

Kidneys, pancreas.

I just lost my brother three months ago to pancreatic cancer.

Brother take it out?

And he was, no, they couldn't take it out.

Right.

It was too-- They said it was too late. And he didn't know that he was sick. He was sick for 12 days and he died in New York, in New York.

Why they couldn't take the bladder out?

No, not bladder, pancreatic.

Ah.

Pancreas.

Pancreas.

Pancreas, yeah.

Pancreas, that--

That's death sentence.

That's a death sentence always.

Yeah.

So maybe like you said, maybe that will be a solution for you. So--

I'm sure, by the way.

Yeah.

Yeah.

And because we are trying it now in animals. And with animals, very good success. I think maybe it depends on the funds that we have. And between a year or two, we shall start experiments in humans. But we are not alone in the world.

All three done in Columbia University in New York.

Right.

We exchange--

Information.

Information, yes.

Well, it's very good to cooperate. You're right.

No other way. That--

I don't want to bother you, OK.

OK.

All right.

First of all, I assume you saw this article in [NON-ENGLISH]. Did you see the man who interviewed you in [NON-ENGLISH] Magazine?

Show me.

When?

This was some time ago. It's a Jewish newspaper, I think in New Jersey. Someone sent a copy to me. And he has some--

He interviewed me?

He interviewed you. I don't know when he interviewed you, maybe a year or two ago.

No, it was maybe three years ago.

Maybe two years ago, yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Yeah, now when I see it, I remember.

OK.

You remember it? All right. So I won't go over all the details.

In [NON-ENGLISH].

[NON-ENGLISH] But first of all, I obviously want to get into your role, and I know you've talked about it. But I want to go over it.

Maybe you could-- I have nothing new to tell you.

Well, it's always good to hear it firsthand. First of all, I have been trying to make sure as you know, in Harel's book, Garibaldi Street, he identifies in the newer edition the people who were on the mission.

Yeah, that's right.

But even there, he says he used real names, but not always I think.

Only I think we covered only the name of [? Tuviah ?] only.

Yes. He calls him Josef [? Kenet. ?]

Yeah.

Yeah, and that's [? Fioroni. ?] Right.

That's right.

Right, and Eli Yuval, it's Peter Malkin, right?

Yeah.

Yeah. OK, I just wanted to make sure I identified people right. Because they went through. And then Yaakov Meidad.

Yaakov Meidad, yes. He died.

He died, yes. He used the name Anton KÃ¼nzle, right?

Only in another--

In the Cukurs case, yes?

Yeah, that's right.

Yeah. And you knew about his role in the Cukurs case?

Yes. Exactly.

Yeah. I want to get back to that because, it's interesting why that action would took place. But let's start with then with Eichmann. But also one other, General Meir Amit, was he involved in the Eichmann case at all?

No.

No, but I think the Cukurs case he was involved.

Cukurs, he was the chief commander.

He was the chief commander, OK. OK, good. Because I'm trying to make sure I have the right picture here.

OK.

Wonderful. Well, first of all, if you could-- I was in many of the descriptions of your role and how Harel, I know you and Harel knew each other, worked together so--

Many years.

Many years, so Harel chose you to be the operational commander.

That's right.

Yeah. So I was particularly intrigued by the scene where you are-- you actually where Malkin grabs Eichmann. And you helped pull him in the car, right?

That's right.

Yeah. Yeah so Malkin had him on the ground first?

Malkin attacked him, OK?

Yes.

Both of them--

Fell.

Fell to the ground. Then Moshe Tabor OK, and myself, came to help him. Malkin took him in the legs, and Moshe Tabor in the middle, and I in the head.

Aha, you were holding his head?

Yeah. And that's how we dragged him took him--

To the car.

To the car.

Right.

And in the car we put him-- we had a good space between the front seats and the rear seats. We put them in the gap between the two seats, in the front.

On the floor.

On the floor, but we arranged it that we have a few blankets there. That it will be easy to put him.

Yes. On the blankets?

On the blankets.

So he won't be injured.

Yeah, that's right. I was sitting on the right with his head on his knees--

On your knees. Yeah, something like this. OK?

Yeah.

And Malkin on the left, Tabor went near on the seat of the driver.

I'm sorry, Tabor?

