

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 1

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

WENTWORTH FILMS - KOVNO GHETTO - ISRAEL

Interview Avraham Tory (7-17-97)

Sound rolls 35-39, part 1

SOUND ROLL 35

(This is going to be sound roll 35, Kovno ghetto. The date is July 17. 7-1/2 IPS synch, that was a minus 8db reference tone nagra)

(Slate)

(Avraham Tory, take one)

Q: In the ghetto you decided to can you tell me a little bit about that.

AT: Well, I thought that they keep us in the ghetto in order that the outside world should not know what expired inside the ghetto. So I thought it is important

to me to write down a diary and mark down what happened in the ghetto day by day.

Q: What other things did you do to keep a record.

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: What other things did you keep as evidence.

AT: Well, I kept also documents, documents.

Q: What kind of documents.

AT: Let's say the orders of the Germans. Orders. And whatever it, it come to me to be important for the future generation.

Q: When you kept track of the German orders how did you do that.

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: How did you do that, did you have someone type the

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 2
Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley
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TIMECODE NOTES:

orders.

AT: I did it myself.

Q: Tell me about Gadiel's workshop.

AT: Oh Gadiel, yes. Gadiel is, was a very important graphic. He was a master of graphics. And he had a workshop of graphics and we were in very close contact with him all the time.

Q: And you gave him assignments.

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: Did you give him jobs to do for you.

AT: Yes, of course.

Q: Tell me about it.

AT: Well uh when I thought of something important should we put also in the video I asked him to, to prepare a, in a writing a document you know in writing.

Q: Do you remember this document.

AT: Oh yes.

Q: Tell me a little, describe that document.

AT: Can you give me that.

Q: Yes.

AT: Well this is what I, I uh this is a certain summary of killings in the ghetto for a period of several monthses. And this is what I did it this way. Fire and killing and uh this was in the ghetto for period of

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 3

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TIMECODE NOTES:

approximately two monthses. And I put it in, I asked Gadiel that he should put it in, in a visualized form so he can remember it.

Q: Tell me about this part of it. It's the same thing,

the same document but a chart.

AT: Yes. Yes. This is the balance of two monthses of killings. Uh. And the 9th and there was September and October in 1944 in the ghetto. This is men, women, and on the twentie...the 28th of October was a very crucial day in the ghetto. There are people were killed and that's why I put it specially, specially, special (way?).

Q: I don't know if you can read any of that

AT: Yes, I can read it.

Q: You can read it. Can you read a little of that in Yiddish. Keep rolling. We'll just wait on that. Is it easier to... I'm going to hold it here. Wait just a minute, there's an airplane.

AT: Yes, this is first days of the war, some 6,000 young men were caught in the streets, were taken out of their homes. They were brought into the ghettos, 29, 30, 64 people.

Q: Read a little bit of the Yiddish to me or the Hebrew, whatever it is. Read it in that language. Read it in Yiddish.

AT: (reads in Yiddish)

Q: Now I'm going to hold up another sheet in English and voice over just for And then we're going to roll picture again. I'll hold it for you.

AT: As secretary of the Alttestenrat, I asked for the preparation of a summary of losses in the ghetto--a document that would be passed down as historical evidence. The Memorial tablet was created from thick sketch paper and shaped into a synagogue ark, fold,

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 4
Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

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TIMECODE NOTES:

folded into several parts.

In the ghetto, there was an office called in German Mal
un Zeichen Werkstatt of the, or the Paint and Sketch
Workshop. It was headed by a German Jew named Fritz
Gadiel. In this workshops they prepared the signs and
announcements for ghetto residents in German Yiddish
and also Lithuanian and also statistical tables, var-
ious graphics and uh designs. Several talented young
people form the ghetto worked there. Fritz Gadiel was
blessed with
talents. During those terrible days--the days of
aktions and on the eves before the aktions--he and the
assistants sat bent over posters. They were artistic,
even the work they prepared called on the population to
do horrible things. The posters announced things like
prohibition of pregnancy, confiscation of property for
Germans, confiscation of furs.

Q: Keep going.

