

Jurek Orwowski, tape 11. Jurek, what was your opinion at this time, this stage in the war, of the ordinary German soldier? Because obviously, these were different groups, as you pointed out, who were concerned with putting down the Warsaw Uprising at this particular stage. What was your opinion of the ordinary German soldier then?

I thought that German soldier-- should I say front soldier-- was, in fact, a good example for me, not knowing anything about British or American soldiers at the time. And I thought that a German front soldier was a model of a fighting man. And they-- well, they were well-dressed, well-armed, disciplined, and, obviously, they were enemy all the time.

And I felt rather subdued by that aspect. But I had nothing to say about their cruelty, their hatred. They were ordinary men. And I feel if I was in that uniform, I would perhaps behave in the same way.

Obviously, as I mentioned before, there were other nationalities within the German Army. And I'm afraid the other nations allied to Germans during the war were much more cruel and, I say, nasty than Germans themselves. And they excelled in this aspect quite a lot.

To support this opinion, I would perhaps give you an example what actually happened towards the end of uprising. In fact, towards the very end of the uprising, when there was a truce between Germans and our command, while negotiations for surrender were being carried out-- I believe that could be about five or six days before the end.

And we were in a position. We realized that negotiations are going on. We thought at the time that there would be no question of giving it up after all these sacrifices, after all these days of fighting, and so on. And we then quite strongly believe that either Russians or Allies will come in.

I must say that the belief that Western Allies will help came about quite strongly by the fact that, I think, during the third week, before the end of the uprising, we had very large supply of weapons and food being dropped on Warsaw and Warsaw area by a group of American bombers. I believe there was more than 100 bombers flew from, I believe, Italy over Warsaw. And they landed in Russia. And on the way-- on the way, they dropped the supply at Warsaw.

Incidentally, most of this supply fell in German hands. But that was an act which very much strengthened our morale. And we thought, by jove, if they could come here in such a force and drop such a lot, next day, will be coming here in brigades and battalions of parachuters. And at no time, we realize, oh-- I mean, we thought that Germans would be defeated. And if Russians will also try from other side, well, victory is just about around the corner.

At that stage, although we knew that negotiations are being carried out, we are still prepared to carry on. And this led us to our little escapade. And my colleague and I, we were facing a German strongpoint across the street-- in fact, not directly across the street, but opposite side of the street, about 100 yards to our left, as we're facing them.

And we decided to come out from our position, go across to them, see who they are, what detachment they are, how strong they are, how many of them, what their weapons were, how they were disposed with a view to, when the time comes and we attack again, we know exactly where to go.

And in fact, looking at this today, it was quite an extraordinary occurrence. We came out with our arms to the middle of the street. And I remember seeing German faces in the trenches, just keeping their big eyes at us, what are we doing there. But there was no shooting, obviously.

And they observed us quite closely. And in fact, I remember one quite big, fat German looked quite frightened when we walked out casually and towards the middle of the street. I put my rifle down. And my colleague had a revolver, which he also put it down. And then we strolled along towards the German bunker, when we noticed there was a German officer just leaning out.

When he noticed us coming up, approaching him without arms, he also walked out from his position. We came to each other within, say, two or three yards. We said, good morning. He said, good morning, which was quite amusing. And then more heads popped out. And quite a little crowd gathered. Obviously, they were with weapons. We were without.

The German asked us how we were. And we said, well, we're not hungry. And would you like some cigarettes? They accepted cigarettes from us. It was from my colleague because I never had cigarettes on me. I never smoked. But he did. So he offered some cigarettes. Germans said, would you like some coffee? We refused it.

So conversation, in fact, turned to the topic of food, while all the time, we were just craning our necks and trying to find out where the machine guns were placed, where they hiding mortars, and so on. And in the end, about quarter of an hour later, we said, thank you very much. We come back tomorrow. We'll perhaps bring you some vodka, we said. And they said, well, that'd be very nice if you do that.

We turn around, walk back to our weapons, pick them up from the street, and came back to our positions. We immediately sat and drew the sketch how the German defenses were laid out. And in fact, we were prepared to guard them next morning if it was-- if the order came to.

Was there any special reason why you didn't have the coffee?

Well, we as a rule did not accept food from Germans. There were a number of instances where Germans were withdrawing, there was food left. And we found that in many cases, food was poisoned. In fact, I remember, one colleague died because he brought a jar of some sort of jam, plum jam or cherry jam, from a house which was previously occupied by Germans.