Near the driver, Moshe Tabor. And Zvi Aharoni drove.

Aha, Zvi Aharoni drove. I see. I'm sorry, Moshe Tabor, he was also a part of his team then? Yeah.

Exactly.

Yeah, was he-- he used that same name. Because I don't remember--

Yeah, Moshe Tabor is--

In there. OK. And I remember I think Harel said that when you described this to him, you felt very strange, realizing you have-- here you have Eichmann right at your feet. What was going through your mind at that time?

Well, of course, I talk to myself. OK. I talk to myself. As by the way in 1953, was the first time that I went to Germany. And I remember myself leaving the train in Frankfurt.

Right.

OK, which was my first time in Germany. And I was on the platform. And I asked myself, look, just a few years ago, OK? Just if I'm talking '53, that means--

Eight years ago.

Eight years ago, if I would be here, probably I would be executed.

Right.

This way or another. And I said, but now I'm representative of the Israeli government.

Right. At the time, were you already in Mossad, or--

Already in Mossad.

Yes, yes. Yeah, so what were you doing on that first trip to Germany?

Not of Nazis, there for spies in Arab countries.

In Arab countries.

You were running your agents to Arab countries.

That was our main mission.

Sure, of course.

In the Mossad.

Right. Right. Right.

Our main target was to bring Israel information about their surrounding our country.

Of course.

It makes sense.

Yeah, so you were meeting some of your spies in Germany?

That's right.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But so getting back then to that moment--

[PHONE RINGS]

Please, go ahead. No. No problem.

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

Yeah, so here you were now after that experience with Eichmann in the car.

And I felt the same. Look, I am an Israeli officer.

Yes.

And I'm holding in my own hands the-- how I say? The chief commander that brought Jewish people to the gallows.

Yeah, to the gas chambers. Yeah. Yeah. It was an amazing, amazing incident.

No doubt.

Now, in terms of before we get back to that, in terms of the first clues of the Eichmann case, at what point did Harel bring you into the case, only once they were sure that they knew that Eichmann was in Argentina, or earlier?

No. I was in the picture all the time. It's not that he came to me and told me that it is. When I came to him on this to get the mission, I knew all that this has already--

[PHONE RINGS]

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

So for instance--

So, the details I knew. it's true that when Isser Harel asked me to come, and he gave me the mission.

Yes.

Then so far as I remember, what in practice we were talking about, we divided between us the various missions, or the various--

Parts of the mission.

--possibilities. And I took on myself everything on the field.

All the operational.

All the operation, let's say to capture him, to bring him to the airport, or to bring him to port.

Yes.

And Isser Harel took on himself to arrange the transport. At this time, we didn't know yet if we are able to--

To get an airplane.

To get an airplane. Or it was a question at the time. But later, let's say a week later, Isser Harel, I talked with him again. And he took on himself to arrange everything for the flight, for aircraft. And I took on myself to arrange everything for the ship sea.

Then I contacted the ZIM Line that they at the time they had two ships, two freight sea ships for meat. OK?

These were the Israeli ships?

Israeli ships, yes. Israeli ships.

And they do these things is done up to this very day that Israel is buying frozen meat from the Argentine.

Right, frozen kosher meat.

Frozen kosher meat.

Which was very important

Yes. Yeah. Yeah. And then I came in touch with the chairman of ZIM Line.

It's called ZIM line?

ZIM line.

T-S-I-M?

Z-I-M.

Z-I-M.

And then--

These are Israeli cargo ships?

Yeah. And then he brought me the captain of one of the ships.

Uh-huh.

According to the schedule that I told him, and we arranged a special compartment in one of the ZIM ships.

So you met with the captain in Argentina already?

No, no.

Oh, already in Israel before.

Yes. We arranged everything in Israel. Let's say that the flight would stop. so that we had another alternative.

Right.

For the flight, the alternative was 20th or 21st of May. And for the ship the alternative was about around 15th or 16th of May.

And the ship was already going in port then in the 15th or 16th?

When we were talking, when I was talking with the captain, he had in a few days to go to the Argentine.

Yes, so he was ready, if needed.

Yes.

Yes. Yeah. And also is it true I read in one of the accounts? I think maybe this was Harel again. That when you were in the car with Eichmann, you had handcuffs, and you were ready--

When I had and Harel specially brought handcuffs.

