

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,290

2  
00:00:01,290 --> 00:00:03,430  
All right.

3  
00:00:03,430 --> 00:00:06,010  
This is a United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum

4  
00:00:06,010 --> 00:00:09,160  
interview with Wes Orlowski.

5  
00:00:09,160 --> 00:00:13,780  
We are meeting today  
on May 23, 2019.

6  
00:00:13,780 --> 00:00:16,059  
This is a second  
interview with Wes.

7  
00:00:16,059 --> 00:00:20,620  
The other interview was  
conducted in October 2018.

8  
00:00:20,620 --> 00:00:24,270  
Wes, we ended our  
last conversation

9  
00:00:24,270 --> 00:00:27,330  
talking about the  
end of the war.

10  
00:00:27,330 --> 00:00:29,190  
But we want to back  
up a little bit

11  
00:00:29,190 --> 00:00:31,200  
to talk about your  
father's experiences

12

00:00:31,200 --> 00:00:33,780  
when he was deported  
to Auschwitz

13  
00:00:33,780 --> 00:00:37,120  
and then spent time  
in different camps.

14  
00:00:37,120 --> 00:00:47,960  
Yes, so my father was outside  
of our home, about 25 kilometers

15  
00:00:47,960 --> 00:00:50,600  
from us, in the  
center of Warsaw,

16  
00:00:50,600 --> 00:00:57,160  
when he was arrested  
by Germans, taken

17  
00:00:57,160 --> 00:01:04,239  
to the temporary headquarters  
where he was tortured.

18  
00:01:04,239 --> 00:01:06,640  
They didn't extract  
much from him

19  
00:01:06,640 --> 00:01:12,390  
because he didn't know what  
they were expecting him to know.

20  
00:01:12,390 --> 00:01:17,393  
And then he was  
transported to Auschwitz.

21  
00:01:17,393 --> 00:01:19,060  
Do you know when that was?

22  
00:01:19,060 --> 00:01:20,020  
Yes.

23  
00:01:20,020 --> 00:01:24,330

I found the exact date when he was registered in Auschwitz.

24  
00:01:24,330 --> 00:01:30,540  
It was on 6 of July 1943.

25  
00:01:30,540 --> 00:01:36,400  
So a few weeks earlier he was arrested in Warsaw.

26  
00:01:36,400 --> 00:01:40,990  
In Auschwitz, depending on the period of time,

27  
00:01:40,990 --> 00:01:48,130  
but by the end of war, Germans were more lenient.

28  
00:01:48,130 --> 00:01:51,820  
It comes to the allowing families

29  
00:01:51,820 --> 00:01:55,780  
of prisoners and prisoners themselves to communicate

30  
00:01:55,780 --> 00:01:57,620  
between themselves.

31  
00:01:57,620 --> 00:02:02,560  
So we're allowed, by the end of war,

32  
00:02:02,560 --> 00:02:07,370  
to send some short letters written

33  
00:02:07,370 --> 00:02:11,940  
in German and small packages.

34  
00:02:11,940 --> 00:02:16,440  
Packages had to be limited in size and weight,

35  
00:02:16,440 --> 00:02:19,950  
and mostly vegetables,  
which he had

36  
00:02:19,950 --> 00:02:29,140  
to share with his inmates  
who were in the same room.

37  
00:02:29,140 --> 00:02:38,810  
A particular one which I  
visited many years later,

38  
00:02:38,810 --> 00:02:45,270  
they had nine beds in  
one room, 11 of them.

39  
00:02:45,270 --> 00:02:51,560  
And so when he received a  
parcel, as well as if they did,

40  
00:02:51,560 --> 00:02:54,480  
they had to share  
it with the inmates.

41  
00:02:54,480 --> 00:02:56,630  
Do you know which  
barracks he was in?

42  
00:02:56,630 --> 00:02:58,430  
Yes, I have all of that.

43  
00:02:58,430 --> 00:02:59,660  
It's written on--

44  
00:02:59,660 --> 00:03:02,350  
I have two letters  
from my father,

45  
00:03:02,350 --> 00:03:04,880  
authentic or original  
letters, written

46

00:03:04,880 --> 00:03:09,650  
in German, one from Auschwitz  
and one from Mauthausen.

47

00:03:09,650 --> 00:03:12,440  
And they are in  
span of two months.

48

00:03:12,440 --> 00:03:19,870  
It means shortly before he  
was deported to Mauthausen

49

00:03:19,870 --> 00:03:24,320  
and then shortly after  
he arrived to Mauthausen.

50

00:03:24,320 --> 00:03:34,380  
So my father survived both camps  
because of several factors.

51

00:03:34,380 --> 00:03:38,900  
One of them, he  
knew some German.

52

00:03:38,900 --> 00:03:46,580  
But he was learning very  
fast due to the presence--

53

00:03:46,580 --> 00:03:51,440  
he befriended some people  
there who knew German.

54

00:03:51,440 --> 00:03:54,860  
And they were kind of  
teaching themselves.

55

00:03:54,860 --> 00:04:01,610  
So my father was participating  
in these informal classes.

56

00:04:01,610 --> 00:04:04,970  
Second, he was  
relatively healthy.

57  
00:04:04,970 --> 00:04:06,800  
He was entrepreneurial.

58  
00:04:06,800 --> 00:04:12,350  
Because in files, I found that  
he was listed as a gardener.

59  
00:04:12,350 --> 00:04:16,220  
I never knew that my father  
had any talent for gardening.

60  
00:04:16,220 --> 00:04:19,160  
But he was a gardener  
in Auschwitz.

61  
00:04:19,160 --> 00:04:26,600  
And then what I knew was that  
he had skills as an accountant.

62  
00:04:26,600 --> 00:04:29,540  
And they employed  
him in the office

63  
00:04:29,540 --> 00:04:35,360  
for keeping some records,  
probably suitcases, shoes,

64  
00:04:35,360 --> 00:04:39,230  
and whatever they--

65  
00:04:39,230 --> 00:04:41,630  
as we know, Germans  
are very systematic.

66  
00:04:41,630 --> 00:04:44,110  
And they were keeping  
records of everything.

67  
00:04:44,110 --> 00:04:47,850

68

00:04:47,850 --> 00:04:49,920  
So my father survived.

69  
00:04:49,920 --> 00:04:56,940  
And also he had some access  
to the kitchen as a help.

70  
00:04:56,940 --> 00:04:58,470  
And then, if you  
are in the kitchen

71  
00:04:58,470 --> 00:05:01,290  
you try to steal  
as much as possible

72  
00:05:01,290 --> 00:05:03,120  
so you can have food later.

73  
00:05:03,120 --> 00:05:05,820

74  
00:05:05,820 --> 00:05:07,530  
Everybody was doing that.

75  
00:05:07,530 --> 00:05:11,800

76  
00:05:11,800 --> 00:05:17,530  
There are some reports  
my father didn't do that.

77  
00:05:17,530 --> 00:05:24,950  
But people were carrying  
bread in their pockets

78  
00:05:24,950 --> 00:05:28,450  
to the end of their life, long  
time after the liberation.

79  
00:05:28,450 --> 00:05:33,790  
And they were 50 years later,  
but they're still carrying

80

00:05:33,790 --> 00:05:35,650

bread in their pockets.

81

00:05:35,650 --> 00:05:41,700

You can imagine what kind of the insecurity people were going

82

00:05:41,700 --> 00:05:45,010

and what kind of fears they went through.

83

00:05:45,010 --> 00:05:48,370

84

00:05:48,370 --> 00:05:51,450

What information did your father tell you about his experiences

85

00:05:51,450 --> 00:05:52,390

there?

86

00:05:52,390 --> 00:05:57,730

My father was telling me how he participated

87

00:05:57,730 --> 00:06:00,280

in the death march.

88

00:06:00,280 --> 00:06:10,120

So there were hundreds of prisoners organized in groups.

89

00:06:10,120 --> 00:06:11,470

And they with guards.

90

00:06:11,470 --> 00:06:18,740

They were chased by foot from Auschwitz camp,

91

00:06:18,740 --> 00:06:23,320

many, many, many miles along the streets and roads,



92  
00:06:23,320 --> 00:06:25,990  
to the railroad  
station which had

93  
00:06:25,990 --> 00:06:28,450  
the connection with Austria.

94  
00:06:28,450 --> 00:06:31,570  
And they were packed  
into the cars.

95  
00:06:31,570 --> 00:06:44,020  
And then unloaded in Vienna,  
in Austria, near the camp,

96  
00:06:44,020 --> 00:06:44,740  
Mauthausen.

97  
00:06:44,740 --> 00:06:49,670

98  
00:06:49,670 --> 00:06:51,560  
So I received--

99  
00:06:51,560 --> 00:06:55,790  
I still preserved one  
letter from before leaving

100  
00:06:55,790 --> 00:06:58,880  
the Auschwitz, and  
then I have one letter

101  
00:06:58,880 --> 00:07:05,720  
which was sent to  
sister of my mother.

102  
00:07:05,720 --> 00:07:10,670  
She lived in Silesian region,  
which was Southern Poland,

103  
00:07:10,670 --> 00:07:11,890

much closer to Austria.

104  
00:07:11,890 --> 00:07:15,060

105  
00:07:15,060 --> 00:07:19,530  
Letters written, obviously,  
in German, with--

106  
00:07:19,530 --> 00:07:23,280  
both cases, there  
are his numbers which

107  
00:07:23,280 --> 00:07:26,010  
he had engraved on his hand.

108  
00:07:26,010 --> 00:07:29,190  
He mentioned also  
the exact place

109  
00:07:29,190 --> 00:07:35,520  
where he was located at that  
time, which block, which--

110  
00:07:35,520 --> 00:07:37,440  
how did he call it?

111  
00:07:37,440 --> 00:07:40,635  
Block and Stube, for example.

112  
00:07:40,635 --> 00:07:43,290

113  
00:07:43,290 --> 00:07:46,487  
So he left on the  
death march in--

114  
00:07:46,487 --> 00:07:47,320  
And he survived it--

115  
00:07:47,320 --> 00:07:47,862  
--in January?

116  
00:07:47,862 --> 00:07:53,370  
--because many-- no, it  
was before the end of 1944.

117  
00:07:53,370 --> 00:07:53,870  
Oh, OK.

118  
00:07:53,870 --> 00:07:57,130

119  
00:07:57,130 --> 00:07:59,050  
Thank God he  
survived this March.

120  
00:07:59,050 --> 00:08:03,580  
Because if anybody  
became weaker,

121  
00:08:03,580 --> 00:08:06,670  
and the neighboring  
prisoners working

122  
00:08:06,670 --> 00:08:13,530  
with him couldn't carry  
him holding his elbows,

123  
00:08:13,530 --> 00:08:18,570  
now he had to be left  
on the side of the road.