And the-- he had quite a lot of this, I must say, on his own. And then I later heard that he died because he got poisoned. I didn't see, actually, it's happening. But I know that he was poisoned. So we did not accept food, neither we consumed any food from German positions.

You mentioned, Jurek, about the morale being raised when the Americans dropped the supplies in large quantities. What would you say the morale of the population was like towards these last weeks of the rising?

I think in average, people were so tired and people were so, should I say, immune what is happening around them that there was not much discussion what happens tomorrow. And everybody was telling each other, oh, yes, tomorrow, we'll be finished, or tomorrow, I will come, or tomorrow, something would happen. And tomorrow must be better than today because nothing could be worse than today.

And everybody lived in a hope that what is happening tomorrow-- I'm sure it won't be as bad as today. And if I can back-- can come back to this point of negotiations, we were told that negotiations were, in fact, carried out with Germans to allow the population-- the civil population to leave the town, while the fighting units will remain until we defeated completely or we managed to break out.

At what stage of the uprising would this be?

That would be well towards the end. I would say that will be last week or last 12 days of the uprising. And that sort of anticipation caused us to visit German trenches opposite or German defenses opposite our own post. As it happened, there was no renewal of fighting. And in fact, fighting was dying from that day onwards, towards the last day of fighting. And we never had chance to visit that German trench again.

I was personally then attached to the unit in which my sister served. And that took me to different part of the city-- in fact, somehow less destroyed when the quarters were better. And there were also our heads. We were-- we could sleep in beds then-- obviously, borrowed beds, but there were beds.

And in fact, that was the time when German prisoners were being exchanged. That means those German prisoners which survived within our lines were sent back to German lines. And there were points within the defense lines where civilian population started going out with their small belongings, cases, whatever they had.

In fact, during those days, our detachment was strengthened by newcomers, by more weapons. And in fact, at that stage,

we were very much stronger than at the beginning of the fight-- of fighting. We represented a unit which, I would think, could be very much more effective than at any time before-- during this uprising. At least we could see all the weapons, and they were all overhauled, cleaned, and had plenty of ammunition.

And in fact, this led to some unruly behavior of a number of soldiers-- lack of action, and so might cause some soldiers to perhaps misbehave by-- for instance, they were staging target shooting. And that was very common, indeed. Some soldiers were testing hand grenades just to see if they would explode or not.

In fact, I was sent at one stage to a position where it was a lot of shooting. And I was told to go and see what happened and quieten them down because there was a fear that Germans may think we're executing German soldiers or German prisoners. And could be-- negotiations could be upset.

And in fact, when I went to the spot, there was about a dozen of soldiers trying to shoot at the bottle, which was standing about 100 yards away on the window ledge. And they were all weapons in action-- submachine guns and rifles. And it was interesting because I didn't know how to approach this crowd. I was on my own. And there was about 15 or 18 of them. And I must say, there wasn't much discipline then, although I was a bit higher rank. But I just couldn't tell them to pipe down or get off from here.

And I usually was good at shooting. I am on average. But I took my chance then. And I thought, the quickest way to stop this performance is to knock this bottle. And I never had mentioned previously to anybody but you now, I took one aim, and I hit that bottle. I was-- biggest surprise was on my side. I said, by jove, well, I would never believe I could knock that bottle off.

But in fact, they said, oh, well, target is off. Let's go home. And that was the way in which I managed to disperse the crowd. And in fact, when I went back to my quarters and reported that I managed to quieten the-- this upheaval, I wasn't asked how I managed. I just said, I managed.

Jurek, could I ask you something about communications? You mentioned about the couriers using the sewers, I imagine with written communications or verbal messages. Were there any newspapers produced--

Oh, yes.

--in Warsaw at this time?

Oh, yes. Yes.

Could you say something about these?

I wouldn't be able to tell you how many, but there were a number of them. And I would say, you would count them in tens maybe. And there were a number of printing presses in operation. There was radio contact-- obviously, radio contact with London. There was radio contact or radio listening post to Russian news.

And there were people writing articles and daily bulletins. And these bulletins were printed constantly until the last day, possibly to the last hour of the uprising, and distributed by, in most cases, the post. There was post. Also, you could post a letter to your friends on the other end of town. And there were stamps issued. And post was carried by scouts.