(Still rolling, that was 2)

Q: I'll hold it up for you.

AT: It's all right, it's all right.

The statistical numbers, the statistical numbers were prepared in the office called Einwohner Nachweis-Amt. This office recorded births before they were forbidden, deaths, changes in the population after aktions and deportation. They also kept a record of marriages and divorces as well as numbers of workers at each work site.

This diagram "The Numbers Cry Out" was prepared a ropra for a booklet which listed a commands given by the ghetto since it had formed. I gave it to a Lithuanian for safe guarding, safe keeping--together with many other things, including Esther Lurie's works.

The first page heading says, "The numbers demand an accounting). Retribution. It gives a summer of the Jewish population in Kovno Ghetto and at the end of 1942. The text says:

Already during the first days of the war, more than 6,000 Jews were killed, especially young men. They were sketched from the streets, snatched from the streets,

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 5
Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley
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TIMECODE NOTES:

dragged out of the houses and murdered at the Forts.
The beginning of 19, August 27,761 souls went into the
ghetto.

(That was 3)

Q: Want to take a rest for a minute or do you want to
keep reading.

(4)

AT: In August 534 young men and additional 91 people
were taken

from the ghetto and killed. According to the count in September 1941 there were 29,136 souls remaining.

During the blood the spilled, the blood spilled aktions of September and October 41, 11,665 Jews were murdered, particularly women and children. After then in November 1941, only 17,412 souls remained.

Even during the period of normal life in the ghetto, another 811 Jews were murdered. Thus from the approximately 35,000 Jews who lived in Kovno at the end of June or July 1941, only 16,601 remained by the end of December 1942.

The chart heading is "The Bloody total". Over 6000 victims in the city, 12,199 victims of aktions in the ghetto, 366 victims of individual murder, 646 deported or died slow deaths. Only 230 buried in Israeli ghetto. Total: 19,231 victims.

(pause)

The graph, the graph chart shows the population of the ghetto in September and November before and after the aktions. It is broken down by age. The bottom line reads the blood balance of two months in the ghetto. Kozlovsky Aktion - September 26. Small ghetto aktion ghetto - October 4. Great Aktion October 28, 1941.

When you open the document another level, it shows a graphic panel with machine guns train, and gra, grave-stones and these numbers of stoning, burning, murder and struggle, strangulations. 336 accidental murder. 646 deported form the ghetto. 240 laid to rest in a Jewish grave in the cemetery. And 12,199 murdered in aktions.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 6

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TIMECODE NOTES:

A panel called the atrocities total read, reads "From August 1941 until December 31, 1942 there disappeared from the ghetto in the back the abyss through various methods 13,421 Jews.

When the document is folded open yet another layer there is a chart that breaks down the losses of human

life by gender and age. Human figures are used as bars
for the chart to show men, women and children lost.

(change rolls)

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 7

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TIMECODE NOTES:

(beep)

(this is sound only 5)

(roll cassette)

Q: Ok, go ahead.

AT: This was only at the end of 1942. It doesn't show the massive losses in life after that before, after uh, that before the ghetto was finally liquidated.

During the period of the occupation the forts near Kovno were the Valleys of Death of Lithuanian Jewry.

Alternates:

The period of terror is summarized in these words. "In all, the bloody total is, is greater than 6000 martyrs from the incidental shootings, 646 martyrs deported (some died during their deportation), 240 died natural deaths in the ghetto. All in all 19,421 sacrifices."

Q: Now just read from the, these two sentences once again at the top.

AT: This was only at the end of 1942. It does not

show the massive losses in life after that, before the ghetto was finally liquidated. During the period of occupation of the occupation, the forts near Kovno were the valleys of death of Lithuanian Jewry.

Q: Cut. I'm just going to do some...

(Speed, sync take 2 mark)

Q: Do you remember the start of the war.

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: Do you remember when the war started.

AT: When the war started?

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 8

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TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Yes, what did you hear, what was it like.

AT: Well it start shooting and, and arresting of jews
in the streets and so on.

Q: What kinds of things happened to the Jews in the
early days.

AT: In the early day, they used to, to catch jews on
the streets. And take them to the for, to the jail.

