

Interview with Dr. Victor J. Fish  
Holocaust Oral History Project  
Date: February 26, 1991 Place: San Francisco  
Interviewer: Barbara Harris  
Transcriber: Beverly Brodie

Q. WHAT IS YOUR FULL NAME?

A. Victor Jacob Fish.

Q. WAS THAT YOUR BIRTH NAME?

A. Yes.

Q. WHAT WAS THE DATE OF BIRTH?

A. July 24, 1919.

Q. CAN YOU START BY TELLING A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY?

A. My father was a judge in Poland. My mother was one of the first female teachers in Poland but she did not teach. My mother was born in Vienna and as far as I know all of the family graves except my fathers are in Vienna.

My father was killed by the Germans on the 2nd day when they came in when they collected all of the intellegencia. 400 people or more, the number varies from 400 to 1,000 were shot by them. These were not only jews -- there were University Professors all of the intellegencia.

Q. WHAT CITY WAS THAT IN?

A. I was in (Wolf). I was born in Zolkiew I went to grade school and

high school in Zolkiew. Then I was admitted to medical school -- one of seven jews admitted. The next year there were only three admitted to medical school, the next year only one. I didn't want to go. I wanted to go to Switzerland. My father said, "no." When your father said No, it was No at that time.

So after I finished my high school. I can tell you something about my high school -- we were a good soccer team. We were very good and I was playing for them. There was one guy who was excellent he was the best and the German teacher was dating his girlfriend. They were both dating the same girl. He was giving him a hard time. So I said, "Why do you give him such a hard time? Tyre was his name. Maybe because you are going with the same girl. He said so we go to the principal, yeah I go with you so we go there and sit down.

I was second in a class of forty-three people. Only three or four survived the war -- two jews and two non-jews. Only two jews and two non-jews of the class of 43 survived the war. Then I was admitted to medical school. The medical school was very easy I had many friends but there still was that National Democrats who were beating up jews. One was killed. So for a period of time we were wearing this medieval type of shirt that had movable steel net so we had to cover up to here [indicating a part of his torso]. So because the guy was killed by a knife and he was killed and bled out. (Klemenser) was his name. I remember that.

Q. THIS WAS AT THE UNIVERSITY IN WOLF?

A. Yes. After that I had some Polish friends who said, "Don't go there. Don't go there." So they pointed this out and I said to the other guys, "Let's get out this way."

Q. CAN YOU SPELL THE NAME OF THE TOWN YOU WERE FROM.

A. Zolkiew. About 18 miles from Wolf.

Q. HOW BIG A TOWN WAS IT.

A. About 15,000. I have to mention that. My father and my mother founded a house for orphans. It was the year (can't decipher) Also there was a school for girls next to it for their education so they could work and so forth.

Q. YOUR PARENTS FOUNDED THE ORPHANAGE AND THE SCHOOL?

A. I don't know about the school, I know about the orphanage because it had my parents' name. But they both had the same buildings and my father was active in both. So I really don't know about that.

Q. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S NAME?

A. (Ignacci).

Q. AND YOUR MOTHER WAS?

A. Clara.

Q. YOU SAID YOU HAD SOME SIBLINGS. COULD YOU TELL US WHO THEY WERE?

A. Yeah, I told you my sister died before I was born, her name was Irana. She died of meningitis in 1918. She is buried in Vienna. My brother, Alfred, was a physician too. He was taken by the Russians and transported into Russia. We were told that he was killed during the war. Bombing of the train. But after the war I said to my mother, "Let's find out." We have friends. My sister-in-law which was killed [can you stop for a second].

[Six second pause]

Q. WE NEED TO GET ON TAPE ABOUT THE LETTER THAT YOU WROTE.

A. There was his writing by son, junior, because while in Poland he was in (Andress) Army from Russia. So he was afraid that the (Andress) Army was not very popular in Poland when there were Communists. So he signed it Junior. I said hey, this is his writing, junior is Junick. Hey, let's write a letter and then we got in touch this way. My sister-in law, his wife was Antonina Levy. Her relative was the Chief Rabbi of Roof. His name was Levy. He survived, he was actually kept by (Schipkepski) who was the Greek Orthodox Bishop for Wolf. He was kept there and he survived the war, this I know. Neither one from the

family otherwise survived. Her father was killed, her mother was killed. She died, she had typhous.

Q. THE TOWN THAT YOU LIVED IN, HOW MANY JEWS WERE IN THIS TOWN?

A. Roughly, 10%,

Q. HOW WERE THE JEWS TREATED PRIOR TO THE WAR WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP?

I didn't have any problem. The city itself did not have any problems. The problems were in the big cities where the National Democrats were in majority. Especially where the corporations from the Students University, Polytechnic and everything. I personally did not have a problem. First, I didn't look very much Jewish as you can see it and the other thing is I had guts. When there were demonstrations where they were beating Jews I would go into the demonstrations and say, "Get out, Get out." Especially I would take care of the women who got caught. On (Acadamescal) usually this was one of the main streets in Wolf and then came out into (Legonyaloff) and they got out. For example, as I told you, at the University they told me, don't go there -- go that way.

There is one thing which will give you a little bit of a feel. I was in gymnasium, you go there when you are 10 years in Poland. So

there was a Jewish guy who was very strong and he was repeating the class so I was 10 and he was 12 and he beat me up. So after that I decided hey you cannot go this way, so I started training. The next time after about three months he hit me and I just swung and broke his jaw. From that time I got peace.

Q. WHERE YOU A SMALL CHILD?

A. I wasn't small, I was average.

Q. THIS WAS THE ONLY PERSON THAT BEAT YOU UP AND IT WASN'T NECESSARILY BECAUSE YOU WERE JEWISH.

A. No, he was jewish too.

Q. WAS THERE A SYNAGOGUE IN THIS TOWN?

A. Yes, we had the seat next to the Torah.

Q. WAS YOUR FAMILY ACTIVE IN THE SYNAGOGUE?

A. We went to synagogue but we were not . . . I was for a time belonging to Temple then you know I did not like some of things so I quit. And I did not have any political connections with the Jewish Political Front. After that I finished high school. The worst thing that happened the high school and the court were very close and we were having a snow-ball fight and I broke some of my father's windows in his office. That was the worst thing which I could have done.

I was brought up very strictly. I remember when I was little I

was eating walking on the street. My father found me and broke an umbrella over me.

At the University the first year we would take two exams and the second year you would take five exams. One year we had an exchange professor from U.S. in psychology who flunked everyone so I said hey, I won't study even for you. I went to exam to him and he said, "You didn't study even." I said, "No, you are flunking everyone anyway. Why should I study, I'll come a second time." He laughed and I came a second time. Already there were Russians in the war and the war was already there. I passed the second time and I went a third and fourth year in medical school.

When I was in medical school I met a girl and I fell in love with her and she fell in love with me. She came from (Somburg) which is close by. After four years according to Soviet Rules at that time, you had to spend two months on the outside of the City. I said okay, I go to (Somburg) to be with her and there is when the war caught me. The German -- Soviet war caught me there. One week later they take you in to put an arm band and I said, "That is not for me, I'm not going to wear it." So I didn't wear it. I was working, because nobody knew that I am Jewish. I am living with the Jews but not necessary that I have to be Jewish. Then the first action came in the early

summer of 1942. Then they said if you want to save her family you had better become a Police Man. I became Police Man assigned to (Schuppol) he was a Buckmeister [a Sergeant]. He said, "Go and take the people out!" I said, "No that is your job. I won't do it, you can kill me." He said, "No, I cannot do that either, let's go and have a swim." So we went swimming and at night I said let's go back and he said no you don't go back because we will still be taking people at night. So next day I came in and everything was okay. This was the first action and the fact was went they deported the people they asked them to write letters and we received two or three cards that said, they were happy, they were working we are clean and everything is fine and great, which wasn't true. Well, then the ghetto came. I said to Ann [her name was Ann] let's go. And you know by bribe you can do everything. Gestapo man named (Lokita Assessman) took us in his car and brought us to Wolf and dropped us in and it was fine. He knew where to go and where we wanted to go. I was already in contact with the underground. We knew where to go and what to do. I had a (cancard) [papers] and at that time I had underwent the operation to correct circumcision. Because I said just drop the pants and they have you. It was painful and it was not good surgery either but it was something that looked like it, you know. I had my cancard



so I didn't go. I had received it from the underground.

Q. WHAT KIND OF CARD?

A. (Candard) everybody had to have it in the occupied zone to prove that he is -- the jews did not get (cancard).

So I got mine but she had to get it. When she was there and she was pointed out by her colleague, a Ukrainian, and she was arrested. She was put on (monskegel) the is the Gestapo jail. When she was there I tried to get her out. It was impossible. Because I was already in the underground she smuggled a letter through a jew in jail and wrote on it "Darling, I love you, you know they won't let me go, they won't let you go, we both will die. I love you, take good care of yourself." After a period of time they had cleaned out the jail and I think she was killed around the 2nd of December. You know it was difficult to know when. So naturally it hit me, it still hits me. I would say 99% I didn't have a chance but there is always the 1% which is always enough. So it sticks with me.

I was working mostly as a courier and I wondered why they put me as a courier, usually this was a role for the women. They know that I wouldn't fall into Gestapo hands I will do everything not to fall into their hands. I carried two hand-grenades, not cyanide, not guns, but

two hand-grenades. You want me then we go together.

I spent the war in the field and also as a courier to different places.

It was dangerous work but I didn't care. I didn't care about my life at that time. She was killed so what the hell.

Q. WHAT YEAR WAS ANN KILLED?

A. She was killed in 1942, December.

Q. HAD YOU TWO BEEN MARRIED AT THAT TIME?

A. Yes, we had been married. We married sometime in June when the war started. I don't remember the date.

When my father was killed I was going to synagog. Synagog was still open and I was saying kaddish as long as possible.

Q. YOUR FATHER WAS KILLED IN 1941?

A. This was still relatively easy. Relatively "EASY".

Q. CAN YOU DESCRIBE A LITTLE BIT ABOUT HOW THINGS CHANGED WHEN HITLER AND STALIN PARTITIONED POLAND AND GIVE PART OF IT TO RUSSIA?

A. Yes. I was asked to come to Pochinska. They asked me where was my father and I said "I don't know." They let me out but they caught me later after the liberation. During the interview they put me facing the wall and the guy behind plays with the gun and they change the interviewers every hour. They say, "You said you were here at 9:40,

you were here at 9:50, 10 minutes is not enough to get there." They try and catch you. I got threw it and at 12:00 they told me you can go home. I said, "No, I'm staying." The reason was there were many marauders from the Russian Army and they needed Russian clothes. I was in civilian clothes, they were killing people on the street for their clothes and Good-bye. So I stayed and I was saying good morning.

Q. YOU WERE IN ZOLKIEW?

A. No we left Zolkiew. We never went back to Zolkiew.

Q. BUT YOUR FATHER WAS STILL THERE?

A. No, when I moved a half of year later they came. They couldn't leave one little boy. I was 18 years old. I was staying with my brother who was in (WOLF), a physician. So my parents came to Wolf and we all lived together.

Q. YOU SAID YOU BROTHER WAS 15 YEARS OLDER THAN YOU ARE?

A. Yes.

Q. WHAT WAS YOUR BOTHER'S NAME?

A. Alfred.

Q. SO THE WHOLE FAMILY WAS LIVING THERE AND THEY KNEW YOUR FATHER WAS A JUDGE AND THE RUSSIANS WANTED HIM?

A. Many of the people who escaped the Germans and went into Eastern Poland. The Germans said, "Who wants to come back, you can sign up for this." People were signing up for this. Naturally it didn't say that Jews cannot sign, but the Jews who signed were not taken and then the Russians said, "We cannot keep this unsecured element close to the boarder." It was 100 kilometers to the boarder. In two days they took about 200,000 people. Initially there was about 100,000 Jews and then at the end there was much more 300,000 to 400,000 and they sent them to Siberia and so forth.

During the war itself I was a courier and I was fighting. I knew how to use a gun and I knew how to throw hand-grenades. Whatever was supposed to be done it was done. There were no questions asked.

Q. DID YOU WORK FOR A PARTICULAR GROUP IN THE UNDERGROUND?

A. National Democrats. Only one person knew I was a Jew. I was completely to the right at that time.

Q. CAN YOU DESCRIBE SOME OF THE THINGS?

A. You go from one City to the other and deliver things which cannot go by mail which cannot be used by telephone. I was travelling back and forth. It wasn't a pleasant thing, you always were on guard and once thing is when I was in Wolf I came to the place where the second

command was. The Gestapo walked in and they just walked in straight and arrested the guys straight ahead. I was in the next room waiting to deliver the things they didn't come in. I was standing behind the door and when they opened the door, I pushed the door closed and put my hands on the grenades and said we go. But they didn't come in.

