

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:08,577

[coughs] This is an interview with Arkadii Weisspapier.

2

00:00:08,577 --> 00:00:17,000

Er, can you ask him when he was born please and where.

3

00:00:17,000 --> 00:00:19,921

We'll start our interview with how, do you hear me, yes? We'll now

4

00:00:19,921 --> 00:00:22,710

start our interview. Please tell, when and where were you born?

5

00:00:22,710 --> 00:00:31,420

Er, I was born in '21.

6

00:00:31,420 --> 00:00:37,650

I was born in 1929.

7

00:00:37,650 --> 00:00:41,030

Er, in Kherson provinc.

8

00:00:41,030 --> 00:00:41,720

In Kherson oblast.

9

00:00:41,720 --> 00:00:42,770

There was a Kalinindorf region.

10

00:00:42,770 --> 00:00:50,260

There was a Kalinindorf region. Spl Er, we had a national region.

11

00:00:50,260 --> 00:00:52,130

A national region we had

12

00:00:52,130 --> 00:00:56,570

You don't have to translate sentence for sentence if you want.

13

00:00:56,570 --> 00:00:57,270

Village Bobrovoy Kut.

14

00:00:57,270 --> 00:01:02,460

The village was called Bobrovoy Kut.

15

00:01:02,460 --> 00:01:09,460

Can you just ask him the kind of family he comes from?

16

00:01:09,460 --> 00:01:10,090

M-m.

17

00:01:10,310 --> 00:01:11,810

Then, then it was in Kherson

18

00:01:11,810 --> 00:01:11,950

M-m

19

00:01:11,950 --> 00:01:14,470

province but now it's a locality in Nikolayev province.

20

00:01:14,470 --> 00:01:18,910

M-m. At that time it was Kherson oblast', now it's Nikolayev oblast'. Please tell, but what can you remember

21

00:01:18,910 --> 00:01:22,610

about your family, which was, well, your family, when you were born, when you lived there?

22

00:01:22,610 --> 00:01:24,090

Well, (I) had a father, a mother.

23

00:01:24,090 --> 00:01:31,180

He had a mother and a father.

24

00:01:31,180 --> 00:01:31,210

Er, and I had an older brother.

25

00:01:31,210 --> 00:01:32,600

I had an older brother.

26

00:01:32,600 --> 00:01:36,610

And, er, a little sister.

27

00:01:36,610 --> 00:01:38,270

And a small sister.

28

00:01:40,740 --> 00:01:42,470

When I enlisted in the army in '39

29

00:01:43,010 --> 00:01:45,810

When in 1939 I was drafted to the army,

30

00:01:47,060 --> 00:01:48,220

my little sister was five years old.

31

00:01:48,220 --> 00:01:50,370

my sister was five years old.

32

00:01:53,300 --> 00:01:56,680

Well, all perished, father, er, I say, in.

33

00:01:56,680 --> 00:01:57,660

They all died.

34

00:01:57,660 --> 00:01:59,050

My brother perished at the front

35

00:01:59,050 --> 00:02:00,430

My brother was killed in the battle, on the battlefield.

36

00:02:00,430 --> 00:02:03,840

and the others perished in our village, all perished here.

37

00:02:03,840 --> 00:02:07,050

And the rest were killed in the village, at home.

38

00:02:07,050 --> 00:02:16,980

[coughs] When they were killed, you weren't there any longer?

39

00:02:16,980 --> 00:02:18,630

But when they perished, you were not there, yes, you were

40

00:02:18,630 --> 00:02:21,350

I, I was, er, in the army.

41

00:02:21,350 --> 00:02:24,220

Of course, I was in the army, I was in the army.

42

00:02:24,220 --> 00:02:30,220

M-m. Do you come from an orthodox family?

43

00:02:30,220 --> 00:02:33,140

Aaa, your family was very religious?

44

00:02:33,140 --> 00:02:35,130

No, not at all, not religious at all.

45

00:02:35,130 --> 00:02:39,050

No, they were not orthodox at all, they were not religious at all.

46

00:02:39,280 --> 00:02:48,450

Not religious. We had, well, I at least, I wasn't believing at all.

47

00:02:48,450 --> 00:02:51,960

In fact I was totally unreligious.

48

00:02:53,580 --> 00:02:59,770

So, your family, did they meet Jews, or did you just live with non-Jews?

49

00:02:59,770 --> 00:03:00,230

Er. Your family, did it live among other Jewish families, or on its own, somehow?

50

00:03:00,230 --> 00:03:09,020

Well, we lived in one house with two halves, we had a house, a large house.

51

00:03:09,020 --> 00:03:09,220

We had one house which had two halves.

52

00:03:09,220 --> 00:03:34,920

In one half lived grandpa, er, the father, er, the father, er, of my father, I say,

53

00:03:34,920 --> 00:03:42,500

M-m. In one half lived a grandfather, father of my father.

54

00:03:42,500 --> 00:03:45,700

and he had, er, a second wife, er, the mother of my father died in '20, there.

55

00:03:45,700 --> 00:03:53,240

And he had a second wife,

56

00:03:53,240 --> 00:03:53,450

Well,

57

00:03:54,190 --> 00:03:54,820

because my father's

58

00:03:54,820 --> 00:03:56,200

and he married.

59

00:03:56,200 --> 00:03:58,620

mother died in 1920.

60

00:03:58,620 --> 00:04:07,960

That's not the question. You tell that you lived in a Jewish colony, a totally Jewish one.

61

00:04:07,960 --> 00:04:08,340

I said, Jewish people, Jewish people, in a Jewish region, that's how it was.

62

00:04:08,650 --> 00:04:10,000

And the Jewish]

63

00:04:10,000 --> 00:04:14,270

? Not our colony, but a region it was. SpNN A whole Jewish region.

64

00:04:14,270 --> 00:04:20,570

The whole region was Jewish.

65

00:04:20,570 --> 00:04:20,990

Er, sorry, I

66

00:04:20,990 --> 00:04:24,370

But these were not such Jews like, er, not from those religious Jews, like, er, Western.

67

00:04:24,370 --> 00:04:28,170

Those were not very religious Jews, not like in the Western Ukraine.

68

00:04:28,170 --> 00:04:30,920

OK, about your family, we were talking about

69

00:04:30,920 --> 00:04:32,880

M-m, yes, excuse me, we interrupted you, you were telling about your family.