And I think they took over the duty of the post delivery and distribution of leaflets and newspaper. In addition, daily bulletins, radio bulletins, and so on, from-- which were reprinted, were posted on walls and at certain areas of houses where you could find all sorts of messages which were pinning-- cards asking whereabouts of sisters, brothers, and so on, or pinning notices that I've been here, I'll be going there if you want to get in touch with me. I'll be back here on that date and so on. All communication concentrated on these areas where you could see news messages.

Was there any humor? For instance, were there sort of cartoons? Were the Germans made fun of in these papers at all?

Yes, in a very big way too. Basically, the whole resistance against Germans, right from the beginning, originated from cartoons and, should I say, Germans were a laughing stock at most times. And the swastikas and Hitler, they were laughed at. And stories involving them were so numerous that you have to write books about it-- that would be entirely separate story.

Did you find, also, that any poetry was written about events?

Yes. Yes. Yes, indeed. In fact, my last commanding officer, he was a theater artist, quite well-known in Poland before the war, apparently, though I never saw him on the stage. But he wrote poetry during that time. And in fact, his poetry was read. And they were gathering where his verses were being read.

And as a matter of fact, much later, when I was already in London, I met him again. And he kept, I think, one or two nights during the week where he read his poems again here in London. They were very moving. And in fact, many people were weeping when they were listening to it. But yes, there were books written at the time-- poetry, and satire, and everything.

What was the name of your friend the poet?

Yes. His pseudonym during the uprising was Szczerba, but his proper name, his surname at the moment escapes my memory. And perhaps, I could mention later.

Were there any songs of the period?

Yes, there were many-- very many songs, in fact, some very popular written by soldiers themselves. And at any occasion where a group gathered outside duty hours or during the rest hours, there was always somebody playing guitar or mouth organ. And the rest of the onlookers joined in the song. There were a number of very popular tunes and songs written, which I believe are being sung even today amongst people who remember those days.

After the negotiations, during the ceasefire, did fighting start again?

No, it didn't. In fact, these negotiations lasted for about three or four days, during which there was a lull in fighting. And it terminated in a message received from the headquarters, from General BÅ³r and-- that this is the end. And we capitulate to German forces in the district of Warsaw. And this was quite a shock to us, obviously.

But at the same time, as that news spread around, there was another news, much happier news for us, which was spread from unit to unit. And apparently, we were told that Germans are recognizing us as a combatant troops. And they will be treating us in accordance with the Geneva Convention.

Up to that point of time, we were not covered by that convention. So we were treated as civil bands or rioting people. And Germans, in fact, could do whatever they like with us. In fact, there were many occasions where they were just simply shooting us or our people without interrogation, without any regard to status or rank, what it was.

The second part of the good news was that if we went to the prisoners of war camp in Germany, we will be most likely exchanged by the Polish Army commanders, who were fighting then in Belgium and Holland-- would be exchanged for-- against German prisoners. And that appealed to us tremendously.

And we thought, well, it's a matter of few days in transit. And then we're back in Polish forces under British command. And in fact, prior to that day, many people were thinking, what to do? How to leave Warsaw? And quietly, how to avoid German capture? And many were trying to leave Warsaw with the civil population.

I don't know if I mentioned before, but during the negotiations, civil population was allowed to leave Warsaw. And in fact, the idea was that we will continue fighting after the civil population left. But this good news, which I'm just describing, stopped many of our colleagues to leave Warsaw. And just-- they were all full of enthusiasm, in fact, going to prison camps.

And so I think it was 2 of November when our union gathered on the outskirts of the area which we were defending, and we were told to have all our weapons on us, ammunition, and were formed in a company, I think, numbering about 240 to 250 people. And we marched towards a sort of entry point, which was just outside Warsaw central railway station. And then we saw, first, Germans, who were looking at us and thinking, oh, well, that's the bunch who were fighting for last two months.

And the procedure of going to prison camp, the first impressions, in fact, were quite favorable. There was a German band playing march music, military march music. There was a German general with a group of 50 or 60 other officers. He was standing on some sort of box wooden box. That means he was higher than anybody else, but at least three or four feet. And he saluted us as we marched by.

We tried to march in step, which wasn't so easy. And we were never trained to march in proper manner, in proper way. But having passed this receiving German general-- I can't remember his name now-- we went another 500 yards, where we stopped and laid down our weapons.

Jurek Orwowski, tape 12.

Wow.