When I was working in Wolf there was one guy from my high school who was Polish and then he became a Ukrainian. He became a Police Man, industrial police, not the red one but the green one [gesturing to refer to the color of a hat]. He said, "Don't go that way they are catching people, go that way." I had seen him later in Poland and I didn't know that he was a Police Man and we just ended up even-steven.

When I was on the streets colleagues would see me, from the Medical School, but we would just say, "Hi, Hi" we didn't talk, but they never pointed me out either. So I was lucky

The worst thing which happened to me. . . There was a delay of the progression of the Russian front from (Broden) to (??City?). Same thing happened in Warsaw for about three months. So we were going between the two lines of Armies and I came to Wolfe and I said to the guys who were with me, "Let's (?) a weapon and let's go where

you work." I went to medical school to surgery because I was interested in that. I looked in and I went, "Ah". He said you are a doctor and I said no I am a medical student. A Russian Captain whose name was MIKUSHSKY, he was a physician from the 62nd Moscow Guard Division. He said, "I need you." I said, "What for". He said, "To give anaesthesia." I said, "No, I have never given anesthesia before". He said, "You will." Anyway I did and I was very glad that the patient survived. I was very careful, I didn't mind him screaming on the table, but I didn't want him dead. So that is how I learned Anesthesia.

Then they came and told me you are going into Russian Army. I said, "No, I am Polish, I am not going into Russian Army." They said, "Alright, but you are going to escort a group of conscripts who are going into the Russian Army to their basic camp." I couldn't say anything -- I got another Doctor with me his name was ENNIS we called him something else. We both got (Pepessia) that is a Russian AK-47 but they were lousy. The last bullet when you shot the full magazine landed in front of your knees. In front of your toes. We got this gun and we went to (?) Ukrainian Nations who were attacking the (?) so we had the pepessia we couldn't do anything else. I could use it but he didn't even know how to point it. It was Moscow he says

and its too far so we jumps the train and we go to Moscow. The people were so nice they said, "You must be from the western Ukraine." I said, "How do you know." Look you have such good clothes on. I thought I had the worst clothes on possible for such a trip. Anyhow, to travel around in Russia you needed proper papers. I didn't have proper Russian papers. So I didn't have the proper thing but I had polish card stating in Polish that I was a medical student. I went to Moscow Station and thought I would see what can I do. Despite the democracy there were three rows; one for the Generals, one for the Officers and one for the enlisted men. Enlisted men line was about 3-4 miles long. I said, " I'm not going to stand here." Officers line didn't look very good so I want to the Generals. If I go, I go, I loose big. So I went in the General line and showed my papers. She couldn't read Polish. I said, "I am a Polish General." She wanted to know why I wasn't in uniform. I said, "I'm travelling incognito." So she gave me the ticket and I went home. I did see this guy coming back who was with me. I said, "If you want to stay, stay...I'm jumping. So I jumped the train to come back to Wolfe and the Russians said whose Polish can go to Poland which is West of the (?) River. So I said we are volunteering and we went. There was some shooting on the way, I went with some guys from the

underground. They were better known than I was and they jumped before we came to the border by (Chemus?) there was some shooting and firing, I don't know what happened to them. Then I went to western Poland and at that time in Western Poland I good friends with a friend of my wife who was killed. She was Catholic but her father was Jewish so she came the same was but she survived. We went to (Chevus?) and on the 5th of May -- suddenly so much firing like hell. I said what is that now, I was sleeping, it was at night. It was when they landed. This was in 1945.

Then I went to Krakov where my Aunt and her daughter were living. I tried to find where they lived -- 24 Kameliska -- no, nothing. They told me that she went to Warsaw and then they don't know what happened. Then I decided that because Wolfe University was going over to Breslov -- I went to Breslov. Before I went to Breslov I became a student at Krakov. I sat two exams there at Krakov and then I took later when I moved completely to Warsaw when my mother came I took another exam and got my diploma in March, 1946.

After that there was a thing that the Germans will be



expatriated from the Western side of Poland. I said, "Mother you are registered, you are German." I am her son and in Europe it goes by the son so I took my mother and myself and I became the boss of the immigration thing. Anyhow, when I came I said to the girl, "You are deaf, dumb and stupid, don't open your mouth." We ended up in the English Zone in Hamburg. Then they took me off the train because my German was good but I didn't have the accent. An English Major looked through my luggage and said, "Are you Dr. Fish." I said, "Yes." He said, "Here is a letter." The letter said Dear Dr. Fish, Thank you very much for the care that you offered me when I needed it. Signed Princess Marino? of Greece. She became later Princess of Caan?. She was in the sanitorium in (Leff) in Vienna. If he would have looked at the dates he would have seen that it didn't go together. The Major said put him back on the train -- get his luggage back on the train, I'm sorry we detained you. I had luck, but I said it is better to be in an English Jail rather than a Russian or Polish jail. We didn't want to stay in the English Zone we wanted to go to the American Zone. So again I was the head of the group of people with me.

Two jew were with me just outside of (Geisen) -- It was a nice day but they had to relieve themselves -- so we went to relieve

themselves in the back of the backpost of the American Army. They saw us there and sent us back to the English Zone. From then on I said I am going alone -- I'm not going to be a leader. Forget it. We ended up in (Besiem) It was a PD camp and I was a physician. Then they transferred us to (Felderfink) which was a Jewish camp and when I was there I was a physician and then they told me -- Do you want to work for JAP (Jewish Agency for Palestine)? I wanted to know what is the job. They said Deputy Medical Officer for Immigration. I said, "Fine." I got the uniform, the PX Card, I got cigarettes for \$1.50. I spent the time in Munich from 1947 until 1951. I was in Uniform and that is when I met my second wife. They asked me, "Do you need anybody to work." I said, "Yes, I always need somebody to work." Come and look at her. I said what are you. She said I am a medical student. I said do you type? She said, "No." I didn't know how she was going to be secretary but I said, "Okay, fine." At that time she got 200 Deutch Marks which was a heck of a lot of money at that time. Naturally I was working inspecting the camps. I had two drivers and two cars. One was Lithuanian guy.

We got married, her name was Pauline. The question was where are you going. I said I'm going to Israel. We sent all of the

furniture, everything we had. I said my mother is 81 how about a place for my mother -- a room not a tent. They said we can not do it so I changed my mind. We went to the United States. I could have gone to many other countries, Australia, Canada, Sweden. But I decided United States would be the best.

Why? Because there are too many crazy people to follow one man.

When I came to the States I was sent to Milwaukee. It was very dirty in the slums. The bathtub was blacker than any place I had ever seen and I couldn't take it there. I moved to Chicago and got work after residency for one year I went to (Monsanto?) for one year. I didn't like the boss because he would stop you and ask you, "Are you talking about me." I would said why should I talk about you. So I quit and I went to Cook County. At Cook County I was cleaning my car and somebody came up behind me and put a gun at my back and said get into the car. I didn't know who he was -- I said, "You must be kidding." I just turned around grabbed the gun and his him in his family jewels. They ran away and the police came and said why did you take the gun away? I said, "What about you, you are supposed

to be here to defend me."

At the end the police came to arrest me that I had attacked this guy. Finally it was straightened out. At immigration and naturalization they said you didn't have this scar here (pointing to forehead) I said, "It was obtained in Chicago."

When I was finishing my residency -- three months before I was done they said you are going in the Army. But my boss knew someone in Washington and I got an extension so I could finish my residency. I said after the three months extension here I am take me. They said we don't need you now.

Q. WHEN WAS THAT.

A. It was in 1955 -56. I was supposed to work but nobody would give me a job if the Army is hanging over you. I was supposed to start working. So I talked to my American friends and went to see the General of the American Fifth Army. He said what did I want. I told him I wanted to be drafted or to get out. I said my American friends tell me that things are done the right way, the wrong way and the Army way. One week later I got my invitation to report at San Antonio, Texas for training. I spent my training there, the worst part

was standing in front for inspection. Col. Parker was inspecting me and he came to me and I ended up (motions at attention) Col. Parker said my uniform was wet with sweat. I thought to myself if you would spend one hour in the hot sun you would be perspiring too.

They asked me where do you want to go. I said I can go for two years and you can send me where you need me and this is fine. Second Special Forces Group is where I went. I was teaching already so they said you can go to Walter Reed already. I said I don't like Washington. I couldn't believe that I got Letterman Hospital in San Francisco in July of 1956. I was very independent too. The Deputy Chief of the Department and the Chief of Nuclear Medicine and the Radiation Safety Officer. I remember one thing - the Inspector General came for inspection -- he put the white glove on top of the doorway. He said, "Major, your door is dirty." I said, "Yes, Sir." Next year when he came in I put a big sign when he came. "Radio-Active Material -- Enter at your own risk" He didn't show up that year.

In 1960 they told me you have to go to Walter Reed. I said, "No way" and resigned. I resigned my commission too. I got \$350.00 in 1956 from the Army. In San Francisco \$350.00 was not enough so

I signed up for hazardous duty and got another \$150.00. I didn't argue that was my job I was paid for it and I do it.

When they told me you are going to Walter Reed, I resigned my commission and went to Cedars of Lebanon to the Hospital. Spent two years there in Los Angeles and I didn't like Los Angeles. Didn't like the way they were treating the patients. So I got a job a Palo Alto Medical Clinic. When I started the radiation therapy department. I was interviewed and I didn't sell myself. You get interviews and interviews and one big boss told me that will you work for me. I said to so and so, "Let's make it clear, I will work with you but not for you, let's make it clear right now!" So I got the job and worked there for 24 years when I got ulcerative colitis and got out.

Q. WHEN DID YOU RETIRE?

A. End of 1984. November. So here I am.

Q. YOU SURVIVED AND SPENT MOST OF THE WAR AS A COURIER.

A. Yes, but sometimes on the line fighting.

Q. COULD YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT YOU

SAW AND WHAT WAS GOING ON IN WOLFE DURING THE  
WAR.

A. I wasn't in Wolfe. I was in Wolfe very little. I forgot to tell you when they caught me. They put me in Abuslauger in Wolfe. One of the Guys was Hukita and the head was Willhause. I was told they made lamp shades from human skin. So they caught me. I said if I stay I will be dead. If I escape I might live. So I escaped. I got out.

Q. TELL US SOME OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO  
YOUR GETTING CAUGHT.

A. I was walking on the street and there was suddenly

Interview with DR. VICTOR J. FISH  
Holocaust Oral History Project  
Date: February 26, 1991 Place: Palo Alto, CA  
Interviewer: Barbara Harris  
Transcriber: Irene T. Fontana, CSR, CPR-CM

MS. HARRIS: Good afternoon. It is  
February 26th, 1991.

We are at the Holocaust Center of Northern  
California.

My name is Barbara Harris. I am an  
interviewer for the Holocaust Oral History Project.

Today I'm interviewing Dr. Victor J. Fish  
of Palo Alto.

And assisting with the interview today is  
(Zara Coloff).

Q: GOOD AFTERNOON, DR. FISH.

A: Good afternoon.

Q: LET'S START, IF YOU WOULD, BY GIVING ME  
YOUR FULL NAME.

A: Victor Jacob Fish.

Q: OKAY. AND WAS THAT YOUR BIRTH NAME?

A: Victor Jacob Fish, yeah.

Q: AND WHAT WAS THE DATE OF YOUR BIRTH?

A: 24 July 1919.

Q: AND CAN YOU START BY TELLING ME A LITTLE  
BIT ABOUT YOUR FAMILY LIFE.



A: My father was a judge in Poland. And my mother was one of the first female teachers in Poland, but she did not teach.

My mother was born in Vienna. And so far as I know, all the family graves except my father's are in Vienna. My father was killed by the Germans on the second day when they came in -- when they collected all the intelligentsia. And four hundred people or more -- the number varies from four hundred to one thousand -- were shot by -- these were not only Jews. There was university professors, all the intelligentsia.

Q: WHAT CITY WAS THAT IN?

A: Wülf. I was in Wülf. I was born in Zólkiew. I went to school, grade school and high school in Zólkiew. Then I was admitted to university medical school. I was one of the seven Jews admitted. The next year were only three admitted to medical school and next year only one. Why I got in -- I didn't want to go. I want to go to Switzerland. My father said no. You know, when father said no, it was no at that time.

And so after I finished my -- I think there was ( ) of my high school. And we were good soccer team. We were very good and I was



Democrats, who were beating up Jews. And one was killed.

So for a period of time, we were wearing the Medieval -- how do you say it? Medieval -- it was a shirt made of movable steel net, you know. So we had to cover up to here (indicating). So because the guy was killed by the knife and ( ) bled out. (Provinsada) was his name. I remember that.

Q: THIS WAS IN --

A: (Hervov).

Q: UNIVERSITY?

