of **Marshall Józef Pilsudski**, who was the **George Washington** of **Poland**; together with some volunteers from **America** – the Americans provided some pilots, who fought in the **Kościuszko** foundation squadron during that war. There were some Italians, and some French, and some English, who supported it, in order to defend **Europe** from the Soviets. And at first the Polish forces were winning, and then the Soviet forces got all the way to **Warsaw**, and it looked like that the – **Poland** was going to lose, and they were going to enter the rest of **Europe**, but they – wha-what is today called the miracle on the **Vistula**, **Marshall Pilsudski**, together with **Marshall Foch**, the French support came up with a very good military strategy, and beat the Soviets, and took hundreds of thousands of Soviet prisoners of war, and th-that was the end of the war, th-the – the Soviets capitulated. And part of the agreement was that **Poland** could recoup all the arts, paintings, jewelry, and things which th-the Russians stole from **Poland**. And my

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father was the head of the commission in **Moscow**, which together with my mother, who went through and brought all the antiques, and – and – and – and things which they found in museums, which were Polish, back to **Poland**.

Q: What a fascinating –

A: So they thu – they had a interesting life during the early days, and then, after that, my father decided that he wanted to become a political scientist, and he went to – to – to – to **France**. My mother worked, in order for him to study, and he went to **Sorbonne**, and he got his degree in political science. So when they got back to **Poland**, he was going to be in the – Minister of Foreign Affairs, but instead, he ended up with the treasury department, and then in 1935, became vice-president of **Warsaw**.

Q: I'll – okay, I was thinking of asking this question later, but I'll ask it now: it is unusual for a city to have a president, or a vice-president, usually they have mayors.

What is – what was **Warsaw's** situation –

A: The difference between the mayors and the presidents is that large cities like **Warsaw, Kraków, Poznań, Gdansk**, have presidents. Smaller towns, smaller cities, have mayors.

Q: I see.

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A: So that's the only difference, and it's basically the same functions, but a different title. And since **Warsaw** was the capitol of **Poland**, it was the most important city, therefore the president of **Warsaw** was second in line to the president of **Poland**.

Q: Oh, really?

A: Right.

Q: Okay.

A: And after the – when – when the war started, the Polish government left, and the president of the city was ste – **Stefan Starzyński**, who fought against the russi – Germans for a whole month, and he, in fact, became the head of the Polish state, and the Germans arrested him immediately after they conquered **Warsaw**, and shot him a month later, killed him. And – and then my father became – my father was an old friend of his still from childhood days, and they were together in the legions, they were together in the prison camp, they were together in **Moscow**, they were together in the treasury, and then in Polish cit – in the **Warsaw** city hall. So that was then the natural that he followed, and was appointed president, during the wartime years, from 1939 to 1944.

Q: That is an amazing – an amazing story in and of itself, and when we are into the war years, I am going to want to know more about it, because, I mean, the questions that can come up for being in such a position, incredible.

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A: It was a horrible position.

Q: Yes, yes. But going back now to his – to his career, he made then, a jump from the treasure ministry, into, let's say, the municipality.

A: Right.

Q: Okay. And what was his – what were his responsibilities as vice-president?

A: As vice-president – as pres – it was the whole transportation system, buses, streetcars, fu-future metro. Besides that, they electricity, all the industrial – city industrial concerns. Labor. Th-the – there were four vice-presidents, and he wa – th-th-the – this wa – this was his responsibility.

Q: Okay. And did your mother finish university?

A: No, my mother never went to the university. She was well-read, and very intelligent, but she never went to university, she married early.

Q: Mm-hm. It's quite an accomplishment to help put your husband through college, you know –

A: Yes, yes.

Q: – particularly if that's the **Sorbonne**.

A: Right.

Q: How did she do it?

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A: Well, she – she worked. She taught Polish to some Russians in fra – **Paris**. She did everything she could in order to live on basically pennies. So, it was very difficult times for them, but they managed it. And she wrote her memoirs, and my father wrote his memoirs: my father's are published, my mother's are still unpublished.

Q: And was this before you were born, all of this?

A: Oh yes. This was all of when he wa – she wa – that's why she was waiting. She wanted to put him through university, to – to give him the opportunity, and only after he became – started to go up in the treasury department, they decided to have me.

Q: I see. And tell me now a little bit about their personalities. What kind of a personality your father had, and your mother had.

A: My mother was very outgoing. She loved people, and everybody loved her. Her maternal instinct being bar – having to bring up her sisters and brother when she was a teenager, taught her how to take care of it. Also, she had an example of her father, who was also very interested in – in helping people. The towns that they lived were very large Jewish population, and her father was known for taking care, and helping the poverty stricken Jews. And so my mother was brought up in the spirit of looking after people, and taking care. And this was one of the problem that

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I had with her, because she was trying to take care of me too much, and I was too independent. So we're very much alike, I'm very much like my mother, but we had that problem. We loved each other, but I wanted to be independent, and – and this lasted the whole li-lifetime. My father was completely different. My father was really quite shy, to start with. He had to overcome it to become a public figure, and he did very well in that. But he was an intellectual. He thought 10 times before he spoke, and he was very broadminded, liberal, and a – a – a very admired person in **Warsaw**, known and admired. Sometimes my mother would get on his nerves because she would say something just without thinking, and that would get him – get him into apoplexy.

Q: But it sounds like they were both – I mean, it sounds – they were very strong people.

A: They were both very strong people. Ver – extremely strong people, i-i-in – in different ways, quite opposite, but very much in love.

Q: Also very nice.

A: So the – I – I was subb – I met a cousin of mine in – in – in **Poland** just months ago, and they comparing our bring – how we're brought up. They were rich, and – but didn't have love. And we had lots of love, but we were not so rich.

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Q: Yeah, well that's – all of these things are crucial for a child, of course, in their development. And in many ways it helped, or – when you had a strong upbringing, when you're put into times of stress, sometimes you have some reserves to draw upon –

A: Exactly.

Q: – you know.

A: And I think that's what pulled me through the war.

Q: Really. Yeah. So tell me a little bit about – you were born in 1929, yes?

A: Right.

Q: So **Hitler** comes to power when you're just four years old.

A: Yes.

Q: Did – from the time that you could remember, did your parents talk about history and politics and current events at home?

A: Oh yes, my father and my – and Uncle **Norbert** used to talk politics, but the closest I got was when I was eight years old, I spent summer in **Bydgoszcz**, which is on the – a city on the German border. And my so-called uncle, he was one of my father's wartime buddies, was the governor of the province, and I was lucky to be – spend two summers in the governor's palace.

Q: Wow.

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A: And they had also summer place, it was surrounded by Polish armored troops, and I used to – was allowed to ride in Polish tanks, at eight years old, that was like, great fun.

Q: What a thrill.

A: And I loved to swim –

Q: Yeah.

A: – and I – I – I learned how to have great social life, to a point that when I got home, I told my mother that she didn't behave like a president's wife should, she – the way Aunt **Hella** as the governor's wife – because they had balls every week, and lots of food and lots of dancing. And furthermore, I told her – told that my father should be a right-winger, not a left-winger, and my mother told him that, and he burst laughing, that this eight year old was trying to tell him how to – what kind of politics he should have. But I was just interested in all the nice things.

Q: Yeah.

A: All the wonderful cookies, and – and chocolates, and one day I even ordered eight guys with – f-for a ball which didn't exist, and my uncle caught me and chased me around the palace.

Q: How cute. How cute.

A: So, I – I was full of beans.

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Q: Yeah. It also sounds that the sense of – of what it is to be Polish was very strong in your family.

A: Well, it – it – it was not – it was only one family. I think that in school, the teachers, the family and everybody, was so excited to have a free and independent **Poland**, free for everybody. The Christians, the Jews were having, you know, particularly the Jews had wonderful theaters, and – and – and social life, and at – in my life, th-there was – I didn't run into any anti-Semitism, because well, the – my father's closest friends were Jewish members of the prepe – legion police, legion, who fought the [**indecipherable**] so the – I wa – religion was not an important part in my bri – upbringing.

Q: Well, it also – I mean, from what you were saying is that many people will – will say in their testimonies, they – as they're talking about their lives, either that there was anti-Semitism that they experienced as Holocaust survivors, or as Jews growing up in **Poland**, or as Poles who had very little contact with – with the Jewish community. That's different for you, and for your family.

A: Well, it-it-it-it was different in the country, and different in the city. In the city, I mean, one-third of **Warsaw** were Jewish, and so th – and there were a lot of Orthodox, and I used to enjoy, as a boy, going in there and seeing the – the food, th-the laughter, the language, the – to me it was very – very fascinating, although I

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didn't know I had any Jewish background, it was just very interesting. But th-the place where I lived was all Poles of Jewish background, who were the leaders of **Poland**, intel – university professors, army men. Ten percent of Polish officer corps were Jewish. So that I didn't pay any attention t-to the – to that. That's why I didn't run into it, but I – I heard stories that in the country, that it was different, that the Or-Orthodox Jews lived separately from the Catholic peasants, and sometimes there were problems, but it was never s-something that I saw in the city.

Q: Yeah. It wasn't part of your life.

A: No, it wasn't part of my life.

Q: Okay. Tell me about your childhood friends. Did you have any close friends as you were growing up?

A: Well, the – the – the – the closest friend was – that I had, was in **Kazimierz** on the **Vistula** in 1939, at the beginning of the war; a girl by the name of **Zula**(ph), who was also of Jewish background, but was Catholic, and we became good friends. And then we continued in – in – in – in **Warsaw**, when I got back from the vacation.

Q: Okay, so tell me about kaz – **Kazimierz** on the **Vistula**.

A: Yeah.

Q: Is that far from **Warsaw**? What is this –

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A: **Kazimierz** on the **Vistula** is about two hours from **Warsaw** by car, and it's an old port on the **Vistula**, which was mainly a Jewish Orthodox town.

Q: North or south?

A: It's north.

Q: So, closer to the **Baltic** Sea?

A: No, no, south. Sorry, south towards **Kraków**.

Q: Okay.

A: A-And since **Poland** was the main exporter of grain, **Kazimierz** had the places for storing grain, and the **Vistula** was the main avenue of going to the **Baltic**. And – but it was a su-summer place, and it's still a big vacation place. I was there a month ago with my wife. And we s – we – we had – my parents rented a house there, and although my father expected war, he didn't realize how soon it would happen, and just as soon as he got – got us settled in **Kazimierz**, the car came from **Warsaw** from President **Starzyński**, taking him back, because the war started.

Q: Okay. So I want to – right before we get into that, I want to spend a little bit of time on – on **Kazimierz**, and this. So you were there in the summertime.

A: Right.

Q: Would this have been July, or August of '39?

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A: This was July – August, but was really mostly August, because the war started on the first of September. So it was – no, it was August and September, August and September.

Q: And is that where you met **Zula**(ph), or had you known her before?

A: That's where I met her.

Q: Okay.

A: I met her. She was also spending summer there.

Q: And she was from **Warsaw**?

A: She was from **Warsaw** too.

Q: And how old was she?

A: She was about – I was 10 and a half and she may have been 11, something like that.

Q: Okay. And you mentioned that she was Catholic, but of Jewish background.

A: Right, right.

Q: So explain that –

A: I think one parent was Jewish and one was Catholic.

Q: Uh-huh. Which one? Do you know?

A: Not really. I – I'm – I'm guessing. I know her father was a Polish army officer, and he was killed at the **Katyn** forest.

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Q: I see.

A: He was a prisoner – taken a prisoner of war by the Soviets.

Q: And what was her last name?

A: Sorry?

Q: What was **Zula's** last name?

A: **Hoyetska**(ph).

Q: **Hoyetska**(ph)?

A: Right.

Q: And what brought you to – how did you become friends? What about her –

A: Well, they lived – they had a cottage next to us, and we just met, I don't know how, but became good friends, and we used to go to the center of **Kazimierz**, where the – on particular on the market day, when the peasants from the area would bring their goods to sell, and the – the – the Jewish people would – who lived in **Kazimierz**, would buy by horse, sell – buy horses, sell horses and chickens and pigs, and – and it was a lot of fun. But it's an old medieval town, small town square, and there was a – at the one end was a big cathedral, and right off the center was a wooden synagogue. And so –

Q: Did she speak Yiddish?

A: No, no, no.

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Q: So she was integrated into full –

A: She was good, she was integrated, right. But she ended up in – in – in the ghetto.

Q: We'll talk about that.

A: Right.

Q: We'll talk about that. It sounds pretty idyllic, as a place, and as a summer –

A: It was an idyllic place, definitely. It was a beautiful summer, and we used to go and swim in the river, and we had th-the run of the place, of the woods, and of the square, and it was a beautiful architecture on the square. A lovely little town.

Q: And did you, even being only 10 years old, did you sense that there was something that was troubling in the larger political air, or not so much?

A: Well, wrote the le – learned that a year and a half before, when I was in **Bydgoszcz**, when I was in with the – with my uncle, the governor, because the Polish army was already training, you know, as I said, the tanks. And I also s-saw a very funny movie of **Hitler**, making fun of him. So that was the beginning. And then, of course, I start to – since then, I got interested in who **Hitler** was, because he looked like s-s-such a funny guy, at the beginning. And then I heard all these horrible stories about what was happening in **Germany**. And nobody could believe it, you know, it was la – un-until we saw it in **Warsaw**.

Q: Yeah.

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A: And – and – and then it came with a bang.

Q: Yeah. So, when your father gets you settled in – in this summer place, and – did he expect to stay with you, and then was suddenly called back?

A: Yes, he expected to stay a fi – at least a week or 10 days, that was his vacation, but he was called off to **Warsaw**, because the – he was the not only vice-president, but he was the head of the anti-aircraft civilian defense, and he had tens of thousands of people trained already for putting out fires. In each building there was somebody who had – they had sand and water on the roof, so when the Germans started dropping incendiary bombs, well, they were trying to put out the fires as soon as possible. The – the – he was responsible for the sirens, for the anti-aircraft notifying the military.