Just in case.

Yeah. And the key he kept for himself.

Oh, really?

And the key what?

He kept for himself.

Oh, the key.

But they were open.

Yeah. And he ordered me, the moment if it happens, the police will capture you, so you handcuffed yourself to the hand of Eichmann, and you are two together, and the key is with me, and you tell the police bring us the Israeli ambassador.

That's a good idea.

Yeah.

So I kept handcuffs with me.

The whole time.

10 days.

10 days, the whole time that Eichmann was there, you kept it, so any time. That would be a rather strange feeling to be handcuffed to Eichmann.

First, I will show, look, I was already very old, a very experienced in operations at the time. And from the very beginning, when I analyzed the situation, the area, the house, the surrounding, I was sure that there was no reason why we would fail, no reason.

And then I thought to myself. Let's say that we are in trouble. But out of my experience when you are in trouble, it's not always that the police come and catch you. Yeah. There are many possibilities.

And I felt that if there is one of the possibilities not the police will come and arrest you.

The car breaks down.

Maybe a possibility, I'll kill Eichmann.

Yeah.

And that's I was consulted also with Zvi Aharoni. I didn't tell it to Isser. But--

So you and Zvi had decided to kill Eichmann if you had to?

That's right.

Yeah.

Didn't you feel that you wanted to hit him in the car?

No.

He was there.

How to kill him, no-- no need to hit him. He could break I would say very easy.

Breaking.

No, but just the idea of--

I wanted to kill him? No. No, no, no. Not to kill, just to hit.

You see, I am a person that my feelings are very moderate, however you say it. I don't hate like this. And if I have to kill, I kill.

Yeah. But so you felt that if the mission was compromised and it looked like for whatever reason they might-- Eichmann might--

That's let's say we are not able to go on with the mission.

Yeah. Then you and Zvi had decided to kill him.

Yeah.

How would you kill him? Choking or stabbing. No. We didn't have-- we didn't have no knife, and no--

Just your hands?

Yeah. And the easy way to kill somebody with your hands is to break his neck.

Yeah.

That's very easy.

Yeah.

So that is by choking? Or--

No, you break it.

I mean with your hand?

Yeah.

Yeah.

Like karate.

Like karate, exactly.

Like that, like a fish.

Yeah. So, but you never told Harel you had decided this?

No.

Yeah. And Harel was physically where? He was in the safe house then, or in the hotel, I forget?

Well Harel had in many other operations to be on the field.

Yes.

But away from the--

But not in the--

Technical team.

--real scene. I as a commander always I used to be in the heart of the operation.

Yes.

OK, because I feel, I know that in the heart of the operation, you are able to control it.

Right. Yes. And he was head of Mossad. No need for the head of the Mossad to be in the heart of the operation. But he was in the area.

Yes, yes.

He was in the area. And he had, according to the conditions, arranging communication with the operation.

Right.

OK?

Right.

And also he gave us, because of this he gave us in this operation and many other operations, a feeling of security. He said that at home you have somebody that is backing you.

Yes.

That's very important.

Yes. Right, right.

Very important.

Right.

Did you have to prepare yourself physically? Did you do any running or lifting weights just to be strong.

When I was very young, I was a sport trainer.

You were a sport trainer?

Yes. But you went into the Mossad--

In the Palmach.

In the Palmach.

I was very well known, as very good, one of the best in field sport trainers.

What was your favorite sport?

It was not football, or rugby, or something like that. It was working with--

Weights?

No, no.

No, no.

With-- it is part of field camping, but to work with the strings, with the--

Ropes?

Ropes.

Ropes.

Just climbing ropes?

Climbing, yes.

Oh, my. That you have to be really strong.

Yes. Yeah.

I have-- up to this very day, I have very strong hands.

Yes, yeah. And you enter the Mossad-- how old were you when you--

[PHONE RINGS]

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

So how old were you when you entered the Mossad? Do you remember in which year?

I entered in 1950.

Yeah.

And well, I was 24, I think.

Yeah. Right.

24, wow.

A young man.

Young man. And then in terms of how-- as you know, there are many versions of exactly how Eichmann was found. In 1953, there was Wiesenthal had that meeting where he sent some information that he was in Argentina or Buenos Aires.