A: Yeah. And after that -- I had -- I thought I had Polish friends.

They said, "Don't go there. Don't go there." You know.

So they pointed out, and I told other guys, "Let's get out this way."

Q: LET'S BACK UP A LITTLE BIT. CAN YOU SPELL THE NAME OF THE TOWN YOU ARE FROM?

A: Z-ó-l-k-i-e-w. It is Zólkiew There was always -- apostrophe on top. It was -- it was about thirty kilometers or eighteen miles from Wülf.

Q: AND HOW BIG A TOWN WAS IT?

A: About fifteen thousand.

Oh, I have to mention that. My father and my mother founded a house for orphans. It was Ignacie i Clara Fish. Also there was school for girls next to it for their education for where they could work and so forth.

Q: THEY FOUNDED BOTH AN ORPHANAGE AND A SCHOOL?

A: I don't know the about the school. I know about the orphanage because it had my parents' name. But there were the same buildings, the same looking buildings. And my father was active in both. So I really don't know about that.

Q: WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S NAME?

A: Ignacie.

Q: AND YOUR MOTHER WAS?

A: Clara.

Q: AND YOU SAID YOU HAD SOME SIBLINGS. COULD YOU TELL US WHO THEY WERE?

A: Yeah. I told you my sister died before I was born, and it was Irena. She died with meningitis epidemic after 1918. And she is buried in Vienna.

And my brother Alfred was a physician, too. He was taken by the Russians and transported into Russia. We were told that he was killed during the war, bombing of the train. But after the war, I

said, "Hey, let's" -- to my mother, "Let's find out." We have friends -- or my sister, who was killed -- sister in-law, which was killed -- can you stop for a second?

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

Q: WE NEED TO GET ON TAPE ABOUT THE LETTER THAT YOU WROTE.

A: Yeah. There was his writing by -- signed Junior because why, in Poland he was an (underarmy). He from Russia. He came -- so he was back this way. And so he was afraid the (undersarmy) was not very popular in Poland when they were Communists. So he signed Junior.

I said, "This his writing. Junior is Junok. I think Junior, Junok. You know. Hey, let's write a letter. And then we got in touch this way.

My -- his wife was Continina Levin. And her -- one of her relatives -- no, it was some kind of -- was a chief rabbi of Wulf. His name was Levin. He survived. He was actually kept by the (shiptitski). He was the Greek Orthodox Bishop for Wulf. He was kept there in (Subak) the war. This I know. And neither one from the family otherwise survived. Her father was killed. Her mother was killed.

She died -- she had typhus -- typhoid fever. No, typhus, which there is a difference between typhoid fever and typhus. She had typhus, and they actually cleaned out the hospital. They took her at that time.

Q: THE TOWN THAT YOU LIVED IN, HOW MANY JEWS WERE IN IT?

A: Usually you can come to ten percent, roughly.

Q: AND HOW WERE THE JEWS TREATED PRIOR TO THE WAR WHEN YOU WERE GROWING UP?

A: I didn't have any problems and the other ones in the city itself did not have any problems. The problems were in the big cities where the National Democrats Index were in majority. Especially there were the corporations from the students in the university, polytechnic and everything. So they -- I personally had never a problem.

First, I didn't look very much Jewish, as you can see it, and the other thing, I had guts. When there were demonstrations beating Jews, I would go into the demonstrations, say, "Get out, get out," you know.

So especially I took care of the women who

got caught, you know, on (Acadamitzka). Usually -- this was a main -- one of the main streets in Wulf, and then came out into (Ligionoff).

And so I said, "Get out, get out," and they got out. For example, as I told you, university, they told me, "Don't go there. Go that way."

There is one thing which will give you a little bit how I feel about this. When I was -- see, in gymnasium, you go when you are ten years in Poland. So there was a guy, a Jewish guy, who was very strong, and he was repeating the class. So between ten and twelve, you know, he beat me up. So after, that I decide, hey, I cannot go this way. So I started training. And next time when -- after about three months, after he hit me, I just swung and broke his jaw, and I had peace.

Q: WERE YOU A SMALL CHILD AT THAT TIME?

A: I wasn't small. I was average.

Q: THAT WAS THE ONLY PERSON WHO EVER BEAT YOU UP, AND IT WASN'T NECESSARILY BECAUSE YOU WERE JEWISH?

A: No. He's Jewish, too.

Q: OH.

A: You know. So . . .

Q: WAS THERE A SYNAGOGUE IN YOUR TOWN?

A: Yes. And we had -- see, my father had to sit next to the Torah.

Q: AND WAS YOUR FAMILY ACTIVE IN THE SYNAGOGUE AND DID YOU HAVE RELIGIOUS --

A: In the synagogue, but we were not -- I was for a time belonging to (Temple Doy). Then, you know, (dizarita dibotinski). And I did not like some of the things, so I quit. And then I did not have any connection, political connections, with the Jewish -- what do you call it -- political front. And after that, I had -- I finished the high school.

And the worst thing which happened, the court -- in high school we were very close. And we were having snowball fight. And I broke windows in my father's office. I was ( ).

I was brought up very strict. For example, when I was little, I remember I was eating, walking on the street. My father found me and broke an umbrella over me. "You are not eating on the street." You know. So I was brought up very strict.

At the university, you know, in first -- there is the first year where you take two exams and then on second year you take five exams.

And there was one time we had an exchange professor from U.S. in physiology. And he flunk



everybody.

So I said, "Hey, I won't study even for you." And I went to exam to him.

He said, "You didn't study."

I said, "No, you are flunking everybody. Why should I study? I come second time." He laughed.

And I came second time when already Russians were in the war, already was there. And I passed the second time.

Then I went third, fourth year in medical school. After four years -- oh, when I was in medical school, I met a girl, who I fell in love with her, and she fell in love with me. And she came from Sambor, which is close by. And after four years, you -- according to the Soviet rules at that time, you had -- you had to spend two months on the outside of the city. So I say, okay, I go to Sambor. I will be with her. And there the war caught me. The German-Russian-Soviet war caught me there.

And, you know, one week later they put -- "You put an arm band." I say, "That's not for me. I'm not going to wear it." I didn't wear it.

And we were there -- I was working because nobody knew that I'm Jewish. I lived with the Jews,

but not necessarily I have to be Jewish.

And after that when we were fluent, I decided not to work. But then the first action came in. This was in '42, early summer. I don't -- exactly I don't remember.

And they said, "You want to save them, you better go to the police, become a policeman."

Q: SAVE WHO?

A: The family. Her family.

So I became policeman. I was assigned to (Shupor). He was bockmeister, you know, like sergeant.

And he said to me, "Go and take the people out."

I said "No, that's your job. I won't do it. You can kill me."

He said, "No, I cannot do it either. Let's go have a swim," you know.

We went swimming. At night I said, "Let's go back."

He said, "No, you don't go back because you will be still taking people at night."

So next day I came in and everything was okay. This was the first action. And the final -- not the final -- the fact is when they deported the

people, they asked them to write letters. And we received two or three cards in the city, said, "Oh, we are happy, we are working, and Ukraina and everything is fine and great," which wasn't true. So just got -- well, then the ghetto came.

So I said, "Hey, Anne" -- her name was Anne -- "we go."

And, you know, by bribe you can do everything. Gestapo man named (Lokita Sessman) took us on his car and brought us to Wulf and dropped us, and it was fine. We knew where to go, where we are going to go. Everything already was in contact with the underground. We knew where to go, what to do. I had a Kenn karte.

And at that time I underwent the operation to correct the circumcision. Because they say just drop the pants, and they have you. It was painful. And it was no good. It was not good surgery either, so -- but it was something would look like it, you know.

And she went -- I had my Kenn karte. I didn't go. I received it from the underground.

Q: WHAT KIND OF CARD?

A: Kenn karte, you know, which is -- everybody had to have it in the occupied zone to prove that he

is -- the Jews did not get Kenn karte. Surprise, I know. So I got it.

But she had to get it. She was there. She was pointed out by her colleague, Ukranian. And she was arrested. She was put on (wonskago). This is Gestapo jail.

And when she was there, I tried to get her out. Was impossible. They put in a letter that if I wrote a report, because I was already in underground, they would let her go. She smuggled a letter through a Jew who worked in the jail and wrote on it, "Darling I love you. You know, they won't let me go. They won't let you go. We both will die. I love you. Take good care of yourself."

And she was then -- you know, every period of time they had cleaning of the jail, and I think she was killed around the 2nd of December. You know, it was difficult to know when. So naturally, it still hits me. You know, maybe, you know, I would say ninety-nine point nine percent I didn't have a chance. But there's always one tenth of percent which is always in doubt. So it sticks with me.

I was working mostly as a courier. And, you know, yesterday when I thought about it, I said why they put me as a courier. Usually this was a

role for the women. I was Jewish, and they know that I wouldn't fall into Gestapo hands. I will everything to do not to give up into their hands. So you know what I was carrying? Two hand grenades. Not cyanide, not a gun. Two hand grenades. Hey, you want me. We go together.

Q: THE UNDERGROUND GAVE YOU HAND GRENADES?

A: Yes. And so I spend the war in the field and also as a courier to different places. That was dangerous work, but I didn't care. I didn't care about my life at that time. She was killed, so what the hell.

Q: WHAT YEAR WAS ANNE KILLED?

A: She was killed in '42, in December.

Q: AND HAD YOU TWO BEEN MARRIED AT THE TIME?

A: Yes, we have been married -- you know, when the war started, we were married sometimes in June after the war started. I don't remember the date. When my father was killed, I was going to synagogue. Synagogues were still open. I didn't care. I was seeing courage as long as possible for him.

Q: YOUR FATHER WAS KILLED, AND THAT WAS IN '41.

A: Yes. So this was still relatively easy, you know. Relatively, in quotation marks, easy.

Q: DO YOU MIND IF WE GO BACK A LITTLE BIT?

A: Yeah, sure.

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE A LITTLE BIT HOW THINGS CHANGED WHEN HITLER AND STALIN PARTITIONED POLAND AND GAVE THE PART YOU WERE IN TO THE RUSSIANS?

A: Yeah. And I was caught -- not caught. I was asked to come to (Ancobaday) on (Pochinska). And they ask me where is my father.

And I said, "I don't know, you know. I don't know."

And they let me out. But how they -- and they caught me later after the liberation.

And you know how they interview? They put you facing the wall and the guy behind plays with the gun. And he -- they change the interviewers every hour. And then they come, "You said you were here at 9:40. You were here at 9:50." Ten minutes is not enough to get there, you know. They were trying to catch you. I got a ( )  
*words* to and then at 12:00 after they told me, "Oh, you can go home," I said, "No, I'm staying."

You know why? There were many marauders in Russian Army and they needed civilian clothes, and I was in civilian clothes. They were killing people on the street for their clothes and good-bye.

I said "No, I'm staying till morning."

Q: AND YOU WERE IN ZOLKIEW?

A: Pardon me?

Q: YOU WERE IN ZOLKIEW?

A: No, in Wülf. This is -- I never went back to Zólkiew.

Q: YOU NEVER DID?

A: No.

Q: BUT YOUR FATHER WAS STILL THERE?

A: No. They came -- everybody, when I move half a year later, they came. They couldn't leave one little boy, you know, eighteen years old, be alone. I was staying with my brother, who was in Wülf, a physician.

And so he say, "No, we have to have you -- you have to stay with us."

So fine. So they came to Wülf and we lived in Wülf, all of us.

Q: YOU SAID YOUR BROTHER WAS FIFTEEN YEARS OLDER THAN YOU ARE?

A: Yeah.

Q: WHAT IS HIS NAME?

A: Alfred.

Q: AND SO THE WHOLE FAMILY WAS LIVING THERE, BUT THEY KNEW THAT YOUR FATHER WAS A JUDGE?

A: Yeah.

Q: AND THEY WANTED TO --

A: Yeah, the Russians were. And one thing which I wanted to tell you, you know, many of the people who escaped the Germans and went into Eastern Poland, the Germans gave who wants to come back can have -- sign for it. And they sent a commissioner and people were signing. Naturally they didn't say the Jews cannot sign, but the Jews who signed were not taken.

And then the Russians said, hey, we cannot keep this unsecure element close to the border. It was a hundred miles to the border -- a hundred kilometers to the border. So they took them -- in two days they took about two hundred thousand people in (Zenorway). You know, initially there was about a hundred thousand Jews. And then at the end there was much more, three hundred thousand to four hundred thousand. And they took -- they sent over to (Sabiaya), to (Aarau) and so forth.

So during the war itself, as I told you, I was a courier and I was fighting, but I knew how to use the gun. I knew how to throw hand grenades. And this is how I went, you know. Whatever was supposed to be done, it was done, you know. There were no



questions asked.

Q: DID YOU WORK FOR A PARTICULAR GROUP IN THE UNDERGROUND?