Q: Do you remember whether you still were in **Kazimierz** when the war actually started?

A: Yes, I was very much in the **Kazimierz**, and I remember the day very well, because –

Q: Tell me about it.

A: – I was out mushroom hunting with **Zula**(ph), which was – **[phone ringing]**

Q: It's okay, we can stop right now. We can stop, don't worry. **[break]** Okay, so tell me again, do you remember September 1st, 1939, where you were?

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A: I will never forget September fir – '39, because I was – it was the first time in my life that I was really terrified. **Zula**(ph) and I went out mushroom hunting, and was early in the morning, and about 10 o'clock, somewhere around 10 o'clock in the morning, there was a terrible noise, and the trees started bending, and right over the treetops came out huge black airplanes with crosses on it. And we didn't know what it was. We didn't wa – know that the war started, but they were flying to bomb **Warsaw**, so they had bombs underneath it. And so we just lay down until they – they were – there seemed like hundreds of them. There weren't that many, I'm sure, but it appeared to me, to a little boy, and we were terrified. And then, after they left, the trees straightened out, and there was this wonderful silence after the noise. And then we loo – I looked up at the sky, and there was a eagle circling around. And the eagle is the symbol of **Poland**. This was a white and black eagle [**indecipherable**]. And it was something which was so unusual, I – I – I was – the whole experience, first of that noise – we run home, and we found out – my mother told us that the war started, and she started worrying about my father, and what was happening in **Warsaw**, because w-we knew that he had such an dangerous post.

Q: Did you have a telephone –

A: Oh yes.

Q: – in **Kazimierz**?

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A: We had telephones, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: Yeah.

Q: Then – and what – you – and so was she able to have a telephone connection to **Warsaw**?

A: Yes, but I didn't.

Q: You didn't know.

A: I was too young to use it, we didn't use it. I'd – you know, I had my own life with – with **Zula**(ph), and there was another boy called **Yendrik**(ph) that lived in the same cottage, and we used to do a lot of just running around and doing things that boys do –

Q: So –

A: – like throwing things in the well.

Q: So once your mother tells you the war starts, do you remember what happened next?

A: Well, I remember that th – everybody was tel – the – the adults were terrified, they was glued to the radio, and then two – about two weeks later, on the 17th of September, the news came that the Soviets attacked the Polish army from behind. They formed an alliance with **Germany**, and they – a-and that's why the Polish

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army had to surrender, because they couldn't fight on two fronts. Not – an-and both of the enemies were much stronger. But there were a lot of soldiers coming through **Kazimierz**, and the la – lot of talking about what we should do. I know that my mother at one time got all the – my mother and – and some other women with children got onto a horse drawn vehicle and went out to – to running off towards **Kraków**, but th-then we turned around, came back the next day. There was just complete chaos on this – the roads, that it – people running away from one front to the other, being caught either by the Germans, or the Russians.

Q: Well, it reminds me of that very famous scene in, I think it's **André Wider's** film, about **Katyn** –

A: Right.

Q: – where there's a bridge, and people are running on one side –

A: That's right, right, right.

Q: – of the bridge. Should they go to one end of it –

A: Right, right –

Q: – or should they go to the other end?

A: – right. Well, it was complete chaos. Complete chaos.

Q: Yeah. How far did the – did you see any German soldiers coming in?

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A: Yes. They came in, I would say in the second week of the war, towards the third week, and I was on the square they came. It wasn't a market day. But they came on motorcycles, and th – i-in cars. And it was a very hot summer, and dry summer, so they were all covered with dust. And so my first thought was, they didn't look like victors, they looked like a – a losing army. But they were the victors. And then they brought in the orchestra, **Wehrmacht** orchestra, and they started playing in the square, in this medieval square, military marches. And they brought in the Orthodox rabbi, and tied him up to the roof of the wooden synagogue, and started a fire, and made the elders run in to try to save him, and they all died right in front of my eyes. And this wa – I was 10 and a half years old. And it – it was just like **Danté's** hell. And it was a little bil – that there were all together about less than a hundred member – fa – Jewish families in town, but all of them perished later.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: There's a monument outside to the Jewish – Jews of **Kazimierz** that were murdered during the war.

Q: It sounds – I mean, the juxtaposition of a resort town in an idyllic place –

A: Right.

Q: – and medieval, and then even a German marching band, okay, that's nothing out of the ordinary.

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A: No, but doing it while they were committing this horrible crime –

Q: Crime, yeah.

A: – on – on innocent and – and helpless – and helpless people, was –

Q: And then a little en –

A: – impossible for – for – for a kid to understand, and I still don't understand it.

Q: Of course, of course. Was anybody el – I mean, was your mother there on the square? Were you alone?

A: No, no, only I and **Zula**(ph), you know the two kids, you know – I don't know, my mother couldn't keep track of me. You know, she had my sister she also had to take care of, and she – oh, she already started working as a cowhand. Her job – everybody in the little house were – we run out of money. My father didn't end – left money, so we – we had, each one – somebody – everybody had to do his job, and my mother's job was to take care of the cow. So she had to take it to the field, and milk it and – and –

Q: Did you – when you went home, did y – I – I would assume you told them all about this, that – what you saw.

A: Oh yes, yes.

Q: Yeah. What happened after that?

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A: Well, after **Warsaw** capitulated, towards the end of September. My father came in the limousine, city limousine to pick us up. He was – had problem walking. The – had problems with his legs because he did so much running around the city during the siege of **Warsaw**. He looked tired, and sick. And they took us to **Warsaw**, and I remember entering the city, and seeing dead people on the sides, a-and dead horses and ruined buildings, and my mother burst crying, and got so sick that he had to stop the car, because she threw up when she saw everything that was happening. I mean, my father knew that – was used to it, after a month. But for us, coming from this idyllic place, it was just a – such a shock. When we got to our house, the house didn't have any windows left, you know, because of the bombs. And there was –

Q: Was your neighborhood bombed?

A: Sections of the – of th – of – of – of – of some – some buildings were bombed, but most of the bombs fell on downtown.

Q: Okay.

A: And hospitals, churches, synagogues, that's where they were bombing.

Q: And your father took you to your home?

A: Yes.

Q: Was there any change inside your house?

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A: Well, it was full of glass, you know, a-and – and dirt, and it was the same house, but it wasn't. Fortunately, before the winter, we were able to get the glass back in the windows, because it was a very hard winter, a very cold winter, and there was a shortage of fuel. It was very difficult, and the Germans started the terror immediately. They arrested my father's boss, the president. They arrested my father. They came to our house, and I was 10 and a half years old. I was playing on the floor with my balsa ships. And I had German ships, and I had Polish ships. And I remember these three Gestapo men coming in and searching the house, and one of them stopped by and spoke in broken Polish, and asked who was winning this war? And I said, of course, **Poland** is winning the war. But it's interesting that this guy, today, is 96 years old, and he is the one who admitted that the Germans killed President **Starzyński** a few weeks later, in **Warsaw**. My father – everybody thought at – til now that he was – died in a concentration camp. But he says that – and th-this was examined by the Polish courts, and they pretty much decided that's a true story. And I agree with it. But it's this guy that talked to me about the ships, that came out –

Q: What's his name?

A: I can't remember his name, but he – he – he was a Silesian. He was – he and his brother, Silesians, joined the Gestapo, but he left a year later, joined the

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Wehrmacht, survived the war, then went to the university and became a hi-history professor. And just now, two years ago, he notified the Polish government that he wanted to tell the story of what happened. And he also ta-talks about my father appearing for interview by the Gestapo headquarters. They were called in. They wanted to know about the foreign diplomatic corps having left **Warsaw**, and what happened, and th – how come that – th-the president of **Warsaw** was making such anti-**Hitler** speeches towards the world about all the – the crimes that the Germans were committed on –

Q: Civilians.

A: – civilian population.

Q: This was President **Starzyński**?

A: President **Starzyński**, right, and my father, the vice-president. And – and he remembered – this Gestapo man remembers now that they came in dressed to a **T**, with the hats on, and elegantly looking, just – and th-th-they were very mad that they were being interviewed by low level ess – Gestapo men, rather than some high level dignitaries. They felt it was an insult.

Q: It probably was.

A: It was. Well, they didn't have it – but the – **Starzyński** was offered to form a Polish government, collaborative government; he refused, so he was useless. And th

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– he says that they took him to the park and he tried to escape, and he was shot.

Well, he was executed, right in the middle of **Warsaw**. And then, he is buried somewhere on that – on th-the outside of **Warsaw**, in a ess – what was then an **SS** camp. And there's no way of finding the body. There's a memorial in – i-i-in the pr – **Warsaw** cemetery, but it – it's empty –

Q: So –

A: – because we never found the body.

Q: So it wa – wa – can I understand it correctly, that it was assumed until just two years ago, that he died in a concentration camp?

A: Yes. Yes. And there were all kinds of stories, that he was in **Dachau**, that he was killed during the **Warsaw** uprising, that he was ki – li-like the head of the Polish underground army, the General **Groetravetski**, and evidently it wasn't true. He was killed right then in **Warsaw**.

Q: And tell me then, how do you make the connection that it's exactly this person who stopped in your house –

A: Beca-Because he reme – because in his statements to the Polish government – and it's – it's lengthy, it's about 25 pages, he mentions coming and – and – and interview to our house, few days after the city was taken over, and my sister and I were the witnesses. And my sister remembers that the guy got sick, he got the cold,

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or something, was throwing up downstairs. And asked for a glass of water, my mother made him some tea. So details like that, that he remembers how my father was dressed, he remembers my playing with the things. And I remember him because of – of th – of th – I was so surprised that a Gestapo man would ask a question like that, in Polish.

Q: Yeah.

A: So – so he – he is – he is a rare person. I think he is pretty much dying now, but before he died, I guess he wanted to get it off his shoulders.

Q: It's amazing. It's amazing.

A: It's an amazing story. Amazing.

Q: It's amazing.

A: And, of course, they haven't found the body, but this is the – my father spent his whole lifetime, until he died, looking for his friend's body in **Germany**, and in – and in German television, and – and nobody came up, and nobody knew anything about it. There were all kinds of stories, you know, that people made up. But th-the – I think that – I believe that this is the story, because I remember this guy.

Q: Yeah, yeah. And it sounds that he would be in a position to know.

A: Well, he – he was the translator, right.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Unbelievable. Well, you know –

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A: And he was told by the guys who shot **Starzyński**, that th-the – the less he knows, the better. They didn't want to give him the details, but they told him that he was sh – that he was killed.

Q: If you ever remember his name, let me know, and we'll add it –

A: Well, I've got it in – at home.

Q: Yeah.

A: Yeah.

Q: This begs the question: President **Starzyński** is executed right away because he is no longer useful. And your father then takes over his position in 1939, and is in it for the next five horrible years.

A: Right.

Q: How did he survive? How was it that he was not executed?

A: Oh, he was given an order by **Starzyński** to continue taking care of the city, and of the people. He was elected by the underground Polish government. The Polish government was in **London**, but Polish underground – underground was in **Warsaw**, and th-they made my father the successor to **Starzyński**. But the Germans, who needed to have the city operating well, and they didn't have the manpower, because most of them were on – in the army. And they needed the city to be running properly. So they – th-they made my father the mayor.

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Bürgermeister was his title. So he was the president of – on the – from the Polish government's side in **London**, and the underground government, but as far as the Germans were concerned, he was the **Bürgermeister**. So some of the pole – citizens, of course, who had – who were not invol – who didn't know about the underground, thought that my father was a collaborator. And that the whole city hall was a collaborator. Then there were tens of thousands of individuals – it's a huge city, million and a half – in order to operate, that was a very big bureaucracy. And in order to run properly; the electricity, the transportation, the b – the schools, the whole system. So th – and the fortunate thing for my father, and I think this is why he was able to survive, although he was arrested three, four times by the Gestapo, because they have – they suspected that he was a member of the underground, and that he was anti-German. But they – there was one individual, called **Ludwig Leist**, who was with **Hitler** in the first World War, in the Bavarian regiment. He was a regular soldier like **Hitler**. But they got to know each other, and in – who in 1934 or '35, joined the Nazi party and joined the Brownshirts. And sp – went up very quickly, although he didn't have any – much education, if any, became a general in the *essda* – **Sturmabteilung, SA**. And he was trained to be the supervisor of **Warsaw**. His first job in **Warsaw** was to create the Jewish ghetto, before he

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became the so-called governor of the city. And he worked with – what's his name? I keep on forgetting, sorry. Th-The head of the Jewish ghetto.

Q: Czernifsky(ph)?

A: Czerniaków.

Q: Czerniaków.

A: **Adam Czerniaków** was a good friend of my father's before the war. **Adam Czerniaków** was the se – in the Polish senate, and he was also a member of the city board, so my father knew him very well. But before my father met **Leist**, **Czerniaków** worked with him for about nine months. And he was – everybody – the Germans were already furious with **Leist**, because **Leist** treated **Czerniaków** well. He gave him a **Mercedes** and a driver. And he let him travel all over **Warsaw**, and treated him like a human being. And of course, the Germans were absolutely livid, because he wasn't carrying out **Hitler's** policy towards Poles and towards Jews. But eight months later, he was appointed the boss of ma – of the city hall. So-called **stadtpräsident**.

Q: Mm-hm, **stadtpräsident**.

A: So if he were – he became the city president, and my father was the mayor below him, and the whole – a-above each of the city departments, there was a German. And some of them were – most of them were pretty horrible Nazis, but

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since he had contacts with **Hitler** himself, he was able to overcome and save a lot of people in the ghetto, and outside of the ghetto, as long as he was – before the ghetto became taken over completely by the **SS**, which was in 1940. From there on they – they closed up the ghetto, and neither **Leist** nor my father could do. But f-for the – the first year, the city hall was able to take care of everybody in – in **Warsaw**, inside and outside of the wall.

