

OK. [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

I don't know really when Michal came to Kovno. He came after he ran away from Poland during the time when Hitler took half of Poland, when there are a lot of Polish Jews had an opportunity.

Michal was never Hashomer Hatzairnik. But he used to come in the club at that time when it was still at the end of existence. Because later, the Russians closed everything up. And we used to meet. You're teenagers, you're 20s and you're 19 and 20, we used to meet. We'd go dancing with girls and boys. And I didn't know him so well. But I just knew him. And he knew me.

And Michal, it was before the war. He was not yet in a group in Poland. And he was in an amateur group. He liked to act. Michal was not a religious person to say, but a very traditional person. Because he was enough religious and enough Jew, but he didn't live according to [NON-ENGLISH].

A lot of times we used to call them him that Tzadik because we were left and atheists and things like this. And many times he used to say [NON-ENGLISH]. Or like on a Sabbath sometimes, we used to go away in groups. We used to have in the Neman, we used to have boats we could rent you know. And you'd go away on the Sabbath. Like the worshippers like to call [NON-ENGLISH] would never come with us because he didn't want to go on Sabbath. We call him the Tzadik.

Sometimes a girl, I don't remember her name but I remember the way she said to him, [NON-ENGLISH]. But that's not important. Important is that me and Michal gelled in the ghetto. Because Michal didn't hit nobody. And he was a Polack. And if it was a question that come in to you, and get [NON-ENGLISH]

And he actually latched himself onto me. And I liked his personality. We used to start smuggling together and go out and do business together. And then later, when they organized the Yanova brigade, they needed young, strong people to go and work as lumberjacks, I fell in with Michal.

Why do I know with Michal better than anybody else? Because Michal's personality, people knew Michal, his family even, his little ways about him, his negatives and positives. But Michal never-- nobody ever saw Michal really that naked [NON-ENGLISH]. And I saw. Because Yanova brigade, I used to sleep with Michal, near each other. It's a joke, huh?

We were partners, me and Michal. [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH] bring me in a partner, [NON-ENGLISH]. We sleep each other. We were full of lice from top to bottom. And [NON-ENGLISH]

Yeah, Michal had humor in times like this. I never saw him without humor. With Michal, he was like a pillar who held up a building. In what way? When we used to break down, I don't know. I don't remember how many we were. There were somewhere between 20 and 30 people, something like this. I really don't know. I never counted. I just would estimate. I think the leader was-- I think it was engineer, not engineer, [NON-ENGLISH], doctor. I don't remember his name. He was a doctor. I don't remember his name.

He was our group leader. I don't remember his name. Anyway, people used to get [NON-ENGLISH], people used to lose, especially winter, freezing, wind, and we're in a barn. There's board, cold, no warm, no heat. We used to warm each other up with our bodies.

Sometimes you hear people crying and people talking themselves loud, like wanting to give up. All of a sudden you hear in the barn, [NON-ENGLISH SINGING]

He had a song with a [NON-ENGLISH] And everybody used to sit around Michal and help him sing, and something, everything used to change. And this is only one facet. He had the key for the moral strength of that group. And he also saved my life, from beginning at the end.

Michal never kept anything personal for himself. We used to do business and we used to go out in the fields. There were small guards, Lithuanians and Germans. They used to allow us to go out between the farmers and trade. We used to run away free, because there was nobody. We were so far away from civilization that nobody could guard us. It was only the few guards and us. And they had the guns and they trusted us. And they knew where we were going to go. They believed they haven't got where to go.

But they used to go out with a deal. We used to bring them speck, chazirim. We used to bring them eggs, whiskey, [NON-ENGLISH]. You know that was the grift we used to give them. For that, they used to let us go out and do business and things like this. Whatever, if Michal made a profit of something, he never kept it. He always shared with the ones who couldn't go out.

I couldn't say not about me, not about many. I wish I was so generous. I mean he risked his life. Michal, he was a real-- I think I cared. But I had selfishness in me. But Michal was pure unselfishness. He was the purest person I met in my lifetime. He always thought about somebody else before he thought about himself.

He kept a sword for me. He went in a direction, and I always wondered why he didn't trust me when I was left out. And I asked him after. I met him here in Israel. On my first trip. I says, Michal, [NON-ENGLISH]. And it always bothered me, because I figured that me and him is one body. And he was in situations where sometimes I envy him why I wasn't around him. Because life separated us.

And when we were at the time of call it heroism or daring or whatever it is, Michal always rested on me. I was his strength in that manner. And I always keep wondering. If he could not trust me, Michal, who can you trust? And that hurt me.

A matter of fact, I talked about it with Dvorele. When she was by [INAUDIBLE] in Washington on the street. I said, Dvorele, Michal [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

And that's it. That's what I could tell you. I can't tell you more. I can't talk about him.

I think I am empty. I don't know what I could give you more. I was everything [NON-ENGLISH] Michal. I was a [NON-ENGLISH]. I was [NON-ENGLISH] Dvorele.

Everything went caca for me after the war. I remember when they shot [NON-ENGLISH] down in the Six Day War. And they brought him in a hospital injured. Right after this, I came to visit. And I was sitting with Dvora. And Dvora was crying.

I said [NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]

[NON-ENGLISH SPEECH]