Q: And when the ghetto was set up, how did everyone
move into the ghetto.

AT: There was a note about that from the 15th of, of
August everyone has to be in the ghetto. It was note
there, official note of the government.

Q: How did they move there.

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: How did everyone move there.

AT: First of all most of the people lived in the, in the area of the ghetto and the others had to were given a, a special date. To this date everyone has to move to the ghetto.

Q: Tell me about the aktion, the great aktion on October 28th.

AT: The day, this was the big aktion. 10,000 people were taken away from the, on all the, all the Jews from the ghetto were ordered to a, appear on the democratic square which was a great square and there they used, they, they selected, they could send thousands away and they never came back.

Q: Tell me about raiding the potato fields, do you

remember that.

Video Tape No. ____ Camera Roll No. ____ Sound Roll No. ____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 9
Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley
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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: Yes, of course because I was a starvation and
people were hungry so they were they'd take out the
potatoes from the, from the ground before it was ripe.

Q: Was that dangerous.

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: Was it dangerous.

AT: It was dangerous because the people were hungry. And when you're hungry you don't think about dangerous or not dangerous.

Q: Tell me what you did with the artists. Did you send Esther Lurie and Joseph Lipshitz to take, to make pictures.

AT: I was all of the time with Esther Lurie in contact. And also Lipshitz of course, yes.

Q: What did you tell them to do.

AT: When, according to what I thought was important to tell the from the ghetto.

Q: You sent them to do pictures.

AT: Yes, I went with Esther Lurie for I was a part of the ghetto that was taken out of the framework of the ghetto so there was a to go there. But I went

with her, with Esther Lurie and she painted from a,
from a hidden house.

Q: That was a house where there had been

AT: I beg your pardon.

Q: Was that the dentists house.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
10

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: No, no.

Q: The hospital, where the hospital was burned.

AT: No, yeah this is the area.

Q: The hospital burning tell me about that.

AT: The hospital with the, with the patients with the doctors have they are just put in a fire and they didn't let (clears throat) the fire brigade from the ghetto to come closer and, and, and liquidate the fire.

Q: Why did they do that.

AT: The Germans wanted to kill the Jews. It's simple like that.

Q: Did they give an order they were going to set the hospital on fire.

AT: No, they just put the fire and finished. Without any notice, without any prior notice.

Q: Did you see the fire.

AT: Of course.

Q: Tell me about it.

AT: Everybody could see the fire. Fire. And the, the,
the fire brigade that came close they didn't let them
to, to deal with the fire.

Q: What time of day was it.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: Daylight, in the morning. In the morning.

Q: We have to put another roll of film on.

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Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
12

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TIMECODE NOTES:

(This is camera roll 2, sound 3.)

(Camera roll 72)

(72, right and mark)

Q: Tell me about how people really how did they who
did they have carts and horses.

AT: Yeah carts and horses but they, they ordered
not to, not to serve the Jews. But nevertheless they
served. And there were rows, long rows through the
streets of Kovno on the way to the ghetto. I have some
pictures even of that.

Q: You talked about once the book aktion.

AT: Yes.

Q: Tell me about that. What was the Book aktion.

AT: There was an order of the Germans to take to give away all the books. And so we other in the clandestine to instead of giving to the Germans the books, most of the books went clandestine to certain to the, to the underground.

Q: What about the dog and cat aktion.

AT: Was

Q: Dog and cat aktion.

AT: Dog and cat aktions. Yes. They were ordered to the, to the, to the synagogue, yes in order to, to, to hurt the feelings of the jews. And they brought the in the, in the synagogue and there they were killed.

Q: And left there. Were they left. Dr. Elkins, what kind of a man was Dr. Elkins.

AT: He was an exceptional man. First of all, he was a famous doctor, a physician but instead but he was a

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 13

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TIMECODE NOTES:

great Jew, very devoted to his people and uh he didn't want to be elected as a chairman. But finally they were, were he was elected and he was the best Jews I think we ever knew. He was all the time head of the ghetto.

Q: Do you remember being forced to go to a bar mitzvah

of the Zussman. Do you remember that.