A: (Zaboozed).

Q: WHICH MEANS?

A: ND Index, National Democrats. Only one person know that I was Jewish, you know. And so I was completely to the right at that time.

Q: AND YOU WERE COURIER. CAN YOU DESCRIBE SOME OF THE THINGS --

A: You go from one city to the other, deliver things which cannot go by mail, which cannot be used by telephone. You have to deliver the things. So I was traveling back and forth. It wasn't a pleasant thing. You always were, you know, on guard.

And one thing is when I was in Wulf, I came to the place where the command was. Not actually -- not the command -- second, the lower grade command. Not the head. And the Gestapo walked in. And they just walked in straight and arrested the guys there. I was in the next room waiting to deliver the things. They didn't come in. But I was standing behind the door. But they opened the door. I pushed the door closed and pushed my hand grenades. We go. They didn't come, which was different.

I had a little bit -- now, when I was working at Wülf, I never -- there was one guy from my high school who was Polish and then he became Ukranian and he was a policeman. Industrial police, you know. They had not the red one, but the green one.

He said, "Don't go that way. They are catching people. Go that way."

When I was in Poland later, I didn't tell them he was a policeman, you know.. It was just ended up even Steven. And when I was walking on the street, the colleagues have seen me from the medical school. We said, "Hi, hi." We didn't talk. But they never pointed out me either. So I was lucky. I was lucky. And ( ).

The worst thing which happened to me, see, there was a delay of progression of the Russian front from (Broaden) to (Nopobay). The same way with Warsaw for about three months.

So we were going between similar line between the two armies. And I came to Wülf, and I said to the guys who were with me, you know, "Let's bury the weapon and let's go where you work, you know. You are all the time there."

And I went to medical school to surgery

because I was interested in it. I walk in. "You are a doctor."

I said, "No, I am a Russian captain."

His name was (Micushsky). He was a physician. And this I remember. And he was from the 62nd Guard Division, Moscow Guard Division.

"I need you."

I said, "What for?"

"I need to give anesthesia."

I said, "I never gave anesthesia."

Took the gun out. "You won't?"

I said, "I will."

I'm glad that the patient survived. I was very careful. I didn't mind him screaming on the table, but I didn't want him dead. So that's how I learn anesthesia, using ether, dropping it.

So then they came. "You going into Russian Army."

I said, "No, I'm Polish. I'm not going to Russian Army."

"All right. But you are going to escort a group of conscripts who are going into Russian Army to the American camp."

I couldn't say anything. And I got another doctor with me. His name was Enis. We called him

something else, you know. And we both got (papesha). You know what's (papesha)? There is a Russian AK47. But they were lousy, because I shot them. The last bullet, when you shoot the full magazine, landed in front of your knees, in front of your toes, you know. So we got this and we went.

There was a (bunter) officer, which are the Ukranian nationalist attacking the Kurds. We had (Papesha). We couldn't do anything -- I could do. He didn't know which way to point.

So anyhow it was Moscow. And he says, "That's too far now." So he jumps a train. I jump the train.

Oh, I forgot to tell you something. We come back later. You can edit it later.

I jumped the train. I went to Moscow. And the people were so nice. They say, "You must be from the Western Ukraine."

I said, "How do you know?"

"Look, you have such good clothes on."

I said, "Good clothes?" I couldn't get the worst clothes which I had going on such a trip, you know.

But anyhow. I didn't have -- in Russia when you travel, you have to have kommandaufka, the

order to travel. And so I didn't have it. But I had a Polish card stating in Polish, is my photograph, that I that I am medical student. And I went to Moscow station. Let's see. Let's expose the area, what can I do.

And despite the democracy, there were three rows. One for the generals, one for the colonels and officers, the other one for enlisted men. Enlisted men were about three, four miles long.

I said, "I'm not going to stand here." I look over there. Officers didn't look very good. Still long. So I went to the generals. If I go, I go. I lose big.

And I came in, show her this Polish thing. She couldn't read Polish. Just general. "I am a Polish general," I told her.

"Why you not in uniform?"

"I'm traveling incognito."

So she gave me the ticket. I went home.

I tell you something else what happened later.

So I went home. I came home. I didn't see this guy coming back who was with me. I say, "I'm jumping. You want to stay, stay. I'm jumping."

And so I -- it's -- where were we? I jump

the train and came back to Wülf. And then the Russians said, "Who is Polish can go to the Poland," which was west of the San River.

So I said, "Mom, we are volunteering." And we took our nanny with us and we went. There was some shooting on the way.

I went with some of my guys from the underground. And they were better known than I was so they jumped -- before we came to the border by (Shemish), they jumped and there was some shooting and firing. I don't know what happened to them. I went -- and I went to Western Poland.

And at that time, Western Poland -- I was going with -- not going, being friends, good friends, with a friend of my wife who was killed. She was Catholic, but her father was Jewish. So she counted the same way, but she survived.

And so we went through to (Shemish) and on the 5th of May, Sunday, firing like hell.

I said, "What is that, now?" I was sleeping. It was at night. There was a German V -- what was it? 5th of May. Yeah, when they landed. You know. So I said, okay, I'm glad I'm not again the same way I was. And this was in '45.

Then I went to Krakow where my aunt and her

daughter were living. I tried to find where they lived, 24 (Kamalitska). No, no, nothing. They told me that she went to Warsaw and they don't know what happened. And then I decided because Wulf University was going over to Watswa, Breslau. I went to Breslau.

But before I went to Breslau, I became a student at Krakow and I took one, two exams there in Krakow and then I took -- later when I moved completely to Warsaw when my mother come I took another exam and I got my diploma in March 1946.

And after that, there was a thing that the Germans will be exportiated from the western side of of Poland. "Mother, you register. You are German." You know. She is from Vienna and I am her son. In Europe that goes by the son. So I took my nanny, her and myself, we register, and I became the boss of the recreation train.

Anyhow, when I came -- I said to the girl, "My nanny say you are deaf, dumb and stupid. Don't open your mouth." So she didn't open it, and we ended up in English zone. It was in Halberstadt. And they took me off the train. Because my German was good, but didn't have the accent.

So I was interviewed by an English major,

and he says -- he looks through my luggage, says,  
"Are you Dr. Fish?"

I said, "Yes." And there was a letter.

"Dear Dr. Fish: Thank you very much for  
the care which you offered me when I needed it.  
Princess Marina of Greece." She became later the  
Princess of Kent. She was in sanitorium left in  
Vienna.

When he was, "Are you Dr. Fish?"

I said, "Yes."

"Oh, I'm sorry we detained you."

sp  
sp  
If he would look at the dates, he would see  
that it doesn't go together. He said, (kiesa  
strika), get his luggage and put him back on the  
train. I was -- I had luck. But I said is better to  
be in English jail than in Russian or Polish jail,  
you know.

So I went up and then we ended -- and  
naturally we didn't want to stay in the English zone.  
We want to go to the American zone.

So again I was the head of the transport.  
And two Jews people, who were on the train with me  
and Giessen, which is before Frankfurt. It was not  
rain, it was nice day. But they had to relieve  
themselves. So they went to relieve themselves in



the back of the post, guard post, of the American Army. He said, "It's not raining. What's going on here?" They got us up and sent us back, you know, to English zone. From then on I said, I'm going alone. I'm not going with anybody. I'm not going to be a leader. Forget it. You know.

So we ended up in Bedzin on the -- Bedzin on the (backstrash). And, you know, it was PDP camp. I was working physician. And then they transfer us to (Pfelderfig).

Q: WHERE?

A: Pfelderfig, which was Jewish camp, in Pfelderfig. And when I was there I was a physician.

Then they told me, "You want to work for JFP, Jewish Agency for Palestine."

I said, "What is the job?"

"Oh, you will be deputy zone medical officer for immigration."

So I said, "Fine." I got the uniform. I got the PX card, you know, and I got my cigarettes, one and a half packs for a dollar fifty.

You could buy things in the PX plus exchange. And I spent the time and lived in Munich this way -- from Pfelderfig I moved to Munich from '47 till '51. And I was in uniform and there I met

my second wife.

What happened, they asked me, "Hey, you need anybody to work?"

Well, I always need somebody to work.

"Come and look at her."

I came and look at her.

I said, "What are you?"

"I'm a medical student."

I said, "Do you type?"

"No."

I said, "How you going to be secretary?"

Anyhow, I say, "Okay, fine. Hire her."

And at that time, she got twelve -- two hundred deutsch a month, which was (debank), which was a heck of a lot of money at that time. And naturally, you know, I was going -- working in (nyon's) office at night, going inspecting the camps. I had two drivers and two cars. One was Lithuanian guy, (Molka). And the only Lithuanian I know, (vo jock), go, let's go. So he brought me -- and you know, all right -- this I want off.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

A: And so we got married. I met her. We got married.

Q: HER NAME IS?

A: Pauline. And I don't know, should I -- okay, I see at the end. Maybe I want this edited out.

The question is, "Where you going?"

I said, "I'm going to Israel." And we sent everything out, furniture, everything which we had, wanted to have that.

And I said -- my mother was eighty-one. I said, "How about a place for my mother? A room, not a tent."

"We cannot do it."

So I change my mind. And I came to the United States. I could have gone to many other countries. Australia, Canada, England, Sweden. But I decided United States will be the best.

Why? I told you that. Because there are too many crazy people to follow one man, you know. This is how it went.

When I came to the States, I was sent to Milwaukee. I was sent to Milwaukee to an area that was very dirty, slums. The bathtub was darker than any black that I ever seen.

And I couldn't take my internship there in Milwaukee. So I moved to Chicago, got the internship work, and then I -- if you know Chicago, I went for

my residency to Mt. Zion for one year. I didn't like the boss. Because he would stop you on the -- "are you talking about me?"

I would tell him, "Why should I talk about you?"

So I quit. And I went to Cook County.

And at Cook County -- see, this scar here (indicating)? I was going out and cleaning my car. Somebody comes behind me, puts a gun at my back. "Get into the car." I didn't know who he is. I just said, "John, you must be kidding."

"Get into the car."

So I just turn around, grab the gun, and hit him in his family jewels. At the same time, they run away.

The police came, said, "Why didn't you take the gun away?"

I said, "You are supposed to be here to defend me. Where were you?"

Then at the end the police came that I attacked this guy to arrest me. Finally, it was straightened out.

When I went to Immigration Naturalization Service, "You didn't have this scar here."

I said, "It was obtained here in Chicago."

So after -- when I was finishing my residency three months before, they told me, "You are going to the Army." I said, "I have ten months. Let we finish."

"No, we can't."

My boss knew somebody in Washington and I got the extension. And so I got the three months. "Here I am. Take me."

"We don't need you now."

Q: WHAT YEAR WAS THAT?

A: This was in '56. "We don't need you there." Or '55, '56. And, you know, I was supposed to work, but nobody will give you a job if the Army is hanging over you. I was supposed to start working in my colleagues. So I talked to my American friends, say, you know -- I thought -- they were kidding, but I thought I don't have any other way.

"Go and see the general of the 5th Army."

So I made an appointment see the general.

He said, "What do you want?"

I said, "I want to be drafted or get out."

And he was telling me not to -- I said,

"Look, my American friends told me that here the things are done the right way, the wrong way, and the Army way. And my things are done the Army way."

One week later I got my invitation to go report to Fort Sam Houston, which is in San Antonio, for training.

I said, "Fine." So I spent my training there.

The worst part was I was standing in front of the battalion for inspection. And Colonel Parker was inspected us. He came to me, turned the belt like that, and said, "Major (Backoff) is there." I said -- I didn't say. I kept my mouth shut. I said, "What would happen to you stay one hour in hot sun for inspection? You would perspire, too."

Anyhow, so this was one. And then at the end they ask me, "Where do you want to go?"

I said, "Look, I'm reserve. I can go for two years. You send me where you need me. And this is fine."

So they say, "You can get (back terrats), second -- there was second special forces group. Second group special forces.

So I look at him, "Who is going to operate the x-ray machine behind me?"

So they say, "Okay, what is your specialty?" And I had MOS with A, my special A. So it means that I was teaching already. I had my

boards and everything.

They said, "You can go to Walter Reed or Letterman."

I said, "I don't like Washington."

So okay, I didn't believe it when I got Letterman assignment. This is where I ended. Here I ended up in Letterman in July of '56. And I was at Letterman.

And I was very independent, too. I was a deputy chief of the department and chief of the nuclear medicine. And I got issued safety officer.

So I had -- you know, I remember one thing. The inspector general came and inspected and then put the white glove, touch the top of the door. "Major, your door is dirty."

I said, "Yes, sir."

Next year when he came in, I put big sign, "Radioactive material. Enter at your own risk." He didn't show up, you know.

Then in 1960 they told me, "You have to go to Walter Reed." There is no way.