70

00:04:32,880 --> 00:04:57,890

Yes, I say, this grandpa had contacted with another wife, (she/they) had two daughters

71

00:04:57,890 --> 00:05:02,950

Er, my grandfather and his second wife had two sisters

72

00:05:02,950 --> 00:05:04,837

it turned out, er, me and my brother were correspondingly

73

00:05:04,837 --> 00:05:06,360

one year older than my aunts, than these here.

74

00:05:06,360 --> 00:05:13,440

[grins] And it turned out that my brother and I were a year older than our, er, a(u)nts.

75

00:05:13,440 --> 00:05:22,980

Yes, well, now, and we lived together, all just from this large family, I alone stayed alive.

76

00:05:22,980 --> 00:05:28,290

And we lived all together but of this large family I'm the only one who survived.

77

00:05:28,290 --> 00:05:29,850

After the war I was alone.

78

00:05:29,850 --> 00:05:31,670

After the war I remained the only one.

79

00:05:31,670 --> 00:05:37,390

Because you were in the army.

80

00:05:37,390 --> 00:05:40,590

Because you were at the front, yes, at that time.

81

00:05:40,590 --> 00:05:44,150

Because I was at the front, then, in this hospital, I was wounded

82

00:05:44,150 --> 00:05:45,030

First of all he was

83

00:05:45,030 --> 00:05:45,630

and this, and

84

00:05:45,630 --> 00:05:46,320

at the front, and he was in the hospital

85

00:05:46,320 --> 00:05:46,320

our sanbat

86

00:05:46,320 --> 00:05:46,910

because I was

87

00:05:46,910 --> 00:05:46,910

got to Kiev, in Kiev, well, in this Kiev]

88

00:05:46,910 --> 00:05:46,910

M-m.

89

00:05:46,910 --> 00:05:49,410

Er, (we) got encircled, and I was in a hospital for prisoners of war.

90

00:05:49,410 --> 00:05:49,410

M-m, and then

91

00:05:49,410 --> 00:05:51,060

Then I was discovered as a Jew.

92

00:05:51,060 --> 00:05:51,090

M-m.

93

00:05:56,030 --> 00:06:03,370

And I was in the concentration camp, in Minsk.

94

00:06:03,370 --> 00:06:04,020

And so

95

00:06:04,020 --> 00:06:05,230

And then

96

00:06:05,230 --> 00:06:05,230

You can remember, yeah?

97

00:06:05,230 --> 00:06:07,150

in the concentration camp in Minsk, in Minsk I was

98

00:06:08,300 --> 00:06:09,200

I know, there

99

00:06:09,200 --> 00:06:25,020

in the concentration camp, yes, and it was named, at the Broad street it was, yes, there, in [?]

100

00:06:25,020 --> 00:06:25,350

M-m.

101

00:06:27,840 --> 00:06:34,830

Well, this was a concentration camp for Jewish prisoners of war.

102

00:06:34,830 --> 00:06:35,370

M-m.

103

00:06:35,370 --> 00:06:37,680

Moment. Ja?

104

00:06:37,680 --> 00:06:39,510

Er, so then his hospital was

105

00:06:42,080 --> 00:06:42,400

You don't

106

00:06:42,400 --> 00:06:55,117

taken by the Germans and he was in the hospital for pulse, then it was found out he's Jewish

107

00:06:55,117 --> 00:07:06,730

and he was sent to Minsk, there was a ghetto on the Shiroka Street, the Wide Street.

108

00:07:06,730 --> 00:07:06,730

Goh.

109

00:07:06,730 --> 00:07:10,280

But in in '43, in August, I think SpT And I think in August '41

110

00:07:10,280 --> 00:07:12,860

our concentration camp, and the Minsk ghetto, was deported to Sobibor, and

111

00:07:13,420 --> 00:07:13,970

I understood.

112

00:07:13,970 --> 00:07:27,448

and all were annihilated. Only eighty people were left, former prisoners

113

00:07:27,448 --> 00:07:37,370

of war, er, to build the Nordlager, as it was called.

114

00:07:37,370 --> 00:07:38,470

Moment, m-mm.

115

00:07:38,470 --> 00:07:45,522

Only eighty people out of that transport to Sobibor were saved,

116

00:07:45,522 --> 00:07:51,120

because they had to build the so-called Nordlager.

117

00:07:51,430 --> 00:08:01,345

We built barracks, and they sort of said, that this will be a camp

118

00:08:01,345 --> 00:08:10,360

for, er, repairing and sorting out of trophy weaponry, well.

119

00:08:10,360 --> 00:08:10,970

And, er

120

00:08:14,190 --> 00:08:20,630

Er, then we organized the uprising and escaped.

121

00:08:20,730 --> 00:08:29,097

They first said us we would be building a camp and barracks to store the trophy weapons,

122

00:08:29,097 --> 00:08:36,990

and after that he had an uprising and everyone ran escaped to different directions.

123

00:08:37,560 --> 00:08:41,030

You said you were one year in Sobibor?

124

00:08:41,030 --> 00:08:42,550

A, a month, one month.

125

00:08:44,680 --> 00:08:45,230

One month, so.

126

00:08:45,230 --> 00:08:56,460

You said, you were for about a month in Sobibor, yes?

127

00:08:56,460 --> 00:08:58,257

Yes, for a month in all, we were brought there and they

128

00:08:58,257 --> 00:08:59,990

all were destroyed, but eighty people were left well.

129

00:08:59,990 --> 00:09:03,240

They brought everyone was killed and only eighty people remained.

130

00:09:03,290 --> 00:09:06,990

You don't have to translate every time, it will be translated, okay?

131

00:09:07,310 --> 00:09:07,610

Okay.

132

00:09:07,610 --> 00:09:17,090

Okay, go on. You said you had different communities inside the camp.

133

00:09:17,090 --> 00:09:19,983

But you were telling that in the camp itself there were several,

134

00:09:19,983 --> 00:09:22,470

well, like communities, yes, friends in different ways.

135

00:09:22,470 --> 00:09:31,089

Yes. Now, er, we with the prisoners of war, we totally

136

00:09:31,089 --> 00:09:39,070

clang together all in a heap, in sum, all together

137

00:09:39,070 --> 00:09:48,028

we worked in the Normlager but others were tailors, there (were) cobblers,

138

00:09:48,028 --> 00:09:56,745

all kinds of, well, I don't know, what these Dutch were doing, In short,

139

00:09:56,745 --> 00:10:04,130

er, I had very little contact with all these Poles and Dutch.