AT: Oh yes.

Q: Tell me about that day.

AT: Well you see I was in the, in the office of the ghetto and when I got a call from the ghetto werkstat-ten, the, the uh, the ghetto workshops. There came (Miller?) from the stadt commissar and they asked that I should come immediately to the workshops. So I went to from the, from the Altestenrat to the, to the work-shops. On the way 8 men caught by the hand and he didn't let me any go. Just what happened you have to be by my, by my son has bar mitzvah and you have to be drink l'chaim and, and he didn't let me go until I sat down and made the barucha and so I did. It was very boring.

Q: Were they very religious people.

AT: They were people religious, people not religious, but bar mitzvah is not a, a matter of religious.

Q: But were those particular people....

AT: Yes.

Q: And did they have, where they happy, how could they be happy in the ghetto.

AT: Nobody was happy in the ghetto. Nobody. It was a cut off from the entire world.

Q: The ghetto changed to a concentration camp. Tell me

Video Tape No. ____ Camera Roll No. ____ Sound Roll No. ____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
14

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TIMECODE NOTES:

about that.

AT: Well this was more a stronger, close of the in evident and restriction of the movements and so on. It was a, people restrictions, stricter restrictions.

Q: And the SS came in then and they what did they do to the Jewish committee.

AT: The on the Jewish committee was, was liquidated because they had no functions. But still they, they existed.

Q: Underground.

AT: Yes.

Q: Resistance. So people thought that.

AT: Yes.

Q: And so tell me about food. Was there enough food.

AT: Food, there was never enough food in the ghetto and we always used to go to the city to work. People used to go over to work, the gates. So they used back, back food. On the gate they used to take away parts of the food that they, they didn't allow to go in the ghetto. It was a, a very hard situation.

Q: Wood, fire wood.

AT: Yes, of course. We, we uh got a load to put the fire with a certain quantity. A very, very small quantity but on the same, on the same permit we clandestinely brought in the ghetto much more firewood.

Q: Was it dangerous, could people be killed for smuggling.

AT: Of course. But we were very de, very careful. By passing the gates of the ghetto.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
15

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TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Did people burn furniture to keep warm.

AT: Yes.

Q: Tell me about it.

AT: My wife she took a wonderful furniture and, and she burned it into to give warm the, a room in the ghetto.

Q: The Jewish committee, tell me how it was formed.

AT: Well the Kovno ghetto were the only one at least the , the, the Jews themselves elected the, their

committee with Dr. Elkins as head of the committee.

Q: Were the police, the Jewish police.

AT: Yes, of course.

Q: Tell me were they good.

(phone ringing)

(end first side of cassette)

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
16

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TIMECODE NOTES:

(Sound roll 37, set it again for the cassette)

(Sync take 4, mark)

Q: Avraham, you buried things in the ghetto, you hid
things, tell me about that.

AT: Well I, I buried things in the ghetto in order to
keep from the Germans you understand. So I kept it in
the, in the clandestine and then after the ghetto, part

I found, part I didn't found.

Q: You went back how soon after the ghetto burned, when did you go back.

AT: When the ghetto was liquidated we were, were all left. The ghetto was burned in the little part of the ghetto. There were, the ghetto was the smaller part and the bigger part. And the, the burned in the smaller part of the ghetto yes.

Q: When how soon did you go and dig up the diary.

AT: As soon as I, as I the ghetto was liquidated.

Q: Tell me about digging it up.

AT: I went in the places where I, where I have was hiding it. About two meters below the uh earth and I digged it up. In four places there were diaries. There I, I dig, I had to dig it up in five places but the two places, I couldn't reach because it was ruined so only three places I could dig it up.

Q: Did you bury it inside jars or what did you put the diary inside. To bury it.

AT: Just plain uh, plain uh cartons.

Q: Tell me about them. Ok.

(Rolling, this is take 5, marker)

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 17

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TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Do you remember this document. Tell me about this.

AT: This was the last page of the document.

Q: What was it.

AT: Give me.

Q: Don't put your glasses on yet. Tell me about the picture.