Q: So that meant that your father di – reported directly to **Leist**.

A: My father reported directly to **Leist**, but my father reported directly to the prime minister of **Poland**. So he had a – this horrible jewel – job – pole – publicly, he was reporting to a German, but on a daily basis, he was surrounded by three military – Polish underground military intelligence agents, and was in c – daily contact with the civilian and military underground facilities. So if he was able to gather intelligence, and pass it on, being an – himself an intelligence officer from the Soviet war, he knew how to do it, and he was able to maneuver it, and fortunately, a-as – as I said, **Leist** was the one who saved many lives, including my father's and my own. He got me out of the – from the train in **Auschwitz**. He got my father out of the Gestapo three times.

Q: Did you meet him?

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A: No, I never met him, I never met him. After the war, he, together with other Nazis, were before the Polish courts, denazification courts, and the surviving members of the ghetto, and of my father's administration defended **Leist**, and the other Nazis were hanged, but **Leist** was declared a Nazi, but not a criminal, and he got a few years sentence, which he spent in Polish jail after the war, for belonging to a criminal organization, the Nazi party. He wrote his memoirs, and my father wrote his memoirs, and **Czesrniaków** wrote his memoirs. So I've got all of these, and I've translated them into English.

Q: Amazing. So, it sounds that – from your telling, that he was li – not brutal, in a very brutal position. Is that –

A: He was an end – it wa – he was referred to by the leaders of **Warsaw** as the prisoner of the city hall. Because he was a – he was a martyr, because he – he had to save as many lives as possible, and provide as decent living conditions for – while – **Czerniaków** would come almost every week, to see my father. He was allowed to leave the ghetto and report to my father, and to **Leist**. And my father, at first, was very suspicious of **Leist**, because he was a Nazi, and all Nazis were horrible, inhuman, and yet, this guy went – after **Czerniaków** left, and was described the conditions in the ghetto, he turned to my father, he said, poor people – about the Jew – Polish Jews in the ghetto. And my father was taken aback. And there were a

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number of things that he did during the five years. He knew about the underground army, he knew about the underground state, and he did not report it to the pole – to the German authorities. And the German authorities were suspicious of him. In 1943 – for – no, '44, after the attempt on **Hitler's** life, **Fisher**, who was **Leist's** supervisor, was told to form a list of a hundred Nazis who was not loyal to **Hitler**. And he called **Leist** and told him – gave him the job to do it in **Warsaw**, to find hundred Germans – and there were tens of thousands of Germans living in **Warsaw** at the time, military and civilian, to form that list. And **Leist** said, well, I'm sorry, but I don't know anybody who is disloyal. And **Fisher** said, why don't you start with your own name? So – and during the trial, after the war, **Fisher** tried to pretend, to save his life, that he was – allowed **Leist** to be the good guy. Like – which was not – which was a lie.

Q: Amazing. Amazing.

A: So that was –

Q: I mean, but I also think – I mean, then **Leist**, your father, and all those people were living on a razor's edge.

A: They were – well, **Leist** wa-was too. He was more afraid – **Leist** was more afraid of Gestapo than he was afraid of us, the underground army. And – and – and – and one – he used to go hunting outside of **Warsaw** with **Fisher**. And in 1943, the

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Polish underground courts passed a sentence on **Fisher** for the – death, for the murder of the ghetto population, and the Polish population outside of the wall. And I was in the – at that time, in the unit, the commander unit, which executed the sentences of the Supreme Court, of the underground courts, on Nazi criminals. And the sentence was passed upon **Ludwig Fisher**. Well, they were coming back and we – we put up machine guns along the road, and as the **Mercedes** were passing, we shot **Fisher's** car. And unfortunately, these two guys changed cars, and **Leist** was the – in the **Fisher's** car, and **Leist** just hit the floor, and when the car arrived in the city hall, he called my father downstairs and he said, look how I've been – for – for all the good things which I have done for the pole – **Warsaw** population, and they are trying to kill me. Why don't you get in touch with the underground and tell them that I am a Polish friend, a friend of Poles. He said – my father said, of course, I will do it tomorrow – right away, if I knew how to do it. I – I have no contact with the underground. But of course, he did contact the liaison officers, and they notified my father next day, to tell him that the order was on **Fisher**, and not for him, and for – never change the cars again. But it –

Q: Did – did you ever – I mean, it sounds to me that all of these things you're telling me, you learned after the war.

A: Oh, yes.

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Q: Okay.

A: I been –

Q: Dur – yeah, at the time, when your father was in this extremely precarious position, did he ever talk at home about what was going on in the office?

A: No, no, no. No, he – he – as a matter of fact, that's one of the reasons why he gave me away. I didn't live with – with – with my father and my parents during the war.

Q: Well, I want to – excuse m – because that's exactly one of my main questions.

A: Yeah.

Q: As I was reading your – your – your memoirs, or your – sort of like your – your diary that you wrote afterwards.

A: Right.

Q: I found it very odd that at such a young age, you would not live at home. Tell me what happened. How did things progress?

A: Well, I was – right after the war, the Germans closed the schools. I had a lot of free time, and from the time I was 10 to 12, I and a friend of mine went out, and we would pick up the bombs which – small bombs which fell on the streets of **Warsaw**, that didn't explode. We'd take them to the garage of my friend, and we would take out the powder out of it. And so my father was worried that –

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Q: He knew this?

A: – I was going to get killed.

Q: Yeah.

A: And my father was being arrested at home by the Gestapo. So he was worried that during the searches of the home, I would get him into trouble, or he would get me into trouble. So he got in touch with my pre-war scoutmaster, by the name of **Ludwig Burger**(ph). He was also of Jewish background. I think he was a Protestant, but he was **Ludwig Burger**(ph). And I lived with him. And I wanted to join the underground army when I was 12, so **Ludwig** came to my father for permission, because I was only 12 years old, and my father said, of course, y-you c – you can – you can join the army, so I was sworn into the Polish army at the age of 12.

Q: Unbelievable.

A: And I lived with **Ludwig**, which was only about three blocks away, so from to time I would drop in on the house, but basically I was – there was no school, and **Ludwig** trained me as a soldier, and I was – **Ludwig** formed the first unit of the Polish underground army out of the boy scouts in **Żoliborz**. Most of them were older than I, I was the youngest one. And at first I was just the runner, I was running around with secret contacts, to the ghetto and t-to other places in **Warsaw**. But later

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on I became a f – at the age of 13, a year later, I became a regular soldier, and I was trained in arms, and we had maneuvers outside of the city, and were trained as a regul – in order to prepare us for to – to fight.

Q: So, did you fa – was your father – did you tell him before you went away, that you and your friend were collecting these unexploded bombs?

A: Oh, he knew – he heard about it, because my f – my friend lost his leg. I wasn't there, but he was supposed to wait for me, but he got some nit – nitrogly-glycerin, and it exploded and the whole garage went up, and he lost a whole leg. So my father knew that I was – they were also trying out making bombs, and – and – and trying them out in the parks, and so we – he was a-fraid that I was going to get killed, and he had no time for the family. He was – he worked day and night at the city hall. Just drop in for food once in a while. And so he didn't have – th-there was no man to take care of the little boy. And he felt that **Ludwig Burger**(ph) would be an excellent person to take hold of me.

Q: And did your mother have anything to say about it?

A: My mother didn't know anything about it. My mother was very upset after the war, when the book came out, that he didn't – she didn't know anything about it.

Q: She didn't know anything about the powder, or the – or the –

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A: No. Well, I don't know if sh – I don't think she knew anything – she knew very much. She certainly didn't know that **Ludwig Burger** would sign me up as a soldier in the underground army.

Q: But she knew he took you.

A: Oh yes, yeah.

Q: And –

A: But he was a boy scout master, and also, together with **Ludwig**, there were two young women, **Steffan(ph) Solla(ph)**, and **Alexandra(ph) Solla(ph) – Solkul(ph)**, who were the daughters of a doctor who take care of my mother's father when he was sick –

Q: Oh wow.

A: – in **Tarnow**. Dr. **Solkul(ph)**. So she knew them, and she kn – everybody knew **Ludwig Burger** from before the war, because he was an actor, he was a very active youth leader in the – in the boy scout movement. And wer –

Q: And you said – and you said he was Jewish?

A: He was of Jewish background, and so were the – the two girls, ot – all – all three of them were of Jewish background.

Q: And how is it that they wouldn't have been in the ghetto?

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A: Well, because they were – they were hiding. They were hiding, so my father really handed me over to a Jewish family, basically. Only, as I said, the religion had no part in it. They were extremely patriotic, integrated Polish intellectuals, and th- they – they – they lived – there was a little boy, **Marek**(ph), who is still alive, the son of **Ludwig's**, I saw him a month ago.

Q: Oh my.

A: And we keep in touch. And when I was being arrested by the Gestapo, he was playing over the secret place where we had our – our arms. And he was only eight years old at time. I was 13.

Q: But here is my question. It's – it's not so much that they were integrated, and not – religion didn't play a part, it is, wouldn't they have been known by the Gestapo, and why – how is it that they could hide in plain sight in – in **W-Warsaw**.

A: Well, it all – it – well, in almost every house in **Żoliborz** that I know of, I mean, certainly every other house, had a Jewish family being hidden, including our own house. My mother hid about nine members of the Jewish family between our house, and we – also, later on we had a house in the country. And she took care of – saved a number of members of – Jews who were, you know, integrated, and were not Polish speaking, and who could survive in – in – in hiding.

Q: I see. And it's a kind of crass way to put it, but did **Ludwig** look Jewish?

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A: Yes, very much so. Just look at the picture.

Q: Okay. So that meant that if he was walking down the street, he could have been picked up.

A: Well, he was six feet four inches tall, he was extremely handsome, and he was very self-confident. He was a real leader, and bordering on the arrogant, you know. So I don't think they – they would dare him, until they found out that they were looking for him. And this is how I got caught, and – and – and **Steffa**(ph) were arrested.

Q: We'll come to that.

A: Yeah.

Q: But – because I want to do this a little bit more chronologically –

A: They were looking for us. They were looking for **Ludwig**.

Q: Okay. But it's – it's just so surprising to me, to hear of somebody who would be living openly, more or less, on the Aryan side, and he could – considered himself a Protestant, but that doesn't matter if the Germans are in control.

A: Exactly. But th-th – he was a great hero in this part of **Warsaw**. He was known by everybody and loved by everybody, and nobody cared what he was – he had the Jewish grandfather, or – or the grandmother, or whatever it was, you know, it was unimportant. He was –

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Q: Did he have false papers?

A: Sorry?

Q: Did he have false papers? Did he have false papers? Did he have real papers that said I am –

A: Oh, I am sure – I am sure he had false papers. They di – all had false papers. All three of them had false papers, in case of being ta – caught. But **Burger**(ph) could be a Jewish – a German name, as well as Jewish.

Q: Of course.

A: So, you know, it – I don't know what kind of papers. Maybe he had the **Volksdeutsche** papers, for all I know.

Q: Okay.

A: I – I me – he – the – that was height of conspiracy, and nobody was supposed to know anything what the other person was doing.

Q: Okay.

A: But I know that when I moved there, there was a little boy, kind of a poor boy that lived in the – in that apartment, and **Ludwig** gave me a job to try to test him whether he was not going to report **Ludwig** to the police, whether it was for his activities in the underground, or for being of Jewish background, I couldn't – I

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didn't know at the time. But the point was that I was able to convince him to do that, and **Ludwig** had him shot, as I – they di –

Q: So what was the test?

A: – he was – he was head of the c – the – the company of 150 soldiers, and at that time the captain had the right of making a decision like that, legally, of a – a suspect was enough to be killed, because he could bring so many deaths, if he was caught by the Germans.

Q: So tell me, what was the test that you had – that you had for him?

A: Well, I talked him into going to the police and – and – and – and selling **Ludwig** for money. And it wasn't very difficult, he already had that idea, so I went and reported to **Ludwig**, and **Ludwig** had him shot.

Q: Wow.

A: But you know, again, that was something that was – I was 12 years old at the time, and I – I – I – I only found out later that he was killed, and where he was killed, by – by our execution squad. And I felt, of course, responsible for it.

Q: So, you maybe have to repeat it a little bit, but tell me what your life was like with **Ludwig**, in this new place. You had the two **Solkul**(ph) sisters, you had **Marek**(ph). He was **Ludwig's** son?

A: And there was a mother – grandmother living. And –

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Q: Where was **Marek's**(ph) mother?

A: **Marek's**(ph) mother was th – they were separated.

Q: Okay.

A: And she – she got him after the war, after **Ludwig** was killed, but at that time, he was live – for whatever reason, he was living with the father, and **Alexandra**(ph) **Sokol**(ph) was the head of the international couriers section, women's courier, and they were also responsible for – also attacks on German criminals. **S-Stepha**(ph), who was the love of **Ludwig's**, and she was kind of his secretary, and did all of the secretarial work for him, and did the h-home caring – help – cooking, and taking care of the house.

Q: So, she was his girlfriend?

A: Sorry?

Q: She was his girlfriend?

A: She was his girlfriend, right.

Q: Yeah. And in this household you first joined the underground, and then at age 13, you were accepted into the underground army?

A: No, I was – I'd – I'd – I – I – I was the – I had joined them at the age of 11, and in the same year, later that year, when I was 12, when I was sworn into the underground army, 1941.

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Q: Which means you don't really have a childhood. Your childhood ended then.