140

00:10:04,130 --> 00:10:04,130

M-mm.

141

00:10:04,130 --> 00:10:07,540

Well, now, Poles there were most of all, Polish Jews well.

142

00:10:07,540 --> 00:10:15,237

Er, so he's explaining that he had very little contact to either Dutch or Polish

143

00:10:15,237 --> 00:10:23,416

Jews, er, and that the prisoners of war stick together as one group, but the majority

144

00:10:23,416 --> 00:10:31,114

he says were Polish er Jews, and he doesn't know what the Dutch Jews were doing,

145

00:10:31,114 --> 00:10:37,080

but some were working as shoesters or some were doing clothes.

146

00:10:37,080 --> 00:10:39,090

Thank you. He was together with Pechersky?

147

00:10:39,090 --> 00:10:40,700

You were together with Pechersky?

148

00:10:40,700 --> 00:10:52,433

Yes, well, Pechersky was for us like a leader, well, he was older than we, about

149

00:10:52,433 --> 00:11:04,020

ten years, fifteen, I don't know, twelve years he was older than me, right, er,

150

00:11:04,020 --> 00:11:15,606

well, and, in short, somehow, well, there was something by which we trusted him

151

00:11:15,606 --> 00:11:25,580

more, we all respected him, well, and he was like a leader among us.

152

00:11:25,580 --> 00:11:29,045

He was there a leader, he was older than, he was twelve or fifteen years older,

153

00:11:29,045 --> 00:11:31,940

and he was very trustworthy, that's why they took him as a leader.

154

00:11:31,940 --> 00:11:35,060

I was, in short, very close to him.

155

00:11:35,060 --> 00:11:37,710

He was very close to him.

156

00:11:37,710 --> 00:11:38,460

Well, in short, yes.

157

00:11:38,460 --> 00:11:40,930

Stop. Did you meet him in Minsk or before all this?

158

00:11:40,930 --> 00:11:44,380

But you met him first in Minsk or did you know him already before?

159

00:11:44,380 --> 00:11:56,069

Er, in Minsk, already in Minsk. But it's true he worked in another commando, er, there was

160

00:11:56,069 --> 00:12:07,629

a commando, the hospital it was called, well in the hospital, there they executed certain

161

00:12:07,629 --> 00:12:18,020

works, but I worked as a docker in the Truppenwirtschaftlager, as it was called.

162

00:12:18,020 --> 00:12:22,706

In Minsk he was doing different kinds of work, er, they were

163

00:12:22,706 --> 00:12:27,080

doing something in the hospital and I was loading stuff.

164

00:12:27,890 --> 00:12:35,220

Can he talk a little bit about Minsk, can he tell a little bit about the conditions in Minsk?

165

00:12:39,380 --> 00:12:46,000

Can you tell a bit more about Minsk and about what kind of conditions there were in Minsk?

166

00:12:46,000 --> 00:12:50,860

And how they were deported.

167

00:12:50,860 --> 00:12:54,410

And how you were then deported from there, from Minsk.

168

00:12:54,410 --> 00:13:01,937

[coughs] Well, in Minsk, well, what kind of conditions, conditions

169

00:13:01,937 --> 00:13:09,350

were bad. They gave (each) a ration of bread and one time skilly.

170

00:13:09,350 --> 00:13:11,420

He had little food, a piece of bread, some kind of porridge.

171

00:13:11,420 --> 00:13:11,600

Well.

172

00:13:11,600 --> 00:13:12,700

Conditions were bad.

173

00:13:12,700 --> 00:13:15,982

But those who worked, well, those who were in the camp, who were weak and could

174

00:13:15,982 --> 00:13:19,182

not get to work, died, of course. But at, work, if I worked as a docker, well

175

00:13:19,182 --> 00:13:21,800

if we were loading potatoes or so, er, we would steal something

176

00:13:21,800 --> 00:13:22,620

M, mmm.

177

00:13:22,620 --> 00:13:30,000

Er, what was being brought in. We had gasmasks

178

00:13:30,000 --> 00:13:30,320

M-m.

179

00:13:30,320 --> 00:13:30,320

[?]

180

00:13:33,540 --> 00:14:00,046

Each had gasmasks in a bag, and there (we would put what we stole) and bring it with us into the

181

00:14:00,046 --> 00:14:26,000

camp sniffs, we brought (it) with us and there we lived in the camp, we live(d) like a family.

182

00:14:26,000 --> 00:14:26,720

M-m.

183

00:14:27,930 --> 00:14:30,400

We were with four people,

184

00:14:30,400 --> 00:14:38,330

me, I say, from Kherson province, and them, all three were Odessites.

185

00:14:38,330 --> 00:14:38,790

M-mm.

186

00:14:40,150 --> 00:14:41,120

Moment.

187

00:14:41,510 --> 00:14:47,959

So, the weaker ones of course died because there was not enough to eat, but those who could

188

00:14:47,959 --> 00:14:54,196

work, for example I was loading sometimes potatoes, sometimes something else, and we all

189

00:14:54,196 --> 00:15:00,362

had special bags for gas masks, so we would steal something, put it in these gas masks,

190

00:15:00,362 --> 00:15:06,528

and then bring back to the lager, to the camp, and there were four of us, who were like

191

00:15:06,528 --> 00:15:11,490

a family, there was me from Kherson, and three other guys from Odessa.

192

00:15:12,100 --> 00:15:18,130

Yashka was one lame Odessite, he worked as a cleaner

193

00:15:18,130 --> 00:15:18,350

M-mm.

194

00:15:18,350 --> 00:15:20,740

in the camp.

195

00:15:20,740 --> 00:15:22,770

M-mm. One of them was [?]

196

00:15:23,100 --> 00:15:28,660

But we, the other three, worked in various jobs well.

197

00:15:28,900 --> 00:15:31,920

The other three had different jobs.

198

00:15:31,920 --> 00:15:36,470

And well, we brought (things) and at our coming cooked potatoes or something, in short, yes, already

199

00:15:36,470 --> 00:15:38,360

We were bringing some food [?]