124  
00:08:18,570 --> 00:08:23,040  
And the last German  
guard who was passing him

125  
00:08:23,040 --> 00:08:24,230  
would shoot him.

126  
00:08:24,230 --> 00:08:27,960  
And then they would leave  
the body for the local--

127

00:08:27,960 --> 00:08:29,910  
But he was strong enough  
to survive the march.

128  
00:08:29,910 --> 00:08:31,890  
My father was strong enough.

129  
00:08:31,890 --> 00:08:36,240  
And apparently he  
took care of himself.

130  
00:08:36,240 --> 00:08:38,909  
And one of the aspects  
which I didn't mention

131  
00:08:38,909 --> 00:08:45,810  
was that he became very  
strong believer in God

132  
00:08:45,810 --> 00:08:48,010  
and was praying a lot.

133  
00:08:48,010 --> 00:08:57,390  
And the claims that kept his  
sanity more or less stable.

134  
00:08:57,390 --> 00:08:59,100  
Because there were  
many cases that people

135  
00:08:59,100 --> 00:09:00,610  
couldn't take it anymore.

136  
00:09:00,610 --> 00:09:04,320  
So they were throwing their  
bodies on electrical fences

137  
00:09:04,320 --> 00:09:06,530  
and electrocuting  
themselves to death.

138  
00:09:06,530 --> 00:09:09,270

139

00:09:09,270 --> 00:09:15,870  
My father somehow was able to  
survive all these atrocities.

140

00:09:15,870 --> 00:09:21,060  
And later he told me-- and  
I complemented my knowledge

141

00:09:21,060 --> 00:09:24,630  
by reading more about that--

142

00:09:24,630 --> 00:09:31,800  
the conditions for  
prisoners in Mauthausen

143

00:09:31,800 --> 00:09:37,080  
were much, much worse  
than in Auschwitz.

144

00:09:37,080 --> 00:09:41,880  
Mauthausen was considered one  
of the most severe German camps

145

00:09:41,880 --> 00:09:44,490  
where first  
prisoners in the camp

146

00:09:44,490 --> 00:09:53,310  
were sent already after the  
Anschluss of Austria in 1938,

147

00:09:53,310 --> 00:09:54,200  
I believe.

148

00:09:54,200 --> 00:09:57,180  
They started this  
camp in the quarry.

149

00:09:57,180 --> 00:10:01,800  
They're digging huge,  
huge area of quarries

150

00:10:01,800 --> 00:10:05,190  
in the side of the mountain  
to prevent this place

151

00:10:05,190 --> 00:10:08,760  
to be bombed by the  
enemy's bombers.

152

00:10:08,760 --> 00:10:11,190  
And there were the  
entire factories.

153

00:10:11,190 --> 00:10:13,610  
The planes, they  
were built there.

154

00:10:13,610 --> 00:10:17,550  
The ammunition was put  
together from the parts.

155

00:10:17,550 --> 00:10:20,980

156

00:10:20,980 --> 00:10:25,440  
And they're working to shifts,  
sometimes three shifts.

157

00:10:25,440 --> 00:10:27,420  
They're taking turns.

158

00:10:27,420 --> 00:10:33,150  
The prisoners had very  
poor average life span.

159

00:10:33,150 --> 00:10:37,600  
For the prisoner in  
Mauthausen, it was two months.

160

00:10:37,600 --> 00:10:40,470  
And my father  
survived seven months.

161

00:10:40,470 --> 00:10:49,010  
And it was liberated in 1945,  
on May 5, by a unit of US Army.

162  
00:10:49,010 --> 00:10:51,570  
Do you know what kind of work  
he was doing in the camp?

163  
00:10:51,570 --> 00:10:52,530  
All kinds of activity.

164  
00:10:52,530 --> 00:10:54,660  
They were shifting  
them so that he

165  
00:10:54,660 --> 00:10:58,040  
was working with the  
ammunition for some time.

166  
00:10:58,040 --> 00:11:04,320  
Sometimes he was in the  
office, bookkeeping again.

167  
00:11:04,320 --> 00:11:09,450  
Which fortunately the knowledge  
of German by my father,

168  
00:11:09,450 --> 00:11:13,020  
his German was quite  
good to the extent

169  
00:11:13,020 --> 00:11:20,020  
that they were employing  
him in the less physically

170  
00:11:20,020 --> 00:11:22,900  
strenuous situations.

171  
00:11:22,900 --> 00:11:25,570

172  
00:11:25,570 --> 00:11:27,460  
The worst was for

the people who had

173  
00:11:27,460 --> 00:11:35,050  
to push heavy carts  
filled of stones

174  
00:11:35,050 --> 00:11:38,710  
or where they were  
not enough people to--

175  
00:11:38,710 --> 00:11:41,020  
so they were  
overextended physically.

176  
00:11:41,020 --> 00:11:48,340  
And luckily for my  
father, he hasn't

177  
00:11:48,340 --> 00:11:53,110  
had to do a lot of menial work.

178  
00:11:53,110 --> 00:11:59,530  
Consequently, he walked  
from Mauthausen, in Austria,

179  
00:11:59,530 --> 00:12:02,230  
to GÅ³ra Kalwaria in Poland.

180  
00:12:02,230 --> 00:12:07,780  
Very rarely he was able  
to get on some freight.

181  
00:12:07,780 --> 00:12:10,510  
He was nearby of the  
railroad station.

182  
00:12:10,510 --> 00:12:12,230  
And the freight  
was just stopped.

183  
00:12:12,230 --> 00:12:15,010  
And so he could climb the train.



184

00:12:15,010 --> 00:12:18,610

But there was no  
regular transportation

185

00:12:18,610 --> 00:12:20,980

by train in 1945.

186

00:12:20,980 --> 00:12:26,000

Did he talk about liberation  
and his emotions at liberation?

187

00:12:26,000 --> 00:12:29,500

No, they're all ecstatic.

188

00:12:29,500 --> 00:12:32,680

But they were in such  
poor physical condition

189

00:12:32,680 --> 00:12:41,410

that joy was limited to the  
food which they could eat

190

00:12:41,410 --> 00:12:44,680

and the stomach  
problems they had.

191

00:12:44,680 --> 00:12:46,390

Because when they  
started to eat,

192

00:12:46,390 --> 00:12:48,430

they didn't know where to end.

193

00:12:48,430 --> 00:12:52,900

Then their stomachs were  
not accustomed to have

194

00:12:52,900 --> 00:12:57,520

normal food and plenty of food.

195

00:12:57,520 --> 00:13:00,070

So they were really suffering.

196  
00:13:00,070 --> 00:13:03,020  
Many of them had  
digestive programs.

197  
00:13:03,020 --> 00:13:07,990  
And so they were  
quickly learning how--

198  
00:13:07,990 --> 00:13:10,150  
both the prisoners  
and the people

199  
00:13:10,150 --> 00:13:12,100  
who were giving them food--

200  
00:13:12,100 --> 00:13:15,610  
to be very careful  
how they transitioned

201  
00:13:15,610 --> 00:13:17,230  
to their normal life.

202  
00:13:17,230 --> 00:13:19,540  
When your father got  
back home, do you

203  
00:13:19,540 --> 00:13:22,690  
remember seeing him for the  
first time after the war?

204  
00:13:22,690 --> 00:13:24,840  
Yes, obviously I remember that.

205  
00:13:24,840 --> 00:13:29,050  
When he came, he was  
dressed in very funny--

206  
00:13:29,050 --> 00:13:33,110  
because as he  
walked from Austria,

207

00:13:33,110 --> 00:13:35,860  
they were able to enter  
the empty houses which

208  
00:13:35,860 --> 00:13:38,740  
were abandoned by  
German population

209  
00:13:38,740 --> 00:13:42,050  
in Western Polish territory.

210  
00:13:42,050 --> 00:13:50,450  
And so they take, sometimes,  
clothing which didn't fit them,

211  
00:13:50,450 --> 00:13:55,400  
or they were partially  
broken, or something.

212  
00:13:55,400 --> 00:13:57,860  
So he was very funnily dressed.

213  
00:13:57,860 --> 00:14:00,170  
That first struck me.

214  
00:14:00,170 --> 00:14:04,940  
And second, his behavior  
was considerably changed,

215  
00:14:04,940 --> 00:14:12,430  
and to the extent  
that my mother had

216  
00:14:12,430 --> 00:14:14,810  
a major conversation with him.

217  
00:14:14,810 --> 00:14:20,040  
And he went to live with  
his mother and his sister.

218  
00:14:20,040 --> 00:14:23,100  
And eventually my  
parents divorced

219  
00:14:23,100 --> 00:14:27,630  
because it was very  
difficult for my mother

220  
00:14:27,630 --> 00:14:31,470  
to raise me as a child.

221  
00:14:31,470 --> 00:14:34,050  
I was 10 and 1/2 at the time.

222  
00:14:34,050 --> 00:14:36,600

223  
00:14:36,600 --> 00:14:40,260  
What kind of personality  
changes did he have?

224  
00:14:40,260 --> 00:14:48,750  
Nightmares, short  
temper, sometimes kind

225  
00:14:48,750 --> 00:14:51,970  
of illogical statements.

226  
00:14:51,970 --> 00:14:52,905  
And there was no--

227  
00:14:52,905 --> 00:14:56,670

228  
00:14:56,670 --> 00:15:02,190  
one could not have a longer  
conversation with him quietly.

229  
00:15:02,190 --> 00:15:05,150  
Because he was very--

230  
00:15:05,150 --> 00:15:10,020  
level of anxiety, while  
he recovered physically,

231

00:15:10,020 --> 00:15:13,470

the level of anxiety  
gradually was increasing.

232

00:15:13,470 --> 00:15:17,460

And on the one  
hand, he was happy

233

00:15:17,460 --> 00:15:19,600

that he was  
liberated, obviously.

234

00:15:19,600 --> 00:15:29,020

But on the other hand, this  
lifestyle which they had,

235

00:15:29,020 --> 00:15:31,710

changed their--

236

00:15:31,710 --> 00:15:34,100

every person, obviously,  
every prisoner,

237

00:15:34,100 --> 00:15:36,000

was reacting in a different way.

238

00:15:36,000 --> 00:15:46,250

But their outlook  
of the world outside

239

00:15:46,250 --> 00:15:51,150

changed so radically that  
they didn't know, quite often,

240

00:15:51,150 --> 00:15:53,690

how to express it.

241

00:15:53,690 --> 00:15:56,450

They didn't understand what  
was going on with them.

242

00:15:56,450 --> 00:16:00,960

There were a lot of what  
you would call, today, PTSD.

243

00:16:00,960 --> 00:16:03,960

It was not known at the time.