A: Yes, it did. Well, everybody had to grow up, but – but basically we were brought up, the Germans made it very clear, that it was question of time, that they were going to kill us all. So it wasn't a question of whether we're gonna live or die, only when. And that made a whole mental attitude different. This is why we rose up in 1944, that's how all our brothers in – in the **Warsaw** ghetto rose in 1943, because they preferred – we preferred to die with our arms in hands, than going to the gas chambers. And it was a question of age. Both inside the ghetto, and outside of the ghetto, the adults, the priests, the rabbis, would tell the kids not to stir things up, not to form in a resistance, not to resist, because that would make things worse. Well, we knew better. We knew that we had to defend ourselves, we had to defend our families. And – and it fon – it proved that the young people were right, and when I meet now with American kids in high schools, I often am on their side, because when you are young, you are honest, you have – you are not spoiled, you – you've got certain inborn morals, and – and you know better than the parents, who are more scared.

Q: Well, they don't want their children to die.

A: Well, they don't want the children to die, exactly, but they – they don't realize that you have to fight to save yourself.

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Q: Well, you know that – in one way, when I was looking through your memoir, you're answering another question that I had, because I had – I see these pictures of children in uniforms, with guns, you know, and they clearly aren't even teenage boys yet. They're in their – they're in that age of 10 to 13. And it just – it boggles the mind, that a teenage boy, who's 17 or 18, could be part of this is already something you can – they're on their way to manhood.

A: Yeah, but it's happening all over the world. Since I've, as an international architect, I've worked in 30 countries. I've worked in Arab countries, I've been in **Israel** many times, and I realize that in places which are dangerous, the kids grow up very fast, and there are many children soldiers –

Q: Yeah.

A: – unfortunately, still today.

Q: It's true.

A: So it's – it's – it's true in **Afghanistan**, and in – in **Iraq**, in – in **Jordan**, and in – and I – I – I'm sure the I-Israeli kids are – are brought up in – in – in the same spirit of defending their homeland. So it – it – it's not something that you recommend, but when the Germans closed schools, and the only school was the military sc – career, you grew up fast, and you grew up in a different way. And you mature faster. I mean, my – my – my chi – I have some children who are – one of my sons is almost

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30. Well, he is what I was at 13. He's so far be-beyond, because of the easy life, no challenges, and th-the parents and the schools don't expect – don't provide enough challenges to these kids. I meet a lot with the boy scouts, the girl scouts, the high school, the middle school kids, and I – I – I make friends with them immediately, and they – because I become that age, back, when I talk about my experiences. And I – I – I – I'm – I've great respect for them, an-and some – and that's some wonderful young people. When I – when I hear about the – the – the education system being bad, there are always bad students and good students, but the good students are fantastic.

Q: Yeah.

A: Great kids.

Q: Amazing. Tell me – let's go back to how things – what were some of the other activities you took part with under **Ludwig's**, I suppose guidance, or – or direction, and so on?

A: Well, first of all, he trained me t-to prepare me for arrest by the Gestapo –

Q: And how do you do that?

A: – and my torture. Sorry?

Q: How do you do that? How do you get trained for that?

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A: Well, he did two things. He taught me how to fight when you don't have a gun. Fight with your teeth, how do kill a person with a knife, or with your hands, and with your teeth. That's how he died. He also prepared me how I should answer under torture, about him, because he knew perfectly well that I would be the natural one that the Gestapo would want to find him, through me. So he said, just say to the Gestapo that you hated me. That I was a tyrant. I wouldn't let you have sex with girls. I wouldn't let you have the freedom that you wanted to do, that you really hated me, and that you will collaborate with them in trying to find me. And also, don't admit that you know any German, so you'll have a translator. So he prepare me very well for it, and it was very useful when I was taken to the torture chambers.

Q: Tell me – tell me some of the activities that you took part in. You said you were part of the commando unit that was –

A: Well, this was later. This was after – after **Ludwig** died.

Q: I see.

A: Th-Th-This was part of the – his unit became the division which was supporting the general headquarters of the Polish underground army, called **Baszta**, the tower. But after I was arrested, and they were following me, trying to find **Ludwig**, I had to leave, because I was burned. And I joined the commandoes in order to be able to

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return the – be able to kill some Germans right away. I couldn't wait for the uprising.

Q: Okay.

A: But during – while I lived with **Ludwig**, I was – at first I was carrying secret messages, and at one time he took me to the ghetto, which was an experience. I – I used to go to visit my girlfriend in the ghetto, but this was when the streetcar would still be allowed to go. The – it wasn't allowed to stop inside the ghetto, but it went from one gate to the other, and I would jump off, see **Zula(ph)**, and then jump back on the – on this – on the streetcar, which was under the police guard.

Q: Was this when the ghetto was still part of – under **Leist's** control, rather than the **SS**?

A: No, no, no, no, no. No, **Leist** only had it a few months, it was still in the construction stages.

Q: I see.

A: He only had it about eight months, six or eight months.

Q: Okay.

A: It was the – the planning stages, rather than the – even construction. No, no, before they – they had – eventual they had to redirect the streetcars around the wall.

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But at first, they went right straight through the – through – through the ghetto, because it was an integral part of the downtown.

Q: So, **Zula**(ph) and – [break]

Q: Okay, this is a continuation of our interview with Mr. **Julian Kulski**. We were talking about you visiting **Zula**(ph) in the ghetto. So that ax – answers another question that I had, which was, what happened to **Zula**(ph). She was then forced, with her mother, to enter the ghetto.

A: After the 1943 **Warsaw** uprising, I believe she was in the bunker with **Annie Levitch**(ph) and they committed suicide in the last days of the uprising. But I have no proof of it, it's just my conjecture, knowing her and her spirit, that she was in the underground, inside the wall, the way I was in the underground outside the wall. But in 1942, **Ludwig** took me for a two day visit into the ghetto, and he told me that he was taking me so that if he got killed there, I would be able to take out the information from inside the ghetto. And I was wondering at the time, if he was killed, why wouldn't I be killed, but I didn't say anything. Took the order. So we went in, and we went through a secret underground passage through one of the buildings, and we met some Polish Jewish underground members, who brought us some dirty clothes, because we would be recognized right away in our outfits from

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the outside, so we put the rags on. And with – going to a place where **Ludwig** was meeting the – some leaders of the Jewish underground –

Q: What did you see when you enter – when you emerged inside –

A: Well, it was suddenly hell. There were dead people on the sidewalks, children. And then I saw a German hunting, shooting innocent people on the street, a pregnant woman being kicked. It was just unbelievable. We had to hi – when he was shooting, we had to hide in a doorway of a – of an apartment building. And then we got there, and **Ludwig** was asked to transmit through the underground government to **London**, the information what was happening to **Warsaw** Jews.

Q: What wa – okay, what kind of information –

A: Well –

Q: – and what kind of requests were made?

A: – well, by that time, it was already tr-trainloads being taken to the gas chambers, and everybody knew what – my father told **Czerniaków** what was happening, and **Czerniaków** committed suicide. But it – the – the wa – the west didn't do anything to help, and it was – there were desperate attempts. They asked to – the west to inform Germans that for every Polish Jewish life, there would be a German killed. Prisoners of war, and other German citizens. And they realized that it was an unrealistic request, but it was a desperate move to – to – to help. They asked to have

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the trains bombed on the way to **Majdanek**, to **Auschwitz**. And also, they asked us for arm – for information how to build bunkers, for concrete, and reinforced steel, so they could prepare for the uprising, and for arms. I know that my own company submitted 50 – sold, or gave 50 guns to the Jewish fighters. And then, later on, I was in the **Warsaw** fire brigade, and the Germans respected the Polish firemen, because they needed it, during the allied bombing of **Warsaw**, the Polish firemen were very important, and the Polish blu – blue police, some of them were **[indecipherable]**, some of them were members of the underground. So they couldn't – you couldn't depend on the – but the – the – the – the firemen were under – according to German law, the police and the fire departments went under the police, under the Gestapo, under the **SS**. So the – the guy who destroyed the ghetto and murdered innocent – destroyed the whole ghetto and the people inside, was **Stroop, Jürgen Stroop**. And he was responsible for the Polish fire department. And once a year there would be a parade of all the fire trucks, and firemen on it in the, you know, firefighting uniforms, before him. And he was very proud of the Polish firemen. He didn't know that 80 percent of us were members of the underground army.

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Q: So, when you were in the ghetto, there was the request of a life for a life – when you were in the ghetto, there was this request of a life for a life, because so many Jews were being killed indiscriminately.

A: Right, right.

Q: There was a request for information on how to build bunkers.

A: Bunkers, and for arms.

Q: And for arms.

A: Right.

Q: And you were able to supply them with 50 – what was it again?

A: Fifty pistols.

Q: Fifty pistols. And that was later.

A: And submach – yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: That was later on.

Q: That was later.

A: And th – we're able to use the fire department trucks, because the Germans would l – of course, if there was a fire in the ghetto, they would let us in through the – through – through, and then we could drop the information, and come out.

Q: So was this the only –

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A: As a matter of fact, they – when I was in – i-in – in full fireman's uniform with my helmet, and my – I was allowed to go thr – walk thro – in the city through the night, after the police hour.

Q: So, after curfew.

A: And when we run into German patrols, **Wehrmacht** patrols, they would salute us, we would salute them. So they thought – it was a very good cover for the – for – for us to carry arms and – and – and attack Germans.

Q: Was this the only time, after the ghetto was sealed off, that you were in the ghetto, or did you go in to deliver those 50 pistols?

A: No, no, I had nothing to do with that.

Q: Okay.

A: No.

Q: Okay.

A: No, th-th – as I said, the first time, I would just go to see **Zula**(ph).

Q: Okay, and so I want to go back to this again. When I asked earlier, not what happened to her at the end, but how is it that she had to go to the ghetto when she was half and half –

A: Well, because they were considered – everybody was considered Jewish up to the third generation. If you had one grandfather who was Jewish, you were Jewish

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as far as the Germans were concerned. That's how I was saying, that if the Germans knew that my father's grandmother was Jewish, he would have been considered Jew by the Nazis.

Q: I see. And so, for **Zula**(ph), and her mother, of course, who was Jewish, it's a – it's a given.

A: Right, right.

Q: But for – and this is where the juxtaposition for me sounded so confusing; that she is forced, but **Ludwig** isn't.

A: Well –

Q: Do you see what I'm saying? She cannot have a choice of living outside – this is someone who doesn't know the war, who doesn't know the situation. And why I was ask –

A: Well, th-th – there were over, I would say, between hundred, and 140,000 Jews in **Warsaw** during – that survived. Either being hidden, or –

Q: Outside the ghetto.

A: – outside the ghet – outside the ghetto, right.

Q: Outside the ghetto, okay.

A: I mean, th-th – the reason all three of them – **Ludwig** was killed on the street, in a fight with an **SS** man, **Steffa**(ph) ended up in **Auschwitz** after we were arrested.

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And **Ola**(ph) committed suicide after she was arrested in the church with false papers and arms, and – and – and was tortured, and committed suicide, with a suicide pill –

Q: Yeah.

A: – cause we all had them, in case we couldn't stand the pain any more, we could commit suicide. I had it in my ring.

Q: You wore a ring?

A: Yeah, I had a silver ring that – empty inside, and I had a cyanide capsule in it. When I was arrested, when I was 13.

Q: Okay. I think we'll break now, and we'll talk about all of these incidents aft –
[break]

Q: This is a continuation with our interview at the Holocaust Museum with Mr. **Julian Kulski**. And before the break, we were talking about the guns, and the – the armaments that were brought in by the fire brigade, to the ghetto. But you were not involved in that. And from what I understand, it was the one and only time you were in the ghetto after the wall was secure – that is, people could not go in. Did you ever go there again?

A: Not after the visit in '42 with **Ludwig Burger**(ph).

Q: Okay.

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A: That was the last time.

Q: That was the last time.

A: Last time.

Q: What did wa – how did things proceed for you, after you left? What kind of activities were you involved in?

A: Well, I was invol – continued training, military training, maneuvers outside of the city, learning about new arms, explosives. But soon after, in 1943, in the middle of the summer, there was a wedding of two Polish underground officers, in one of the downtown churches. And there were about a hundred underground officers attending it, which is against all the rules of conspiracy, which they broke. And somehow the Germans learned about it, and at the height of the marriage ceremony, the **SS** entered the church, and arrested 89 people, and among them was **Ola(ph) Solkul(ph)**, with whom I lived, with **Steffa(ph)**, and **Ludwig**. And she had false papers, German papers under **Evee(ph) Keller(ph)**, and guns. So, as soon as we found out that she was arrested, **Ludwig** left the apartment and he told – send me home to my parents, so only **Steffa(ph)** and **Marek(ph)**, and the grandmother were left. But about 10 days, two weeks later, we found out through our underground sources that **Ola(ph)** was tortured so badly that she committed suicide, and was – died, rather than tell the stories. So I felt I was safe, and in the morning I went back

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to the apartment. **Ludwig** stayed away, fortunately. Well, in the afternoon, I was in the living room, and I heard banging on the front door, and **Steffa**(ph) said, who is it? And I heard, Gestapo, open the door, or I will shoot through. And I was on the first floor, and there was a balcony, and I was going to jump into the park, a public park, and escape. So I opened the doors, the French doors, and I look behind me, and the Gestapo man already had a machine gun pointed at me, and said **[indecipherable]**. So I had to surrender. He – I was arrested on the spot. They – they check on the apartment. The little boy was playing over the secret safe where the arms were kept. And so they took me and **Steffa**(ph), and took me downstairs, and there were open, big **Mercedes** cars, three of them, and they put – put us in, and took us to the **Pawiak** prison.

Q: What's the **Pawiak** prison?