Jurek, earlier on, you had said that never before had your position been so strong in Warsaw, the Home Army's position. And yet your general capitulated. Were you aware of the reasons why he capitulated?

Well, we were and we were not. But on reflection now, I could quote at least four or five reasons. I think the most important one was that we were desperately short of food.

And there was no food to be found in the city. There were no supplies from there by the Allies. There were supplies by aerial drops from the Russian side, but they were absolutely inadequate. And they would not keep us going even a matter of days.

The second reason was a civil population who did not take part in fighting. But they were obviously everywhere around, in every house and every cellar, every possible position in which you were fighting, civil population was next to us. And they were suffering really badly. And they were really on the receiving end of the German attack.

A further reason, which I think was important for General BÅ³r to make the decision, was that there was no hope that the Russians would relieve us from the situation within the foreseeable future. And the third-- I'm sorry, the fourth, and perhaps more important at this stage, was that the area in which we found ourselves at the end of the uprising was in the center of the town-- was very densely populated and was totally encircled by German forces. So it was obvious that if fighting will resume, it's going to be a very bitter fight to the last bullet and the last sort of square yard of soil. And we would be definitely annihilated then.

So how did you feel about the capitulation? Did you feel any humiliation or disappointment?

Possibly disappointment, but I wouldn't say humiliation. The moment of humiliation or some sort of desperation was diluted considerably by the fact that we had this news about going to be exchanged for German prisoners. And in fact, we thought it would be much better, much nicer, much more convenient and comfortable to fight in the western front than battle in Warsaw, which was already in ruins. So the move-- the change will be to our advantage.

Could I ask you something about the population? Because you did mention earlier that during the truce, a great percentage of the population left Warsaw. But you've just mentioned that in the center of Warsaw, it was densely populated. Would this have been with some of the population-- the civil population as well as the Home Army?

Yes. Yes. All the Germans allow-- as they put it-- allow a civil population to leave the area of battle. Many people didn't want to leave. They want to stay with us. And as the defended area shrank during the weeks of fighting, those people

who were determined to stay with us also concentrated in our area.

So in fact, in the end, at the end of the time, we were extremely densely populated and, in fact, were as many soldiers as civil people-- and women and children too. So if they didn't leave, as Germans thought they would allow them-- and if it came to fighting it would be rather a very nasty mess.

Do you think you could continue with your story to the camp? You did mention that you marched to the railway station and then laid down your arms.

Yes. After laying arms, I think most of us, including me, felt a little bit downhearted. Now, we felt, we are on Germany's mercy. But that wasn't a very sharp sort of impression. We were just eager to see what happens next.

And so we marched from the center of Warsaw to a place called Pruszków, which I believe is about 12 to 15 miles outside of Warsaw. I remember this march because there was only one time in my life when I had blisters and rather squashed toes and-- a most uncomfortable march because, again, thinking about going to the west, everybody put their best clothes, best cap, best shirt, and best boots.

And I found quite nice boots to walk in. But they weren't boots to walk 12 miles, were much too small for me, and they were rather tough German long, tall boots. And I almost felt like taking them off halfway through. However, I managed to get to the end.

We arrived at that camp, which it was called transient camp. And the camp itself was disused factory. All machinery was removed, just bare walls and yard, big yard. We arrived and it was already dark, and wet, and raining. And so we were divided in, I think, groups of 200 or so. And we were shown to the place where we were going to spend the night. Everything was dark and wet.

And when I finally found myself, it was a concrete floor with a few bales of straw lying. And most of us went to sleep immediately. And that was our first night in captivity. In the morning, we were told to line up for a plate of soup. German kitchen arrived-- German field kitchen.

And we had, I think, first soup, hot soup, for many, many weeks-- well, at least three or four weeks, speaking for myself. And we started mingling about, seeing who is there, who is coming, who is not coming, because a number of people apparently managed to escape that Tuesday night from that camp or from that area. I met my sister there.

And one-- that comical aspect of this first night in captivity was that the factory was a dye and paint factory. And obviously, when the machinery and the store of this plant was removed, there was quite a lot of powdered and liquid paint about. People who arrive at night in darkness didn't see that, didn't notice this.

And many of them just sat and lie down where they found space to sit. And in the morning, you could see chaps with half face green, and their hands were blue or red. And in fact, I met these people later on, months later, in German camps.

