

RG#: RG-50.120*092

TITLE: Oral history interview with Elizer Lidovski

DATE: 11 March 1992

PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION: 20 videocassettes (U-Matic), Protection copy
8 videocassettes (VHS), User copy

SUMMARY: Born in 1908 in Baranovichi. In 1939, married and father of two children, he was a well-known political figure among the Jews in the city. When the Soviets conquered the region he was arrested because of his activity and exiled to a city 200 km away, where he remained until the summer of 1941. When the Germans entered in June he was captured and transported to a provisional concentration camp near Minsk. After starving for a few weeks, managed to escape and joined his family at Baranovichi. In the ghetto he founded and led a Jewish underground movement that united all political movements in the city. He obtained weapons and was prepared to fight the Germans when they tried to kill the Jews. His plan did not work out, and after the first Akzia he joined the partisans in the forests. His family, however, remained in the ghetto. After a while he was sent by the partisans to the ghetto and met his family again, for the last time. Tried to convince his wife to join him with their children in the forest but she refused. Returned to the forest and stayed there for the rest of the war, at first a Jewish partisan among gentiles, and later a member in a unit of Jewish partisans. He gives full account of this period and also describes manifestations of antisemitism among the partisans. Took part in the liberation of Rovno by the Red Army, with other partisans, and was the first to initiate the foundation of "Ha-Berikha" of Vilna, but he was a forerunner nonetheless, because he did not know of the Vilna organization. He became famous and was invited to Moscow by the Anti-Fascist Committee. There he tried, with no success, to raise money for financing the rescue of Jewish children in the Rovno area. He was appointed a formal reporter of the Yiddish newspaper "Einikeit". That helped him later in his activities in the "Ha-Berikha" organization. He returned to Rovno and traveled through Lublin and Bucharest to Italy. In Italy he was in charge of the "Ha'apala" of the refugees and organized day by day life in the refugee camps. Back to Lublin, he initiated the Revenge operation along with Aba Kovner and Pasha Avidov, and his role in Italy was to supply the Avengers with logistic means. After three years in Italy he emigrated illegally to Eretz, Israel was caught by the British and imprisoned in Cyprus.