No. The Wiesenthal information was that Eichmann was in the Argentine.

Nothing more specific than that?

Nothing. He didn't know.

Yeah. Yeah. And this was the one he claimed from this Austrian Baron?

You must understand that you have to mention.

Yeah.

In 1950, the population of Israel, a new state, was around 600,000 people.

Wow.

Yeah.

In 1953, we were almost 1 million. In 1960, we were nearly 2 and 1/2 million. So the burden of the government offices was enormous.

Yes.

To observe the new immigrants and to understand who are they. And many of the immigrants were from Eastern Europe.

Yes. And the Eastern intelligence services.

[PHONE RINGS]

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

And you must understand that the Cold War just started.

Right.

And the intelligence services of the East, of Poland, of Romania, of Russia of course, recruited many of the immigrants to their services.

Yes.

And we had to select everyone that came to understand he was a spy or he was not a spy.

Right.

You understand? That was--

That was the focus of your efforts, so that was the priority then?

Because a priority, because at the time these services sent the information about us to the Arabs.

To the Arabs, right. Right, right.

So it was first priority, and not capturing--

Nazis.

Nazis, and now and when Ben-Gurion directed Israel to find one of the Nazis to be brought into Israel, he didn't want revenge. He wanted to have a trial that all the world and also the Jewish people, how I say? You see the picture, the real picture that was during the Holocaust. That was his target.

Yes.

And he said it.

Yes, so he decided that-- I think that was the mid 1950s?

No, it's the end of '57.

End of '57.

Yes. After Sinai War.

After Sinai War. So, it really wasn't a priority up to that point.

Of course not.

Yeah, so even if--

Even, let's say, only in '57, Israel established a unit that had to analyze the information, and to direct the operations for to finding ex-Nazis.

And that was within the Mossad?

Yeah, it was within the Mossad.

Yeah. But you were not assigned to that unit then?

No. Well, I never assigned-- I never assigned to this unit. It was operation.

Yeah.

I could do operation for any target.

So even if Wiesenthal's information in '53 had been more precise, there probably would not have been the resources to

go after them?

For sure, we wouldn't do nothing unless the government or the foreign minister would decide to approach the Argentines and to ask for this and that.

Yeah.

Yes. Yeah. Right.

Now was Wiesenthal himself-- there have been different theories-- in those early days, was he working for the Mossad at all?

In Tel -- Yeah. He just started the connection, and the real connection between him and the Mossad came only at the end of the '50s.

At the end of the '50s. So he was never-- and that was when you say a connection, was he actually working for the Mossad, or just cooperating with them?

Not really. And he had-- he and also another one in-- Wiesenthal lives in Vienna.

Right.

And the other one, I've forgotten his name, lived in Israel.

Tuviah Friedman.

Tuviah Friedman.

Yes.

Right. And both of them had a private institution.

Yes.

And private donations, et cetera, et cetera. And the Mossad was one of the donators, if you like.

You understand that means that we had a connection. And we had some agreement that they give us all the information that they have. And we helped them financially, as a donation or whatever you call it.

And with the agreement to share information?

Yeah, that's right.

Yeah. But the financial help was only in the late '50s or earlier?

Only in the late '50s.

Late '50s. Yeah, because actually. Yes, I mean Wiesenthal, I remember he closed his office in Linz in I think '54, and then he reopened in Vienna. So maybe it was the Mossad donation that made it possible to open that office in Vienna. Right?

Look, I don't know. Maybe I never knew. I didn't know him in the past. Because I started having connection with Wiesenthal only after Eichmann.

Oh, after Eichmann.

After Eichmann, when I got the duty to be the Mossad person in Europe. And that was in 1963. So, but I knew that in 1963, when I met Wiesenthal, I knew that he got some financial support from the Mossad for a few years. But so far as I remember, it's only from the late '50s, maybe '57, maybe '59. And just for a few years?

Yeah, but you could ask Wiesenthal institution. It exists up to-- in Los Angeles.

Yes. Yes, yes. Yeah. Yeah. And when you were the Mossad person in Europe, where were you based? Were you--

Paris.

In Paris, yeah.

And for how long was that?

Well, five years in Paris, and two years in Belgium. Seven years.