AT: This was a...

Q: Wait, take your glasses off and you have to sit back. Now tell me about that picture.

AT: This was the set of the, of the roof of the ghetto in collected in one, in one place.

Q: You ordered it, is that right.

AT: I arra, I uh I composed it.

Q: How.

AT: I collected from _____ and then put it together.

Q: With our own hands.

AT: Yes.

Q: You pasted it together.

AT: Yes.

Q: And tell me about the picture, the picture

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
18

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: The picture was symbolic to show that there is no
equal, equality yes, in the ghetto.

Q: Did you bury this document.

AT: Yes.

Q: Do you remember where you buried it.

AT: Well it, you, I used to in, in, in there was a, a
building and it was called block C. And below this
block C we buried the, the five crates.

Q: How did you get guns.

AT: Guns.

Q: Guns yeah.

AT: Well we, we bought from the, from the clandestine.

Q: What kind of guns.

AT: Well not very important guns. Not important.

Q: Who had guns.

AT: Somebody of the police and some of the underground.

Q: Did you ever have a gun.

AT: No.

Q: But did you help buy guns.

AT: Yes.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
19

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TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: How, tell me how you did it.

AT: What.

Q: How did you do it.

AT: How did I bury it.

Q: How did you buy guns. Who did you meet.

AT: Ah, I didn't buy them. Some of our underground, members of the underground went to the city and they used to buy the guns and bring it into the ghetto.

Q: Did anyone get away from the ninth force ever and come back and tell you about it.

AT: No, we there was an escape from the ninth force. It's a famous escape of the ninth force.

Q: But did anyone ever come out who didn't get killed, did a little boy come back to the ghetto.

AT: He came back to the ghetto yes.

Q: What did he tell you.

AT: Well it was a little boy and he there was not much to, we could learn from him. But nevertheless he was the only one, the first one that came that escaped from the ninth fortress. (sigh)

Q: Was he left there, did they think they killed him.

AT: I don't think so.

Q: He got away before, he wasn't in the pit. He was not shot at.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
20

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: No.

Q: No and the year book. Do you remember the year

books .

AT: Yes .

Q: Tell me about this . Are there maps in the year
book

AT: Maps and all kinds of documentation .

Q: Was this your book .

AT: Yes .

Q: And how did you keep, who kept this for you .

AT: In the, in the underground . Below there, in the
block C in the building of the block C, below the, the
earth .

Q: OK, let's cut picture for a second .

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
21

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TIMECODE NOTES:

(this is sound roll A 6)

Q: You can wear your glasses and I was going to have you read some of this. This is about the year book and I'll hold it.

AT: The yearbook. the 42 yearbook has 365 page, one for every day of 1942. The, the title page displays the logo of, of ghetto administration with the Council of Elders of the Jewish Ghetto in Vilijampole written around it. Daily entries were typed in Yiddish and posted onto a, the pages. Dates when large numbers of people were killed were marked by yortsayt candle, a flame candle on anniversary of a death.

In the book, of the book in the back of the book are descriptions and color illustrations of armbands worn by Jewish Ghetto police, Altestenrat Council members, Sanitation Service, Workshop workers, Fire fighters, Ghetto Messengers and construction workers. An armband in the ghetto was not just a badge, but part of uniform. In the days of aktions, people live, people lives were sometimes saved only thanks to the armbands. A

color life, graph chart the work at the Aerodrome.

In the back cover is a map of Slabodka the streets named in Yiddish, with police precinct borders indicated. A series of maps overlays show the ghetto boundaries became smaller and smaller through 1942 with information about why--taking the small ghetto, actions and mass murders at the Ninth fort. The remaining of the population was pressed together in great crowding in the ridiculously small area which each was given the space of, of about 2 comma 3 square meters per person.

Q: I'm going to just show you some things. Tell me about the, the maps that were in the book.

AT: Yes.

Q: Like what did the maps show. Did they show the ghetto getting smaller and smaller.

AT: Yes, yes, yes.

Q: Tell me about it.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
22

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: Yeah, here you can see parts of the ghetto that
they go.