And then when you see-- when you saw somebody with half face red or green, you said, oh, you've been in Pruszków. Apparently, those dyes were so strong that they were completely not to be washed out. So I think people who got in contact with that sort of dye, color dye, it took them months and months to regain the natural color of the cheeks.

Well, towards the end of that first day, we were put on train, about 70 to a truck, cattle truck, goods truck. The windows were wired with barbed wire. And we were counted and sorted out by Germans. Some coffee was given and a slice of bread. And doors were shut behind us.

I think we were standing for several hours there. And the train moved on. We said, oh, fine, next stop will be Belgium, perhaps. So we went on, and on, and on. And many of us went to sleep.

But it was so packed in the truck that we decided to part of the area, of floor area, such way that while those who wanted

to rest could sit, the other side should stand up because there was no space for all to sit down. So every two hours or so, we were told to get up, and somebody else sat down next to us.

And that journey lasted all night and, I think, until middle of next morning on midday, when somebody's looking through the gaps in the window, boarded-up windows, and oh, we near Berlin. So he went for another few hours.

When we stopped, Germans came around, opened the door, and said, who wants some fresh air can get out. And there was a scramble of thousands of people going out, and stretching their legs, and so on. We were all gathered around. Obviously, one could not escape. But after a sort of rest of half an hour, we were packed again. And there was another night of travel.

When we stopped again-- that was the third day of travel. We stopped again. And the place we went, the doors were opened, we noticed that we were in a place called Celle. Well, those who knew the geography well said, oh, we're near Hanover.

We were told to get out. We were, again, sorted out in fours in a row, counted. And we marched about 10 to 12 miles again in my nasty boots. And we arrived at a camp situated in big pine woods. And the entry to the camp was quite impressive-- the gate, and guards, and so on.

And there was board on top, which then didn't mean anything to me. But it was Belsen-Bergen. We-- I never heard about Belsen before. So it didn't mean anything to me. However, we were then, again, paraded and sorted out. They extend that officers were separated from the ranks. I'd be then officer. So I was sorted out to one group.

And we moved on to, I would say, about eight to 10 long barracks, wooden barracks, which were fenced off from the main camp. And the officers and ranks were marched off to another camp, which was, I would say, about five or six miles further on. And here, we lost contact with our colleagues, who were so far together with us.

We were allocated to this barracks, I would say about 250 per barrack. And there were six or eight rooms in each barrack. And there were bunks, double bunks. And I think we were about 12 or 15, maybe, per room. Soon afterwards, we were called out again. We was sorted out in, I think, what, four or five rows, five abreast.

And then we had a visit from German commanding officer of the camp. And I remember, it was a long wait because, apparently, he started from the other end of the camp, while everybody was standing ready. And he took quite a time to go around and look at the people personally.

Everything was in military fashion. Each barrack had a Polish officer in charge. This officer had to report to a German officer with square bashing, and saluting, and that sort of thing, and the reporting number of present, and that sort of thing. It was arrange in proper military manner, just like in the army. Germans appear no more hostile than we imagined. In fact, the one who inspected us was quite amicable-looking gentleman, about 60-65, grayish, quite tall.

We thought, so far, so good. And we, as officers, we were not called up for work. So you can imagine, after this Appeal in the morning, we were counted. There was nothing else to do all day. So in a matter of days, we got completely bored. And we were waiting desperately to hear when this exchange is going to take place.

You still believed that would happen?

Oh, yes, more strongly, more strongly. And in fact, within six or seven days after arriving in Belsen, we were told that there were negotiations between German Army command and our commanding officer of in the camp. But the negotiations were not connected with any exchange of prisoners. But they were connected with German suggestion that we should join German Army to fight Russians.

Well, that was an entirely new story to us and couldn't possibly to us because, well, we just fighting-- we were just fighting them. And now, we're going to serve with them. No, that was not on. And the negotiations were broke off-- broken off. And then we realized that we really now in prison camp.

Well, in the meantime, we were given numbers. Each prisoner POW got his number and a disk. You were photographed. Or everybody was photographed. A list was compiled and sent to-- by Germans, then sent to Red Cross headquarters in Switzerland. And we were told that that will help us to be more comfortable in the future because some sort of help would be extended by Red Cross to prisoners.

As it happened, the part of the camp in which we were, so to speak, housed or billeted was separated by fairly formidable wire fencing from the actual concentration camp. And although we could see what was happening there, it was too far between those fences to communicate with people who were in actual concentration camp.

But you could actually look at them and see what they were like?