244

00:16:03,960 --> 00:16:12,580

But all forms of that kind of  
the trauma was engraved deeply.

245

00:16:12,580 --> 00:16:20,850

There was not enough time to  
rest and recover for them.

246

00:16:20,850 --> 00:16:25,750

So they were still  
living, so to speak.

247

00:16:25,750 --> 00:16:27,520

They're waking in the morning.

248

00:16:27,520 --> 00:16:31,460

And they were surprised that  
they don't have to go to work,

249

00:16:31,460 --> 00:16:34,160

for example.

250

00:16:34,160 --> 00:16:37,970

Do you think, later  
in his life, he

251

00:16:37,970 --> 00:16:41,135

found ways of dealing with it,  
of coping with it, and changed?

252

00:16:41,135 --> 00:16:41,870

He must have.

253

00:16:41,870 --> 00:16:45,020

Because he started another  
family and eventually

254

00:16:45,020 --> 00:16:45,955  
had two children.

255

00:16:45,955 --> 00:16:48,660

256

00:16:48,660 --> 00:16:51,740  
But I hadn't been in  
close contact with him

257

00:16:51,740 --> 00:16:54,380  
at that time at the  
end of his life.

258

00:16:54,380 --> 00:16:58,310  
He lived till the age--

259

00:16:58,310 --> 00:17:01,420  
he was 79 when he died.

260

00:17:01,420 --> 00:17:11,760  
He was born 1905  
and died in 1983.

261

00:17:11,760 --> 00:17:14,030  
And I've been to  
his grave, but I

262

00:17:14,030 --> 00:17:19,190  
haven't seen in the last  
many years before his death.

263

00:17:19,190 --> 00:17:22,940  
I will in the United States  
already, then, besides,

264

00:17:22,940 --> 00:17:24,460  
for many years.

265

00:17:24,460 --> 00:17:40,392  
So to return to our life,  
in 1944, we became refugees.

266  
00:17:40,392 --> 00:17:41,100  
What do you mean?

267  
00:17:41,100 --> 00:17:42,860  
You were kicked  
out of your home?

268  
00:17:42,860 --> 00:17:46,280  
We are told to leave our  
home at a short notice.

269  
00:17:46,280 --> 00:17:49,380  
Entire town, and  
neighboring villages,

270  
00:17:49,380 --> 00:17:53,210  
and the whole strip  
along the Vistula River.

271  
00:17:53,210 --> 00:17:57,330  
And the reason was that we  
live on the Western shore

272  
00:17:57,330 --> 00:17:58,730  
of the Vistula River.

273  
00:17:58,730 --> 00:18:03,300  
And on the eastern  
shore, Soviet army

274  
00:18:03,300 --> 00:18:05,520  
approached, chasing Germans.

275  
00:18:05,520 --> 00:18:10,680  
And the Vistula River  
became the border line

276  
00:18:10,680 --> 00:18:11,730  
between two armies--

277  
00:18:11,730 --> 00:18:14,730



German army and Soviet army.

278

00:18:14,730 --> 00:18:19,260

And our house was on high  
shore of Vistula River,

279

00:18:19,260 --> 00:18:25,470

easily visible from the  
other shore of the river.

280

00:18:25,470 --> 00:18:34,460

And the snipers--  
how do you call them,

281

00:18:34,460 --> 00:18:37,320

sharp snipers,  
with the lunettes,

282

00:18:37,320 --> 00:18:39,870

they could see  
any moving object.

283

00:18:39,870 --> 00:18:41,500

And they were shooting.

284

00:18:41,500 --> 00:18:46,710

So for a short time, we  
were living in our house.

285

00:18:46,710 --> 00:18:51,300

But we had to go with  
our head down and almost

286

00:18:51,300 --> 00:18:56,560

crawl because we  
could easily be shot

287

00:18:56,560 --> 00:18:59,620

like ducks during the hunting.

288

00:18:59,620 --> 00:19:00,610

Where did you go?

289

00:19:00,610 --> 00:19:06,330

So we went with two  
suitcases and my cat

290

00:19:06,330 --> 00:19:15,010

hanging in a bag on my neck, we  
walked for about several miles.

291

00:19:15,010 --> 00:19:18,895

And then, eventually, we  
hired, for a small fee,

292

00:19:18,895 --> 00:19:23,970

a farmer with his cart and  
horse and several families

293

00:19:23,970 --> 00:19:27,160

we share that vehicle.

294

00:19:27,160 --> 00:19:30,220

And we went to one  
of the villages

295

00:19:30,220 --> 00:19:35,260

when we rented a small  
place in the barn.

296

00:19:35,260 --> 00:19:39,700

And then we rented  
one room in the house.

297

00:19:39,700 --> 00:19:44,560

And then we went  
to another village.

298

00:19:44,560 --> 00:19:53,020

And that were Polish underground  
fighters from Warsaw uprising.

299

00:19:53,020 --> 00:19:58,180

It was 1944.

300

00:19:58,180 --> 00:20:04,450  
We kept them from helping  
them to change dressings

301  
00:20:04,450 --> 00:20:06,580  
on their wounds.

302  
00:20:06,580 --> 00:20:10,250  
And after a few  
weeks, they left.

303  
00:20:10,250 --> 00:20:15,010  
They were taken by other  
units of underground movement

304  
00:20:15,010 --> 00:20:16,480  
during the night.

305  
00:20:16,480 --> 00:20:22,210  
But nearby there was a big  
artillery unit, German.

306  
00:20:22,210 --> 00:20:24,730  
And it was aiming,  
obviously, towards east,

307  
00:20:24,730 --> 00:20:27,900  
against the Soviets.

308  
00:20:27,900 --> 00:20:30,880  
Then, certain day,  
in the morning,

309  
00:20:30,880 --> 00:20:36,340  
we see they are  
turning their guns

310  
00:20:36,340 --> 00:20:39,450  
aiming to the west,  
180 degrees reversal.

311  
00:20:39,450 --> 00:20:41,520  
We were completely shocked.

312  
00:20:41,520 --> 00:20:44,310  
Well, what's-- they're  
shooting their own unit?

313  
00:20:44,310 --> 00:20:49,890  
Then we realized that  
they were ready to defend

314  
00:20:49,890 --> 00:20:52,520  
against the encircling  
which took place.

315  
00:20:52,520 --> 00:20:57,780  
The Russians broke the front  
at the beginning of January.

316  
00:20:57,780 --> 00:21:00,450  
Eventually the  
liberation of Warsaw

317  
00:21:00,450 --> 00:21:03,990  
took place on January 17, 1945.

318  
00:21:03,990 --> 00:21:06,570  
But before that,  
this German units

319  
00:21:06,570 --> 00:21:10,650  
which were in our neighborhood  
in the countryside,

320  
00:21:10,650 --> 00:21:13,540  
they were aiming towards us.

321  
00:21:13,540 --> 00:21:15,130  
They are not shooting  
at that time,

322  
00:21:15,130 --> 00:21:18,910  
but they were  
aiming towards west.

323

00:21:18,910 --> 00:21:23,470

Because Russian army already encircled them from the West.

324

00:21:23,470 --> 00:21:28,240

The only open area they had is towards Warsaw, towards north.

325

00:21:28,240 --> 00:21:31,600

So eventually they put their stuff together.

326

00:21:31,600 --> 00:21:38,020

They hooked their artillery units to the trucks.

327

00:21:38,020 --> 00:21:40,930

And they left towards north.

328

00:21:40,930 --> 00:21:45,820

I don't know what happened to them, whether they

329

00:21:45,820 --> 00:21:52,060

were caught in encirclement or they were able successfully

330

00:21:52,060 --> 00:21:54,460

to go west.

331

00:21:54,460 --> 00:21:56,350

Did you return home at that point?

332

00:21:56,350 --> 00:21:58,780

At this point, we were free to go home.

333

00:21:58,780 --> 00:22:04,420

And we-- around the time of the liberation of the Warsaw,

334

00:22:04,420 --> 00:22:08,740  
we came with our two  
suitcases to our home.

335  
00:22:08,740 --> 00:22:12,610  
And our home was  
really plundered.

336  
00:22:12,610 --> 00:22:16,960  
And whatever was able--

337  
00:22:16,960 --> 00:22:24,100  
people who were stealing the  
items, they did a good job,

338  
00:22:24,100 --> 00:22:25,810  
I have to admit.

339  
00:22:25,810 --> 00:22:33,370  
And we barely found  
any belongings,

340  
00:22:33,370 --> 00:22:36,360  
including the front door.

341  
00:22:36,360 --> 00:22:40,485  
When we were approaching our  
house, we saw a gentleman--

342  
00:22:40,485 --> 00:22:44,860  
well, "gentleman,"  
who my mother knew,

343  
00:22:44,860 --> 00:22:48,200  
he was cutting on his back,  
from door of our house.

344  
00:22:48,200 --> 00:22:52,910  
So my mother told him,  
you better leave it here.

345  
00:22:52,910 --> 00:22:58,840  
[CHUCKLES] And he grabbed

the door, apologized--

346  
00:22:58,840 --> 00:23:01,750  
because he didn't know  
whose house was it--

347  
00:23:01,750 --> 00:23:02,340  
and he--

348  
00:23:02,340 --> 00:23:03,490  
He didn't put it back on?

349  
00:23:03,490 --> 00:23:07,630  
And my mother was his teacher.

350  
00:23:07,630 --> 00:23:10,000  
So he recognized my  
mother as a teacher.

351  
00:23:10,000 --> 00:23:17,775  
And, well, anyhow,  
after the war, life--

352  
00:23:17,775 --> 00:23:21,750  
we are all ecstatic, obviously.

353  
00:23:21,750 --> 00:23:24,870  
But there were huge  
shortages of everything.

354  
00:23:24,870 --> 00:23:27,300  
And food was the most important.

355  
00:23:27,300 --> 00:23:29,760  
The farmers which  
were around did

356  
00:23:29,760 --> 00:23:33,330  
their best and to  
feed their families

357  
00:23:33,330 --> 00:23:38,310

and have something  
to sell and feed us,

358  
00:23:38,310 --> 00:23:41,640  
people living in the small town.

359  
00:23:41,640 --> 00:23:46,650  
We quickly started to grow  
food in a small garden.

360  
00:23:46,650 --> 00:23:51,450  
I was one of the  
main providers there.

361  
00:23:51,450 --> 00:23:54,480  
I learned a lot of  
skills at that time.

362  
00:23:54,480 --> 00:23:55,880  
What were you growing?

363  
00:23:55,880 --> 00:24:01,770  
Oh, basic root vegetables.

364  
00:24:01,770 --> 00:24:04,770  
Which we had good soil.

365  
00:24:04,770 --> 00:24:07,260  
Because chemicals were unknown.