Q: Now as if you didn't already read, tell me what
does this
mean. This candle, what does this mean.

AT: Yeah, this is yortach, a remember day of
special day the second of August 1941.

Q: A special day, why was it a special day.

AT: Because there was killings. Yes here is the, the
how the ghetto goes smaller and smaller. You see.
This was . And here is where at what date the
the ghetto was, was effect.

Q: When they cut the ghetto what did they do, how did
they do that.

AT: Just simply took it out, to get out.

Q: Told everyone to move and then what happened.

AT: People couldn't stay there any more.

Q: What was the fence like around the ghetto, the fence
what was it like.

AT: What.

Q: The fence around the ghetto, the fence.

AT: The fence, very simple, a wooden fence.

Q: With barbed wire.

AT: Barbed wire.

Video Tape No. ____ Camera Roll No. ____ Sound Roll No. ____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
23

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Do you know what this

AT: Yes. This is three, one, two, three, arbeitersi-

zats, a labor, it's frequency. Your labor frequency in the, in September and November and so on. See, yes.

Q: How many people went on hard labor, is that

AT: Oh yes it is, it's written exactly. Here is exactly written how many.

Q: And this was part of the year book.

AT: Yes.

Q: So did you make this chart.

AT: Yes. Ideo made it but I uh I gave him the numbers, the data. This was the big idea.

Q: Cut for just a second. I can't find one of the pages.

(Sound roll one seven)

Q: Do you recognize that.

AT: Front....??? Yes, this is for the, front (?).
There was a place, a very hard place to walk for the
Germans. The military German where Jews work there.

Q: And is this a, I'll hold it,

AT: Ghetto police.

Q: Is this the arm band.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
24

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854
TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: Arm band, yes.

Q: And whose is this.

AT: This is all, also kinds of for the police. Arbeitseiders each one had a sign. Altestenrat this is a Jewish committee and arbeitseiders, this is the labor.

Q: ...wear this

AT: I beg pardon.

Q: Did you wear this.

AT: Yes.

Q: Tell me I wore this arm band, tell me that.

AT: This was a ordered by the ...stadt and the

people pass

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
25

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

(sound roll 38, July 17)

(July 17, 7-1/2 IPS, that was my mistake, should be
reference pilot tone sync, we're continuing wild sound,
slate number what Jim)

(Yeah it's 8)

(Sound number 8)

Q: Do you recognize this.

AT: Ergos, this was the major and you see the it's the
()

Q: A stamp. What did this stamp mean.

AT: So all kinds of documents that the stadt used
to use.

Q: And the official alte

AT: Yes. This was the set up of the, of the depart-
ments of the altestenrat.

Q: Tell me more about it, tell me more about that.

AT: There is the secretariat, this is the altestenrat
and this is secretariat and this is control commission.
And this is the court. And this is the police and this
is a speishusund, arbeitsund. Yiddisher , welsh-
ersund, framisund, social. Aptek. Solemarkwerstad.
Goethewerkstadt. Uh and the, the

Q: So this shows the work shops of the ghetto.

AT: Yes.

Q: And now can you, I don't know if you can read all

these pages.

AT: Oh ghetto werkstette this, this is for the
sanitet, sanitary. And this is for the ghetto werk-
stett, workshops.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
26

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Can you read a little of this for me in Hebrew or
in Yiddish.

AT: (Yiddish? German?)

Q: Can you cut for a second let me find a good page here.

(Sound 9, sound only)

Q: I don't know what

AT: This is explanations to the plan of the ghetto.

Q: The plan of the ghetto.

AT: Yes, there are plan, a map.

Q: Can you read a little of that for me.

AT: Yes. (Yiddish? German?)

Q: Let's wait a minute for the siren.

(This is 10)

Q: Ok, go ahead, this is wild sound.

AT: Alte daily the day of the grace, of a great aktion
in the ghetto. Where people were killed.

Q: Ok this is 1942.

AT: Yes, this was the same year, the day, this it was
a 41.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
27

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: So what does this page mean. Is this.

AT: They say, they say the year day of the aktion,
a year after the big aktion.