A: **Pawiak** prison was an old so – Russian prison in the center of **Warsaw**, a huge – built to take care of Polish par – freedom fighters of the 19th century. The – the – this was a huge, huge – so huge prison. And th – there were double gate, and the cars went through the first gate, they closed the gate behind, and suddenly there were all kinds of horrible German Shepherds that were trying to attack us, growling, and they were all fed on – on human flesh, on the prisoners' flesh, that they were just – I – I – I – I will never forget the sight of these dogs – and I love dogs, but

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these were just wild animals, horrible. And then finally they opened the other gate, took us in, and there they put us on one side of the room; the man, on the other side the women, and I was standing, my face to the wall. And I tried to make contact with **Steffa**(ph) across the room, I turned my head, and one of the Germans hit me on the wall, and my nose started bleeding. So that was di – di – the first time I knew that I was – lost my freedom. Then they took me, and took everything away from me, and shaved my head. And being a 13 year old, all I was worried about is, how am I going to go on dates? You know, instead of worrying about my life, I was worried about my hair. It just shows the mentality of a 13 year old. Then I was thrown into a cell, which was supposed to be for one person, and there were six of us altogether. It was jammed, and at night we had to sleep like sardines across the room. In order to turn over, we had to all do it at the same time, because we just stuck, wall to wall. And then, in the middle of the night, you heard the executions squads in th – in the outside, and the cries of the people being shot, and tortured. Th-There were all kind – poor food, hardly any food. We're allowed to the bathroom once a day only, for five minutes. So there was a bucket of uh – in the corner, smelly. It was horrible. So, at – at –

Q: Were you the youngest there, do you think?

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A: I was the – definitely the youngest one. And for all the strange things, I was selected by the adults to be the one to be representative, because every morning the door opened, and I had to report, in German, that six prisoners, all here, everything in order. I was very short, and then I had the door slammed in my face. But, was the same in – in – in – in a prisoner of war camp later. I don't know why, being the youngest, they had the greatest faith in me, that I would be honest, about food, cutting bread, because –

Q: The prisoners themselves had selected you –

A: The prisoners selected me, right, right.

Q: Did you speak German?

A: Very little, very little. Oh, I had this German nanny, but I didn't want to learn German, I hated her. But that was u – turned useful. I understood more than, than I could speak. And I knew a few words. I knew enough to say that. And then, one day, I was taken for – to the Gestapo headquarters for examinations, for torture, and we were in a prison van, and I was with **Steffa**(ph), and we were able to – finally to agree on the same story, so that each one of us would tell the same story about **Ludwig**, and everything else. And that was the last time I saw her. From the – there, she was sent to **Auschwitz**, where she survived the war, but she didn't know that **Ludwig** was killed on the streets a few weeks later. So when she would – got to

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Poland, it was a shock, because the first thing she was looking forward to, was to see **Ludwig**, whom she la – was crazy about. And when she found out he was dead, she died soon after, a few years later.

Q: Really?

A: But I was taken, and put into a cage, which we – we called the streetcars, because it was a narrow room with about 16 so-called chairs, very uncomfortable, wooden bench. And we had to sit back to the main corridor, where the Gestapo men walked back and forth. And this was the beginning of the torture, because at the end of the corridor were the torture chambers, and we could hear the cries of the prisoners being tortured. And then, they would put these people into the same room with us. Women without breasts, with the eyes cut out, with the fingers pulled out. You know, kind of inhuman. So you sat there for about 48 hours, without food, without all these thing, and then the German would playing – they had the radio, and they were playing the German tunes, and they were cooking steaks. So that the – this was all – you had all the senses, which were – were starved, after two weeks in the prison, and then two days with no food. And the music, the cries of the being tortured, the – a-a-and the – and the smell of the food, and the music were – that completely wrecked you, so by the time you – I was taken upstairs into one of the examination rooms. They asked me if I speak German, I said no, I didn't know a

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word, so they had to have a translator. That was one thing that **Ludwig** prepared me, so that gave me a time to come out with a answer, a lie, while the translator was translating it. My father did the same thing, when he was arrested. And they – first, they wanted to know my relationship with **Ludwig**, so I – I – I – I mentioned all the things, and I told them that I want to help them find him, because I hated him. And so they said, well, will you join us? I said, of course, anything to – to – to – to – to find him. And then they gave me a book full of pictures of freedom fighters, a ba – very thick book, and made me look at each picture, and – to see if I recognized anybody. And I recognized one, and I said – and he said, who is it, where do you get it? I said, well, he's in my cell in **Pawiak** prison. When they knew I was making fun of them, I got really hit behind the head with the whip.

Q: Was he in your cell?

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Q: And, excuse me, for those of us who don't know, why would that be making fun? If you were a – a – you know, recognize this person –

A: Well, because they – they – they th – they felt that I wasn't leading them to – to – to the underground, you know, that –

Q: It's true.

A: – and I didn't, I didn't. I just –

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Q: It's true.

A: – picked out somebody that I knew, but I did – there was a picture of **Ola**(ph), there was a picture of **Ludwig**, and there were a picture of other members of – that I knew, that I didn't say anything. The – they – then they started beating me. Then after beating, they again started talking me into it, that they fight – just lead them to **Ludwig**, I will – I'll – I'll – I can join the Gestapo, and I will be well off, and I'm so young, it's a pity, and so it was bad guy and good guy routine. Then they made me look through the secret files, to see if I find something, that I would stop and be interested. Which is amazing, because I was being ab – able to see all of the Polish and Jewish underground fighting organization they had the file – files on. But then towards the evening after the – all this beating and – and – and starvation and torture, they asked me where **Ludwig** worked. I said, well, he worked as a – taking care of some gardens. So he – they put – took me to a map of the city, and they saw a building in the middle of the gardens, and they says, what is it? I said, well, it's just a garden shed. But actually, we – **Ludwig** had a German car there, and some arms. So they piled me up into the car, it was an evening. There were again two **Mercedes**, open cars, with machine guns on the sides. And I remember we went through the center of **Warsaw**, it was a beautiful, sunny day. And I was bald, I was starving, and I could see the human be – you know, the normal life. I almost felt

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like cr-crying. And there were two ways to the garden, one was from the bottom, from the **Vistula**, and the one from the top. And I knew that if we came from the top there was a gate, then whoever was there could escape. So we came up from the top, and sure enough, the German car said **p-o-l, polizei** on the – on the – they recognized right away as a Gestapo car. And by the time we got down **[indecipherable]** escaped. **Ludwig** wasn't there, but fortunately, he took everything out of that building before that.

Q: Beforehand.

A: So then they took me back, and they had one more day of tortures, and then they send me back to – back to **Pawiak** prison. And then, about two and a half weeks, three weeks later, they were calling out names, those to be executed, those to be sent to **Auschwitz**, and I was on the list to the **Auschwitz**, so –

Q: Did people know at that point what **Auschwitz** was?

A: Oh, perfectly well.

Q: Okay.

A: Everybody knew what **Auschwitz** was, it was a frightening name **[indecipherable]**. My Uncle **Norbert** was murdered there in the first year, in 1940.

Q: Well, how did he get arrested? What happened with him?

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A: Well, they arrested all the Polish leaders of – the university professors, and – and leaders of parties, and he was the leader of the Polish Socialist party. So he was a public figure, and –

Q: What was his last name?

A: – and he was arrested th-the same time as my father. And –

Q: I see. What was he – **Norbert's** last name?

A: Sorry – **Barlicki**.

Q: **Barlicki**, okay.

A: **Barlicki, Norbert Barlicki**. And my father was also arrested, and my father was arrested for a different reason. During the siege of **Warsaw** in 1939, there was an American photo reporter by the name of **Julien Bryan**, who came voluntarily three days after the siege, and was taking pictures, movies. Most of these movies are right now in this museum. They were bought by Holocaust Museum, and restored. And my father took him around **Warsaw**, taking pictures. Well, a year later, somehow the “**Life**” magazine, which **Julien Bryan's** pictures occurred, got to the city hall, and his secretary gave them a copy of this “**Life**” magazine. He –

Q: Your father.

A: My father brought it home and hid in the – in the laundry closet, which during the next Gestapo search, they found the – the “**Life**” magazine, and they were

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convinced that my father was a American spy. So this time it was extremely serious, not only that – that he might be a member of the Polish underground government, which he was, but that he was an American spy. So he was taken to **Pawiak**, and thrown together with Uncle **Norbert**. So they spent about two days in prison together, saying goodbye, and that was the last time my father saw **Norbert**. **Norbert** went to **Auschwitz**. He helped organize an underground there, and then he was killed there. But my father was released after – oh, my father was taken to a torture chamber too, and told to take all his clothes. He knew that he was going to be beaten to death. And he was just in the process of taking off his pants, as a senior Gestapo man passed through, and recognized my father. It was the same man that arrested my father in 1939. So he knew that my father was the mayor of **Warsaw**, and he said to the guys there, don't beat him yet, wait. And my father knew that if – once they beat you up [**indecipherable**] they will never let you go – be alive, because you were a-at – they couldn't let you out on – on the streets in condition like that. They didn't want people to know what they were doing. So that saved his life, this time.

Q: So the – the – the Gestapo who said delay, what made the delay into, don't beat him at all?

A: Well, I guess he recog – realized that he was the mayor of **Warsaw**.

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Q: Okay.

A: And they let him go.

Q: Okay, okay.

A: Because he was – he was too important for the Germans. The Germans didn't have a way of running the city, and so my father had this unfortunate situation, that he did – he **[indecipherable]** his best in a terrible situation, being a – a – endangered by the Gestapo, and by the **SS**, and also by the communist underground, who – who – which didn't know – they threw a bomb at his car while he was going to the city hall one day. And the under – Polish underground had to notify the communist underground that my father was a member of the underground government, so to desist. But after that my father stopped using the car, and started driving in a **dróźka**, in a ca – in a horse drawn vehicle to show that he had nothing to be afraid of.

Q: Mm-hm. So let's go back to your imprisonment. So there you are, and you're on the list to go to **Auschwitz**. What happens?

A: Well, the – evidently somebody in the city hall went over to **Leist**, and told them that the mayor's son was being sent to **Auschwitz**. And my father refused to go and ask for – for – for my life, because he felt that if he started asking for favors from the Germans, he would really be a collaborator, and he would have to pay – pay the

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price for it. But somebody, one of his directors, went to **Leist**, and **Leist** must have gotten in touch with **Berlin**, and **Berlin** ordered th-the Gestapo in **Warsaw** to let me go.

Q: Wow.

A: But when the – when I was being released, I was sent up to the chief Gestapo man, who was Colonel **Hann**(ph), who was sitting be-behind a big desk, in a big room, up on the same building where the torture chambers were. And he was under huge painting of **Hitler**. Enormous painting, f-full – full wall size. And there was my father and **Leist** and my father's translator, sitting back. I couldn't say hello to them. They didn't turn around. But I got a lecture from the Major **Hahn**(ph), he said, I – I know you are a member of the underground. You were caught with – red-handed, but General **Leist** says that you are only 14 years old, so we let you go. But next time we catch you, the devil himself is not going to save you.

Q: Wow.

A: So then I was released, but they followed me everywhere I went in **Warsaw**, because they thought that I would lead them to **Ludwig**. So –

Q: Wa – did you go home to your parents? Ha – wi –

A: I went to – to – to my parents, right, to my parents' house, but they thought that I would lead them to – to **Ludwig**. So they send me to the country place outside of

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Warsaw, where I spend about a month, and **Ludwig** came and visited us, and that was the last time I saw him.

Q: And what was this country place called?

A: **Banyoha**(ph).

Q: **Banyoha**(ph).

A: Which is about an hour and a half by narrow gauge railroad [**phone ringing**]

Q: Let's just break for a second. [**break**] So wi – you were sent to **Banyoha**(ph).

Now, did your mother know of aw – any of these things that were happening to you?

A: Well, she knew that I was in prison, of course.

Q: Okay.

A: And I di – she saw me afterwards. There is a picture in the book of my mother's sister, younger sister **Zosia**(ph) who hid the **Katz** family, and **Ludwig**, supposedly with a new haircut, but he was six feet four, so the change in outlook didn't – it was just question of time when he would be. And everybody begged him to leave the city and go and fight in the woods with the partisans, but he was so involved with the underground in **Warsaw** that he didn't go. And sure enough, he was caught in one of the regular streetcar searches. They stopped the streetcar, and he and his second in command started running off, and the **SS** men were running behind him

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and shooting machine guns. And finally he got to a house with a garden, and he was jumping over a fence, and one of the **SS** men got to him. He ran out of bullets, so they started fighting hand to hand. And **Ludwig** tried to kill him by – the German, by biting his throat through, but another German came through and shot him point blank into the – so when I found out that he was killed there, I ran over there, and his body was already removed, but his brain was still lying on – on – on – on – on – on – on the ground. And I just swore that I would revenge him, and every time I killed a German during the uprising, I would say, it's for you. I loved that man.

Q: I wanted to ask you, what did he mean to you?

A: Oh, he was everything. He was my best friend, he was my teacher, he was my scoutmaster, he was my captain. He was the one who got me into the army, and who – whose ideals – he was a great orator, and he knew Polish literature by heart. And he would – on every national holiday, he would line us up, all 150 in the company in a line, and would orate the poems of **Mickiewicz** and **Słowacki** and Polish – just to keep up the – our spirit, our national identity, and our love of freedom. So he was feeding us the things which we as kids, needed most. Love of **Poland**.

Q: I can't imagine what that must have felt like, to see somebody you loved, and only part of him there.

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A: He is buried in the military sera – cemetery now, and every time I got to **Warsaw**, I go and lay some flowers on his grave.

Q: So his body was discovered, and was buried.

A: Yes, he was di – his body was taken to a pol – police – police barracks, and then the – I guess they were buried somewhere, in a – the place, and after the war he was found, and buried with military honors. He is a – he is – after I found out he was killed, I and another boy spent the night tearing up the street signs on the street that we lived – that he lived, was **Karchanjeski**(ph) street. Then we repainted it with his pseudo names, and hanged them up, so we renamed the street in his honor.

Q: What were some of his pseudonyms?

A: He had three; **Mihau**(ph) – **Michael, Hardy**(ph), and **Goliut**(ph).

Q: Wow.