366  
00:24:07,260 --> 00:24:11,940  
We were getting  
manure from farmers.

367  
00:24:11,940 --> 00:24:19,830  
My mother was helping  
herself and helping children.

368  
00:24:19,830 --> 00:24:24,930  
A lot of children were  
behind the regular program

369



00:24:24,930 --> 00:24:32,780  
in Polish language,  
math, biology, geography,

370  
00:24:32,780 --> 00:24:37,060  
all the basic subjects  
in the grammar school.

371  
00:24:37,060 --> 00:24:44,670  
My mom was doing  
tutorials at home,

372  
00:24:44,670 --> 00:24:47,840  
after the regular  
school classes.

373  
00:24:47,840 --> 00:24:52,050  
So these children, on the way  
home, they were stopping by.

374  
00:24:52,050 --> 00:24:55,560  
Not that many-- two,  
three, one sometimes.

375  
00:24:55,560 --> 00:24:59,760  
But quite often,  
after regular school,

376  
00:24:59,760 --> 00:25:04,230  
there was somebody in my house  
where my mother was teaching.

377  
00:25:04,230 --> 00:25:08,430  
And these children,  
most of them,

378  
00:25:08,430 --> 00:25:10,370  
they were children of farmers.

379  
00:25:10,370 --> 00:25:13,050  
And there was a  
barter agreement.

380

00:25:13,050 --> 00:25:18,450  
And they were bringing  
eggs, a small can of milk,

381  
00:25:18,450 --> 00:25:23,040  
homemade cheese, a  
chicken, sometimes live,

382  
00:25:23,040 --> 00:25:26,400  
sometimes killed, but freshly.

383  
00:25:26,400 --> 00:25:29,910  
So we are trying to survive.

384  
00:25:29,910 --> 00:25:35,460  
Because stores were  
empty at the beginning.

385  
00:25:35,460 --> 00:25:37,410  
And also there was  
shortage of cash.

386  
00:25:37,410 --> 00:25:43,080  
I mean, the whole  
organization of the life,

387  
00:25:43,080 --> 00:25:48,990  
it took many months  
before people

388  
00:25:48,990 --> 00:25:52,083  
could function normally--

389  
00:25:52,083 --> 00:25:53,000  
so to speak, normally.

390  
00:25:53,000 --> 00:25:56,360

391  
00:25:56,360 --> 00:26:00,870  
How did her job change with  
the communists in power?

392

00:26:00,870 --> 00:26:02,760

Very interesting question.

393

00:26:02,760 --> 00:26:06,050

Because my mother and  
all her colleagues,

394

00:26:06,050 --> 00:26:09,120

they were pre-war teachers.

395

00:26:09,120 --> 00:26:10,920

So they knew the program.

396

00:26:10,920 --> 00:26:17,830

And some of them, they saved the  
books, or copies of the books,

397

00:26:17,830 --> 00:26:19,200

pre-war.

398

00:26:19,200 --> 00:26:22,360

They were not  
accepted officially

399

00:26:22,360 --> 00:26:27,570

by the communist authorities  
because they were--

400

00:26:27,570 --> 00:26:29,340

especially history books.

401

00:26:29,340 --> 00:26:32,730

In math or biology,  
you cannot change much.

402

00:26:32,730 --> 00:26:35,770

But history books,  
they were a no-no

403

00:26:35,770 --> 00:26:40,500

for the communist authorities.

404

00:26:40,500 --> 00:26:46,280

So a lot of teaching was based  
either from these fragments

405

00:26:46,280 --> 00:26:50,900

of the books which are  
saved by the teachers

406

00:26:50,900 --> 00:26:53,780

or from their  
memories, or teachers

407

00:26:53,780 --> 00:26:58,640

who are teaching one  
another some of that,

408

00:26:58,640 --> 00:27:03,530

depending who was behind the  
back, who was unofficial.

409

00:27:03,530 --> 00:27:08,480

And they were kind of the  
between the real facts

410

00:27:08,480 --> 00:27:15,200

and phantom history which  
communists wanted to teach.

411

00:27:15,200 --> 00:27:22,880

And the history--  
as the older people

412

00:27:22,880 --> 00:27:26,780

knew, history is not  
only what's in the books,

413

00:27:26,780 --> 00:27:30,290

but what's in people's memory,  
especially older people's

414

00:27:30,290 --> 00:27:33,240

memory.

415

00:27:33,240 --> 00:27:35,190

So they were very  
difficult times.

416

00:27:35,190 --> 00:27:42,150

My mother was very involved  
in the teachers union.

417

00:27:42,150 --> 00:27:44,550

Before war, she  
was participating

418

00:27:44,550 --> 00:27:46,340

in demonstrations in Warsaw.

419

00:27:46,340 --> 00:27:54,450

But after the war, obviously  
the teachers labor union

420

00:27:54,450 --> 00:28:05,650

was penetrated by communists,  
open or secret agents.

421

00:28:05,650 --> 00:28:08,730

So we need to  
relearn quickly who

422

00:28:08,730 --> 00:28:11,760

to speak to, to what extent.

423

00:28:11,760 --> 00:28:15,350

We had to learn how to read  
between the lines what's

424

00:28:15,350 --> 00:28:17,130

in the newspapers.

425

00:28:17,130 --> 00:28:21,870

We had to learn quickly not to  
believe official propaganda.

426

00:28:21,870 --> 00:28:25,680

We have to relearn  
quickly how to man--

427  
00:28:25,680 --> 00:28:32,280  
or woman-- a radio  
receiver and how

428  
00:28:32,280 --> 00:28:37,170  
to listen to Radio Free  
Europe or BBC from England.

429  
00:28:37,170 --> 00:28:41,400  
Radio Free Europe  
stations were located just

430  
00:28:41,400 --> 00:28:43,710  
over the border between  
West and Eastern

431  
00:28:43,710 --> 00:28:49,470  
Germany, several transmitters  
on different frequencies.

432  
00:28:49,470 --> 00:28:57,090  
And to learn that the Polish  
authorities are having

433  
00:28:57,090 --> 00:29:00,780  
radio stations on the same  
frequency located in Poland,

434  
00:29:00,780 --> 00:29:08,430  
which those were sending  
huge noise, gobbledygook,

435  
00:29:08,430 --> 00:29:09,660  
mechanical noise.

436  
00:29:09,660 --> 00:29:11,820  
Which the purpose  
of that was just

437  
00:29:11,820 --> 00:29:18,600

to squash the regular signals  
coming from Radio Free

438  
00:29:18,600 --> 00:29:20,040  
Europe from Germany.

439  
00:29:20,040 --> 00:29:22,020  
What programs do you  
remember listening to?

440  
00:29:22,020 --> 00:29:24,210  
Oh, they were all  
publicity programs.

441  
00:29:24,210 --> 00:29:26,580  
They were interviewing  
interesting people.

442  
00:29:26,580 --> 00:29:29,090  
And they were, you know--

443  
00:29:29,090 --> 00:29:33,120  
at the beginning we believed  
whatever was said there.

444  
00:29:33,120 --> 00:29:36,270  
Because it was so  
different and refreshing

445  
00:29:36,270 --> 00:29:38,280  
what was the  
official propaganda.

446  
00:29:38,280 --> 00:29:45,240  
Gradually we started to  
learn how to read and listen

447  
00:29:45,240 --> 00:29:47,550  
with some criticism.

448  
00:29:47,550 --> 00:29:49,477  
To the BBC and Free Radio--

449

00:29:49,477 --> 00:29:50,310  
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

450

00:29:50,310 --> 00:29:53,190  
--and Radio Free Europe.

451

00:29:53,190 --> 00:29:56,820  
They were a different  
type of propaganda,

452

00:29:56,820 --> 00:29:59,840  
as we learned, after some time.

453

00:29:59,840 --> 00:30:01,990  
And was that in English?

454

00:30:01,990 --> 00:30:04,020  
No, it was in Polish.

455

00:30:04,020 --> 00:30:05,300  
Everything was in Polish.

456

00:30:05,300 --> 00:30:07,535  
No, no, it was directed  
to Polish population.

457

00:30:07,535 --> 00:30:09,440  
OK, and the BBC was also?

458

00:30:09,440 --> 00:30:12,620  
Yeah, but authorities  
were chasing it.

459

00:30:12,620 --> 00:30:15,540  
So people were doing very  
secretly in the evening,

460

00:30:15,540 --> 00:30:20,400  
not too loud so  
neighbors wouldn't hear.

461



00:30:20,400 --> 00:30:23,100  
But a lot of people  
were doing it, even

462  
00:30:23,100 --> 00:30:28,440  
those who claim to be  
communists and believing

463  
00:30:28,440 --> 00:30:32,620  
in the theory of communism.

464  
00:30:32,620 --> 00:30:35,250  
We learned later they were  
listening to these radio

465  
00:30:35,250 --> 00:30:36,150  
stations as well.

466  
00:30:36,150 --> 00:30:39,600

467  
00:30:39,600 --> 00:30:41,700  
So I'm sure you had neighbors  
that you could trust

468  
00:30:41,700 --> 00:30:43,440  
and neighbors you  
couldn't trust.

469  
00:30:43,440 --> 00:30:44,580  
Yes, yes.

470  
00:30:44,580 --> 00:30:49,930  
During the war, from  
the very beginning,

471  
00:30:49,930 --> 00:30:53,140  
my mother had a saying  
that real friends,

472  
00:30:53,140 --> 00:31:00,140  
you recognized and distinguished  
from so-called friends when

473  
00:31:00,140 --> 00:31:04,540  
the people had to  
do the sacrifices

474  
00:31:04,540 --> 00:31:10,070  
and people have to do  
beyond their comfort zone.

475  
00:31:10,070 --> 00:31:14,090  
So the people-- many  
of our neighbors

476  
00:31:14,090 --> 00:31:20,880  
which we thought not  
very highly about them,

477  
00:31:20,880 --> 00:31:24,380  
they appeared full  
of sacrifices,

478  
00:31:24,380 --> 00:31:27,110  
ready to take their  
last shirt and give you

479  
00:31:27,110 --> 00:31:31,410  
if you needed, so to  
speak, symbolically.

480  
00:31:31,410 --> 00:31:34,970  
And people for whom  
we had high esteem

481  
00:31:34,970 --> 00:31:41,660  
appeared not worse,  
petty, so to speak.

482  
00:31:41,660 --> 00:31:53,160  
Because they became either  
selfish or they became agents.

483  
00:31:53,160 --> 00:31:58,470  
And they were ready to spy on

you and report to authorities.

484

00:31:58,470 --> 00:32:05,130

So learning whom you can  
trust and to what extent

485

00:32:05,130 --> 00:32:09,950

was one of the major human  
skills which one had to learn.