200

00:15:38,460 --> 00:15:49,518

so that during the last period we didn't have hunger, well,

201

00:15:49,518 --> 00:16:00,390

right, so, we survived. But when they brought us into this

202

00:16:00,390 --> 00:16:08,470

Moment. If you talk when he is talking

203

00:16:08,470 --> 00:16:08,470

[?]

204

00:16:08,470 --> 00:16:10,180

it is very difficult, yeah?

205

00:16:10,180 --> 00:16:11,270

Okay, I understand.

206

00:16:11,470 --> 00:16:13,690

We do not delay the process. Okay, what did he say?

207

00:16:14,130 --> 00:16:21,001

He said that, that when Yasha was working as a cleaner, he would often prepare food for them,

208

00:16:21,001 --> 00:16:27,800

from the things they've stolen when unloading stuff, and that's how they managed to survive.

209

00:16:27,800 --> 00:16:42,571

When they lined us all up, and said, Are there tailors, cobblers? Step out! Then: Who can carry

210

00:16:42,571 --> 00:16:56,721

a bag of hundred eighty kilogram, step out as well. I stepped out, and then this, er, Fimka

211

00:16:56,721 --> 00:17:11,648

also was dragged out and we got (there), well, but the others were seized, the others and Yashka

212

00:17:11,648 --> 00:17:23,310

and this, er, they, er, were sent into the chambers, into the gas chambers.

213

00:17:23,310 --> 00:17:28,070

Later, when we were brought, we were lined up, and people would be calling.

214

00:17:28,070 --> 00:17:28,930

Would be

215

00:17:28,930 --> 00:17:35,400

Just That, that thing, okay, put that, yeah? Sure.

216

00:17:35,400 --> 00:17:36,250

Er, so

217

00:17:36,250 --> 00:17:51,460

No you have to I'll show you, I'll show you.

218

00:17:51,460 --> 00:18:05,180

No I just

219

00:18:05,180 --> 00:18:07,660

No no no no. No no no no.

220

00:18:07,660 --> 00:18:08,470

Okay, now.

221

00:18:08,470 --> 00:18:11,100

Okay, you manage? And then, and then you.

222

00:18:11,100 --> 00:18:13,250

This inside, and this one outside.

223

00:18:13,500 --> 00:18:14,430

Ja. Er. Yeah?

224

00:18:14,430 --> 00:18:15,520

Like this.

225

00:18:15,520 --> 00:18:15,520

[?]

226

00:18:15,520 --> 00:18:21,751

So, he was saying that they were lined up and they would ask, who is a shoemaker, who

227

00:18:21,751 --> 00:18:28,203

is a tailor, and then they were asked, who can lift a bag eighty kilograms weight, until

228

00:18:28,203 --> 00:18:34,361

he stood out and he took one of his former comrades, Fimka, out, and that's how they

229

00:18:34,361 --> 00:18:39,860

stayed alive, and the rest of his comrades were killed in gas chamber then.

230

00:18:39,860 --> 00:18:43,170

In Sobibor.

231

00:18:43,170 --> 00:18:44,380

In Sobibor this happened, yes?

232

00:18:44,380 --> 00:18:44,530

What?

233

00:18:44,530 --> 00:18:46,440

In Sobibor this happened already, when you stepped out and drew out Fimka after you.

234

00:18:54,670 --> 00:19:01,990

What, how, well, we sort of stepped out.

235

00:19:01,990 --> 00:19:07,620

This was already in Sobibor? Yes?

236

00:19:07,620 --> 00:19:08,510

What, what was?

237

00:19:08,510 --> 00:19:15,610

Well, when they were calling you out, as a cobbler, as who can lift eighty kilogram.

238

00:19:15,610 --> 00:19:20,017

When the train arrived, and (we) were lined up along the railroad cars, and they were

239

00:19:20,017 --> 00:19:24,581

asking, er, Step out, they said, Are there tailors, cobblers? Yes. Step out. Then, well,

240

00:19:24,581 --> 00:19:28,730

they took out these dockers, then they said, in short, Weak ones, also step out.

241

00:19:28,730 --> 00:19:37,895

And the others, we were taken apart to one side, but the others to different, into these,

242

00:19:37,895 --> 00:19:46,854

er, gas chambers. We didn't even know at all, by then we didn't know yet, but then (we)

243

00:19:46,854 --> 00:19:56,226

asked the older camp inmates, Where are all the others of us (They answered), (Over there),

244

00:19:56,226 --> 00:20:02,920

you see that smoke there, well this already is your comrades all.

245

00:20:02,920 --> 00:20:09,082

It happened in[Sobibor, when the trains came, they would be lining us up and calling others,

246

00:20:09,082 --> 00:20:14,847

and then we were taken to one side, they were taken to the other side. At that point we

247

00:20:14,847 --> 00:20:20,546

did not know anything, of course, and afterwards we asked the old inmates of the camp,

248

00:20:20,546 --> 00:20:25,450

Where is the rest, and they showed us the smoke and said, That's the rest.

249

00:20:28,380 --> 00:20:33,055

Can he tell me how he landed from Minsk in Sobibor? And there's

250

00:20:33,055 --> 00:20:36,840

a moment in which he learned he had to leave Minsk.

251

00:20:36,840 --> 00:20:42,280

Er, at the moment when he learned, he has to leave Minsk. M-m.

252

00:20:42,280 --> 00:20:43,300

To leave Minsk, how, and when.

253

00:20:43,300 --> 00:20:46,651

But do you remember how it happened, well, when you found out that you were going

254

00:20:46,651 --> 00:20:50,126

to be transferred from Minsk, do you remember that moment? How did this happen? When

255

00:20:50,126 --> 00:20:53,230

did they tell you, that, well, you were going to be transferred from Minsk?

256

00:20:53,230 --> 00:21:00,902

[coughs] (We) were brought from the ghetto into our camp, and then loaded into railroad

257

00:21:00,902 --> 00:21:09,016

cars. We were told that we were brought to Germany for work. And they loaded us, well, those

258

00:21:09,016 --> 00:21:16,689

whom they had brought from the ghetto. The first train was ours, they drove it off, and

259

00:21:16,689 --> 00:21:23,480

then another two trains after our one arrived as well, from the Minsk ghetto.

260

00:21:28,290 --> 00:21:28,660

So

261

00:21:28,660 --> 00:21:33,960

We were told, You're going to Germany to work (there).