I said, "I'm resigning." And I resigned my commission, too.

This what I have against the people who kept their commissions. They were paid for it. They

go. If they ask you, they go. Like I was. Three hundred fifty dollars. Three hundred fifty dollars in San Francisco in 1956 was not enough. So I signed up for hazardous duty. I got another hundred fifty dollars. Where they sent, me, I went. I didn't argue. That's my job. I was paid for it, I do it. So when they told me, "You are going," I resigned my commission. And I went to Cedars of Lebanon to the hospital. Spent two years there in Cedars of Lebanon.

Q: WHERE IS THAT?

A: Los Angeles. And I didn't like it. Didn't like Los Angeles. And didn't like the way -- and I think I want this out -- the way they were treating the patients.

So I got the job at Peralta Medical Clinic where I started the Radiation Therapy Department. You know, you are interviewed. And I didn't -- I did care to get the job, but I didn't sell myself. They said you get interviews, interviews. And one guy who was the big boss and has told me. "Will you work for me."

I said, "Dr. So-and-so, please remember I will work with you, but not for you. Let's make it clear right now."



So I got the job. I went there for twenty-four years, where I got ulcers. I got ulcer of colitis. And I got out. And since then -- oh --

Q: WHAT YEAR WAS THAT YOU RETIRED?

A: From 1984 or '85 -- '84 or '85. '84. End of '84. Yeah, November '84. And here I am.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

Q: OKAY. LET'S GO BACK A LITTLE BIT. YOU SURVIVED -- SPENT MOST OF THE WAR AS A COURIER?

A: Yes. Sometimes on the line.

Q: SOMETIMES ON --

A: On the line, too. But fighting. On the line, fighting.

Q: OH, OKAY. WILL YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT WHAT YOU SAW -- WHAT WAS GOING ON IN WULF DURING THE WAR, WHAT KINDS OF THINGS YOU SAW?

A: I wasn't in Wulf -- I was in Wulf very little. I have, for example -- oh, I forgot to tell you the worst. They caught me and they put me in -- they call it oboslager. It was an annihilation camp in Oski in Wulf. Yeah. One of the guys was Lukita and the head was Wilhouse. His wife had -- I was told -- I wasn't there. I was told she had lamp shades made from human skin, the same like the girl in Auschwitz.

So they caught me. I said if I stay, I will be dead. If I escape, I might be dead. So I escaped. I got out.

Q: WHAT WERE YOU DOING WHEN THEY CAUGHT YOU?

A: Courier.

Q: AND WHERE WERE YOU?

A: In Wülf. At that time, I was in Wülf.

Q: AND TELL US SOME OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT LED TO YOUR GETTING CAUGHT.

A: I was walking on the street and there was only -- all the man, you know, Jews -- I mean on the street, there were no Jews on the street. Were caught and transferred, you know, to the camp and then sorted out who goes there, who goes where, and what. So this is how it happened.

Q: SO IN A GENERAL SWEEP?

A: Yeah, general sweep.

Q: DID YOU HAVE SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS WITH YOU?

A: At that time, no. I already delivered them.

Q: DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT YOU HAD BEEN CARRYING BEFORE?

A: I never know it. They never tell you. So, you know, they never tell you what you carrying.

Q: DID THE GERMANS KNOW YOU WERE A COURIER

WHEN THEY PICKED YOU UP?

A: Uh-uh, no. I was just -- they caught me twice, and I escape. I mean, if I stay -- you know, I met only one man from the same camp during the entire time.

I said, "How did you do it?"

"Oh, I escaped after five weeks."

I was better. I escaped the first day. I mean, when they brought me in -- you know, they bring you in and there's quite a lot of commotion and so forth when they bring in many people. The dogs were not there. I just hid behind -- under the train which was standing there. And when it was dark and the train was moving out, I moved out with the train. And the second time the same. I learned the first one works. Why not?

Q: AND IT WAS A DON'T ARGUE WITH SUCCESS?

A: Yes.

Q: DID YOU KNOW -- PRIOR TO THAT, DID YOU KNOW ABOUT (LIOFSKI), ABOUT THE CAMP?

A: Yeah, I heard about it.

Q: WHAT HAD YOU HEARD?

A: There were -- I have seen -- I was walking on the street in (Liofski) delivering something there and I went on the street coming back. This is where

they caught me. The people were -- walking on the street were surrounded by the Ukrainian and Jewish police. So that's what happened.

One thing which bothered me, and I had disagreement, that everybody says all Jews were great. They weren't. There were people who were giving other people up. There were -- for example, the first Judenrat was usually good. They were the select people. But then is when they tell you there were so many people, they said we won't. So they were shot. With the second one there were more reasoning, but still they resisted. With the third one, you want out of here, you get thousand people. You know. And the Jewish police, they were like couples, and they were -- some of them went to court. They were tried in Poland after the war.

Q: OF THE JEWISH COUPLES?

A: Yeah, Jewish police, yeah. I know that.

Q: HOW DID SOMEONE GET SELECTED TO BE -- OR DID THEY VOLUNTEER TO BE A JEWISH --

A: Oh, yeah, they volunteer because they are given relative safety and relative power and being the boss. Some of them were very good, but there were many who were not so good. You know, this happen in any ghetto. This happen in Warsaw ghetto

and Lodz ghetto and Wulf ghetto, and then Sambor ghetto. I don't worry about Sambor because I was there during the change during, the first action, and we were in the Einsatzgruppen D.

Q: D?

A: Yeah. A was farther north, and then was B, C, D. South was the . . .

Q: TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT SETTING UP THE GHETTO IN SAMBOR.

A: There were the orders, the orders were out. They moved -- I moved out to Wulf at that time. And then Wulf ghetto was already in existence.

Q: WHAT WERE CONDITIONS LIKE IN THE GHETTO?

A: I wasn't there.

Q: YOU NEVER WENT IN --

A: No. no. I never went there. Because this was double danger, you know. It's not -- I was not so much afraid of the Germans. I was afraid of the Jewish people, my friends, who said, hey, how are you, you know, and here we go.

Q: JEWS WHO KNEW WHAT WAS GOING ON INSIDE THE GHETTO GET OUT?

A: Oh, yes, they got out. I knew -- see, I knew what happened to my sister in-law. I knew what is going on. I was sending packages through by other

people. But I never went in. She use it, I am out.

Q: YOUR SISTER IN-LAW, HOW WAS SHE PICKED OUT?

A: As a Jew. She -- just as a Jew.

Q: SHE DIDN'T -- YOU HAD FALSE PAPERS?

A: Yeah.

Q: CAN YOU TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT HOW YOU AND YOUR MOTHER OBTAINED FALSE PAPERS?

A: Mother, I -- mother got the false papers through a friend. We had to pay for it. I had to give my gold Longines watch and she got the papers. You know what I did after war? Bought myself the same watch back. Longines.

Q: AND WHO DID YOU BUY THEM FROM AND HOW DID YOU FIND THE PEOPLE?

A: As I told you, we had many friends who were non-Jewish, and they went with my mother. And she didn't look Jewish, so she got it. I couldn't go. I got it through the underground.

Q: AND THE PAPER GAVE YOU THE RIGHT TO PASS ON THE STREETS?

A: I was like any other Pole, you know. I could work if I want to. But I didn't want to work because I had other jobs to do. So this is how it went.

Q: THERE CAME A POINT WHEN THE SOVIETS

INSISTED THAT ALL POLES TAKE ON SOVIET CITIZENSHIP.

A: Yes.

Q: HOW DID YOU AVOID --

A: I said, "I'm Polish. I'm not taking it."

Q: A LOT OF PEOPLE WHO DID THAT, I THINK, WERE  
KILLED.

A: Excuse me. Would you explain yourself.

Q: IF PEOPLE DID NOT ACCEPT SOVIET  
CITIZENSHIP, WEREN'T THEY DEPORTED TO --

A: Oh, yeah. I told they were, indeed, but I  
didn't accept it. And this was after they came the  
second time and they told me, "You are going to the  
Russian Army."

I said, "No, I'm Polish."

Okay, "So you are going to Poland. Out."

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE --

A: The one thing which bothered me on the  
Russian passport, you know, that was (Evay). You  
know what means (Evay)?

Q: UH-HUH.

A: Okay. So I didn't like it, democratic  
country. To me it is a religion, not nationality.

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE WHAT LIOFSKI LOOKED LIKE,  
THE CAMP.

A: I didn't see very much. I see this -- but

what I have seen, they were long barracks, you know, with barbed wire, two or three times barbed wire with dogs and everything. And people who worked there mostly, there were very few German. Mostly (Vlasov) officers, the Vlasov Army, the black. The Russian Army, who surrendered to the Germans, you know, and for where they were under ( ). Communist -- they needed food and they were not fat. The prisoner of war -- I have seen myself when the Germans shot ten thousand prisoner of war just walking in front of the machine gun. They told me ten thousand. I don't know. I didn't count them.

Q: THIS WAS AT THE CAMP?

A: No. This was on the perimeter when they were progressing. This was near Sambor, not far from Sambor, between Sambor and Wulf.

Q: WHAT OTHER CITIES WERE YOU IN AS A COURIER DURING THE WAR?

A: Mostly in Wulf and the area where I had to ( ) in the front line.

Q: AND WHERE WAS THE FRONT LINE?

A: Wherever they told me.

Q: DID YOU ACTUALLY SEE THE FIGHTING IN THE FRONT LINE?

A: Oh, yeah. Not the front line. We attack --



for example, we liberated one train, full train of German Jews. We stopped it. We said, "Out, out, out."

"We are Germans. Nothing will happen to us." You know.

So I said, "Yeah, you will go first. You will have the priority," and there is no time to talk anymore. I said fine, "Let's go out."

Q: WHERE WAS THIS?

A: It was close -- they were going to (Mydonik). It was further that way, further north. Sort of Central Poland.

Q: YOU SAY MOST OF THE JEWS DID NOT GET OUT OF THE TRAIN?

A: No, none. I don't blame them -- and the other thing because this was Poland mostly. They will be picked up right away because they didn't speak Polish. So, you know, they would have to risk their lives like we risk our lives, fine. And they were mostly elderly. No young people. So I said, "Fine." What can you do?

Q: I WAS GOING TO ASK YOU -- YOU SAID THAT YOU FORGOT SOMETHING WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT BEING ON THE TRAIN TO BE AN ESCORT TO MOSCOW. THERE WAS SOMETHING YOU WERE GOING TO TELL US AND I DIDN'T KNOW

IF YOU WENT BACK TO THAT.

A: No, this cannot be on this. I say how we call the doctor. He was Enis. We added a "P." I don't know what happened to him.

But the Russians were very good to me. They kept me. He was invalid. He was wounded in the war. They fed me. They let me sleep in their house. They were very good to me. I cannot complain.

Q: AND WHAT YEAR DID YOU COME TO THE STATES?

A: 1951.

Q: ONE MORE QUESTION. HOW DID YOU SUPPORT -- YOU SAID --

A: Oh, I forgot to tell you one more thing, which is really important. Do you know what is (Breecar)? You should know.

Q: YEAH.

A: I was a (breecar). We were going back taking young people out from Poland, Rumania, Hungary, and the head camp, main camp, was in (Garretsig) and I was the physician in charge. I was going back. And when they were going, they put us on a train. And we were going through the tunnel. And suddenly one guy opens the window. In train, you know, in Europe you can open the windows.

So I said, "No." There was a guy put his

hand in front of me and broke his hand. He was crazy.

So I say, "Okay, you want to jump, jump."

You know how we got him on the ship? He wanted sunglasses. I had my sunglasses here. "Walk with me and with the sunglasses. I give it to you when you on the ship." He got it. That's fine.

Q: HE DIDN'T WANT TO GO?

A: He was crazy.

Q: WAS IT DANGEROUS TRYING TO GET PEOPLE OUT?

A: Yes and no. Not so much, because -- see, I don't speak Hebrew now, but I spoke Hebrew what was necessary, because it was one language which nobody could understand, you know. So this is the way we had good communication. We had good guards. We knew who is being paid, where we can cross. It was okay. I went to Israel to do my sabbatical. And we had a party for all night. I forgot about the (paycar).

Q: YOU HAD A PARTY WITH --

A: With the people who were with me at that time.

Q: THE REUNION.

A: Yeah.

Q: HOW MANY PEOPLE DO YOU THINK YOU HELPED GET OUT OF POLAND?

A: I would be sure it is thousands. From Poland to Rumania, Hungary. I don't know if we went to Bulgaria or not, but I know from Poland and then Hungary and Rumania. I learned couple of Rumanian words, which I have ( ). (Atachitay) means "turn around" and (espira), "breeze." So that's what I needed.

Q: DID YOU HAVE TO GET FALSE PAPERS FOR EACH PERSON YOU GOT OUT OR WERE THERE JUST BORDER POINTS?