486

00:32:09,950 --> 00:32:11,790

Did those neighbors  
change at all

487

00:32:11,790 --> 00:32:14,610

after the communists  
came into power?

488

00:32:14,610 --> 00:32:17,640

Were certain neighbors who you  
could trust during the war,

489

00:32:17,640 --> 00:32:21,480

could you no longer  
trust them after the war?

490

00:32:21,480 --> 00:32:23,420

This was an interesting process.

491

00:32:23,420 --> 00:32:26,010

That was a dynamic process.

492

00:32:26,010 --> 00:32:28,670

And to the extent that  
these things are written

493

00:32:28,670 --> 00:32:37,100

and I witness the  
situations like that, people

494

00:32:37,100 --> 00:32:41,120

who were discovered by the  
Polish underground movement

495

00:32:41,120 --> 00:32:46,040

in the war, that they were  
cooperating with Germans,

496

00:32:46,040 --> 00:32:49,560

and they were caught  
and proven, they

497

00:32:49,560 --> 00:33:00,440

were taken on the site somewhere  
outside of everybody's view,

498

00:33:00,440 --> 00:33:06,110

and they were shot and  
killed by the special units

499

00:33:06,110 --> 00:33:07,520

of Polish underground movement.

500

00:33:07,520 --> 00:33:11,240

And there was very  
obvious reason--

501

00:33:11,240 --> 00:33:15,200

to give a lesson to  
the rest of the society

502

00:33:15,200 --> 00:33:20,060

that's not the approved  
way of behaving.

503

00:33:20,060 --> 00:33:23,220

Plus they had to be  
removed because they

504

00:33:23,220 --> 00:33:25,070

are doing so much damage.

505

00:33:25,070 --> 00:33:29,550

So many people lost lives  
because of people like that.

506

00:33:29,550 --> 00:33:36,380

So yes, there are all kinds of the behaviors.

507

00:33:36,380 --> 00:33:40,190

There are people who were indecisive that

508

00:33:40,190 --> 00:33:41,930

then became very cooperative.

509

00:33:41,930 --> 00:33:46,190

People who were cooperative and they change their mind

510

00:33:46,190 --> 00:33:47,600

and they became selfish.

511

00:33:47,600 --> 00:33:51,860

512

00:33:51,860 --> 00:33:55,070

There were trial periods for everybody.

513

00:33:55,070 --> 00:33:59,600

Everybody was, certain way, exposed and tested.

514

00:33:59,600 --> 00:34:02,640

515

00:34:02,640 --> 00:34:06,830

And there was nobody basically who

516

00:34:06,830 --> 00:34:15,150

could stay in their comfort zone and stay unengaged in any way.

517

00:34:15,150 --> 00:34:21,770

So let's switch topics and

talk about your education.

518  
00:34:21,770 --> 00:34:27,949  
So my education started  
from self-education.

519  
00:34:27,949 --> 00:34:30,590  
So when my mother  
was giving tutorials,

520  
00:34:30,590 --> 00:34:34,400  
I was sitting, playing with  
my toys, in the other room.

521  
00:34:34,400 --> 00:34:35,989  
Doors were open.

522  
00:34:35,989 --> 00:34:37,750  
I was on the floor.

523  
00:34:37,750 --> 00:34:41,739  
And my mother  
didn't know that I'm

524  
00:34:41,739 --> 00:34:45,260  
absorbing everything what  
she was teaching there

525  
00:34:45,260 --> 00:34:47,800  
like a sponge.

526  
00:34:47,800 --> 00:34:55,960  
To the extent that when I was  
ready to go to the first grade,

527  
00:34:55,960 --> 00:34:59,380  
teachers who where  
examining me, they said,

528  
00:34:59,380 --> 00:35:02,890  
no, you can go to second grade.

529

00:35:02,890 --> 00:35:05,050  
You know more than that.

530  
00:35:05,050 --> 00:35:08,770  
So my mother herself  
was surprised.

531  
00:35:08,770 --> 00:35:10,870  
But I went to the second grade.

532  
00:35:10,870 --> 00:35:17,410  
And from that second grade  
to the end of my high school,

533  
00:35:17,410 --> 00:35:18,430  
I was always--

534  
00:35:18,430 --> 00:35:21,210

535  
00:35:21,210 --> 00:35:26,170  
to the last class, I was  
always the best student.

536  
00:35:26,170 --> 00:35:31,410  
I had the best grades.

537  
00:35:31,410 --> 00:35:35,880  
However, in the last two  
years of my high school,

538  
00:35:35,880 --> 00:35:37,590  
there was an--

539  
00:35:37,590 --> 00:35:39,840  
older than all of us--

540  
00:35:39,840 --> 00:35:41,340  
young man came.

541  
00:35:41,340 --> 00:35:47,130  
And he was studying at

the seminary for priests.

542  
00:35:47,130 --> 00:35:51,060  
And he knew Latin  
like nobody else.

543  
00:35:51,060 --> 00:35:54,720  
He knew French like nobody else.

544  
00:35:54,720 --> 00:35:58,100  
And he was good, but not  
as good as I was in math.

545  
00:35:58,100 --> 00:35:59,210  
[CHUCKLES]

546  
00:35:59,210 --> 00:36:02,130  
But I had quite a problem.

547  
00:36:02,130 --> 00:36:04,400  
Because I was accustomed  
to being the best.

548  
00:36:04,400 --> 00:36:09,080  
All the kids were coming to  
me with problems to solve

549  
00:36:09,080 --> 00:36:09,810  
or something.

550  
00:36:09,810 --> 00:36:11,730  
I was helping.

551  
00:36:11,730 --> 00:36:14,370  
And I was not selfish.

552  
00:36:14,370 --> 00:36:17,280  
I was very helpful  
to other students.

553  
00:36:17,280 --> 00:36:20,290



554  
00:36:20,290 --> 00:36:23,580  
However, in that last--

555  
00:36:23,580 --> 00:36:26,790  
just before graduation,  
I had problem

556  
00:36:26,790 --> 00:36:33,840  
with competing with  
this young man.

557  
00:36:33,840 --> 00:36:39,900  
As I said, he was for four  
or five years older than us.

558  
00:36:39,900 --> 00:36:43,530  
And he had so much  
schooling in that seminary.

559  
00:36:43,530 --> 00:36:53,310  
So anyhow, I graduated from high  
school in 1952, the same year

560  
00:36:53,310 --> 00:37:01,170  
I applied to Warsaw Polytech, to  
the Department of Electronics,

561  
00:37:01,170 --> 00:37:03,450  
which was a direction--

562  
00:37:03,450 --> 00:37:06,010

563  
00:37:06,010 --> 00:37:09,420  
well, if young man  
ask older man where

564  
00:37:09,420 --> 00:37:12,540  
he should go in the  
movie The Graduate,

565

00:37:12,540 --> 00:37:15,150  
I believe, he would  
say, "plastics."

566  
00:37:15,150 --> 00:37:22,020  
At that time, electronics  
was a popular direction.

567  
00:37:22,020 --> 00:37:26,280  
Everybody wanted to  
learn about electronics.

568  
00:37:26,280 --> 00:37:29,160  
And we had competitive exams.

569  
00:37:29,160 --> 00:37:34,600  
I went through  
that starting in--

570  
00:37:34,600 --> 00:37:39,120  
it was an 11-semester program.

571  
00:37:39,120 --> 00:37:43,860  
There was an  
experimental program

572  
00:37:43,860 --> 00:37:50,250  
where we couldn't get a  
BS, Bachelor of Science.

573  
00:37:50,250 --> 00:37:52,620  
We had to go for master's.

574  
00:37:52,620 --> 00:37:57,050  
So in one chunk,  
without interrupting

575  
00:37:57,050 --> 00:38:02,700  
there was the first course  
of that entire college.

576  
00:38:02,700 --> 00:38:05,940

577  
00:38:05,940 --> 00:38:10,080  
I had to go for master's degree.

578  
00:38:10,080 --> 00:38:17,400  
So after almost  
10 semesters, when

579  
00:38:17,400 --> 00:38:23,160  
I was done with my regular  
study at the class, when

580  
00:38:23,160 --> 00:38:27,460  
it was the time to write  
dissertation, myself and two

581  
00:38:27,460 --> 00:38:29,500  
of my closest  
friends, we started

582  
00:38:29,500 --> 00:38:35,830  
to work in industrial institute  
for telecommunications.

583  
00:38:35,830 --> 00:38:39,280  
And it was semi-military  
institution.

584  
00:38:39,280 --> 00:38:42,520  
But there was a lot of  
work there for civilians.

585  
00:38:42,520 --> 00:38:46,540  
In our case we were  
doing parts for radars

586  
00:38:46,540 --> 00:38:52,300  
which were later installed  
on commercial ships,

587  
00:38:52,300 --> 00:38:55,480  
ocean-going ships.

588

00:38:55,480 --> 00:38:59,860

So when I was writing  
my dissertation,

589

00:38:59,860 --> 00:39:03,850

I had to do a lot  
of translations

590

00:39:03,850 --> 00:39:09,550

from literature, not only  
in English but in French.

591

00:39:09,550 --> 00:39:14,100

And I was fluent in French  
at that time, in Russian,

592

00:39:14,100 --> 00:39:18,650

in Italian, and  
obviously in Polish.

593

00:39:18,650 --> 00:39:23,560

So I had to be, from the  
technical translation

594

00:39:23,560 --> 00:39:26,370

point of view, fluent  
in five languages.

595

00:39:26,370 --> 00:39:30,720

Did you learn all these  
languages in school?

596

00:39:30,720 --> 00:39:32,060

Some of them in school.

597

00:39:32,060 --> 00:39:37,570

But like French,  
I was learning--

598

00:39:37,570 --> 00:39:41,510

my first exposure  
with French was

599

00:39:41,510 --> 00:39:47,740  
there were two workers working  
for Germans in the shop which

600

00:39:47,740 --> 00:39:48,530  
was repairing.

601

00:39:48,530 --> 00:39:51,550  
It was 1943-44.

602

00:39:51,550 --> 00:39:54,000  
My father, at the  
beginning of that,

603

00:39:54,000 --> 00:39:57,960  
was still visiting  
us from Warsaw.

604

00:39:57,960 --> 00:40:01,090  
But then he was  
taken to Auschwitz.

605

00:40:01,090 --> 00:40:07,390  
That didn't prevent  
two contractual workers

606

00:40:07,390 --> 00:40:09,770  
from France--

607

00:40:09,770 --> 00:40:12,940  
one was Russian origin, and  
another was the Polish origin.

608

00:40:12,940 --> 00:40:14,070  
I remember their names--

609

00:40:14,070 --> 00:40:17,670  
Stanisław Malinowski  
and [? Lisen. ?] Mr.