262

00:21:33,960 --> 00:21:45,223

So they were said they would be taken to Germany for work, and people from the ghettos were deported

263

00:21:45,223 --> 00:21:56,932

for the moment, and also from their camp. Er, and they were deported together. He says they were deported

264

00:21:56,932 --> 00:22:07,080

in the first train and then afterwards there were two more trains with the ghetto dwellers.

265

00:22:07,080 --> 00:22:10,300

And they were all killed.

266

00:22:10,300 --> 00:22:13,810

Er, and they all perished? All these trains? All, who arrived?

267

00:22:13,810 --> 00:22:17,620

Of course, all!

268

00:22:17,620 --> 00:22:20,280

Yes, of course.

269

00:22:20,280 --> 00:22:25,040

Well, these eighty people were left. Three trains from Minsk, all perished.

270

00:22:25,040 --> 00:22:27,580

Three trains from Minsk and only eighty people were left.

271

00:22:30,210 --> 00:22:35,994

Er, did he leave, live in a large barracks in Sobibor,

272

00:22:35,994 --> 00:22:41,030

what were his conditions? Where was he staying?

273

00:22:41,030 --> 00:22:48,978

M-m. But in Sobibor, when you were there, did you stay in some large sort barracks,

274

00:22:48,978 --> 00:22:55,970

do you remember which were the conditions at that place, where you lived?

275

00:22:55,970 --> 00:23:07,791

Well, I remember, er, bunks, and this bunk of two levels, lower and upper levels, and (made)

276

00:23:07,791 --> 00:23:18,200

of planks, well, and, how we made our beds with what one had, and so, and so, er.

277

00:23:18,200 --> 00:23:20,360

I remember these benches, of course.

278

00:23:20,360 --> 00:23:28,041

This is considered, of course, very bad, if this is so, but we were

279

00:23:28,041 --> 00:23:35,380

used (to) that, er, (nothing) better, sort of all right [grins].

280

00:23:35,380 --> 00:23:39,539

Er, of course it looks very, very bad, but we were used

281

00:23:39,539 --> 00:23:43,320

to it and that's why we found it was the usual way

282

00:23:43,320 --> 00:23:43,320

M-m. He was healthy all the time, in Sobibor?

283

00:23:45,020 --> 00:23:49,020

Er, you were not ill during the time you were there?

284

00:23:49,020 --> 00:23:49,310

I, where?

285

00:23:49,310 --> 00:23:49,640

In Sobibor]

286

00:23:49,640 --> 00:23:59,248

In Sobibor? Sort of no. Whoever was ill, those were taken away, taken away, ill people

287

00:23:59,248 --> 00:24:08,746

were not kept, they were taken away, and it was visible, to, er, the third camp as it

288

00:24:08,746 --> 00:24:18,354

was called. The third camp, that was the camp, er, of destruction. And there they were

289

00:24:18,354 --> 00:24:27,070

taken, into the third camp, from where there were no, (there) was no way back.

290

00:24:27,750 --> 00:24:34,309

Obviously I did not, because those who were ill were taken away to the so-called third camp, and, and

291

00:24:34,309 --> 00:24:40,610

no one came back, back from there. There were no ill people. If you got ill, you were taken away.

292

00:24:41,450 --> 00:24:57,850

So can he tell me how he heard for the first time about the ideas of the

293

00:24:57,850 --> 00:25:13,340

uprising? And if he wants to speak longer, I know a lot of the story

294

00:25:13,340 --> 00:25:13,710

M-m.

295

00:25:13,710 --> 00:25:14,150

so just give me short details please, okay?

296

00:25:14,150 --> 00:25:21,758

Okay. Er, do you remember when for the first time you heard that there was to be some

297

00:25:21,758 --> 00:25:28,740

kind of uprising? Well, when did you hear for the first time about such ideas?

298

00:25:28,740 --> 00:25:31,794

How we heard? Well, it was us who organized this uprising. I was, I was

299

00:25:31,794 --> 00:25:34,977

in, er, the uprising committee, I, er, together with this Sasha, together,

300

00:25:34,977 --> 00:25:37,730

er, we slept together, together we knew, we prepared everything.

301

00:25:37,730 --> 00:25:40,986

I was into the committee, so together with Sasha we even

302

00:25:40,986 --> 00:25:44,010

slept together, and we prepared everything together.

303

00:25:45,510 --> 00:25:54,380

Er, how did this committee come to exist?

304

00:25:54,380 --> 00:26:00,000

M-m. Er, but how did this committee come up, for organizing the uprising?

305

00:26:00,000 --> 00:26:12,000

[coughs] In short, the committee was organized, er, the organizer was Sasha

306

00:26:12,000 --> 00:26:22,240

Pechersky, there was Shloymo, Shloymo, er, what was his surname?

307

00:26:22,240 --> 00:26:23,470

Leon Leon]

308

00:26:23,470 --> 00:26:33,459

Shloymo, forgot, well, he was in our, from Minsk. But he was a Pole! From Poland

309

00:26:33,459 --> 00:26:43,449

they were deported to Minsk, er, these Po(l)es, but from the Minsk ghetto he got

310

00:26:43,449 --> 00:26:52,439

to our camp, this Shloymo What the heck, well, now I forgot the surname.

311

00:26:52,440 --> 00:26:54,160

You remember the surname.

312

00:26:54,160 --> 00:26:54,270

Leon.

313

00:26:54,270 --> 00:26:55,400

Well, so this

314

00:26:55,400 --> 00:26:55,400

Leon.

315

00:26:55,400 --> 00:26:55,400

What?

316

00:26:55,400 --> 00:26:55,510

Leon is the surname!

317

00:26:55,510 --> 00:26:55,510

What?

318

00:26:55,510 --> 00:26:59,670

Shlomo Leon it was, wasn't it?

319

00:26:59,670 --> 00:27:00,090

Leitman.

320

00:27:00,090 --> 00:27:00,730

Ho-how?

321

00:27:00,750 --> 00:27:11,560

Shlemo Leon, she's asking again for the surname? She remembers the surname, Leon.

322

00:27:12,340 --> 00:27:14,710

No, Leitman it was.

323

00:27:14,710 --> 00:27:15,130

Leitman.

