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BIAŁOWARCZUK, Waław
Polish Witnesses to the Holocaust Project
Polish
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[The interview is conducted in Polish and there are no restrictions.]

SUMMARY

[Approximately 90 min]

Waław Białowarczuk was born in Ciechanowiec on April 17, 1913. He studied in Białystok and after becoming a teacher in Tykocin, he became a member of the local intelligentsia. Mr. Białowarczuk comments on the demographics of Tykocin and explains that Polish-Jewish relations were mostly peaceful and good. He recalls the outbreak of the war and his participation in civil defense actions against the Germans. Mr. Białowarczuk talks about the Soviet occupation and discusses that it was welcomed by the young Jews, who collaborated with the Soviet occupants; they denounced the Poles, who were consequently deported to Siberia. He explains that the high ranking officers in the Soviet Army were often Jews, who were known for their ruthlessness. Mr. Białowarczuk comments that the local Jews knew about the treatment of Jews in the General Government; however they rarely sought refuge in the USSR, since the Soviets were reluctant to accept refugees. He remembers the rapid retreat of the Soviets and the entry of the German Army after the German-Soviet war began. During German occupation Mr. Białowarczuk was employed as an accountant for the local German administration. He remembers that his workload picked up after the Jewish pogroms, though most of the money was pocketed by German officials. Mr. Białowarczuk speaks about the deportation of the Jews from Tykocin to Zawady, where they were executed in the nearby forest. He remembers that the majority of the Poles in Tykocin were shaken by the news of the executions; however he admits that some Poles welcomed the change. He comments that the abandoned Jewish houses were looted by the Germans as well as some locals; later they were gradually inhabited. He remembers an auction of Jewish property, which brought in 60 thousand marks. Being an administrative employee, Mr. Białowarczuk suggested establishing a local store, ein Stadtsgeschäft, with the money. Appointed the store manager, he was able to support the local underground movement by providing money and gathering information through frequent contacts with the clients; he bribed several German officials to obtain classified military information. Mr. Białowarczuk talks about a Jewish communist, Paulina **Pakulska** [real name: **Kaufman**], who was a runaway from the Białystok ghetto. Ms. Pakulska was deported from Tykocin during one of the Polish deportations; and Mr. Białowarczuk remembers rescuing her little daughter, Maria Dworzecka, who was left behind. He was awarded the Righteous Among the Nations award for saving the Jewish child. Overcoming her difficult youth Ms. Dworzecka graduated from the doctoral program at the University of Warsaw in 1969

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and is currently employed at the George Mason University as the head of the Nuclear Physics Department. Mr. Białowarczuk comments on recent anti- Polish speeches in the Knesset [1998] and he concludes that the nations should strive to make peace, not war in the name of the adage “Homo homini frater”.

[Prepared by Agnieszka McClure on 09/19/2010; the content of the interview is pertinent to the Collaboration and Complicity Exhibition.]