610

00:40:17,670 --> 00:40:20,360  
[? Lisen ?] was--

611  
00:40:20,360 --> 00:40:23,260  
had background.

612  
00:40:23,260 --> 00:40:28,480  
His ancestors were  
White Russians,

613  
00:40:28,480 --> 00:40:37,750  
those who were murdered mostly  
during the 1917 revolution

614  
00:40:37,750 --> 00:40:40,790  
in Soviet Union.

615  
00:40:40,790 --> 00:40:46,350  
So and his family  
escaped to Paris.

616  
00:40:46,350 --> 00:40:50,580  
And he was educated there.

617  
00:40:50,580 --> 00:40:52,890  
So he was fluent in Russian.

618  
00:40:52,890 --> 00:40:57,570  
And I remember he was talking  
a little bit of Russian

619  
00:40:57,570 --> 00:41:00,810  
to me, both of them  
talking French.

620  
00:41:00,810 --> 00:41:08,650  
And Mr. Stanisław Malinowski  
was knowing Polish,

621  
00:41:08,650 --> 00:41:12,010  
but kind of the broken Polish.

622  
00:41:12,010 --> 00:41:14,960  
So an interesting

conversation at the table.

623  
00:41:14,960 --> 00:41:16,680  
They were bringing  
some food with them.

624  
00:41:16,680 --> 00:41:18,550  
We were cooking together.

625  
00:41:18,550 --> 00:41:20,810  
And they were-- for  
example, first time I

626  
00:41:20,810 --> 00:41:33,590  
ate frogs, the frog legs,  
fried on butter and so on.

627  
00:41:33,590 --> 00:41:34,660  
And they were delicious.

628  
00:41:34,660 --> 00:41:36,560  
But I wouldn't eat them today.

629  
00:41:36,560 --> 00:41:39,730  
Did they make you  
catch the frogs?

630  
00:41:39,730 --> 00:41:40,532  
I went with them.

631  
00:41:40,532 --> 00:41:41,740  
I showed them where they are.

632  
00:41:41,740 --> 00:41:43,990  
And they were catching them.

633  
00:41:43,990 --> 00:41:48,320  
I knew where they were,  
where they frogs were.

634  
00:41:48,320 --> 00:41:50,860  
So that's my first

exposure with French.

635  
00:41:50,860 --> 00:41:55,420  
Then my mother's colleague,  
teacher of the French--

636  
00:41:55,420 --> 00:42:02,800  
it was 1944, '45, and '46--

637  
00:42:02,800 --> 00:42:06,780  
I was coming to her  
home and helping her

638  
00:42:06,780 --> 00:42:10,270  
with the chores,  
household chores.

639  
00:42:10,270 --> 00:42:13,570  
And she was speaking  
French exclusively to me.

640  
00:42:13,570 --> 00:42:17,020  
She wouldn't allow  
me to speak Polish.

641  
00:42:17,020 --> 00:42:19,540  
So I was quite fluent.

642  
00:42:19,540 --> 00:42:22,090  
I didn't know much  
grammar, but I

643  
00:42:22,090 --> 00:42:27,740  
was fluent in everyday  
talk, just simple sentences.

644  
00:42:27,740 --> 00:42:35,470  
And eventually I was  
learning, in school, grammar.

645  
00:42:35,470 --> 00:42:41,350  
So when I graduated  
high school I



646  
00:42:41,350 --> 00:42:44,530  
was good in Latin,  
four years of Latin,

647  
00:42:44,530 --> 00:42:49,020  
four years of formal schooling,  
in high school, in French.

648  
00:42:49,020 --> 00:42:55,420  
And learning Russian caught  
with me only in college.

649  
00:42:55,420 --> 00:42:59,270  
First time I had to  
go-- it was unusual.

650  
00:42:59,270 --> 00:43:03,850  
In my times, most of the high  
schools and the regular schools

651  
00:43:03,850 --> 00:43:06,070  
had to have Russian.

652  
00:43:06,070 --> 00:43:12,100  
Somehow my high school omitted--

653  
00:43:12,100 --> 00:43:15,100  
they were able to  
avoid teaching there.

654  
00:43:15,100 --> 00:43:16,420  
They didn't have teacher.

655  
00:43:16,420 --> 00:43:19,870  
And that was not  
popular, Russian.

656  
00:43:19,870 --> 00:43:25,550

657  
00:43:25,550 --> 00:43:31,550

That was very helpful  
for me, French.

658  
00:43:31,550 --> 00:43:35,720  
But English, I started  
to learn preparing

659  
00:43:35,720 --> 00:43:40,895  
my dissertation, my master's  
degree dissertation.

660  
00:43:40,895 --> 00:43:45,470  
It was '56, '57, '58, '59.

661  
00:43:45,470 --> 00:43:49,730  
I graduated officially  
'59, with master's degree,

662  
00:43:49,730 --> 00:43:53,030  
from Warsaw Polytech.

663  
00:43:53,030 --> 00:43:55,130  
Did you have any  
mentors at that time?

664  
00:43:55,130 --> 00:43:56,990  
Yes.

665  
00:43:56,990 --> 00:44:00,230  
One of my colleagues--

666  
00:44:00,230 --> 00:44:04,610  
and we happened to live in  
dorms, in the same room.

667  
00:44:04,610 --> 00:44:05,390  
I was lucky.

668  
00:44:05,390 --> 00:44:08,510  
And I asked him a  
lot of questions.

669

00:44:08,510 --> 00:44:10,220  
He had dictionaries.

670  
00:44:10,220 --> 00:44:13,250  
So kind of informal tutorial.

671  
00:44:13,250 --> 00:44:20,460  
Because my first English  
self-taught words were--

672  
00:44:20,460 --> 00:44:24,560  
the pronunciation of them,  
I found it in pictures.

673  
00:44:24,560 --> 00:44:26,540  
I didn't know how to  
pronounce the words.

674  
00:44:26,540 --> 00:44:29,570  
I knew what they meant.

675  
00:44:29,570 --> 00:44:36,940  
But I had to see them first  
before, realistically, I

676  
00:44:36,940 --> 00:44:39,580  
could comprehend.

677  
00:44:39,580 --> 00:44:43,650  
That was everything  
helpful until--

678  
00:44:43,650 --> 00:44:46,460  
all my life.

679  
00:44:46,460 --> 00:44:54,470  
Foreign languages were  
saviors many times in my life.

680  
00:44:54,470 --> 00:44:58,450  
I was lucky, I would say.

681

00:44:58,450 --> 00:45:03,570  
Among other things, I was in the  
right place at the right time.

682  
00:45:03,570 --> 00:45:05,070  
That was part of the luck.

683  
00:45:05,070 --> 00:45:09,790  
But I developed the  
skills for languages.

684  
00:45:09,790 --> 00:45:13,830  
And also human skills.

685  
00:45:13,830 --> 00:45:20,410  
I think coming from that  
training during the war

686  
00:45:20,410 --> 00:45:23,650  
and after the war,  
and balancing act

687  
00:45:23,650 --> 00:45:27,910  
which we had to, all the time,  
whom to trust, to what extent,

688  
00:45:27,910 --> 00:45:32,530  
and how to build  
relationships and friendships,

689  
00:45:32,530 --> 00:45:38,350  
and how to value  
real relationships,

690  
00:45:38,350 --> 00:45:40,270  
the real friendships.

691  
00:45:40,270 --> 00:45:45,460  
Those are the skills you cannot  
easily learn or cannot learn

692  
00:45:45,460 --> 00:45:48,240  
at all in school.

693  
00:45:48,240 --> 00:45:50,500  
So tell me what  
life was like going

694  
00:45:50,500 --> 00:45:54,720  
from a relatively small  
town to Warsaw, which

695  
00:45:54,720 --> 00:45:57,530  
is a very interesting city.

696  
00:45:57,530 --> 00:45:58,870  
That's a very good question.

697  
00:45:58,870 --> 00:46:05,800  
Because I would assume  
that this country

698  
00:46:05,800 --> 00:46:10,160  
would be something  
of similar nature.

699  
00:46:10,160 --> 00:46:15,940  
Small towns are in kind  
of the dream certain way.

700  
00:46:15,940 --> 00:46:18,550  
Everybody knows everybody.

701  
00:46:18,550 --> 00:46:21,570  
They have expectations  
you have to follow.

702  
00:46:21,570 --> 00:46:24,670  
In big cities, people disappear.

703  
00:46:24,670 --> 00:46:28,060  
They don't really care  
for neighbors anymore.

704  
00:46:28,060 --> 00:46:30,940

They could be on the same  
corridor, have doors,

705  
00:46:30,940 --> 00:46:34,940  
and they don't say good  
morning to one another.

706  
00:46:34,940 --> 00:46:37,270  
They pretend that they don't--

707  
00:46:37,270 --> 00:46:40,870  
they avoid other people.

708  
00:46:40,870 --> 00:46:42,010  
This is not the case.

709  
00:46:42,010 --> 00:46:44,880

710  
00:46:44,880 --> 00:46:48,390  
Warsaw, at that time,  
had a lot of population

711  
00:46:48,390 --> 00:46:52,080  
coming from smaller cities  
and from the countryside.

712  
00:46:52,080 --> 00:46:57,270  
So this people brought  
a culture of small town

713  
00:46:57,270 --> 00:47:01,590  
plus the experience, the older  
generations, you know, the war.

714  
00:47:01,590 --> 00:47:06,540  
People were much more  
friendlier, helpful,

715  
00:47:06,540 --> 00:47:09,300  
paying attention  
one to another, not

716

00:47:09,300 --> 00:47:14,090

being afraid to look  
into other people's eyes.

717

00:47:14,090 --> 00:47:17,050

718

00:47:17,050 --> 00:47:20,800

When I came to this country,  
one of the first warnings

719

00:47:20,800 --> 00:47:27,850

I was told, not to look into the  
eyes of young men especially,

720

00:47:27,850 --> 00:47:29,200

being young man.

721

00:47:29,200 --> 00:47:32,080

Because that is  
considered as a challenge.

722

00:47:32,080 --> 00:47:34,830

And can end up being beaten up.

723

00:47:34,830 --> 00:47:38,390

[CHUCKLES] Do you think  
you were misled by that?

724

00:47:38,390 --> 00:47:42,310

I never experienced a  
beating in this country.

725

00:47:42,310 --> 00:47:47,740

But observing other  
people, I think

726

00:47:47,740 --> 00:47:52,900

that was not bad advice to  
be on the cautious side,

727

00:47:52,900 --> 00:47:57,320

not to be too trustful  
and direct people

728  
00:47:57,320 --> 00:47:59,740  
and to be too friendly.

729  
00:47:59,740 --> 00:48:03,880  
What advice did your mother give  
you when you moved to Warsaw?