A: He had to change three times, in order to maintain his secrecy. The last one was **Goliat**(ph). And **Goliat**(ph) is the one that I took over after I was arrested. Before that, it was **Chernatski**(ph), but I – I change it to **Goliat**(ph) in his honor.

Q: After you were released, did you have a chance to talk to your own father about what had gone on in prison, or about anything?

A: A little, a little. I think he knew. He went through it himself, so he knew perfectly well what I went through. It didn't take much. I talked a lot to **Ludwig**

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when he came over and spent the night, in the country. He – all he wanted to know, what happened to **Steffa**(ph), and how she was. And he congratulated me for not spilling the beans under the torture. He pro – proposed me for a medal, and he was just proud of me.

Q: What kind of activities did you get involved with after these things?

A: Well, after this, I was just so full of hate, and a desire for revenge on these beasts, on the Germans, that killed my friends in the ghetto, and outside, that I went in search of wet – disarming German soldiers. And I and another guys were able to get some old guns. I had a old American western **Colt**, about this size. And we spent the whole night looking for Germans, individual Germans that we could catch and disarm, without killing them, because for every German, there were 20 to a hundred Poles, innocent civilians, shot on the same place. This mass **[indecipherable]**. And we find – in the morning, we found downtown, a – a – a sergeant, a big sergeant, with a beautiful gun on his side, getting onto the front of the streetcar, which was only **Nur für Deutschen**, only for Germans, and we followed him. But besides this sergeant, there were five other soldiers, regular soldiers with rifles. And they all got off at the railroad station, the **Danzig-Warsaw** railroad station, near **Żoliborz**. And we thought we would run down the steps, and hid under the viaduct, and disarm him before the other soldiers came down. Well,

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we faced him with both our guns, and said [**indecipherable**] or you are dead. And he, instead of raising his hands, being a seasoned soldier, started opening up his gun, and pulling out. So it was a question us or them, and we both fired, and he fell on his face. And he was the first German that I killed. And my initial reaction was, they were supposed to be supermen, and yet they were human. You were able to kill them. You know, as a 13 year old boy, I was – I – I was surprise. And then, of course, we saw the four guys coming towards us, about 20 feet ahead of us, and they saw what was happening, so we started running. And they took the rifles off and started shooting at us, and we run up the embankment, and near the ghetto walls, and by the ghetto walls we got to downtown. And then, on the way back, we're told not to go through – near the station, because the German were arresting people left and right. And next day they killed 20 women and children on that spot. There is a sign, and every time I go there, I feel responsible for the death of these poor people.

Q: Th – so was that – that is something that's been a burden for you.

A: Yeah, for your whole life. It's – it – and I mean, it wasn't my fault, it was a matter of life and death, it was war, but the results were something that ver-very deeply – first it was that boy, and now the 20 women and children. And it was after that that my father send me to the countryside again, to try to hide me.

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Q: Yeah. And then after that, how did life progress? What happened?

A: Well, then I – I – I – I was – the commandoes heard about my actions, and I was able to join them. And the commandoes had the advantage, that they were responsible carrying out the – the death sentence on Poles who sold Jews to the Germans, who were traitorous, who were collaborators. A-And so, we had an opportunity to kill some Germans legally after that. It was, again, pretty horrible, because we had to go into their homes, sometimes kill the family, as well as the individual, because they we – they were well armed, and they would defend themselves during the execution.

Q: That's huge.

A: Then, we were all praying that there will be an uprising, and the commanders were ordered in full, under arms, for 10 days before. And we're all, my whole unit, about 14 of us were housed in my father's house. So my father, of course, knew every day about it, that we're hidden there, fully armed. And they used to bring the food, big cauldrons of soup once a day, for all of us. And we couldn't wait to have the uprising. And then on the first of August, we got orders to go and retrieve arms for the whole company, from our secret place. And we're carrying it across one of the major streets, and the German car, because they were expecting something, saw us and started firing at us. So the **Warsaw** uprising was started by the six of us, by

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accident. It was supposed to start at five o'clock in the afternoon, and this was two o'clock. So the Germans were able to bring tanks, and –

Q: This was in the center city?

A: This was in the city, in **Żoliborz**, in **Warsaw**.

Q: So, in your neighborhood?

A: In our na – in my neighborhood.

Q: In your – in your – in your suburb area.

A: In my suburb.

Q: Yeah.

A: So this was ma – my whole – I spent the whole occupation and – and the whole battle in – in **Żoliborz**, fighting –

Q: So we're talking –

A: – on ground that I knew.

Q: Yeah. So, in other words, we're talking August 1st, 1944.

A: Right.

Q: That's when the uprising starts. And you're saying that you f – the entire time of the uprising, you stayed in your neighborhood?

A: Yes.

Q: What kind of activities did you take part in?

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A: Well, the first time, I fa – I fought – I was fighting, I got the g – my rifle, which was 1939 Polish rifle, and I was able to shoot across the street at the Germans, while they were shooting at us. Then, after they left, there was one wounded, and one killed, we had to go around, and get across another boulevard. And th – th-th- there was a tank standing and machine-gunning us as we were jumping over. And this was the first day of the uprising, that I got wounded. I got f – hit in my arm. It was something that not incapacitated me, because on the other side, there were nurses. They took care of it, and I was able to continue fighting. Then that night, the commandant of the – our section of – the **Żoliborz** section, decided that the Germans knew already about it, and they were winning, so we – he took us out into the **Kampinos** forest, which was about 15 – 20 miles outside of the city. We march all night. And then, while – the next day we got an order from the commandant of the **Warsaw**, of the whole city, to return, and we had to return. On the return, we were – we had to fight a very big battle with some German **Luftwaffe** near the airport, military airport, to get back to our own homes. And we lost quite a few. My comma – commander was badly wounded, we had to leave him behind. And then we got home, and the civilian population was very excited, and just like during the ghetto uprising, the – the Jewish – Polish fighters raised the – the Jewish and Polish flags. The Polish flags were flying from every home, and we were welcomed, and –

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by the civilians, and they helped us build barricades. So we build the barricades, and we mounted the front lines, and the Germans – when the Germans started attacking, we would let them go behind our positions. They were stopped at the barricades, and then they would get into fire from our buildings, and from behind the barricade. So th-they lost quite – in the first few days, they lost a lot of soldiers.

Q: The Germans did.

A: The German.

Q: Yeah.

A: Also I – I took a prisoner, one of the Germans. And he was – th-the – the Germans were bullies, and when they were in power, they were heartless, but when they were captured, they were cowards. And this old guy that I captured, ges – started kissing my feet, begging me not to shoot him. And I said, well, we do not shoot prisoners. But they knew that they shot us, because they didn't consider us army, they considered us bandits. So wa – there was no way of surrendering. We knew that we had to fight, or kill, ourselves. Because the way they killed us would be the much more cruel way.

Q: Yeah. What happened to this German prisoner?

A: Well, I took him over to the back, and he, together with other German prisoners, did some helping in the military kitchen, and d-digging up passages underground.

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Q: Trenches.

A: Trenches, and th-they were employed, and he always smiled at me when he saw me. He was an Austrian, and he was trying to tell me he was not a Nazi, he was – had a big family, please don't kill him. I had no respect for him.

Q: I – I can't get over you're a 14 - 15 year old boy, you know? You're still in – and yet, you're not, you know. You've been fighting for a while.

A: Well, we – we wou – we would kill the Gestapo men, we would kill the **SS** men, but we did not shoot **Wehrmacht**, the regular army. They wo – we took them prisoners.

Q: I see. So, the uprising lasted several weeks.

A: Sixty-three days.

Q: Sixty-three days. Two months.

A: Sixty-three. And th-the – the Germans were – **Hitler** issued an order that he wanted to have every man, woman and child in **Warsaw** killed in the return. And he wanted **Warsaw** leveled to the ground, the way he leveled the ghetto, after the uprising. So the Germans came in and took the order, and in the first day, they killed almost 100,000 innocent women, children, babies. It was a massacre. It was so bad that the German command had to stop it because they knew they would not win the war, th-the battle, if they continued this spending the ammunition, and the

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effort of killing innocent people rather than fighting us. So that after that they continued in shooting people. And in – in the 63 days, every day they murdered the number of people that died in 9-11, in that building. That's 3,000 people a day, for 63 days. It was medieval in – in extent. And then after, we had to surrender the – they continued leveling the city to the ground, the way that – so by the time the Russians came in the following year, they were – **Warsaw** was just a pile of bricks.

Q: Tell me, you said you were in **Żoliborz** the whole time?

A: Right.

Q: Did you ever venture into the city and come back, or is it what you – what you knew of it is what you were hearing from other people, who had been there? Did you know –

A: Oh, during – during the uprising, it was just what I heard from people who were escaped from the other parts, or who came through the sewers. The sewers were – were the connections. And a month later, after the – in the middle of the uprising, my father was – came across the sewers to **Żoliborz** from the center city, and he almost drowned. He slipped. And the Germans set up barriers, wire barriers, and his body ran into that barrier, and his leg was completely cut up by the –

Q: So at that point, in '44, is that when the uprising happened is – he stops being the mayor of **Warsaw**.

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A: He ri – he resigned three days after the for – on the fourth day of the uprising he resigned, because he felt that he could no longer administer the city, which was divided into various sections by the Germans. There were five sections of freedom fighters, and they – separated by German army, and so he felt there was no need, and he asked th – to be relieved, he and his two vice-presidents.

Q: Now, what did have they been arrested?

A: By whom?

Q: The Germans. When –

A: No, no, this was dur – th-this was when the – the uprising –

Q: Oh, so he was in the territory that was controlled by –

A: By Poles.

Q: – by the Poles.

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Okay, got it, got it, got it.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: I didn't realize that.

A: It was on the front line – the city hall was on the front line.

Q: Okay.

A: It was opposite the opera house.

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Q: Okay. And so he was going through the sewers to get out from that center area.

A: At the end of the m – the month, when the left whole section of the ancient city was destroyed, the army went to the center city through the sewers, and he was – he was able to go through the sewers to **Żoliborz**, to find out if I was alive.

Q: And your own family home, was it still standing?

A: Yes, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: Th-There was a – th – in the last few days of the uprising, the Russians sent weapons and ammunition from the low flying aircraft, without parachutes. And one of the big bags of ammunition came into the – my bedroom. Fortunately, didn't explode, but ruined the bedroom.

Q: So, through the ceiling?

A: Sorry?

Q: It came through the ceiling?

A: It came through the side wall, through the wa – kind of near the window. Th-Th- They were flying these first World War planes, double planes, very, very low. They would turn the engine off, and they would fly very low, and – and thr – but, without the parachute. Either it was too low, or they wanted to have everything destroyed on the ground, but pretend that they were helping.

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Q: So you knew that the Russians were close by?

A: Oh, th – we could see them across the river.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah. Because th – **Żoliborz** is on the river. And on the other side of the river was the Red Army. And the Polish communist par – army. And they tried to – to come a few times, but they were not trained for city fighting, and the Germans had su-such advanced equipment that they – most of the soldiers who came by boats across the river were drowned. Killed. But in the – in our uprising, in – in 1944, there were more Jewish-Polish freedom fighters than there were in the Jewish ghetto, which is very little known.

Q: Yeah.

A: In my own company, there was a whole section of about 24 freedom fighters from the ghetto. And they – they didn't go into the prison camps, but they hid, because they were afraid that they would not be treated – when the last day of the uprising, the Germans decided that they would treat us as combatants, and give us **Geneva** rights. We didn't believe it, so it was a terrible experience to have to surrender. We were ready to die, but we were not ready to go and lose our freedom.

Q: Yeah.

A: And –

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Q: How did the tide turn against you? Because it sounds like in the beginning you were – there were – you were winning.

A: Well, we were – we only had enough – we had – only one in 10 had any guns at all. Nine were with the hands. They were supposed to get arms from the Germans. So they were slaughtered right the very beginning. We did win with tremendous losses, but we won the f – for two months, and the Germans that captured us, and who fought in **Stalingrad** said that the battle of '44 in **Warsaw** was worse than **Stalingrad**. It was house to house, room to room fighting. It was hard on them, and hard on us, but it was – we had the advantage, because it was our city, we knew every corner, practically in **Żoliborz**, and we could defend ourselves better than attacking.

Q: Mm-hm. Do you remember the names of any of these Jewish-Polish fighters with you?

A: No, I don't, I – I have it at home in my – in my books, the – but –

Q: Did everybody still go by a pseudonym at that point?

A: Oh yes, yeah.

Q: Okay.

A: Everybody [**indecipherable**] pseudonym. It was only in the prison camps that we were able to declare our real names.

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Q: So tell me, how did the surrender happen to you?

A: Well, I was wounded again in the last – first day, and then I was wounded more seriously in the last day. About a week before the end of the uprising, I got pneumonia, which then turned into **TB**. And I was very, very weak, and my father was wounded in the sewers, and – with gangrene in his leg. So we lay in our house. But when the German tanks started approaching, my father forced me to get out of bed, although I had huge fever, and I could hardly walk. And we walked – he took me back to the front lines, because he felt I would be safer in the company, as a – as a soldier, than being caught as a insurgent with a gun, and wounded, because they were shooting all the wounded prisoners. They didn't take prisoners, they were killing them. Hospitals and everybody. So he took me there, and the whole city was in a flame. It was extremely hot and stinking, and I was given a anti-tank weapon, which I could hardly handle. And I was firing at one of the tanks, and I hit the tank, and the tank started firing. But there was another tank – tank standing by, and he saw the window from which I fired, and he turned the gun, and fired at my window. And just before he fired, I jumped out. This was second story. And I busted my leg – broke my leg.

Q: And that's how you were –

A: It still hurts.

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Q: Yeah.

A: That was my second time that –

Q: You were wounded.

A: But I – I – I – I – I – I was flying down as the gun – as the –

Q: Shell.