Yeah. Yeah.

Do you speak French? My children, my wife, fluently. Me? For food.

[BOTH TALKING]

No, I speak French.

Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Now, in terms of--

But my children--

How many children do you have?

Three.

Three. Yeah. In terms of the role of Wiesenthal and Tuvia Friedman, and to what extent was their information, especially in the Eichmann case, useful or not useful? Because there was also, aside from-- and then we can get into Fritz Bauer, of course. But did Wiesenthal talk about also sending photographers to a funeral of the family, where the wife-- wives and relatives were there. Was that useful to the Mossad?

I don't know.

You don't know. Yeah.

I don't know because I didn't have the unit to work against--

Eichmann, the Nazis--

No, against Nazis, it was not under my responsibility, one. And in practice, during Isser time, it was very active.

Yes.

When Meir Amit arrived, in practice, it was minimized. And I had no connection with this unit, unless they want something from me. But no connection. So what you ask, I don't know.

Yes. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But I know, of course, as you know, Harel and Wiesenthal did not like each other. They had some sort of a-- Harel felt that Wiesenthal was claiming too much credit for the Eichmann-- did Harel ever talk to you about that?

No, I think Harel didn't-- didn't think like this.

Yeah.

He didn't need it. He didn't need it. That's what you say is a story.

Yeah. Well, he wrote. He said some things about it, anyway. But I don't--

He didn't need it because he had his own naturally.

Right. And in terms of your own contacts with Wiesenthal in Europe, were they--

No. I met him twice in my life.

Yes. Yeah.

After that.

Yeah, and they were?

Once when I arrived in Europe, I visited him--

In Vienna.

In Vienna. And once I saw him in Tel Aviv in some conference of survivors, Holocaust survivors.

Right. And what were your impressions of him then?

I never worked with him.

You never worked with him. Yeah. OK. And you did not have any dealings directly with Fritz Bauer? That was all on the side too, right? Yeah.

Not me.

Yeah, not you. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. Did that unit of the Mossad-- I know you were not involved in it-- aside from the Eichmann case and the Cukurs case, did they have other actions that we don't know about?

So far as I know, no.

Yeah. Yeah.

And that Cukurs case, why do you think the decision-- I know you were not directly involved. The decision, it was interesting to me, the Eichmann case was this, as you said, this example, which Ben-Gurion wanted. It played a huge role. But why the decision to find and lure Cukurs to Uruguay and have him killed? Do you know? I was unusual for an Israeli operation to do that. I think as far as I know, it's the only case.

Well, maybe it was a personal ambition of the people involved.

So do you think this was of the people directly involved, Aharoni?

I can't tell you.

Yeah.

But I mean clearly they had instructions from up high, this could not have been done as a--

They were-- probably they had-- how I say? Of course, Meir Amit was the chief commander, had to instruct them.

Yeah.

So you think it was more a personal decision of Amit?

Look, all of them dead.

Yes. Yes.

Also Meidad is dead.

Yes.

So Meidad wrote a book about it.

Yes, I know. I have it. I have it. It's fascinating. Yeah. But-- but it doesn't really explain why this particular decision. It's a fantastically interesting book about the operation. Yeah.

At the time I ask also myself, why they did this operation?

Yes.

Because to kill a man, OK.

Yes.

It's easier just to shoot him from a distance in the state.

Right.

OK? No-- no need to make operation.

Right, right, right. Yes. Yes, they wanted him to see that he was being killed. Yeah. So you think there was something personal there from Amit or so?

Some, yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah. But you never asked anyone directly why?

Look, I was busy with my problems.

Yes. Yes. Yeah. And in terms of Mengele, were you at all involved in pursuing Mengele at that point?

Well, of course. After Eichmann, we tried to find Mengele, but two things. Though in 1962 we knew that he was living in a suburb of Sao Paulo, Brazil.

Right.

The fact that he died in this place.

Right.

But we didn't-- and no doubt that everybody in the government, in the Mossad, thought that we should bring Mengele into trial in Israel. OK? But then Isser Harel resigned and Meir Amit became the head of the Mossad.

Yes.

And he had missions, like preparing in practice the '67 war. OK?

So he gave little weight to find Mengele. So we didn't find Mengele. And later on, nobody cares about Mengele.