324

00:27:15,130 --> 00:27:25,434

Leitman!] Er, this Shloymo Leitman, yes, yes, Shloymo Leitman. Well, there

325

00:27:25,434 --> 00:27:35,879

were brought (some) of the Polish guys, a couple of people, and I, and this

326

00:27:35,879 --> 00:27:45,070

Shubaev, Shubaev from our (people). We and, of course, Sasha, well

327

00:27:45,200 --> 00:27:49,930

So he speaks that, er, some of committee

328

00:27:50,160 --> 00:27:50,470

And Tsybulsky also was with us.

329

00:27:50,470 --> 00:27:54,680

in the committee were Polish who were first brought to Minsk and then got to Sobibor.

330

00:27:54,680 --> 00:27:55,720

So they met in Minsk.

331

00:27:56,080 --> 00:27:56,920

Er, yes.

332

00:27:56,920 --> 00:27:58,180

This structure was created in Minsk.

333

00:27:58,180 --> 00:28:01,505

Er, so it turns out that this structure and you all met each other

334

00:28:01,505 --> 00:28:04,580

(when) still in Minsk? Yes, all these people, whom you named.

335

00:28:04,580 --> 00:28:16,299

No, not all. Er, this Leitman, but (there) were of those elder ones, camp inmates from the Poles,

336

00:28:16,299 --> 00:28:27,777

whom I even was not acquainted with. Well, I knew my own people, (but) er, the Poles I didn't

337

00:28:27,777 --> 00:28:38,410

know, I knew Leitman, I knew this Sasha Pechersky, I knew, but those, er, I didn't know.

338

00:28:38,410 --> 00:28:41,853

So he knew only two of them, with whom he was in Minsk

339

00:28:41,853 --> 00:28:45,170

and the other two, they were old inmates of Sobibor]

340

00:28:45,170 --> 00:28:46,010

Yes, they were Polish.

341

00:28:46,010 --> 00:28:49,780

and he did not know them before, he didn't know the Polish people before.

342

00:28:49,780 --> 00:28:52,510

So can you talk about the preparation for the uprising?

343

00:28:52,510 --> 00:28:56,774

M-m, can you tell a little bit about the preparation itself

344

00:28:56,774 --> 00:29:00,460

for the uprising? How did you talk with each other?

345

00:29:00,460 --> 00:29:02,140

He had to be very secret.

346

00:29:02,140 --> 00:29:53,440

This, of course, was a great secret, probably?

347

00:29:53,440 --> 00:30:00,669

Well, a great secret, well well, I say, the point is that

348

00:30:00,669 --> 00:30:06,630

we knew, ooh, what, I altogether lost my voice.

349

00:30:06,630 --> 00:30:17,440

We knew that, er, the guard was Ukrainians, in short, Polizei, but there were about twenty people,

350

00:30:17,440 --> 00:30:28,472

Germans, work leaders. These Germans were armed with automatic guns, in short, armed well. But, but,

351

00:30:28,472 --> 00:30:39,503

these Polizei, we knew that the Germans didn't trust them. They would go their positions, they would

352

00:30:39,503 --> 00:30:50,424

give them an amount of cartridges there, but then, when they were changed, they took the cartridges

353

00:30:50,424 --> 00:31:01,786

away from them. I say, thus we concluded that we had to kill the Germans. Then we just knew that around

354

00:31:01,786 --> 00:31:12,487

the camp there was a minefield, I say, (we) must, er, we knew that, er, along the fence, close to

355

00:31:12,487 --> 00:31:23,408

the fence there were these small German houses of theirs, where the Germans lived. So, we concluded

356

00:31:23,408 --> 00:31:34,439

that probably opposite these little houses they would hardly have laid mines. I say, we, er, decided

357

00:31:34,439 --> 00:31:45,250

like this: that we had to kill some more Germans, and all in a mass to (run) to this, er, passage,

358

00:31:45,250 --> 00:31:55,951

straight to the Ukrainians, and, er, to cut the fence opposite the little houses. Well. And so it

359

00:31:55,951 --> 00:32:02,570

turned out, that, er, some mines exploded, well, a few. Well

360

00:32:02,570 --> 00:32:02,570

Moment. Sorry.

361

00:32:02,570 --> 00:32:10,691

Er, so they learned that there were about twenty Germans and more Ukrainians, but the Germans were

362

00:32:10,691 --> 00:32:18,977

not trusting Ukrainians, they learned that they were giving them certain amount of bullets when they

363

00:32:18,977 --> 00:32:27,264

were sent out for watch and then they were taken these bullets away. That's why they decided to kill

364

00:32:27,264 --> 00:32:35,468

as many as possible Germans and then to attack, er, the rest, and also they learned that there were

365

00:32:35,468 --> 00:32:43,672

German houses very near to the barbwire and probably there was no mines, there were no mines there.

366

00:32:43,672 --> 00:32:51,793

And so afterwards when the Germans were killed they decided to storm those direction and when they

367

00:32:51,793 --> 00:32:57,759

did so, er, there were one or two mines which exploded but not too many.

368

00:32:57,760 --> 00:32:58,410

I keep, keep

369

00:32:58,410 --> 00:32:58,770

Oh, er, okay.

370

00:32:58,770 --> 00:33:00,790

That's what he said.

371

00:33:00,790 --> 00:33:01,480

Er, and, er.

372

00:33:01,480 --> 00:33:01,870

And so we killed eleven Germans.

373

00:33:01,870 --> 00:33:02,380

We killed eleven Germans.

374

00:33:02,380 --> 00:33:04,640

And I with my helpers killed two Germans.

375

00:33:04,640 --> 00:33:07,860

I killed two with my friends.

376

00:33:08,200 --> 00:33:09,630

Did you ever kill before?

377

00:33:12,100 --> 00:33:16,790

Did you ever have, before, at some time, to kill?

378

00:33:16,790 --> 00:33:28,066

Don't you think that it is so easy to kill, moreover to kill with an axe. Er, after the killing

379

00:33:28,066 --> 00:33:38,630

I went to, er, Sasha, and I say, that's it, here you are, two pistols, one I kept myself,

380

00:33:38,630 --> 00:33:49,669

one I gave to him, here you are, and I was shaking all over, er, how could that be, something

381

00:33:49,669 --> 00:33:57,860

horrible, er, well, after all I killed a man, that's a horror, that's

382

00:33:57,860 --> 00:34:03,750

It was very terrible, it was

383

00:34:03,750 --> 00:34:04,740

I don't want to talk about it.