730  
00:48:03,880 --> 00:48:08,210  
My mother, being born  
in the countryside

731  
00:48:08,210 --> 00:48:13,050  
and then living more  
years in a small city,

732  
00:48:13,050 --> 00:48:19,480  
never have much to offer  
in the sense of practical,

733  
00:48:19,480 --> 00:48:21,160  
how to behave.

734  
00:48:21,160 --> 00:48:25,585  
More helpful was to have  
some friends acquaintance

735  
00:48:25,585 --> 00:48:29,320  
of the acquaintances,  
or her pupils,

736  
00:48:29,320 --> 00:48:34,240  
or her co-workers  
who moved to Warsaw.

737  
00:48:34,240 --> 00:48:38,410  
So I could-- not  
to live with them,

738  
00:48:38,410 --> 00:48:43,560  
but I could come sometimes



for advice, for--

739

00:48:43,560 --> 00:48:48,570

this times, there  
were huge problems

740

00:48:48,570 --> 00:48:52,020

with supply of basic goods.

741

00:48:52,020 --> 00:48:57,410

So having friends,  
acquaintances, always allow

742

00:48:57,410 --> 00:49:02,930

people to ask for  
favours and give favours.

743

00:49:02,930 --> 00:49:06,770

For example, if I was  
walking in the streets

744

00:49:06,770 --> 00:49:10,760

and I see the line of people  
in the front of this store--

745

00:49:10,760 --> 00:49:12,710

because it's not enough  
room in the store,

746

00:49:12,710 --> 00:49:16,190

so people are outside,  
long line, 20, 70, 40

747

00:49:16,190 --> 00:49:18,480

people standing in line.

748

00:49:18,480 --> 00:49:21,180

Most of the people, what  
they do, without asking,

749

00:49:21,180 --> 00:49:24,200

they will first stand up  
and take the place in line.

750  
00:49:24,200 --> 00:49:27,640  
And then they started to  
ask what they give here.

751  
00:49:27,640 --> 00:49:28,140  
"Give."

752  
00:49:28,140 --> 00:49:29,430  
Notice that.

753  
00:49:29,430 --> 00:49:31,710  
Not because you're paying  
with money obviously,

754  
00:49:31,710 --> 00:49:34,550  
but delivery was just coming.

755  
00:49:34,550 --> 00:49:35,460  
Truck came.

756  
00:49:35,460 --> 00:49:38,400  
And it was delivery of  
toilet paper, let's say.

757  
00:49:38,400 --> 00:49:42,980  
So you wouldn't buy two or  
three or a small block of paper.

758  
00:49:42,980 --> 00:49:45,870  
You bought 20 or  
30 toilet papers.

759  
00:49:45,870 --> 00:49:49,890  
And you took a string, you  
put them through the string,

760  
00:49:49,890 --> 00:49:51,331  
and you'll make like a--

761  
00:49:51,331 --> 00:49:54,217

762  
00:49:54,217 --> 00:49:56,774  
Like a necklace?

763  
00:49:56,774 --> 00:49:58,070  
A garland?

764  
00:49:58,070 --> 00:49:59,160  
Like a garland.

765  
00:49:59,160 --> 00:50:02,580  
And you are hanging them, let's  
say, three times or four times

766  
00:50:02,580 --> 00:50:03,840  
around your head.

767  
00:50:03,840 --> 00:50:05,820  
And you are walking  
in the street

768  
00:50:05,820 --> 00:50:08,610  
like that, which looks funny.

769  
00:50:08,610 --> 00:50:11,730  
But you are not  
alone in the street.

770  
00:50:11,730 --> 00:50:15,570  
And then you came home  
and, to your good friend,

771  
00:50:15,570 --> 00:50:20,580  
you sold them half or  
whatever of your supply.

772  
00:50:20,580 --> 00:50:24,360  
So everybody was trading  
with everybody else.

773  
00:50:24,360 --> 00:50:29,650  
And life was full of activity.

774  
00:50:29,650 --> 00:50:30,900  
Nobody was bored.

775  
00:50:30,900 --> 00:50:36,330  
Because to survive, you had  
to be industrious, active,

776  
00:50:36,330 --> 00:50:39,000  
working with others,  
helping one another,

777  
00:50:39,000 --> 00:50:41,880  
not to be afraid  
to ask for help,

778  
00:50:41,880 --> 00:50:48,240  
but also be ready to give a hand  
or to share your goods which

779  
00:50:48,240 --> 00:50:49,100  
you received.

780  
00:50:49,100 --> 00:50:50,970  
And you consider yourself lucky.

781  
00:50:50,970 --> 00:50:53,640  
Did you have any interaction  
with the Jewish community

782  
00:50:53,640 --> 00:50:55,890  
in Warsaw after the war?

783  
00:50:55,890 --> 00:50:58,950  
Or did you have classmates  
who were Jewish?

784  
00:50:58,950 --> 00:51:00,960  
Only in G<sup>3</sup>ra Kalwaria.

785  
00:51:00,960 --> 00:51:04,170  
And those are the

people who incidentally

786  
00:51:04,170 --> 00:51:10,650  
are recorded already for  
the US Memorial Museum.

787  
00:51:10,650 --> 00:51:14,520  
I was listening to  
their testimonials.

788  
00:51:14,520 --> 00:51:18,550  
One is Mr. Heinrich Price.

789  
00:51:18,550 --> 00:51:22,770  
Another one is Mr. Kartman.

790  
00:51:22,770 --> 00:51:25,270  
Another one is Mr. Majewski.

791  
00:51:25,270 --> 00:51:26,490  
And did you know them?

792  
00:51:26,490 --> 00:51:30,780  
Yes, I knew them quite well.

793  
00:51:30,780 --> 00:51:41,170  
Especially Mr. Price was working  
some social organizations

794  
00:51:41,170 --> 00:51:49,060  
together was my mom in GÅ³ra  
Kalwaria in '50s, '60s.

795  
00:51:49,060 --> 00:51:50,320  
So I knew him.

796  
00:51:50,320 --> 00:51:53,620  
I knew his family.

797  
00:51:53,620 --> 00:51:57,320  
And he had one  
daughter, Malgosia.

798  
00:51:57,320 --> 00:51:59,470  
And she's one of  
the three people

799  
00:51:59,470 --> 00:52:05,020  
I'm going to recommend for  
the museum to interview.

800  
00:52:05,020 --> 00:52:08,800  
Mr. Price and the others died.

801  
00:52:08,800 --> 00:52:12,638  
Mr. Price had 101  
years when he died.

802  
00:52:12,638 --> 00:52:13,180  
It's amazing.

803  
00:52:13,180 --> 00:52:16,380

804  
00:52:16,380 --> 00:52:18,355  
But you didn't  
have any classmates

805  
00:52:18,355 --> 00:52:20,950  
who were Jewish when you  
were going through college

806  
00:52:20,950 --> 00:52:22,420  
for your master's program?

807  
00:52:22,420 --> 00:52:22,972  
Several.

808  
00:52:22,972 --> 00:52:23,930  
Oh, there were several?

809  
00:52:23,930 --> 00:52:25,840  
Yeah, there were several.

810

00:52:25,840 --> 00:52:33,840

But as it happens, many of  
them, they had Polish names.

811

00:52:33,840 --> 00:52:34,690

And they were not--

812

00:52:34,690 --> 00:52:37,960

813

00:52:37,960 --> 00:52:40,090

either they were  
converts or they

814

00:52:40,090 --> 00:52:48,700

were coming from mixed family,  
where mother was Jewish

815

00:52:48,700 --> 00:52:51,850

or father was Jewish  
but had Polish name.

816

00:52:51,850 --> 00:52:55,870

So several of them,  
I was friendly.

817

00:52:55,870 --> 00:52:58,600

818

00:52:58,600 --> 00:53:01,090

And certainly only  
after I became friendly

819

00:53:01,090 --> 00:53:05,350

I learned that they were Jewish  
or had some Jewish background.

820

00:53:05,350 --> 00:53:08,010

821

00:53:08,010 --> 00:53:10,510

Part of it was

the country were--

822

00:53:10,510 --> 00:53:14,670

there were all kinds  
of the experiences.

823

00:53:14,670 --> 00:53:16,970

And it's just not  
the place now to--

824

00:53:16,970 --> 00:53:19,190

this is a longer story.

825

00:53:19,190 --> 00:53:25,770

But people of Jewish  
origin were involved

826

00:53:25,770 --> 00:53:29,340

whole spectrum of activities.

827

00:53:29,340 --> 00:53:35,910

Some of them, they were part  
of the communist establishment.

828

00:53:35,910 --> 00:53:39,570

Some of them they were against.

829

00:53:39,570 --> 00:53:41,325

They work in underground army.

830

00:53:41,325 --> 00:53:45,070

831

00:53:45,070 --> 00:53:50,330

The ethnic origin was not  
enough to make any judgment.

832

00:53:50,330 --> 00:53:54,110

Depending how these people were  
behaving, what they were doing,

833

00:53:54,110 --> 00:53:57,650



were they doing something  
good for their environment,

834  
00:53:57,650 --> 00:53:59,900  
for where they live, for  
the people where they--

835  
00:53:59,900 --> 00:54:13,610  
or they were involved in arrests  
and other not-popular causes.

836  
00:54:13,610 --> 00:54:21,260  
So it was a judgmental  
call each time.

837  
00:54:21,260 --> 00:54:24,520  
Yes, but I have several  
friends, good friends,

838  
00:54:24,520 --> 00:54:29,860  
who are of Jewish origin,  
including the older friend

839  
00:54:29,860 --> 00:54:32,490  
of mine who came from France.

840  
00:54:32,490 --> 00:54:35,260  
And where he was part of the  
French underground movement.

841  
00:54:35,260 --> 00:54:37,960

842  
00:54:37,960 --> 00:54:44,020  
His brother became the owner  
of the major circles in Warsaw.

843  
00:54:44,020 --> 00:54:52,540  
And this friend of mine taught  
me how to make coq au vin.

844  
00:54:52,540 --> 00:54:56,490  
It means chicken in wine--

845  
00:54:56,490 --> 00:54:57,880  
how to cook--

846  
00:54:57,880 --> 00:54:58,630  
What was his name.

847  
00:54:58,630 --> 00:54:59,500  
--chicken.

848  
00:54:59,500 --> 00:55:04,780  
His name was-- it just  
escaped me this moment.

849  
00:55:04,780 --> 00:55:06,030  
Maybe I'll recall it.

850  
00:55:06,030 --> 00:55:10,750

851  
00:55:10,750 --> 00:55:12,690  
So when did you finish  
your master's program?