Although then there was that period in the '80s when people were still hunting for him, and he was already dead, but people did not know that then. Yeah. Yeah.

When did he die? In '79.

Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah, he drowned, or had a heart attack, or whatever it was.

He was swimming--

In the Atlantic.

And he got a heart attack or something.

Yes. Yes. Yeah.

So his body was never found?

No, I think they did find it.

Yeah. Yeah they found it. Yes, they have the remains. It was analyzed.

Yeah, analyzed. And they checked the DNA.

Just to make sure.

With his son.

There was a US an Israeli team that checked the DNA, and all that. Yeah, his son exactly, exactly. Yeah. And one other thing getting back to the operation of Eichmann, Avraham Shalom, what was his role in there? Because I know you were close. I will see him, by the way, tomorrow.

He was my deputy.

Yes. Yes.

And he was my deputy in the operation.

Right, right. And he was physically also at the abduction?

He was everywhere.

He was everywhere.

And he's very good. He knows the details of the operation very well.

Yes. Yes. Yeah. Yeah, wonderful. Now, and also getting back to Tuviah Friedman. Did you ever meet him?

Yes.

Yeah. What was your impressions of him?

Well, in his old days, up to a few years ago, up to he died a few years--

Yes, I know. I know.

I helped him.

Yeah, you helped him.

Yeah.

Yeah. Did you feel he did good work?

Look, Wiesenthal and Tuviah Friedman I would say they were the only people that kept the running of Nazis all the time. The Israeli government didn't do it. They did it.

Yeah, so they kept the whole issue alive. Yeah.

I would say that Wiesenthal made pressure on Isser Harel, on the government, on the Israeli government. And also Tuviah Friedman less.

Yeah.

Because the impact of Wiesenthal was much more. But this is-- how I say? They did it. Nobody else did it.

Well, there were the Klarsfelds too, and the--

The couple of Klarsfelds came very late.

Yes, that was much later. Yes. Yes. Yeah. Yeah. So you give whatever his role or not role in the Eichmann case, you give Wiesenthal a lot of credit for keeping this issue alive. Right?

Yeah.

Yeah. Yeah. And the Israeli government, aside from the issue of not having really enough as you say, resources to focus on the issue, you felt there was ambivalence about how far to push this issue of hunting Nazis?

The Israeli government was so busy.

Yeah. Yeah.

Look, remember, remember again, we were 600,000 in 1950, and we became 7 million at let's say 1980.

Right. Yes.

Too short time, and too many missions.

Yes, yeah. Yeah.

I remember when I bought the land was this house.

Yes.

And it was 54 years ago.

Wow.

And no one wanted to buy a piece of land here.

This was a good business investment.

No. No one wanted to buy, because it was far from Tel Aviv.

Yes.

There were no bridges on the river.

Oh, really?

On the small river here. So to come here you had to go about 40 or 50 kilometers.

Oh, really? To go around, to get--

To go around. And no one wanted to buy. It was nothing, no water, no electricity, nothing.

Yes. Yeah. And I said, I buy it. And one day I be in a private house in the middle of Tel Aviv.

Yeah.

You were right. Yes. Yes.

Here we are.

What is the river here? Which river?

Yarkon

Yarkon

Yeah, a small river.

Small river, but yeah, you need bridges.

But a river. But you need bridge to cross it.

That's wonderful, wonderful.

How did you get to Argentina with your team. Did you fly?

We flew by civilian flights.

Yes, yeah.

And you all came in different planes?

In different planes, in different names.

So did you have diplomatic passports? Or--

No, no.

Just regular?

They were all undercover.

Sorry, regular Israeli tourists?

Regular passports, but different names.

But it was an Israeli passport?

Some Israelis, but some were already also foreign. I remember, out of my team, half of them [NON-ENGLISH]. Were foreign citizens.

Yes.

So what other passports did they have?

Let's say some German, some Austrians, some French. But they were--

Yeah, like--

Foreign citizens.

Yeah, like my dad, I think had an Austrian passport, I think.

No, you could get today Polish passport.

Yeah, probably. Yes, yeah. Yeah. And afterwards, during the trial, were you back in Israel when the trial took place of Eichmann?

Yes.

Yes.

I was here.