384

00:34:04,740 --> 00:34:11,675

It was very terrible of course, er, it's not simple to kill, er, to kill with an axe, and afterwards

385

00:34:11,675 --> 00:34:18,056

when I, we had to kill two, when I came to Sasha, I said, here you have two guns, one I left

386

00:34:18,056 --> 00:34:24,645

to myself, one I gave him, and I was all shivering a-and it was terrible, because I had to kill

387

00:34:24,645 --> 00:34:29,570

a person, it was a human life and I don't want to be, to talk about it.

388

00:34:29,570 --> 00:34:36,986

And he says to me, he says, You know, Frenzel is still alive, the most important one,

389

00:34:36,986 --> 00:34:44,228

Frenzel is alive. I (say), You look at me, can I still do something, I said to him,

390

00:34:44,228 --> 00:34:50,510

you, Sasha, look at me, can I still do something? And he says, Sit down.

391

00:34:50,510 --> 00:34:56,580

And then he said me, You know that Frenzel is, is still alive, the main one, the main German.

392

00:34:56,580 --> 00:34:57,540

Ja, Frenzel.

393

00:34:57,540 --> 00:35:03,910

And, er, I said, Sasha, look at me, I cannot do anything more now, and he said, Okay, stay.

394

00:35:05,070 --> 00:35:08,220

So he run to the fence. Thank you for telling this.

395

00:35:08,220 --> 00:35:11,300

Er, thank you very much that you told about this.

396

00:35:11,300 --> 00:35:14,920

It must be difficult.

397

00:35:14,920 --> 00:35:16,760

Of course this is very difficult for you, thank you.

398

00:35:16,760 --> 00:35:16,760

What?

399

00:35:16,760 --> 00:35:19,090

Very difficult for you to tell, thank you very much that you told.

400

00:35:19,090 --> 00:35:35,640

Thank you, spasibo. He run to the gate, er, with the others.

401

00:35:35,640 --> 00:35:45,817

Er, during the uprising you and the others ran to the gate,

402

00:35:45,817 --> 00:35:55,650

well, to that passage, where the little houses were, yes?

403

00:35:55,650 --> 00:36:00,895

Yes. I, I passed through the wire, passed, well and then, I say, we went out, many

404

00:36:00,895 --> 00:36:06,140

went out, out of this camp, well, but, er, well, those who were the organizers, we

405

00:36:06,140 --> 00:36:11,130

had arms, we I say, I say we went for reconnaissance, for reconnaissance, when

406

00:36:11,130 --> 00:36:11,130

M-m.

407

00:36:11,130 --> 00:36:23,218

when Shubaev says, Shubaev says, Well, this is maybe not very moral, er, ?

408

00:36:23,218 --> 00:36:35,307

case, he said, I won't go back We went away, and, he says, I won't return,

409

00:36:35,307 --> 00:36:47,070

because we all will perish and, er, they will perish and we will perish.

410

00:36:47,070 --> 00:36:47,580

Moment.

411

00:36:47,580 --> 00:36:47,920

And he

412

00:36:51,560 --> 00:36:53,390

So I

413

00:36:53,390 --> 00:36:53,670

Moment, okay?

414

00:36:53,670 --> 00:37:00,188

So I went through the barbwire, and then we ran away, and the group which were the organizers

415

00:37:00,188 --> 00:37:06,355

of the uprising, who had weapons, we went to do some intelligence, to see what's around.

416

00:37:06,355 --> 00:37:12,453

And maybe it's not they're immoral but one of us, Shubaev, he said, I'm not coming back

417

00:37:12,453 --> 00:37:17,850

from this intelligence, er, I'm not coming back, I'm not returning, because I

418

00:37:21,590 --> 00:37:31,758

The point is, that we for the whole night had been running, like, farther away from the camp.

419

00:37:31,758 --> 00:37:41,599

And then dawn came, and we appeared to be near the camp. We had been circling around, near

420

00:37:41,599 --> 00:37:52,751

the camp and we appeared to be close to the camp. And I was saying so, I went then for reconnaissance,

421

00:37:52,751 --> 00:38:02,920

where to go, but then, I say, we went already not just through the woods, but along the road.

422

00:38:02,920 --> 00:38:12,870

I say, we (went) so along the road, then Sasha was saying, we must walk on, not immediately

423

00:38:12,870 --> 00:38:22,491

cross the Bug but walk, but we must walk to the North, because we must cross in Belarus,

424

00:38:22,491 --> 00:38:32,223

not in Ukraine. And we, I say, went for the North, well, there were seven of us, and then

425

00:38:32,223 --> 00:38:37,690

crossed the Bug and got straight to the partisans.

426

00:38:37,690 --> 00:38:45,075

Er, so, we were running for the whole night, trying to get as far possible from Sobibor, but

427

00:38:45,075 --> 00:38:52,220

at, er, the dusk it turned out, at the dawn it turned out that, er, we were near the camp

428

00:38:52,220 --> 00:38:54,210

The gate.

429

00:38:54,210 --> 00:39:00,474

near the camp again, we were walking in circles, for the whole night, and afterwards Sasha said that

430

00:39:00,474 --> 00:39:06,988

we should not go through the woods but we should take the road, and that we have to, don't have to cross

431

00:39:06,988 --> 00:39:13,252

Bug now, we have to do it in the North, in Belarus, not in Ukraine. And that's why he went North, to

432

00:39:13,252 --> 00:39:18,639

Belarus, we crossed the Bug and at once got to the partisans, we joined the partisans.

433

00:39:18,640 --> 00:39:25,880

Can I ask him, he was alone with Sasha at that moment? He didn't stay with the others who escaped?

434

00:39:25,880 --> 00:39:26,539

But, er, well, when you went to cross the Bug, how many of you were

435

00:39:26,539 --> 00:39:27,160

there, you were there, Sasha was there, was there someone else?

436

00:39:27,160 --> 00:39:28,060

Seven people there were.

437

00:39:28,060 --> 00:39:28,680

There were seven.

438

00:39:28,680 --> 00:39:30,730

M-m, you splitted of from the big group in the woods?

439

00:39:30,730 --> 00:39:39,140

You, you separated from the larger group, that was in the woods, yes?

440

00:39:39,140 --> 00:39:39,140

Yes.