852  
00:55:12,690 --> 00:55:15,290

853  
00:55:15,290 --> 00:55:19,800  
I got the diploma  
which is dated 1959.

854  
00:55:19,800 --> 00:55:28,380  
But the program itself, I would  
say majority of my colleagues

855  
00:55:28,380 --> 00:55:30,570  
graduated--

856  
00:55:30,570 --> 00:55:34,260  
there was not the one day of  
graduation where we're done

857

00:55:34,260 --> 00:55:35,280  
with our master's.

858

00:55:35,280 --> 00:55:37,680  
Most of us were already  
working because we

859

00:55:37,680 --> 00:55:40,660  
were stripped of money.

860

00:55:40,660 --> 00:55:42,000  
We couldn't support ourselves.

861

00:55:42,000 --> 00:55:50,010  
So we were looking for jobs,  
working as young engineers.

862

00:55:50,010 --> 00:55:54,940  
And the salaries were poor,  
but they allow you to survive.

863

00:55:54,940 --> 00:55:56,790  
And that's where it counted.

864

00:55:56,790 --> 00:55:59,670  
I didn't have my  
apartment in Warsaw.

865

00:55:59,670 --> 00:56:04,800  
I couldn't travel to my work  
in Warsaw from G<sup>3</sup>ra Kalwaria

866

00:56:04,800 --> 00:56:11,430  
because there was narrow-gauge  
train which took almost one

867

00:56:11,430 --> 00:56:15,870  
hour and a half, like one  
hour and 20 minutes, one way.

868

00:56:15,870 --> 00:56:18,120  
So I had to live in Warsaw.

869  
00:56:18,120 --> 00:56:25,000

870  
00:56:25,000 --> 00:56:29,340  
So what was your first  
job out of school?

871  
00:56:29,340 --> 00:56:32,340  
After the college,  
my first job was

872  
00:56:32,340 --> 00:56:34,410  
in that industrial  
institute, where

873  
00:56:34,410 --> 00:56:38,550  
I was doing research work,  
experimental research work,

874  
00:56:38,550 --> 00:56:41,040  
with the behavior  
of semiconductor

875  
00:56:41,040 --> 00:56:45,480  
devices in high-frequency  
electromagnetic fields.

876  
00:56:45,480 --> 00:56:50,950

877  
00:56:50,950 --> 00:56:54,920  
There were big-dimensional  
rectangular

878  
00:56:54,920 --> 00:56:59,280  
in cross-section tubes in which  
the electromagnetic signals

879  
00:56:59,280 --> 00:57:00,030  
were sent.

880

00:57:00,030 --> 00:57:04,870  
And these semiconductor  
devices were put inside.

881  
00:57:04,870 --> 00:57:09,180  
And there were measurements  
how they were detecting

882  
00:57:09,180 --> 00:57:11,790  
that and all kind of--

883  
00:57:11,790 --> 00:57:17,730  
based on their really  
cutting-edge science.

884  
00:57:17,730 --> 00:57:19,680  
One of the funniest  
things is, which

885  
00:57:19,680 --> 00:57:23,790  
probably many people in  
the West didn't know,

886  
00:57:23,790 --> 00:57:27,930  
that there was an embargo  
on the communist countries.

887  
00:57:27,930 --> 00:57:33,610  
And normally you couldn't get  
the most modern equipment.

888  
00:57:33,610 --> 00:57:37,040  
And for the electronic  
engineers, having good--

889  
00:57:37,040 --> 00:57:38,910  
like today you have a computer.

890  
00:57:38,910 --> 00:57:44,610  
At that time, in '50s, you  
had to have an oscillator.

891  
00:57:44,610 --> 00:57:46,800

And one of the best  
oscillators in the world

892  
00:57:46,800 --> 00:57:49,860  
was American tectronics.

893  
00:57:49,860 --> 00:57:53,530  
And we had the most  
modern tectronics,

894  
00:57:53,530 --> 00:57:56,230  
which were embargoed by the US.

895  
00:57:56,230 --> 00:57:58,890  
How it happened--  
there were go-betweens

896  
00:57:58,890 --> 00:58:02,790  
in Switzerland which  
would, for cash,

897  
00:58:02,790 --> 00:58:06,140  
they would sell  
you that equipment.

898  
00:58:06,140 --> 00:58:09,220  
But what they would do,  
they would mechanically

899  
00:58:09,220 --> 00:58:14,320  
remove the serial number on that  
so that nobody could trace it

900  
00:58:14,320 --> 00:58:17,570  
back who sold to whom.

901  
00:58:17,570 --> 00:58:22,010  
So it was a lot of equipment  
which we had in our laps

902  
00:58:22,010 --> 00:58:24,520  
through the purchasing  
agents which

903

00:58:24,520 --> 00:58:27,280

were having cash with them.

904

00:58:27,280 --> 00:58:30,890

They went to Switzerland,  
purchased them,

905

00:58:30,890 --> 00:58:35,170

and brought them behind  
the Iron Curtain.

906

00:58:35,170 --> 00:58:38,990

And we had the most  
modern equipment.

907

00:58:38,990 --> 00:58:42,195

So what brought you to the US?

908

00:58:42,195 --> 00:58:43,740

A Fulbright Fellowship.

909

00:58:43,740 --> 00:58:45,560

Mm-hmm.

910

00:58:45,560 --> 00:58:47,360

When did you receive that?

911

00:58:47,360 --> 00:58:49,730

In 1970.

912

00:58:49,730 --> 00:58:51,560

I applied in 19--

913

00:58:51,560 --> 00:58:55,340

I was working then at the  
Polish Academy of Sciences

914

00:58:55,340 --> 00:58:57,560

in one of the institutes--  
two institutes

915

00:58:57,560 --> 00:59:00,140

I worked for Polish  
Academy of Sciences.

916

00:59:00,140 --> 00:59:12,110

One, for a short time, was  
Institute of Basic Technical--

917

00:59:12,110 --> 00:59:14,900

I don't know how  
to translate it.

918

00:59:14,900 --> 00:59:26,610

Another one was called Institute  
of Electronic Technology, where

919

00:59:26,610 --> 00:59:31,820

I am doing support research  
because I do not have a PhD.

920

00:59:31,820 --> 00:59:38,300

And unofficially I have  
advanced work towards a PhD

921

00:59:38,300 --> 00:59:39,990

experimentally.

922

00:59:39,990 --> 00:59:44,390

But I didn't start the  
coursework yet at that time.

923

00:59:44,390 --> 00:59:47,180

924

00:59:47,180 --> 00:59:53,500

So there was the work  
in that institute.

925

00:59:53,500 --> 00:59:59,640

Then I worked for  
a company which

926



00:59:59,640 --> 01:00:10,000  
was managing communication  
in air corridors.

927  
01:00:10,000 --> 01:00:13,750  
So we're in charge  
of radio beacons

928  
01:00:13,750 --> 01:00:17,890  
in the corridors or  
instrumental landing system.

929  
01:00:17,890 --> 01:00:20,530  
I had several  
responsible positions.

930  
01:00:20,530 --> 01:00:25,330  
One of them was I was in  
charge of installation

931  
01:00:25,330 --> 01:00:27,490  
of the first  
instrumental landing

932  
01:00:27,490 --> 01:00:35,740  
system in Okecie International  
Airport in Warsaw.

933  
01:00:35,740 --> 01:00:42,110  
That was 1962, I believe.

934  
01:00:42,110 --> 01:00:45,440  
That was one of the first  
instrumental landing systems

935  
01:00:45,440 --> 01:00:47,890  
installed in Eastern Europe.

936  
01:00:47,890 --> 01:00:51,350  
It was a British  
equipment [INAUDIBLE]..

937  
01:00:51,350 --> 01:00:55,775

That's where knowledge  
of English was helpful.

938  
01:00:55,775 --> 01:00:59,750

939  
01:00:59,750 --> 01:01:07,690  
Later, when I was working and  
had a little bit of time--

940  
01:01:07,690 --> 01:01:11,910  
my workday was ending  
usually at 3:00--

941  
01:01:11,910 --> 01:01:15,700  
for another hour or two,  
I was working another job

942  
01:01:15,700 --> 01:01:20,890  
with the same institution,  
which was paid separately.

943  
01:01:20,890 --> 01:01:25,220  
And there was research  
for some companies.

944  
01:01:25,220 --> 01:01:32,170  
And I had another job, which was  
the translation of the aircraft

945  
01:01:32,170 --> 01:01:37,600  
manuals, civilian aircraft,  
from English into Polish.

946  
01:01:37,600 --> 01:01:42,220  
And I had hand  
written, and then I

947  
01:01:42,220 --> 01:01:46,480  
have a typist who was typing  
it by conventional type--

948  
01:01:46,480 --> 01:01:48,830

or electric maybe she had.

949

01:01:48,830 --> 01:01:51,074

That's a lot of pressure  
to have to translate that--

950

01:01:51,074 --> 01:01:52,282

I was doing it the evenings--

951

01:01:52,282 --> 01:01:53,950

It's very important information.

952

01:01:53,950 --> 01:01:55,180

--and weekends.

953

01:01:55,180 --> 01:01:58,330

And it requires a lot of  
technical knowledge involved.

954

01:01:58,330 --> 01:02:00,410

It is not just your  
regular English.

955

01:02:00,410 --> 01:02:00,910

No.

956

01:02:00,910 --> 01:02:01,810

[BOTH CHUCKLE]

957

01:02:01,810 --> 01:02:03,790

It is not an easy text.

958

01:02:03,790 --> 01:02:09,670

And so I have to consult  
with the aircraft engineer

959

01:02:09,670 --> 01:02:11,560

sometimes.

960

01:02:11,560 --> 01:02:15,400

But it allowed me  
to save enough money

961  
01:02:15,400 --> 01:02:17,440  
to buy apartment in Warsaw.

962  
01:02:17,440 --> 01:02:20,570  
Finally I had  
enough money to buy.

963  
01:02:20,570 --> 01:02:25,330  
And I got the bank loan  
obviously, the mortgage,

964  
01:02:25,330 --> 01:02:25,930  
for that.

965  
01:02:25,930 --> 01:02:28,450

966  
01:02:28,450 --> 01:02:32,770  
When I left for the  
United States in 1970,

967  
01:02:32,770 --> 01:02:37,390  
my mother moved from her  
apartment to this apartment.

968  
01:02:37,390 --> 01:02:43,570  
And I was sending her some money  
to finish paying that mortgage.

969  
01:02:43,570 --> 01:02:47,070  
And then I paid it to the  
end and became the owner.

970  
01:02:47,070 --> 01:02:55,260

971  
01:02:55,260 --> 01:02:57,370  
OK, we'll take a break.

972  
01:02:57,370 --> 01:02:58,500  
Yeah.

973

01:02:58,500 --> 01:02:59,000