Q: So this page commemorates the big aktion.

AT: Yeah.

Q: Can you read to me in Yiddish what that says.

AT: (Yiddish)

Q: You've got to read it again for me, I'm sorry cause
we touched the microphone.

AT: (Yiddish)

(sound only 11)

AT: In the completion of German orders. The completion of German orders.

Q: Compilation.

AT: The collection of German Laws is a collection of the oral and written orders and regulations between July 1941 and March 1943. I collected and edited the document and Fritz Gadiel did the illustration. It is not a complete diary documenting all the events in the ghetto, but we compiled the collection of documents, the orders received by the leadership to preserve evidence for the future--evidence about the preparation, preparators who were responsible for conditions in the ghetto.

The orders are almost in all German and most are arranged chronologically. They were collected, cut off and posted on the cardboard in the early 1943. On the cover was a picture Justitia blindfolded, standing on the broken postestal and holding a bloody sword. For events that involved the death of Jews, a black paper

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 28

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

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TIMECODE NOTES:

frame surrounded the text--usually, not always.

There are orders to hand things over: things like horses, cows, poultry, carts and sleds, electrical items, soap, furs, books, water sport equipment, Altes-tenrat money, milk from the 6 cows, valuables, single shoes, gloves and, and socks.

Other prohibited things like newspapers, buying anything in the city, taking money out of the ghetto, carrying razor blades in , smoking.

There are regulations about wearing Star of David--the yellow star--and another order that they cannot be embroidered stars, but must be made of fabric.

There are proclamations about work and people needed for work, regulations about the setting up and reo, reorganization of the workshops, calls for a specific numbers of people to report for various tasks at various times. For example one time a call for 2000 to

build an airfield and other time for complete list dentists.

There are orders to report for deportation. And there are orders that result in death. Such persons for September 1941 to Fort hospital burning October 4, Great Aktion October 28. There is regulations about death zone by the fence of three meters. Orders that call for executions of people for black marketing at various times, including one to take wives and children of four ghetto inmates who smuggled a truck of flour into the ghetto to the Ninth Fortress for execution and a report an 18 year old killed who wanted, for wanting to see boots to a lithuanian policeman. the hanging of Meck from gallows and remaining there are four 24 hours after the execution of Meck's another, mother and sister.

Q: Now in your own words I want you to tell me about the compilation of German orders. You, you made this document right.

AT: This is the information of the altestenrat. They in wishes and outside of of the Gestapo. Today it is not and all kinds of, all kinds of

Q: But you made this up.

AT: Yes.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
29

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Because you wanted that historical record.

AT: Yes, of course.

Q: Tell me about that.

AT: It's exactly what I saw. the commander of the
SA on the 21st of July 42. Order of commandant, com-
mandant 25th of July Order of state commissar.

Q: Why did you do this.

AT: Because to keep record for this history of the
ghetto.

(pause)

AT: On the days of a large 42, 20 soldiers were killed
by . this is Ygal from the Gestapo.

Q: And is this the front or the back of it.

AT: Yes, it's the back.

Q: And what does it say, I mean what does the hand
writing.

AT: (German?) The Bible, oval Bible.

Q: So the Bible of German orders or something like that.

AT: Yes. You will not expect that we will correspond with you in writing. It's a German setting.

Q: The Germans said that.

Video Tape No. ____ Camera Roll No. ____ Sound Roll No. ____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page 30

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854

TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: To the Jewish committee.

Q: And is this the cover.

AT: Yes.

Q: Describe it to me as if I don't have it. Describe the cover, did you make it or did you make Gadiel make it.

AT: Gadiel made it of my, my instruction.

Q: And what did you tell him to do. Do you remember what you told him to do.

AT: Yes, of course.

Q: Tell me.

AT: The order, a Jewish paragraph. The order of the Germans to the Jews.

Q: And whose idea was this picture.

AT: And these are the laws German style and
these are the laws German style. Leave the German
laws. The laws that the Germans instructed.

Q: And.

AT: We had it already.

Q: Can you read me some of this in the language that
it is.

AT: You, the same think that's there. You will not
expect that we should correspond with Jews in writing.