A: – shell was going above my head. So, it was worth it to survive. And then wo – we were supposed to fight our way to the **Vistula**, and the Russians were supposed to send boats to pick us up. And of course, they didn't, and the Germans knew about it, and that's why they forced our command – our general to surrender, because we – the – we knew that we will be all killed by the artillery and tank fire, before we reached the **Vistula** even.

Q: So you on a broken leg, and still with pneumonia –

A: Right.

Q: – are still there. Did you say goodbye to your father at that front line?

A: No, no, my father said goodbye as he took me two days before that, and he told me at that time that if I survive the prison camp, which was doubtful because of my pneumonia and **TB**, I should not go back to **Poland** until **Poland** is free and independent, but try to go to **London**, and to his brother, who was in the Polish embassy in **London**. So that's what I did. And then when I was in – I went to camp,

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about five days before the end of the war, it was an international camp, it was the largest prisoner of war camp in **Germany**, Stalag 11a, **Altengrabow**, located between **Magdeburg**, and – and **Berlin**.

Q: So, in the heart of **Germany**.

A: In the heart of **Germany**, **East Germany** –

Q: Hm, yes, **East Germany**.

A: – to be, later on, right. And of course, to be liberated by the Russians, but I – I didn't know that, but five days before, at the camp gates, arrived hundreds of trucks, American army trucks, to pick up American prisoners of war, and English an-and – and the western allies. It was an international camp. Just leave Poles and Russians and the Slavs behind, to be liberated by the Russian army. And th – it – the war was still going on. I could never figure out how they were allowed to cross the line, because the line was on the **Elb**, and this was quite a f – halfway b – to **Berlin**. And evidently what happened was that the American army sent some parachute jumpers to jump – to jump into the camp, to prevent the Germans from murdering the prisoners of war before they are liberated. Well, they were all caught, and they were sent to the commanding officer, the German commanding officer. And they explained to him that if he allows the American trucks to cross the line, they will – they can liberate all of the prisoners, and the German didn't want, obviously, to

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have the western prisoners fall into Russian hands, the way that the western allies didn't, so he agreed to it. And they were allowed to go through the German lines, all the way to the camp, and arrive at the camp and started loading American prisoners. And I had made friends with a Polish-American from **Chicago**, and I was standing at the gate, the Germans didn't care, the gates were opened, and he kind of waved me in, and I couldn't walk, so they got me onto the truck. And the truck drivers were supposed to be unarmed, they were supposed to be Red Cross, which they were not. And boys will be boys, they all had machine guns above the in – and I remember they stopped to shoot at a deer, and then they disarmed a couple of German officers in one of these little towns. We went about 75 - 80 miles an hour through these little, narrow, German towns. And we got to the other side of the river. Well, they still carried me into the barracks, and the next day – we had about two, three days, and we started walking already. They carried me. And I – th-they wanted to take me as an American prisoner of war, and smuggle me to **America**, and I said no, I explained with my hands, because I didn't speak English, that I wanted to go to **London**. So they thought, oh, this kid is really crazy, he doesn't want to go to **America**. But there were a couple of British **Tommys** walking by, and they explained that this guy – this kid want – was crazy, but he wants to go to **London**. So they took me under their arms, and took me to their camp. And then

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they had the problem because the – the following day, they – they were going to be interviewed by the British intelligence, to make sure that people like me don't get through. So they decided to put me into one of their uniforms, which is a

[indecipherable] uniform. And they gave me the name **William Jones**, and th – and then they bandaged my throat, so that I was shot through and lost my voice.

And that's the way they carried me through the colonels, and the generals who were interviewed individually; each one of the prisoners was interviewed to make sure that only the proper English prisoners got through. So the –

Q: That's amazing.

A: – they saw this poor guy that cou – kid that could stand by, that was a veteran of a battle of now – in **Africa, North Africa**. And they saluted me, they passed me through. Then we got onto the trucks, and went to **Belgium**. And that wou – that was the victory day, that was five days later, after my liberation, and we – we got clean there, and we got debug –

Q: Did you speak Polish with anybody?

A: No, no, I that – there were no Poles, I was the only one who was among, so it was just lang – little language, a little German and I was able to ex – we – we – we learned how to get together without using the language. And it was victory parade, and roses being thrown at us. And we were deloused, because we were all full of

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sickness, and I was – weighed 70 pounds; I was skin and bones, and I couldn't walk. And that next day, they put us on liberators, and sent us to **England**. And –

Q: And this was – do you remember the date?

A: Well, this was the – the victory day was the fifth of May – eighth of May, wasn't it? Eighth of May. I was escape on the third of May, it was Polish national holiday, Constitution day.

Q: So the day that you – you – yeah.

A: And the eighth, five days later, was the – was when the **Germany** surrendered. That's what I'm saying, that five days before, we – they allowed American trucks through to show how the Germans didn't want – they rather surrender to the west, than to the g – Russians.

Q: Of course.

A: But of course the [**indecipherable**] of this young Englishmen, Scotsmen, Irishmen were singing all the way to **Tipperary**, they were happy, and they're saying, when we get to **Oxford** there will be girls. They haven't seen women for years, and they – they – they were very naughty, they – they said, well, you know, when you get there, there will be women – air force girls to meet you, and there will be air marshal, and there will be a God save the king band, and you know, to thank for liberation, and – and – and – and – and he said, it's only one short word. Well,

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they taught me that word, short, four letter word, and I got down – down the steps, I was the first ones. And these two pretty girls, and I turn with a big smile, and repeat it. They drop me like on the tarmac, and these two – three guys were sitting there, and laughing their heads off.

Q: What was the first letter of that word?

A: Sorry – **F**.

Q: **F**, got it, mm-hm.

A: What else?

Q: Of course, of course.

A: So the – but after that they took me to – to barrack, and I asked for a British intelligence officer, and I asked for asylum. And next day they send me by Red Cross wagon, because I couldn't walk, to **Scotland**, where I was admitted into the Polish army in **Britain**.

Q: So, until that point, you hadn't spoken Polish to anybody since being liberated in **Altengrabow**?

A: Right, no, no, no.

Q: And you got into the country, and even British intelligence, which had been there in **Germany** to prevent someone from –

A: Yeah.

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Q: – like you from going, that that point when you got there, they didn't send you back.

A: No, we a – a – they didn't send back political esc – y-you know, I asked for political asylum, but also, I was a Polish soldier before. That was an ally –

Q: Okay.

A: – and th-there was a Polish army headquarters in **Scotland**.

Q: Okay.

A: So that's where they send me, and I was inducted into the Polish army there.

And –

Q: And you had no papers with you?

A: Oh, I had no – no papers whatsoever. I had just filled in, so – I was able to fill in my real age, and then I sent a cable to – to the embassy, to my father's – to my uncle, and I was released from the camp about a week later, and went to live with them for a while.

Q: So tell me, did you ever see your father again?

A: I sa – I didn't see my parents for 15 years, and that's – I was 15 when I left, and I didn't see them until I was 30.

Q: Wow.

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A: The first time I was doing some school buildings as an architect in **Turkey**, and I stopped by in **Poland** in 1960. So I left in 1944, and I didn't see them until 1960.

Q: But they survived.

A: But we had – they survive, and – and I was in constant letters. My almost weekly letters with my – my father. And I've got all these letters, I've just passed them on to the museum in **Warsaw**, where somebody is writing a – the bi – a biography of my father. They're also building a moi – a – a memorial for him.

Q: Tell me – one part that we skipped in this –

A: Sorry?

Q: One part that we skipped in this was from the time you were captured, to your transport to the prisoner of war camp, and what your experience was there. So I'd like to go back a little bit, and tell me: you were sick, you had your – you had pneumonia, you had a broken leg, but what happened after you had to surrender, and what was – what happ – what was your experience from that moment until

[indecipherable]

A: Well, first I – I was – I-I broke up my gun, rather than surrendering it, and then we were marched off, and put on trucks and sent to a temporary camp outside of **Warsaw**. And I remember the Gestapo man going around the camp, looking like they would like to murder us, but they were not allowed inside. And then they were

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put – put on cattle train, and we were prisoners of the same tank regiment. It was a – the – now I can't remember it, it's – it's – it's – it's a elite German tank regiment and th-the general in charge of – give us a pep talk that how many tanks we have killed, how many soldiers of his, what wonderful soldiers we were.

Q: An enemy general saying this?

A: In German, you know, he was being a – he was a ex-cavalry officer, and he knew that our Polish general from Olympic games in **Berlin**, and they were friends. So he tried to be very straightforward, and – but he said, if we tried to escape from the – the train, then we would, of course, be shot. And the – th – his – th-the – the – those German soldiers that were – that survived the battle, were going on home leave on the same train. So they were – th-they were our guards.

Q: How did they behave towards you?

A: They behaved very well, but I was dying and sick. I had – I just disgraced myself in-in – in – in – in the thing, and I'm surprised that my – if they could they would have thrown me out of that thing, was – I was so sick I couldn't sit, I couldn't – and I couldn't stand and there was no place to sit down. It was a cattle train, like the same trains that they took people to gas chambers. And they wouldn't – I remember we stopped in **Berlin**, there was a big allied air raid, and so that pleased us enormously. And then we got to the camp, and they didn't have any space, the camp

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was so full. And it was rainy, it was cold, it was wet. So I had to spend about two, three nights on the ground.

Q: And you're already sick.

A: With the – raining on me, already sick. So I – I was pretty much dying when some English nurse found me, and they took me to a **TB** hos – so-called hospital. And there were – we didn't have any beds, it was just the same wooden benches as in an – any other concentration camp, or prisoner of war camp. And the only difference between concentration camp and – and a prison camp was that they tried to kill you with – by not feeding you. So it was starvation and hard work. They would send you to coal mines and stone quarries, and you lasted about a week. But because I had **TB**, and I was dying, they didn't send me to – to work. And that's – that's how I survived. And once I got out of being sick, I went specially and – and – and – to another barrack where they had certain diseases of skin, and I got it myself, so that – it was very unpleasant, very horrible, but that kept me from going to the – to the – so I survived, but I was skin and bones at the end, and depressed, and I really wanted to die there. But it – it was horrible.

Q: Okay then, let's go back to **England** now. At the very beginning of our interview, you said that your doctors in – in **Britain** –

A: Military doctor.

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Q: Military doctor, suggested that one of the ways you could heal is by writing down what happened to you.

A: Well, there were two things, one was the physical. They didn't know how to take care of escaped prisoners of war, and they put me on normal diet; egg, rich milk and everything. The result was that my body turned into huge carbuncles. I just couldn't absorb rich food, and it almost killed me with the good, rich food. But the worst thing was the psychological. I had nightmares. I would keep on fighting in the middle of the night. I would end up standing up on the – my bed, and I threw the side lamp in the corner because I thought I was throwing grenades. And I was – I was in – in no condition to go into normal life, let alone any kind of education. So the doctor suggested that I write down my memoirs, mainly – in the form of a diary. And I sat down – I was very fortunate to be invited – I – I – I had very bad relations with my uncle. My uncle was a member – was a completely different man from my father. He was 10 years younger, he never fought in any war, he was a very comfortable, childless couple, lived for themselves, and just a real diplomat – a diplomat [indecipherable]. So when I arrived, he blamed me for the **Warsaw** uprising. And I'd lost my friends, my whole city, my whole family. And they wanted to adopt me. So, we didn't get along, but fortunately, there was a English aristocrat, who was a member of parliament, a woman called Lady **Ida Copeland**,

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who was a Member of Parliament, in 1935 visited **Warsaw** with a group of British **MPs**, and was entertained at the city hall by my father. So when the word got through the British government, that the son of the president of **Warsaw** arrived in such a terrible shape, she invited me into her palatial estate in **Cornwall**. And so I found myself from hell, in heaven. I was met at – at **Truro** in – in **Cornwall** by a chauffeur with a **Rolls Royce**, and I was taken to the this gorgeous vi – house, right on the waterfront, with hundreds of acres of land. It – the – the family was the **Copeland** china, the famous china. And she was very interested in Polish affairs. She was a good friend of **Ignacy Paderewski**, and she put me in the same bedroom that he had, with a view of the – o-o-of the – the ocean.

Q: Tell – tell people who was **Ignacy Paderewski**.

A: **Ignacy Paderewski** was the great Polish pianist, and prime minister in the first World War.

Q: Okay.

A: And –

Q: So what kind of – wa – you say you – you hadn't – you suffered from nightmares.

A: Right.

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Q: What kind of personality did you have at that point? How had you been changed, how were you traumatized?

A: I had no patience. I had no patience with other people's problems, because I thought they were un – completely ridiculous and unimportant, in comparison to what I went through, and what my friends, **Zula**(ph) and **Ludwig** and everybody else went through. And when they complain about the weather, or complain about th-the clothes, or complain about anything, I had no patience, and I was very, very difficult to live with for that reason. Because, after all, everybody's problems is a big problem, but at that time I didn't realize. And i-i-i-it went through – at least through my first marriage, that I wasn't a very good husband. And I went through what now everybody recognize as the post traumatic –

Q: Stress disorder.

A: – stress syndrome. But in those days nobody knew, so they almost killed me with good food, and they almost – and didn't recognize my problems. But, I was lucky, because in – Lady **Copeland** became my fairy godmother. She not only – well, I – I – when I arrived there, I arrived in my battle dress, and my duffle bag. When I got to the bedroom, there was a black tie ready, and the regular clothes that she bought, shoes. And every night we would dress for dinner. This was still – it was a s – 60 room house, and some beautiful antiques, and beautif – anten – and

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interesting people, and at breakfast I am a – we would just help ourselves, we had a big buffet, and that's where I got all that rich food that almost killed me. But she – in the afternoon – in – in the morning and early afternoon, I would write my story down, and then she would take me for rides in ca – when she – and she was very involved in social life. And I always, always went with her in her **Rolls Royce**, driving around. And I remember one day on the radio of the **Rolls Royce** came through information that **Winston Churchill** lost the elections, and she burst in tears, because she was very close friend of **Churchill's**. And that's the only time that I was able to take her into my arms, the old lady, and try to cheer her up. But she didn't – after I left and went back to **London**, she arranged to have me go and be admitted to the top elite school in northern **Ireland**, the **Eaton** of northern **Ireland**, and I spent a year and a half there, being a normal schoolboy.