A: No, this was just border points. And we -- for example, the one which I went with was from Uznam. Everybody congregate Uznam and then one night over to France and from France to Marseille.

Q: AND IN MARSEILLE THEY SAILED --

A: Yes.

Q: AND WHAT YEARS DID YOU DO THIS WORK?

A: Since -- since about '48, '49, '50. And the headquarters were in (Garretsrig). It was underground factory, German factory. There were some underground factories and this was where they made place where the people congregated before they were going out. I almost went on the one ship, and then when I asked about my mother, so I said no.

Q: I'D LIKE TO GO BACK TO YOUR EXPERIENCES IN THE UNDERGROUND. DID YOU EVER EXPERIENCE ANY

ANTI-SEMITISM?

A: No. They didn't know I'm Jewish. I told you they didn't know.

Q: YEAH. OKAY.

A: They didn't know that I'm Jewish, no.

Q: DID YOU FEEL UNEASY WORKING ALWAYS KNOWING YOU COULD BE FOUND OUT?

A: You cannot keep uneasy. You have to be -- do the best what you can. You see, for example I am still -- when somebody tells me 10:45, I'm there 10:45. I'm not there 10:44 or 10:46. Today I came earlier because I didn't know what I can find it.

*words*  
And I went farther ( ) forty-six. I had to turn around and find a parking space. So I was here about 11:45.

Q: WHERE DO YOU GET -- YOU HAVE OBVIOUSLY AN INDEPENDENT STREAK IN YOU. DID YOU GET THAT FROM YOUR FATHER OR FROM YOUR MOTHER?

A: My father.

Q: TELL ME A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR FATHER, HOW HE TAUGHT YOU TO DO TO BE SO HEADSTRONG AND INDEPENDENT.

A: He was a judge. And he was most proud of it that his decisions were never reversed, you know. So that's how I got it. I still remember him through

my door where I slept, him sitting in the other room with the green shade lamp and writing the decisions.

Q: DID YOU HAVE A BIG HOME OR WERE YOU CONSIDERED WEALTHY IN THAT --

A: Yes. Yes.

Q: YOU SAID THAT ONLY TEN PERCENT OF THE PEOPLE IN ZOLKIEW WERE --

A: Zólkiew.

Q: Zólkiew.

A: Yeah.

Q: WERE JEWISH. WHAT WERE THE REST OF THE PEOPLE?

A: Ukranians and Poles. I don't know how many Ukranians. Maybe at most fifty percent. You see, I judge the -- there was ten percent of Jewish population in Poland and this really goes like, for example, in Wülf there was -- initially there were three hundred thousand Jews in Wülf. Then during the war they came up to five hundred, you know. Ten percent average. You judge it.

Q: DID YOU SHARE YOUR WHOLE STORY WITH YOUR KIDS? HOW MANY KIDS DO YOU HAVE?

A: Three.

Q: HAVE YOU SHARED THIS WITH THEM?

A: I forgot one thing to tell you. Yes and

no. And they were after me to tell it. I put it on my small tape, but they want more. For example, I went now with my son for a trip. I just felt -- we went to Puerto Vallarta and we had a wonderful time. We were talking and talking and talking. Yes, we -- off the record.

"Why you mad with mother?"

"I'm not mad with her." We are talking now, you know. We are ( ) my house and her house.

But I say, you know, "she cheated me of something."

He said, "What was it?"

"The years when you were young she didn't let me see you."

You know, and we made arrangements that I see all three kids every other weekend and one kid every Wednesday, you know. So I have three kids together and then one kid. And she always responded to parties they have to go some place, it was canceled, you know. Some kind of thing.

But then naturally now the kids are smarter. And they are okay.

This is off the record again. For example, my --

Q: SHALL I TURN THE TAPE OFF?

A: No.

All right.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

Q: YOU HAD -- YOU WERE IN MEDICAL SCHOOL  
WHEN --

A: War broke out. The first war in '39 and  
the second war in '41, yes.

Q: WHAT WAS THE REACTION AMONG STUDENTS? HOW  
MUCH DID THEY KNOW ABOUT WHAT THE GERMANS PLANNED FOR  
THE JEWS? HOW MUCH DID YOU KNOW? HOW MUCH DID YOUR  
JEWISH --

A: I -- at the beginning, I didn't know too  
much. I started knowing when the first action came.  
See, the first action was without ghetto yet in  
Sambor. They went only to the Jewish area, you know,  
behind the neighbor this way. But then when the  
things came, the ghetto, I said out.

Q: EXPLAIN EXACTLY WHAT THE ACTION -- WHAT YOU  
RECALL ABOUT THE ACTION. HOW DID IT PROGRESS?

A: Okay. They say everybody will report at  
6:00 to the unigrad. So I reported. Everybody else.  
They say -- we were assigned to a German. There  
were -- mostly there were -- there were very few  
Germans. There were -- mostly was (Zonadeest), which



was the young falsch Deutsch. You know what is falsch Deutsch? Who were the falsch Deutsch people who were Polish and then sell themselves for a piece of bread. They became falsch Deutsch and they were bad. I was lucky I got the German who was older, fifty-five. He was a wachmeister. (Shitspolysci). So he didn't make any decisions. I don't know what he did during the night. I never seen him again, but there were some people, too, very few, but they were, you know. For example, I know a person whose father was German. He was close to the ( ) Auschwitz. As they said, they didn't know what happened. I mean, that's baloney. How could they not know?

Q: THIS WAS A FRIEND FROM THE UNIVERSITY?

A: No, no. I just -- fine, you know.

Q: SO THE ACTION WHEN YOU RECORDED -- WHO YOU REPORTED TO WHO SENT YOU --

A: Yeah, you go with this guy, you go with this guy, you go with this guy. And what we going to do? You going to be in (Justow) for a settlement. I didn't like it. I didn't know what is happening in the settlement. It's relatively early, you know.

I said, "I won't do it. You can shoot me. I won't do it. That's your job."

He said, "I cannot do it either. Let's go and have a swim."

Q: YOUR WIFE'S FAMILY, WERE THEY ALSO PICKED UP IN THAT FIRST ACTION?

A: No, they were not. My wife, no, never. Protected. I made sure of it that they are protected. That's why I went into it. Otherwise, I won't go this way. Her brother was a policeman, too. But I don't know. He left -- I left him there. We left. And I seen after the war he had a trial coming.

Q: HE WHAT?

A: A trial. His girlfriend, who was -- either Catholic or Greek Catholic, I don't know, saved him. But had to die. I don't know what happened. I felt sorry for him because, you know, these people were fifteen, fourteen, fifteen years old. They didn't know what was good or bad, what they should do. You know, they are too young to know what is good, what is bad. But sometimes you have to realize what is bad, even if you are fourteen.

I'm a strong ( ).

Yes, I am. But I'm proud of it. During my career, if I had only one person, I selected well.

Q: DO YOU REMEMBER ANY OF THE NAMES AND

PARTICULARS OF PEOPLE WHO MAY HAVE HELPED YOU SURVIVE?

A: Okay, the guy who pointed me out was (Shelow), the Ukranian. The guy who brought me from Sambor was Lokita Sessman. You know, he was bribed. I have seen my colleagues on the street. They didn't attack me. We said hi to each other when we pass. So they helped me by not pointing me out. But not otherwise.

Q: HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT GERMANS AND UKRANIANS, RUSSIANS TODAY?

A: I told you how I feel about Ukranians. When I was at Cedars of Lebanon, one of the assistants was Ukranian from Wulf, and I looked at him and say, "You not come into my office. If you need something, talk to my secretary. She will transfer my -- what I want from you to you." I don't know how he got the job there but again, that is not my problem. I said, "I don't want to talk to you even."

The Germans, the majority, I can tolerate them. Quite -- I can tolerate them. For example, I went to a trip to Europe and I pass through Munich in the train. You know, from England I went to Switzerland. I walked out for a minute. I say I

don't want to stay here. I went back into the train, and that's all.

I don't know if this is true, but I was told that Kissinger, when I was in Bedzin under (Winestrasser), he was a corporal and CID at that time. I don't know it's right or wrong.

Q: HAVE YOU VISITED POLAND SINCE --

A: No, and I don't intend to. You know, what they have now? They say, "Jews to the ovens." These were signs. I'm not going there. I have Polish friends which are good. You know, like the Jews -- like the Poles said we have one Jewish friend. I have one Polish friend and we are friendly. We are just like sister and -- like brother and brother, you know. So it always depends from the person. And I usually make a good contact with the person. I can judge it, yes or no. And this is why I survived, too, you know. Yes, I always -- oh, my left eye is twitching. I better don't go there. You know. You just take many things. If my eye is twitching, I'm not going.

Q: WHERE DID YOU LIVE DURING THE WAR? AND DID YOU LIVE WITH YOUR MOTHER?

A: No. Because this will be her in jeopardy. I was coming and they let me stay there for two

nights when I came to Wülf to get the orders. I even went so far -- I even went to the place where we lived before and the guy -- what do you call it? Who lived in the basement, he see me. "Hi. How are you doing? Just go ahead." You know. I got a different -- I got a different relationship with the people. I can talk now to the person, stop on the street and talk to them. And I could do then, too. This gives me idea what kind of a person she -- he or she is. I can talk. I can stop.

You know what it gives me the most pleasure now? I was in the department, you know, where I work. Say, "hi, Dr. Fish, how are you?"

I said, "Oh, I'm fine. How are you? You know, if you wouldn't be here, I wouldn't be here either." You know. This gives me that I did something, I accomplished something.

Q: SO TELL ME A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT WHERE YOU LIVED AND WHAT DAY-TO-DAY LIFE WAS LIKE DURING THE WAR. DESCRIBE IT TO ME.

A: During the war? Okay. In 1939 when the Russians came, I live on (Vernatska) 5 in Wülf. Naturally, we had a large apartment. We owned a house. So we got the Russians to be quartered, and they had lived with us. He was (Hoodoshnee) director

of the Philharmonia, which means art director of the Philharmonic Orchestra. Actually, he was a (polytook). You know what's (polytook)? (Antega badge) in the Army. They call (polytook). And what they do when they were deporting people, suddenly he came back with a blue cap, and cover the cap was -- I said, "Hey, you are art director. What are you doing there?"

"Oh, that's only temporary," you know.

Then after the war he came back, say, "I want my badge." Forget it. The Germans took it. Go where it is.

Q: SO YOU LIVED IN AN APARTMENT?

A: Yeah.

Q: FOR A TIME?

A: I lived in an apartment since 1938 till 1941.

Q: AND THEN BECAUSE YOU QUARTERED RUSSIANS IN THE BUILDING, THEY DIDN'T CONFISCATE --

A: I don't know -- you see, Russians aren't very good in it. They lose you in the shuffle. We were lost in the shuffle, I guess.

Q: AND WAS THERE FOOD, ADEQUATE FOOD?

A: Oh, no. Okay. We formed a group of students, you know. In Russia it's a store where you

buy food that's called (bacaya). Bacaya Number 36.

So we went to the owners and to the people who worked there, said, "Look, you want protection. Will you give food because we want something for our stomach?"

They said yes, so we assigned six students to this one, six students to this one. Kept the people in order. And we got for this one kilogram of sugar. One gram more, you know.

This is how it goes. And I was working because I support my family, my parents. I was working as (leakpom), which means like assistant physician, physician's assistant. And so I was getting -- and in Russia the medicine is rather funny because you have to see -- when you are internist, you have to see five patients an hour. If you are surgeon, ten patients an hour. You know. This is how it goes. And so I was a (leakpom) and I was getting -- and then there was -- ( ) whether we want to join the (Matushka Lucea), the fatherland. And they were voting and I didn't want to vote. So they came to me and say ( ) things.

"You know I am not working. I cannot go."

They said, "Okay, when you finish working."

Oh, the polls are open til 9:00. You be sure that you vote."

Between 8:30 there was a car in front of the house. "You didn't vote yet. Come on."

And so I went and I said I really don't want to vote. What I'm going to do.

I just destroy my ballot and didn't drop it in.

Q: THAT'S ONE WAY TO GET VOTERS TO THE POLLS.

A: Yeah, deliver them.

Q: YOU ALSO MENTIONED THAT YOU DIDN'T REALLY -- YOU HADN'T WANTED TO GO TO MEDICAL SCHOOL. YOU WANTED TO GO TO SWITZERLAND?

A: Yes.

Q: TELL ME SOME OF THE DETAILS ABOUT THAT. WHAT DID YOU WANT TO DO IN SWITZERLAND?

A: I want to be a pilot.

Q: AND YOUR FATHER DID NOT THINK THAT WAS A SUITABLE PROFESSION?

A: No. He wanted me there because I was the baby. I had admission already to school. Had to cancel it. In Zurich. Then I wanted second time to go to Czechoslovakia, to France, when the Polish Army was formed.