Q: What does that mean.

Video Tape No.____ Camera Roll No. ____ Sound Roll No. ____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
31

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: The Germans said to the Jewish committee, you will not expect that we correspond with you in writing. It is below their dignity.

Q: Can you read this to me in, is that in German there.

AT: the Jews from Eastern virtually should also call into the ghetto. People surrounding Kovno, those Jews should also go into the Ghetto, Kovno.

(Cut for a second)

(Sound only 12)

(Wild sound)

Q: The German orders, as if you had not already talked

to me and you were we telling me what they are, what kinds of orders did the Germans give.

AT: Every day there was another order, to appear before, to work to fear the more, the more labor and to, to all kinds of orders, every day we got a order.

(Six marker)

Q: So tell me that again.

AT: First when the German soldier cause there is birth is restricted. And it should not be the ghetto. And all kinds of such restrictions.

Q: And so what did people do with that. Ere there abortions in the ghetto.

AT: Yes there were abortions.

Q: What have some people had babies in the ghetto too.

AT: Before, before they, before they, the restriction.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
32

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

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TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: What kind of orders were they, what kinds of things
did the Germans say. Tell me as if I...

(change)

(Cassette rolling, ok roll 39, that was minus 8db
reference, 7-1/2 IPS, pilot tone, sync)

(Camera roll 73...)

(Camera...)

(Speed and this is sync take 7, mark)

(Camera roll 73, sound roll 39)

Q: What so tell me about those German work, what kinds of Germans what kinds of things did the Germans order.

AT: says they ordered to, to submit all the, all the electric equipment that we had yes. All kinds, all kinds of things. Whatever they have in their head.

Q: How often did they give orders.

AT: All the time.

Q: How did they do it, who would they tell, would they tell you.

AT: They don't tell the Jewish committee.

Q: And then what would you do, how would you tell the people.

AT: Announce, a written announcement, public announce-
ment in, on the walls of the ghetto. And there were
places where announcements, special pronouncements.

Q: Did the Germans give you the orders in writing or
did they, they just tell you what they were and then
you had to

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
33

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

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TIMECODE NOTES:

AT: Mostly, mostly they gave it in oral but some
things also writing.

Q: And then what did you do.

AT: We used to proclaim in writing to the Jewish population in the ghetto.

Q: So every day you would go to Gadiel and you would say ok now make a poster about this.

AT: Not every day but more or less frequently.

Q: They took away milk from the ghetto.

AT: Yes, the cows they took away. There were six cows in the ghetto, they took them away.

Q: What else did they take away. They took away valuables. What did they make you hand over.

AT: All kinds of things that happened, they used to say all kinds has .

Q: Let's cut. Just keep rolling Jim.

(Sound 13, wild sound)

(This is going to be room tone)

(room tone)

(Let's cut for a second)

(This is sync take 8, mark)

Q: Avraham, when the German gave you the order by word and you had to give it out in writing, how did you have to write it yourself.

AT: Of course. Write it Secretariat, the Jewish committee of the Secretariat. And Secretary printers, typewrite, typists.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

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TIMECODE NOTES:

Q: Who put the verbal order into writing. If the Germans told you orally.

AT: Yeah.

Q: Who wrote the order down.

AT: I over my assistant, the Secretariat.

Q: Did you ever get in trouble for writing for how you wrote the order.

AT: No.

Q: The Germans never got angry that you did it wrong.

AT: No.

Q: that it wasn't tough enough.

AT: I don't think so. I don't remember anything.

Q: Tell me how many different kinds of orders. Were they, did you think they were all the same or did you think they were, were you surprised.

AT: There was no surprise because German orders is, we lived on it, on it. This is every day were all, all kinds of orders. Economically uh spiritually, family all kinds.

Q: You knew what to expect.

AT: Yes.

Q: Was there a sense of irony.

Video Tape No. _____ Camera Roll No. _____ Sound Roll No. _____

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview & Readings w/AVRAHAM TORY page
35

Interviewed (7-17-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

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TIMECODE NOTES:

(end first cassette)

(end interview Avraham)

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