Q: Amazing. Amazing, how could that happen?

A: Well, the headmaster and the masters all knew my story, but on purpose they didn't allow me to get involved with it. So I – I – I was on the crew, I did all the sports, and I learned English, of course. I excelled in English literature. I had problems in mathematics and – and – and physics, chemistry, but I was very good in history and in English. I was a top student. And then I got my **Oxford** and **Cambridge** school certificate, and I had a choice of what I was going to become, a

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lawyer, doctor or architect. I wanted to be a brain surgeon, but in order to get into a medi – school of medicine, you had to learn Latin, and I was just learning English, and that didn't appeal to me, so I decided to become an architect. And then I was admitted to **Oxford** next year, and –

Q: This would be what year?

A: This was – well, I got there in 1945, I stayed through – I graduated in the end of 1946 with **Oxford** and **Cambridge** school certificate. It was 1947 – 1947 - '48.

Q: That you entered **Oxford**?

A: That I entered **Oxford** for not quite a year. I was a very rebellious student still, and I didn't like the traditional curriculum, and I was thrown out because I was – instead of doing a house for a British ambassador in **Athens**, I was doing **Frank Lloyd Wright's** house in **Arizona**. So I left, and then I got my visa and came to **America**.

Q: Well, how did – how did that – well, first of all, I want to go back a little bit with your schooling. For somebody who had had no formal schooling throughout those very formative years, of you know, middle school and high school gymnasium, as it would be in **Europe** –

A: Right.

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Q: – how is it that only a year and a half schooling got you up to faw – college level? That’s an amazing achievement.

A: Well, not only to college level, I never went to college. I went straight to –

Q: The university?

A: No, to – went to the – the master’s degree. I didn’t –

Q: You didn’t – you bypassed a bachelor’s.

A: The graduate school.

Q: You went to graduate school.

A: Yeah, to graduate school. So I – I – I had kindergarten, two years, then I had a year and a half high school, and then I went to graduate school. And my feeling is that so many years are wasted i-in college. Th-Th-Th – if – if the high school is at a high level – and the high school in – in **England** was excellent. It was at least second year of college, if not third. So that when I got to **Yale**, they – they wanted – oh, there’s another funny story, if you want to hear about it. When I was still at **Oxford** School of Architecture, I applied to three schools in **America**; to **Harvard**, **Yale**, and another school. And **Yale** se – was the one who showed interest in me, but they asked for a – the credit hours from **Oxford**. So I went to the dean of the school of architecture in **Oxford**, and – Dr. **Rice**, and I said, well, here is the letter. Can you write a letter and tell them how many credit hours? And he said, what?

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These Americans are crazy. You know that you are here working seven days a week, 12 hours a day. And he added it all up in seven hours, and I had more credit hours than – than a **PhD**. So when I got to **Yale**, they did – they wanted to put me in the last year of graduate school.

Q: Oh my gosh.

A: And I had to convince them that I didn't learn anything at **Oxford**. I insisted on repeating the first year, and it was the best decision I made.

Q: Oh my goodness.

A: But I was a scholarship student, I had the – I had no money, and –

Q: Did you have any family in the **United States**?

A: Well, I had my uncle, but I – I – I – I – we had no – no contact.

Q: That meant your father's brother from **London**?

A: Right, right, he ended up as a professor at the University of **Alabama, Tuscaloosa**.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But we – we – we – we-we broke relations altogether. We just couldn't get along. So he didn't help me at all. And then, coming over on the **Queen Mary**, I met an American girl, and a year later, I married her. So I became an American

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citizen very quickly. And she – we were married through **Yale** graduate school, and had children.

Q: Okay. How many children did you have?

A: Two.

Q: Two. And why did you leave the **U.K.** for the **United States**?

A: Why did I leave **United Kingdom**?

Q: Correct.

A: Well, there was – I think one was an architectural reason. I didn't like traditional architecture. I wanted to do modern architecture, and **America** beckoned, from library and everything I saw, **Frank Lloyd Wright** and **Louis Kahn** and th-the great American architects were here. The second, I felt that I wanted to become a full citizen of a country. I knew I couldn't go back to **Poland** because it was under Russian occupation. And I knew that I would have better chance of becoming American than a British citizen. And – but my British friends felt that I was making a big mistake, and they were very sorry to see me go, but – and when I arrived here, I realized how lucky I was in **England**. **A**, I was part of the elite, I had veterans benefits, I – th-the government paid for my education at **Oxford**, and here I arrive with five dollars in my pocket, and the – without knowing anybody. I – again, I couldn't – I went to uncle, but we – we couldn't get along, so I left, and I arrived in

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Boston with five dollars in my pocket, I couldn't find work. I went to – tried to find work as a ste-stevedore, and – a-and they laughed me off. So I was starving for about a month. And finally, I got to **Cape Cod**, where my future wife lived, and I became a waiter. And I was trained, and then started saving money, and that paid for the first year of **Yale**.

Q: Amazing, amazing. In some ways you've answered this question in part, but how did what you experienced shape you? What kind of a person did it make you?

A: Well, physically, if something doesn't kill you, it makes you stronger. You probably know from the people who were in **Siberia** that didn't die, they – they became stronger. The climate, the conditions, and particularly during the growing up years, development years, physically, you become stronger. Also, having experience all the difficulties, you become much stronger as a person, and you don't allow anything to keep you from your career goals. So I knew what I wanted to be, and I was able to do it, and to conquer all the difficulties.

Q: Did the nightmares go away?

A: And I think it's all thanks – sorry?

Q: Did the nightmares go away? Did the nightmares go away?

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A: Mostly, yes. And – and I have kept it out by writing about it, by sharing this with other people, to prepare American kids for life. And I find that very satisfactory, and have a lot – made a lot of friends.

Q: Did – when you met your family again, tha – your parents, and I take it your sister must have stayed in **Poland**, is that right?

A: Yes.

Q: That would have been 1959 - 1960?

A: Right.

Q: In those years.

A: The first time. What – did you have the opportunity to find out and talk about the things that you couldn't talk about during the war years?

Q: Some. I saw – I met **Steffa**(ph), who was out – straight out of **Auschwitz** with her number on the leg, and I – I bought some flowers, I took it. So we tooked – I talked with **Steffa**(ph) about **Ludwig**, and about those things. And I talked with my parents, but since we were in constant correspondence, I knew what was happening there, and they knew about my life. But was great, the getting back, but **Warsaw** was not the same place. And the thing which I really missed, was the Jewish section of **Warsaw**, because it was completely destroyed, and never rebuilt. So the place where there is the Jewish memorial, the Jewish history museum, now was – these

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were residential streets, with beautiful architecture, and it's all gone. A-And so, I – I get lost in that part of the ci-city. The old city, and certain monuments, and **Żoliborz**, the place that I was brought up, has changed very little.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: Does your family house still stand?

A: No, well, had – they had – that stands, but they had to sell it during the war, because my father's salary was so inadequate, it lasted only for five days of the month, the rest of the time my mother had to bring in food, and – and – and sell it on the black market. So they – they had to – my mother had to sell all the jewelry, and they – finally, they had to sell the house, with the understanding that we could live til the end of the war. But they used the money to pay off the – the debt on the house, and bought a si – a country house, where my mother had the garden.

Q: Di – were there any actions about – against your father, or for your father, after the country went communist, given that he had a prominent position.

A: That's a very good question, and they're being asked all the time. Yes, my father was offered ministerial positions in the communist government, which he refused. So he lived in a very – in a workers' house, a tiny, little place, and – a-and – and in real poverty. But he never, of course, joined the communists. So the – he was an

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enemy of the state. They knew about it. But fortunately, before the war, he was involved as vice-president, building a lot of workers' housing. And the socialists, who were in the first communist government, remembered his contributions for social welfare to the people, and one of them became his protector. And he pi – not only protected his life, but the whole family. So th – he did whatever he could, you know. He didn't last in his job very long, but he was well-placed, and high government official, and he was able to save them.

Q: So, that meant that – [**technical interruption, break**] So, we were talking about postwar, and – and that there was some – your father had a protector in the socialist party, which at first was allied with the communist party in **Poland**.

A: Right.

Q: What was this gentleman's name?

A: **Stanislaw Schwallba**(ph).

Q: **Schwallba**(ph)?

A: **Schwallba**(ph).

Q: **Schwallba**(ph).

A: And for a short time he was the Marshal of the Senate.

Q: I see.

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A: So he – he – his position was – but then he, after **Stalin's** death, **Gomolka** took over, and he was a private citizen, but he still had – was able to have enough power to save my father from the jail.

Q: I see. When – did he also arrange for a place for him to – to live?

A: Well, he couldn't do much, there was so little housing.

Q: Okay.

A: And the only housing that was left were the pre – the very, very workers' houses that my father and he worked on before the war.

Q: Okay.

A: So that was where my father ended.

Q: And did your father have – what kind a work did he do, or did he do any work **[indecipherable]** afterward?

A: My father was work in **Gdansk** for a shipping company, and then he came to **Warsaw** for the last few years he worked, and the rebuilding the housing in the city, and then he went – retired, and I was – I was able to get him to s – to come to **America** for a few weeks, few days.

Q: I see.

A: To visit me here.

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Q: Okay. Is there anything else that you think we should talk about, that we should explore here today, in having discussed all these unbelievable years, and unbelievable events that happened to you, that you think is important for people to know about?

A: Well, I think it's important to know that freedom is not free, that you have to remember it on a daily basis. You have to teach this to the children, so the history wouldn't repeat itself. And I'm afraid history does repeat itself. We can see that in – in what's happening in the world today. The middle – **Middle East, Ukraine**. And I think that our children are being disadvantaged by not being educated properly about the Holocaust, about the second World War, about the need to be on guard to save your independence. Just because we had forefathers who fought in the revolution, and made this country, doesn't mean that we have to lower our guard, and not defend it on a daily basis. And you have things happening, which shouldn't be happening. People being hurt which shouldn't be hurt. And I think it's the – for example, the scout movement, which I think is extremely important in training the character of the young people, is being maligned. There's many high school kids, who when they try to be patriotic, or – or – are being discouraged for – or – or even thrown out of school for carrying flags, or saying – believing in God, or in – in – in – in – in things which are good, and higher, and which will prepare them for – and –

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an-and not spoiling the children. I think it's a terrible thing to – just because the parents have an easier life, they make it so easy for the children that they go and look for satisfaction with drugs, and smoking and sex, and – and – and all kinds of bad things, because they lack ideology. And I think they're starved for the ideology. And I find that when I talk to the groups of young people, they are just starved for my words, they – because they don't get it at home, they don't get it in school.

Q: So, you'd say for – for values that are beyond themselves.

A: For values which they are not getting, and they know that they should be getting.

Q: I see. What about **Poland's** young people? Have you had an opportunity to talk to them?

A: Yes. The – there is certain amount of the same thing, because since independence, and the ones who were – never encountered German or Russian oppression, don't fully appreciate it. On the other hand, I think there's still enough adults and teachers, who are teaching history, recent history. For example, when I was there last month, I saw 100,000 young people doing a marathon on the day of the **Warsaw** uprising. There were three days of festivities; theaters, plays, movies. Thr-Three movies were made, enormous movies about the **Warsaw** uprising. So, that's always kept – that, together with the solidarity movement and **Walesa**

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himself says that solidarity wouldn't exist, if it wasn't for the uprising. That the –
the roots were in the fight for freedom and independence that we fought for in 1944.

Q: Well, how do you make that direct connection? If the uprising hadn't happened,
why would solidarity not happen?

A: Well, according to **Walesa**, the spirit of Polish history is the 19th century
uprising. First ni – first the **Kościuszko** uprising at the beginning of the 18th
century, 18 – 19th century, 1830, 1863, 1944. And then solidarity in 1979 –

Q: Yeah.

A: – 1980. So this was something which was passed from father to son, from the
grandfather to the grandson, and kept alive the will to live in freedom, and not be
satisfied to be a slave. And that's why **Walesa** says in his introduction in my new
book, that if it wasn't for our actions in '44, he feels that the solidarity movement
would not exist today, and **Poland** wouldn't be free. He makes that very direct –

Q: Connection.

A: – line – conja – and his own father was arrested, and died at the age of 33, so he
didn't know his father.

Q: And what was it like at the 75th anniversary –

A: Seventieth.

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Q: Seventieth anniversary, excuse me, of the uprising? And you saw all of – the marathon, and the celebrations and the commemoration of this. And you were there. How many of the former people – how many people like you are still here, who could see that, and –

A: Not many, but those mostly older and sicker, there are – a lot of in the wheelchairs. But the important thing was the way that the – today's citizens treated us veterans. Taxi drivers refused to take fees, restaurants were free. Hotels were free. It was just making it – us feel that they owe us a debt of gratitude. And it was very satisfying. And young people, the – for each one of us veterans, there was always a boy scout or a girl scout that would take each one under the arms, take us to the seats, sit down and look after us, bring us water. So we were – we-were – were well looked after.

Q: I think that's a wonderful, fitting image –

A: Isn't it? Right.

Q: – and tribute, you know, with which to end our interview today. And f – with that, I would like to thank you, Mr. **Kulski**, for coming by, for sharing your story with us, for explaining the events and the experiences that you had, and the bravery that you showed. So, thank you very, very much.

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A: Well, thank you for having me, and I hope it will helpful in the future generations.

Q: I hope so too. And with that, this ends the **United States Holocaust Memorial Museum** interview with Mr. **Julian Kulski** – or **Julian Kulski**, on September 25th, 2014. Thank you.

A: Thank you.

Conclusion of Interview