He said, "I don't know. Who is going to



support us? You are going to stay."

So I stayed. I said, "You have Junok," my brother.

"He has his own family. He has to support them. You are going to stay."

And there was no question asked anymore.

Q: BUT THAT WAS MORE TRADITIONAL THAT THE CHILDREN WOULD TAKE CARE OF THE PARENTS.

A: That's right. Normally, I wouldn't have to, but they took everything away, the Russians.

Q: AND WHERE WAS -- IN RELATION TO WHERE YOU WERE LIVING DURING THE WAR, WHERE WAS YOUR MOTHER LIVING AND HOW DID SHE GET FOOD AND TAKE CARE OF --

A: Oh, she had the Kenn karte. She had rations card. She had rations. I would say where I was living, about a mile a way. She lived on (Witchakoska). We lived on (Vernoska). So we had to go (Kopernika) down and then go up to (Witchakoska). (Kopernika), (Ligionoff), up.

Q: WAS SHE ABLE TO WORK?

A: No, she didn't work. She was older at that time. She didn't need to work. Nobody stopped her.

Q: DID YOU EVER -- WERE YOU EVER PICKED UP FOR ANY OF THE WORK CREWS, ARBEITS --

A: I, no. No, only this time when I told you.

Yeah.

Q: DID YOU EVER WITNESS ANY --

A: Beatings?

Q: TORTURE OF --

A: Yes. ( ) the action. At the beginning. Beating. Hitting. People bleeding, you know.

Q: WHERE DID THIS TAKE PLACE?

A: Sambor. I was -- you know, I was working with (shipper polysci), so I was exempted. You had to go to the area where the action was taking place, to the river. But that's when I have seen it.

Q: AND WERE THERE CHILDREN AND WOMEN AND --

A: Oh, everybody.

Q: DID YOU EVER HAVE ANYONE DOUBT YOUR FALSE PAPERS, HAVE THEM CHECKED OR HAVE ANYBODY QUESTION THEM?

A: No. I got good papers. I was lucky. I was never stopped. Really, I was never stopped. Except for these two occasions.

Q: DID YOU EVER MEET ANY OTHER JEWS WORKING IN THE UNDERGROUND --

A: No. I was in the -- completely to the right.

Q: DOES THAT SEEM SORT OF -- DID YOU EVER MEET

OTHER JEWS WHO ESCAPED OR TRIED --

A: No, we knew about them, but we never met. See, the point is if they were mostly -- the Jews who were there were mostly in the pro Russian underground. Very few -- there was only one colleague of mine who was in the Army of (Krioba). He was Jewish, which is the Polish government in underground. I don't know what happened to him. We met -- he was with me in Germany, but then he ended up in New York. I met him in New York. He got divorced, and we just -- contact was broken.

Q: DID YOU EVER THINK -- WERE YOU EVER IN A POSITION WHEN YOU WENT CLOSER TO THE FRONT LINES WHERE YOU WERE --

A: Afraid.

Q: -- UNDER FIRE OR YOU THOUGHT YOU MIGHT LOSE YOUR --

A: Oh, yeah, sure. I was under -- I tell you one thing which is along with the German forces, when they have to take -- I don't know, maybe they left by now. A machinegun attack. They always attack frontally and you get the most casualties you went around.

Q: YOU ACTUALLY TOOK -- YOU ACTUALLY WENT OUT AND TOOK OUT (UNINTELLIGIBLE) --

A: I did, no, no. But I was close to it. I was next to it. I mean, you get assignment and I was -- I was a little bit better off because they needed me so I did not get the very hazardous assignments because to train a courier takes time.

Q: WHAT DOES IT INVOLVE?

A: How to behave. What to do. How to hide documents. What to do with them.

Q: TELL US SOME OF WHAT YOU LEARNED AS A COURIER.

A: Never be afraid. Never look afraid. Never look afraid. If you look afraid, you are done. Forget it. And if they stop you, if you have the documents on you, try to get out. If you don't have documents, you chance.

Q: WHERE DID YOU USED TO HIDE THE DOCUMENTS? WHERE WAS THE SAFEST PLACE TO KEEP THEM?

A: Usually in the belt, like money belt, because this way they went, you know, over there but nobody was thinking about getting into the belt. It depends on where ( ). Some people had in the shoes. To me the soles are crazy because take your shoes off. You were left -- they told you, but it was left to your ingenuity, more or less.

Q: WHAT WAS THE MOST DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENT YOU

EVER HAD AS A COURIER?

A: Picking up and killing an SS man.

Q: CAN YOU EXPAND ON THAT?

A: You have to be very careful when you kill SS men. Why? Because they will take a hundred people or twenty people out of the street so it would be worthwhile to kill them. It's worthwhile the money which you have to pay for it. He was going in a car. We had a car behind, a German car, you know. And we shot him and threw the grenade. He went in flames.

Q: DO YOU KNOW WHO HE WAS?

A: He was Oberstromung Fuhrer. I don't remember his name. It's like -- no, it's a little bit more like full colonel or more.

Q: AND DID YOU DO THIS IN BROAD DAYLIGHT OR AT NIGHT, OR WHEN WAS IT DONE?

A: It was daytime.

Q: DID YOU DO ANYTHING ELSE LIKE THAT? DID YOU EVER --

A: Oh, one was enough. One is enough.

Q: THE UNDERGROUND YOU WORKED FOR, DID THEY -- WAS THE ORGANIZATION EVER INFILTRATED OR ANY CAPTURES OF LEADERSHIP?

A: No. That's why I'm alive. There were some

people lost, but not generally infiltrated so they know what we were going to do or we are not going to do.

Q: WHAT OTHER KIND OF OPERATIONS WERE BEING DIRECTED FROM THIS UNDERGROUND CREW. DID IT HAVE A MILITARY UNIT?

A: There were military units which were in the underground, you know. They were fighting. But they must ( ) in the central Poland. The one in the east south, they are mostly just groups. Say you do this, you do this, you do this. But there were not constant unit, so far as I know, that were fighting. I know there was ( ) officers. There was lots of people. There were some Jewish people fighting. And what else? And some Army (Krioba), but very little because it's mostly Ukranian infiltrated area. So you had two things to fight for. For once the Germans and -- my brother told me, you know, "You had better than I did."

I say, "Yeah, you at least know who is shooting at you. I didn't even know that."

Q: DID YOU EVER HAVE CONTACT AMONG THESE UNITS TO DO JOINT OPERATIONS OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT?

A: Very few. Very few. Because, you know, the thing is the ingenuity of the person who leads

it. So they were very few. Mostly they were kept separate. We knew about each other, but that's all.

Q: THIS MAY BE A DUMB QUESTION, BUT HOW DID YOU FEEL WHEN YOU KILLED THE SS OFFICER, YOU PARTICIPATED IN IT?

A: Didn't feel sorry for him. I was afraid how to get out now.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET OUT?

A: In the car. We just sped around and moved.

Q: THE GHETTO IN WULF WAS LIQUIDATED ON JULY 1ST, 1943, I THINK WAS THE FINAL --

A: I think so. You are right. But as I told you, I was never in ghetto in Wulf.

Q: WERE YOU IN THE CITY AT THAT TIME? DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THAT?

A: No, no, I don't.

Q: HOW DID YOU GET -- GENERALLY WERE THERE NEWSPAPERS OPERATING? DID YOU GET MORE NEWS --

A: Radio. And there was some newspapers. Mostly radio, BBC.

Q: WHAT DID YOU KNOW OF WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE REST OF THE WAR? HOW MUCH --

A: By BBC because we had -- there was 9:00 news Poland time, Polish time where I was, and that's what we knew. We didn't know -- we found about

Stalingrad the BBC.

Q: WHAT WERE THE RUSSIAN OR UKRANIAN PAPERS REPORTING ABOUT STALINGRAD?

A: Oh, everything is great, wonderful. Like Saddam Hussein now, you know. Yeah, everything is great. There's one thing about the Polish German. I had a girlfriend when I was in high school and there was one guy whose father was -- was -- correspond to IRS here. He was a local supervisor of tax. He became falsch Deutsch. Before we had bloody noses, you know, and he became falsch Deutsch. She became falsch Deutsch. I'm glad I didn't join, but he was killed under Stalingrad. See, falsch Deutsch got food but then later when the population of people of Germany are ready to go to war, it was crazy take all the falsch Deutsches, everything to SS, (faffen) SS.

Q: DURING THE WAR DID YOU KNOW ABOUT AUSCHWITZ, BUCHENWALD, MAJDANEK, BELSEN --

A: No, I didn't know exactly. But I know that something is happening ( ). but I didn't know what. I know, you know, this was the Arbeitslager. Arbeitsmeister (slavenzees). But I don't know that they are killing people actually there.

Q: WERE YOU IN CONTACT WITH OTHER JEWS AT ALL



THAT WERE IN THE WAR, SOMEONE TO TALK TO ABOUT WHAT WAS GOING ON?

A: No. There's one thing which I wanted to tell you. When my father was killed, the German offered me ( ) mark, and I said, "You cannot pay me for my father's death. You can pay me for two days that I spent in the camp and that's all." I didn't want any money from them. I just don't see any reason to take money for my father's life.

Q: THEY PICKED UP YOUR FATHER TWO DAYS AFTER --

A: After they entered, yeah.

Q: SO THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN IN JULY --

A: No, June.

Q: JUNE '41?

A: Yeah.

Q: AND DID THEY COME TO THE HOUSE WHEN YOU WEREN'T IN HIDING?

A: I don't know. I wasn't there. I just know that he was killed at that time.

Q: DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY TOOK HIM? DID YOUR MOTHER EVER --

A: (Witness shakes head from side to side.).

Q: THERE WAS ANOTHER BIG CAMPAIGN. THEY

CALLED IT THE JANUARY CAMPAIGN IN 1942 WHERE THERE WERE A NUMBER OF -- WHERE THEY WERE PICKING UP A LOT OF JEWS. DO YOU REMEMBER --

A: I was out.

Q: YOU WERE NOT THERE?

A: Yeah.

Q: CAN YOU DESCRIBE A LITTLE BIT ABOUT THE DOCUMENT THAT YOU -- THE DOCUMENT YOU HAD THAT GAVE YOU SAFE PASSAGE?

A: This was so-called Kenn karte which had my photograph, my date of birth, my name and my address. Did it have my address? I don't -- no, it didn't have my address. And that I am citizen. I'm a -- a law abiding citizen. More or less.

Q: YOU SAY YOUR NAME OR --

A: No, this is the (Shujeski) name which I told you.

Q: WOULD YOU SAY THAT NAME, THE FULL NAME ON THE CAMERA FOR US, THE NAME THAT YOU USED?

A: Victor Jacob Herbert Stanislov Shujeski.

Q: JACOB?

A: Yeah.

Q: WOULDN'T THAT BE A GIVEAWAY AS A JEWISH NAME?

A: They have a Polish name Jacob. Jacob,

yeah. But I had like Spanish. I had four names.  
Four names.

Q: I HAVE A COUPLE MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR  
WIFE. WHAT YEAR DID YOU MEET HER IN MEDICAL SCHOOL?

A: '39. No. Yeah, '39.

Q: AND YOU WERE MARRIED WHEN?

A: '41.

Q: HER NAME WAS --

A: Anne Bender.

Q: AND YOU WERE MARRIED IN --

A: Sambor.

Q: WHICH IS WHERE YOU WERE LIVING?

A: Yeah.

Q: DO YOU REMEMBER SPECIFICALLY WHEN SHE WAS  
PICKED UP, HOW THAT HAPPENED?

A: Yeah, I know when -- she went for the Kenn  
karte. I told you that. With another girl. They  
both were picked up. And she was transferred -- both  
were transferred to (Waskego), not far away where I  
lived. Is about five hundred meters. On the corner.  
See I live here, this was this way (indicating).

Q: HOW LONG WAS SHE HELD THERE BEFORE --

A: Two weeks. And my nanny came out. They  
just told me they just cleaned up the prison. I  
didn't see her, but they just cleaned up the prison.

And they took them over I think was (Pioski) on the Seine in (Wichokovich) is a part of Poland -- part of Wulf out, farther out. I don't know what that would be. North -- I don't remember whether it was north, west. See, there were two cemeteries, areas where cemeteries. (Yanoski) is one where the camp was and the other one was (Whichikoski.)

Q: SO YOU ARE NOT SURE WHICH ONE --

A: No, she went to (Whichikoski). I know that, but I don't -- see, like, for example, I did never go to visit the concentration camp. And if I came and I came here I no doubt I want to stay Jewish. You know, I was just no religion. My religion is don't do to anything what you want to have done to yourself. But when the kids were born, I said I better be -- join the synagogue. Because if somebody tells them, "You dirty Jews," they know what they stand for.

