

Can you just summarize for me the complexity of how it was a situation without choices for the peasants who were threatened and who-- so maybe they wanted to help. Maybe some couldn't help.

OK. After our first mission against those collaborators, things had changed. People were less afraid to talk to us. There were some who were helping us, risking their lives, keeping our wounded and our disabled people in bunkers for the two years where we existed. They risked their lives, not get paid for a penny for it. And other people who were really against us were not any more open to be against us.

The reason what happened before, why the situation was created as such was that there was no laws against harassing or killing Jews. Everything was free. Those hoodlums, collaborators jumped on the bandwagon. Everyone wanted to be in the act. What happened [INAUDIBLE] they became heroes for their people against unarmed Jewish people, you understand? And they were getting rewards for it.

So there was no threat. They were getting rewards. They became heroes So that's why everything was-- when we came into being and they saw that somebody is there to defend Jewish life, it became too expensive for them to go on and do those things. So they had to pay a price for their own life. There was no questions asked. If somebody killed a Jew, he was killed, no question about it. And that's why the whole situation changed.

Even those who were, in heart, anti-Semitic, which mostly where-- they didn't show because-- it's funny-- let's say several weeks prior we got firearms. We used to go to a village. We were chased like dogs. We show them money. We want to buy food. When we came into some isolated places and the peasants had [INAUDIBLE], they sold us food. Some of them didn't want to take money. There were all kind of people, no question about it. Without their help, they could not succeed, let me tell you.

So what happened when we came into the biggest enemy? We knew who the enemy is now. The only way why we succeeded in doing all those things and protecting ourselves is we knew exactly who is what. We did our homework.

So we came into the biggest anti-Semite, said good evening. They took us in and gave us royalty, everything we wanted. They asked us, and they gave us food. They gave us shelter. Later on, what they did-- they saw a way not to give their quarters or the contribution to the Germans because every farmer had to give some percentage of their farm products to the Germans.

So we gave them receipts that we took so and so, and they showed to the Germans they were killing themselves pigs, cows and selling things on the black market. They gained on that. We really did not eat their food. We ate the food from the-- it belonged to the Germans. And that's how things got organized that even those fascists got used to it. They didn't want to listen anymore to their leaders because their leaders had mind to kill everyone, Jew, not to stay alive, not to be able to testify like I have to say testimony today.

They got orders from London, from their government in exile because when they caught some of them, they told us the truth what happening. So later on, they saw they can do nothing. They tried to liquidate us, but they couldn't. They wanted to get us in one place where they could-- and they had the means. We were outgunned and outnumbered. Every peasant had arms, and they knew how to use it.

And let me tell you a story. Once in May or June 1943, I went with a friend of mine-- we went to a estate named Lukov, and this wonderful estate-- what do you call-- the baron-- we call it [NON-ENGLISH]. He used to give us money every month for the wounded to buy medicine, things like that.

And we came in. We announced who we are, and my friend of mine who I went-- he was a commander for another Jewish group from [? Kushov. ?] His name was [? Issa ?] Eisenberg-- no, Rosenberg. And there was a-- what you call-- a doorman. A [NON-ENGLISH], we they called it. He went to announce us to the [NON-ENGLISH].

He asked who we are. He came in. He knew him. He says, oh, hello, clapped him on his hand, come on in. And he says, I have a surprise for you. When we came in, there were about 24 from the AK group. Three were officers dressed in

Polish uniform. They were sitting at nice dining room table, and they invited us, oh, hello, how are you, boys? We were looking for you. We want to help you. We heard that you're good fighters, you're doing a good job.

So we had a few drinks with them. They tried to make contacts to make us believe that they are friend of us and tried to take us in one time. If they could liquidate us, they would do it. But the way we had a plan worked out to protect ourselves, we never went, the whole group, in one place, one time. We split it up.

And they knew that the group who stayed behind knows where we going and will take revenge, and this was all about-- and-- what's the name-- the owner, the [NON-ENGLISH] gave us money in front of them, 100,000 zlotys [INAUDIBLE]. We were not afraid of that because we needed the money.

And later on, they tried very hard to try to get us in somehow, to make peace, and we knew a place was called Bor³w. It was south of Lublin. In 1943, there were a Jewish partisan group. 26 Jewish boys were in contact with the AK, and they were naive. And they trusted them.

So they were in good conditions with them. One day, they came throwing grenades to their bunkers and killed them all. There was even a song that time. The AL the People's Army, made a song in Polish about this story. Really, the way we operated is, luckily, that we did not trust nobody. To us, they were all enemies, even the friends.