Did you ever go to the trial?

Many times.

Many times.

Yeah.

And when you were at the trial, did you ever make eye contact with Eichmann? Did he recognize you?

I visited him in his jail a few times.

Oh you did? Just to talk to him?

Yeah, to ask him a few questions.

What type?

I wanted to understand the mind of Nazi officer, how he was trained, how he was recruited, other officers, things like that.

[PHONE RINGS]

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

So when you met Eichmann, what did you talk about? Because--

I asked him questions, and he replied to the questions. He didn't, how I say, volunteer something from himself.

Yes.

Only replied to questions.

Yes. And what kind of--

[PHONE RINGS]

You are a busy man.

[SIDE CONVERSATION]

OK.

OK. So did you feel you got some understanding of his thinking as a Nazi officer?

No. I will say most of my questions were technical questions. OK? And how I say? The conclusion was that he was trained to be loyal up to death to his commanders. It was not only training. It was also culture.

Now he himself was, from a technical point, he was very able. From an intelligent point of view, it was below average.

And did he-- did he speak Hebrew some, or not? He claimed to have--

A few words.

Yeah. Yeah, sorry.

Was he proud that he killed so many people, because like you said he was sort of professional?

He always said that he didn't kill anyone.

That yes--

That personally he didn't kill anyone.

Yeah.

Personally.

Yeah.

That's what he said. He was responsible for the transport.

Transport, yeah. Yeah.

He said it in the trial. You could read his evidence in the trial.

Right.

You could buy it in the Yad Vashem.

Yes, no, I have it. Yes.

And you see all the replies is there.

Yeah. Yeah. Did you agree or disagree with Hannah Arendt when she talked about him as just this cog in the machine.

[NON-ENGLISH]

Yeah, The Banality of Evil.

Yeah. What did you think of that?

Well, in a way she was right.

Because her thesis was also that it wasn't so much he would have killed anybody. He was-- it wasn't-- the target here happened to be Jews. But the way he thought, if he had been told to kill some other group, he would have killed them too. It was not so much--

He did.

Yeah. It was not antisemitism, per se. But it was his thinking that he felt important carrying out these orders.

And he himself never hate Jews.

That's what he said.

No, that was my feeling.

Yeah. That was your feeling too? Yeah.

And that's the banality of evil.

Yeah.

He could kill anybody, tomorrow tell him to kill French people, he will do the same.

Yeah. Right.

Well, this has been incredibly useful. Yes, I have-- with me--

I have to go.

OK, I have a favor to ask you from a friend in the United States who is a big admirer of yours. He wants your signature on a couple of things, photographs of you. And he gave me extras. I can tell you, because it is someone from the Justice Department. So he cannot ask directly.

Well what is his name?

Eli Rosenbaum.

And what is he-- where in justice--

He was the head of the Office of Special Investigations. So here is this. He was hoping that you might just sign it with your name in the beginning, just wherever you would like, at the top, if you wouldn't mind. This is the police report on Eichmann. Just put your-- if you could sign your name on it.

I think just on the cover, any place you would like.

Here?

Yeah, I think, yes. He even gave me a special pen. He said, this pen is good for this. He is very--

It is. Should I sign in English or in Hebrew?

Or maybe both.

Maybe both. That might be good, yes, actually maybe both. And maybe in English too if you don't mind.

Does it write?

Yes. Yes. Yes. He tested that pen, everything. He was very prepared.

OK.

All right. And then these photos with a different pen. I will-- I'm sorry to bother you.

Is it--

Yeah, with this pen, he says this is the right pen. And just again, if you don't mind signing, he actually gave me an extra pair for-- one set for him and one set for me, if you don't mind. I will do both. Let me get this out of your way. Anyway, with this pen he asked me to do it. Let me just tape this together. He's a very careful man. He wanted to make sure I gave you the right-- oh, here it is. Here it is.

So this is a photo of you shortly after you caught Eichmann. And this is more recent, of course.

Is it you? Do you recognize yourself?

And actually, I will sign in the meantime.

How did he get these photos?

I think he found them somewhere. I don't know. He's a resourceful person. And that's from some conference or somewhere.

Just make sure that you are--

Yeah, I know. I know.

He's smart.

Yes. He asked that I let them dry for a minute.