Q: SO YOU WERE SAYING YOU WERE NOT A RELIGIOUS MAN AFTER THE WAR?

A: No.

Q: HOW ABOUT BEFORE THE WAR?

A: I believed in God. I still believe in God. But -- I went through the bar mitzvah. But then when I went to university, no.

Q: YOU SAID THAT YOUR FATHER WORE TEFILLIN?

A: Yeah, we had talas every morning. Didn't influence me.

Q: AND DID YOUR FAMILY CELEBRATE SHABBAT AND HOLIDAYS?

A: Yes. I remember I had to say how ( ) every Friday.

Q: WERE THOSE GOOD MEMORIES FOR YOU?

A: Yeah. See, I couldn't understand the way other people couldn't understand, why this happen. Where is God?

Q: WHEN -- THIS SUMMER WHEN -- LAST SUMMER, I GUESS IT WAS NOW, WHEN GERMANY REUNITED, HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT THE REUNIFICATION OF GERMANY?

A: Not happy, but not -- you know, it happened. What I am very unhappy is about the Lithuanians, Latvians and Estonians. Estonians, see I wrote a letter to Bush. I am moderately Republican. I am not a Democrat. I said, look, you know, when the Germans needed ( ), they took the Germans, took us out, and they put the Lithuanian police. And believe me, it was more than just work next to the Lituanian policeman than crossing the one -- traffic cop. I said why do you want to risk everything just to make them hell. They

were -- they are not being killed, you know. If they were being killed, okay, I can say fine. Let's go for it. But they are not being killed. Why should we escape and make them happy. They never make anybody else. They weren't ( ) with Germans. And probably more American soldiers were killed. I got an answer, too.

Q: WHAT WAS THE ANSWER?

A: The answer is -- I don't know how to translate. Actually was no more, no man no ( ) you know.

Q: WHEN DID YOU FIRST BECOME AWARE OF THE EINSATZGRUPPEN? DID YOU KNOW IMMEDIATELY THAT THEY --

A: I was familiar -- no. I was familiar with (Zonendaynce) because they were -- and then I became -- later I became involved with Einsatzgruppen about two, three later. Two years later. You know, they came in 1941. Einsatzgruppen I was familiar about 1942. In '43, '43.

Q: AND DID PEOPLE UNDERSTAND WHAT THE MISSION OF THE -- AND DID YOU UNDERSTAND WHAT THE MISSION OF THE EINSATZGRUPPEN WAS?

A: Oh, sure. There was no question. But everybody tried to kid themselves it wouldn't be me.

It was the other guy.

Q: DID YOU EVER CONSIDER LEAVING THE COUNTRY, TRYING TO LEAVE TO SOMEWHERE ELSE DURING THE WAR?

A: No, except when I told you that I wanted to go to Czechoslovakia, to Poland, to the Polish Army and France and then to England. And many of my friends were. And they were in the Polish -- firefighter, you know, which were in London, Blitzkrieg. They were pilots.

Q: WHEN DID YOU FIRST TELL YOUR -- START TALKING TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT YOUR WAR EXPERIENCES?

A: On and off for about last five, six years. When they grow older. They are now -- the boy -- the oldest boy is now forty-nine. He's thirty-two. The girl is thirty-one. And the youngest boy is twenty-eight. And the ones who pushes the most is the youngest one.

Q: HOW DID THEY -- DID THEY KNOW YOU WERE AN SURVIVOR?

A: Yeah. Sure.

Q: WHY DID YOU WAIT SO LONG TO TELL THEM ABOUT IT?

A: I didn't think there was anything -- you know, I had this situation or -- I want the off the tape.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

Q: DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR CHILDREN -- YOU FIND THAT THEY ARE ALL GENERALLY INTERESTED AND WANT TO KNOW ABOUT --

A: Yeah, because they ask me about it. They push me to do it.

Q: YOU KNOW, SOME CHILDREN DON'T. THAT'S WHY I ASK THE QUESTION.

A: The youngest one pushes the most.

Q: I THINK I'M RUNNING OUT OF QUESTIONS.

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Q: I HAD SOME, BUT YOU COVERED THEM.

A: Generally speaking, it's not a pleasant memory. But I think the war made me stronger and a better human being. I really do. I know what is right, what is wrong, which before not many people know and I didn't know for sure. And I hope that the war per se like this one, Number 2, will never happen.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

Q: TELL US WHO THIS IS, PLEASE.

A: This is my mother, Clara Fish. She was one of the first female teachers in Poland, but she never practiced.

Q: HOW OLD WAS SHE WHEN THAT WAS TAKEN?



A: She was about seventy-two or seventy-three.  
This was taken before the war, my father.  
This is my father. Ignacie, Ignacious Fish. He was  
a judge in Poland. He was here about sixty-five,  
maybe less. Say, between sixty and sixty-five.

Q: TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A: This is myself when I was nineteen years  
old.

Q: WHERE WAS THIS PICTURE TAKEN?

A: This was taken in ( ).

Q: AND HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO PRESERVE OLD  
PHOTOS?

A: This is a copy.

Q: WHERE DID YOU GET THE ORIGINAL FROM?

A: My nanny.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

A: This is myself at the age of fourteen or  
fifteen, and the uniform is the first year of the  
( ) which is ( ) but in  
a younger age of ( ).

Q: TELL US ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT, PLEASE.

A: This is the document stating that I am a  
student of the -- fifth year student in the medical  
school in Wulf under the name of Fish, which is my  
family name, immediately about two, three weeks after

I got out from underground.

Q: SO HOW OLD WERE YOU HERE?

A: Here? I was -- in '44. See, they came the Russian -- underground -- okay, I came -- okay, this was when I came when the Russians occupied Wulf which is in July, almost close to my birthday, 1944.

This is my photograph with the name Victor Shujeski which I kept from the underground. This was taken in 1945 in Kraków where I continue my medical study in Kraków.

Q: WHY DID YOU KEEP THIS NAME?

A: Because it was unsafe in Poland to be Jewish.

Q: ON THAT CERTIFICATE YOU HAD YOUR OTHER NAME; RIGHT?

A: Yes, this was in Russia.

(Interruption in videotaping)

Q: TELL US ABOUT THIS PHOTO, PLEASE.

A: This is myself and this is before the war. It had to be 1939 because I am studying for anatomy exam which I had to take at that time.

Q: TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE, WHO THIS IS.

A: This is my brother with his friends taken about 1936.

Q: WHICH ONE IS YOUR BROTHER?

A: The one standing in front with the light jacket.

Q: HIS NAME IS ALBERT?

A: Alfred.

Q: ALFRED. ALFRED. AND HE WAS -- SURVIVED WAR --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- DEEPER IN RUSSIA?

A: No. He went to Russia. Then he joined ( ) Middle East, Africa.

Q: AND WHERE DOES HE LIVE TODAY?

A: He's dead. He died.

Q: TELL US WHO THIS IS, PLEASE.

A: This looks like myself when I was one or two years old. Two years, I imagine.

Q: TELL US WHO THIS IS, PLEASE.

A: This is my brother Alfred and his wife. This is their wedding. This was taken about 1947.

Q: AND IS THIS IN ENGLAND?

A: In England. In London.

Q: AND TELL US ABOUT THIS PICTURE, PLEASE.

A: This is me in second year of medical school in the ( ).

Q: AND WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

A: Learning anatomy on a corpse.

Q: TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

A: This is my brother Alfred when he was in the Polish Army during World War II.

Q: YOU GUESS WHAT YEAR WAS THIS TAKEN ROUGHLY?

A: It would have to be 1942, '43.

(The videotaping was stopped momentarily.)

Q: OKAY, I'D LIKE TO ASK YOU A COUPLE QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR NANNY. COULD YOU PLEASE TELL US HER NAME, PLEASE.

A: Shujeski. That's how I got the name.

Q: I'M SORRY.

A: Shujeski.

Q: SO THAT'S WHERE YOU TOOK YOUR --

A: That's right, so I can say, "Hey, I have relatives there," you know, if they come.

Q: WHAT --

A: That's my mother was also Shujeski. We took her name. All of us. Two of us.

Q: AND SHE WAS UKRANIAN?

A: No, she was Polish. She went -- started my father -- this was, it was a judge initially, a young judge in (Vernewoff) which is near (strabitchstray), this area. She went to work for us when she was eighteen. She died here when she was eighty-one.

Q: YOU BROUGHT HER OVER HERE?

A: Yes.

Q: WAS SHE VERY CLOSE TO YOUR MOTHER'S AGE THEN?

A: Yeah. Roughly. Because she was there when my sister was born, okay. So -- see this is hearsay. I wasn't there.

Q: SO SHE LIVED WITH THE FAMILY?

A: All the time. Until she -- until she died.

Q: AND NEVER MARRIED?

A: No.

Q: YOU SAID THAT SHE SAVED YOUR MOTHER? CAN YOU TELL US HOW --

Q: Yes. She connected her with the people who we knew who got her the Kenn karte and so forth.

Q: WHERE DID YOUR NANNY STAY DURING THE WAR?

A: In Wülf. And quite often when I was coming I didn't have anywhere to sleep, I stayed with my mother or my nanny. You know, because you have -- there was a curfew. So I had to be out. Mostly I stayed with my mother because, one reason for it, everybody knew me there as Shujeski and in my old place they knew me as Fish, so I had to come very late or very early so nobody could see me.

Q: WAS YOUR NANNY EVER THREATENED BY --

A: No. The neighbors told her once. You

know, "We know that you hiding Victor, which is Jewish. We don't know anything about it. If anything happens, it's your responsibility."

Q: WHY DO YOU THINK SHE WAS WILLING TO TAKE SUCH A CHANCE TO HELP YOU AND YOUR MOTHER? SHE COULD HAVE BEEN KILLED.

A: Yes. There were many people, even Polish people, who had been killed who hide -- were hiding Jews. Some did for money, some did because they care for them. Some of them married, you know. And -- but she care for us. We were good to her. She was good to us when it was needed.

Q: WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT HER AS A NANNY? WAS SHE A VERY LOVING --

A: She was very loving. Small, fat. Typical nanny.

Q: AND DID SHE TAKE CARE OF YOU MORE THAN YOUR MOTHER, OR WAS SHE --

A: No, my mother was taking care of me, but she was helping her.

Q: SHE WAS ALWAYS THERE.

A: Yeah.

Q: I GUESS AS YOU WERE ALSO INDEPENDENT AS A KID, HOW DID SHE DEAL WITH THAT?

A: I don't know. I don't know how she dealt

with. My mother dealt with it successfully.

Q: WHAT DID SHE DO?

A: You will laugh. Off the record.

My mother told taught me about sex when I was fourteen.

Q: YOU WERE FOURTEEN?

A: Yeah. I started early. She told me about these things. And I was looking at my brother's medical books.

Q: DID YOU BELIEVE IT?

A: I didn't see any reason why not to.

Q: YOUR NANNY, SHE STAYED IN HER OWN APARTMENT DURING THE WAR?

A: Yes.

Q: DID SHE LIVE BETTER THAN YOUR MOTHER?

A: No. About the same, yeah. You know, there was a -- the guy above our -- in our apartment she live downstairs. They moved her. He worked for the SS and he had the flags, you know, the German flags with the swastika. So what they did -- you know, everybody needed a ( ), so she cut out the swastika out the window and sell the guys clothes on the black market.

Q: SHE WAS AS FEISTY AS EVERYONE ELSE IN YOUR FAMILY?

A: Yeah.

Q: AND AFTER THE WAR YOU TOOK HER WITH YOU?

A: All the time. Sure. She saved my life.  
Why not? I didn't want to leave her there alone.

Q: DID YOU HAVE SOME IDEA WHAT WAS GOING TO  
HAPPEN IN THE UKRAINE AFTER THE WAR?

A: Now, you mean?

Q: YES, SINCE THE WAR.

A: The Ukraine, yes. Different people. Like  
you look at (Petruha), like you look at the other  
things. They are different people. I was happy to  
stay under Russia. Now they are trying to get out.  
So they put a stop to it. But -- see, I thought I  
will go to Wulf to see where I lived, the schools, so  
forth. But after I found out, I said no way. I'm  
not going. And they wouldn't let me in, too. I'm  
not going, but they wouldn't let me in. Maybe now.  
I don't know.

Q: WHEN WAS THIS THAT YOU THOUGHT ABOUT GOING  
BACK?

A: After retirement. I didn't have time  
before. No way.

Q: WERE YOU WORRIED THAT IF YOU LEFT YOUR  
NANNY BEHIND, THAT SHE WOULDN'T HAVE --

A: That she wouldn't -- yeah, you know, she



was elderly -- elderly at that time and who will support her? I felt that's my duty.

Q: OKAY. THAT'S IT. THANK YOU VERY MUCH.