Oh, yes, yes, yes. Yes.

Could you describe what you saw?

Well, basically, we didn't see much. We saw hundreds and hundreds of barracks, very closely spaced, and people mingling about. But what actually was happening there, we couldn't-- you couldn't make out.

What did you think the people looked like, their state of health?

Well, we knew they were civil population because they were in rather tatty-looking clothes. We knew that there were mixed people-- that means women and men-- while we were only men in our camp. We knew that there were squabbles and fights for food because you could see that a German kitchen-- or not a kitchen-- pulled by prisoners arrived in the front of the barrack.

And people were queuing, and squabbling, and trying to get to it. And generally, was quite a rough time for them. I presume the inmates in charge, so-called kapo-- they were called kapos-- always took advantage of position. And they were quite rough with the inmates in that sort of situations.

But I never imagined-- I never thought that was a concentration camp and extermination camp. We saw the crematoria. But we thought that it was a boiler house for warming the camp. But on other hand, we knew that camps were not being centrally heated. So we couldn't make that out what was that. And we were never-- or I personally never imagined that was a crematorium there.

Because you had heard of this before. I remember you saying earlier on, you had heard of the extermination camps.

Yes. Yes. Yes.

But I never connected Belsen with that sort of camp.

Were there no smells at all?

Not that I remember. No, in fact, as a prisoner, I had a fairly comfortable life, if I look at this now. I used to speak fluently German. So immediately, they ask, who speaks German? And I thought, if I say, yes, I may gain something.

And in fact, I did. I was appointed a Red Cross orderly for the camp. And in charge of these orderlies-- there were several of us-- in charge of these orderlies, Red Cross orderlies were two Polish prisoners of war who were in the camp since 1939. So in fact, they were well-established as prisoners are concerned.

In fact, they were better off than Germans themselves. They have their own rooms, each for his own use. They had one or two brand new uniforms pressed every day. They have cupboards full of food. And they had a permit allowing them to go from camp to camp, even go out to the town.

So I thought, well, I'm good wicked-- on a good wicked here. And in fact, one of these soldiers who were captured in 1939 was a sailor. And he-- his parents used to live not very far where my parents used to live. So we had plenty to talk about.

And no, remembering old days and that sort of thing-- what happens in 1939, as he had been in camp since then. Well, I knew the area very well. So we had plenty of conversations. And in return, I had quite a few good turns from him in the way of food, in the way of free time, and in the way of sightseeing around the camp with him.

And this was within the main camp, Belsen?

That was within the main camp in which we were.

Not the other part?

Not the other part.

Yeah.

We had nothing to do, no contacts. Even guards were different.

Yes. There were Jews in Belsen, weren't there?

Yes. Yes, now, I know. Yes. But then I didn't know.

You didn't see that?

No, no. I couldn't recognize who was Jew, who was not. But one thing I must say, that I says-- just mentioned, we were guarded by Wehrmacht, which was ordinary German Army soldier. And 99% of them were either too old to serve on the front line or were already invalids after fighting. Some lost arms, or eye, or something like that. So they were diverted to guard duty.

And we had kitchen. We did not make our own meals, but there was a kitchen, where every day, 9 o'clock, we saw a horse going towards kitchen. And then there was a shot, and a lot of chopping we heard, and so on-- that soup being prepared.

There were about a dozen of cooks. And they were all Italians and Russians-- Russian prisoners of war. And they cooked for us. And they brought in food for us. Several days after our arrival on that--

Could I just established the date of your arrival there? Was it November 1944?

Oh, yes, that was first decade of November, '44. A few days after we arrived at Belsen, we heard that the female, should I say, content of Home Army, consisting of, say, 200-300 girls, maybe, who were serving in the underground also were brought to the same camp-- the same area, but not the same camp.

There was, again, on other side, we had the Belsen concentration camp. And on the other side of our compound, we had about three or four large barracks, wooden barracks, where these girls were put in. And obviously, there was great joy and shouting going on and across a 20-yards distance.

And then I saw my sister again, which was a chance one of many thousands, I would say. She was all right. She was quite-- in quite good spirits. And in fact, as being the Red Cross orderly and having the pass to walk about the camp, I paid them a visit one day. Yes.

And there was, in this large room within-- inside this, I think it was-- it must be a two-story barrack. I can't remember exactly, but it was very high ceiling. And there was a milling, and chatting, and hugging, and kissing, all these things.

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