441

00:39:39,140 --> 00:39:39,250

Yes.

442

00:39:39,250 --> 00:39:44,570

Was that a difficult decision, to

443

00:39:46,950 --> 00:39:53,619

But well, the others crossed the Bug immediately, well, and these OUN people, er,

444

00:39:53,619 --> 00:39:59,630

led them away, all one after another, they killed them off, like Germans.

445

00:39:59,790 --> 00:40:06,714

M-m. And the rest, they crossed the Bug at once, and, they were killed by nationalists,

446

00:40:06,714 --> 00:40:11,650

by Ukrainian nationalists, who were killing them like Germans.

447

00:40:11,750 --> 00:40:14,680

How did they decide to split off with seven people, yeah?

448

00:40:14,680 --> 00:40:18,650

But how did you decide, well, with this group of seven, to separate?

449

00:40:18,650 --> 00:40:21,983

Well, right, this (was) not separating, we were going for reconnaissance,

450

00:40:21,983 --> 00:40:24,860

and then did not return back to the general, to the general [?]

451

00:40:24,860 --> 00:40:33,437

Er, we went for intelligence, and then we never came back

452

00:40:33,437 --> 00:40:40,660

to the main group. So that's how we split it up.

453

00:40:40,660 --> 00:40:42,960

You decided.

454

00:40:43,480 --> 00:40:48,860

They, they decided to go to see what's around and never came back.

455

00:40:48,860 --> 00:40:48,860

M-m. They really decided not to come back?

456

00:40:48,860 --> 00:40:51,200

? I don't remember, either seven or nine.

457

00:40:51,200 --> 00:40:57,591

You, well, from these then, did you decide then, that you

458

00:40:57,591 --> 00:41:03,310

wouldn't return, or did it just turn out like that?

459

00:41:05,120 --> 00:41:12,979

Well, it turned out like that, this Shubaev was saying, back we won't return, because

460

00:41:12,979 --> 00:41:20,100

we all perish. We must cross the Bug faster, and get to the partisans, right.

461

00:41:20,100 --> 00:41:26,328

It turned out so and, and Shubaev was saying all the time, that we are not coming back, because

462

00:41:26,328 --> 00:41:32,360

then we're all dead, and we have to cross the Bug and join the partisans as quick as we can.

463

00:41:32,360 --> 00:41:32,360

[cough]

464

00:41:32,360 --> 00:41:32,360

Thank you ve

465

00:41:32,360 --> 00:41:34,230

We got into this, well, right, the Frunze detachment, so it was called.

466

00:41:34,230 --> 00:41:35,040

We joined er partisan, er, group

467

00:41:35,040 --> 00:41:35,040

And they

468

00:41:35,040 --> 00:41:35,040

called Frunze group.

469

00:41:35,040 --> 00:41:51,372

I say, they said so, about three days we were there, er, he says, they

470

00:41:51,372 --> 00:42:07,937

of course did not kill (us), like in Ukraine, they said, Go east, cross

471

00:42:07,937 --> 00:42:22,870

the front, you cross, and join the army. But we don't need Jews.

472

00:42:22,870 --> 00:42:28,187

And we stayed for about three days with that partisan group, they of course

473

00:42:28,187 --> 00:42:33,575

were not killing us like it happened in Ukraine, but they said, You go east,

474

00:42:33,575 --> 00:42:38,680

you cross the frontline and you join the army. We do not need Jews here.

475

00:42:40,860 --> 00:42:41,340

Well. We headed.

476

00:42:41,340 --> 00:42:42,380

That, that must have been a shock.

477

00:42:42,380 --> 00:42:49,955

We headed east, and the reconnaissance of this detachment

478

00:42:49,955 --> 00:42:56,600

encircled us took our arms from us, and went away.

479

00:42:56,600 --> 00:43:03,720

And then, er, when we went eastwards, the intelligence groups of the those partisans took

480

00:43:03,940 --> 00:43:04,380

Pistols.

481

00:43:04,380 --> 00:43:06,400

away our weapons, and left.

482

00:43:06,400 --> 00:43:10,970

Were they Polish partisans or Russian partisans [?]. Russian partisans.

483

00:43:10,970 --> 00:43:11,250

M-m.

484

00:43:14,530 --> 00:43:17,270

They took away your weapons?

485

00:43:17,270 --> 00:43:19,250

They took away all arms from you?

486

00:43:25,690 --> 00:43:26,220

All arms, they took everything from us.

487

00:43:26,220 --> 00:43:26,220

Yes they took everything from us [?].

488

00:43:26,220 --> 00:43:36,420

And, er, we went farther. But we got to the transport unit of this Stalin brigade.

489

00:43:36,420 --> 00:43:36,900

M-m

490

00:43:36,900 --> 00:43:55,681

And they needed, er, these [нездабрые?]. And they seated us on a cart,

491

00:43:55,681 --> 00:44:12,350

and with this transport unit we got to the brigade, the Stalin brigade.

492

00:44:12,350 --> 00:44:13,360

Er.

493

00:44:13,360 --> 00:44:22,960

And there, I say, we got to this Stalin brigade, and there they separated us. Sasha and yet another

494

00:44:22,960 --> 00:44:32,366

one, Naum, he was, er, ? from ? And he was a butcher, so they took him immediately into this, er,

495

00:44:32,366 --> 00:44:41,676

transport unit, well. In turn them two, er, they left them in the Shchors detachment. But in the

496

00:44:41,676 --> 00:44:50,210

Shchors detachment was a Jewish, er, Jewish, er, not a company but a unit, a Jewish one.

497

00:44:50,210 --> 00:44:51,450

Moment.

498

00:44:51,590 --> 00:44:59,582

M-m. Ah, so when they were walking afterwards they got to the rear transport of the Stalin brigade,

499

00:44:59,582 --> 00:45:07,171

so-called, and that rear brigade they had, they needed help. So they took them, with that rear

500

00:45:07,171 --> 00:45:13,550

unions they got to the main brigade and that's were they got separated, because

501

00:45:13,550 --> 00:45:14,280

But us, the others

502

00:45:14,280 --> 00:45:15,610

Moment, moment! Who got separated?

503

00:45:15,610 --> 00:45:18,220

Er, this group of, of seven people.

504

00:45:18,380 --> 00:45:19,110

Ja, with different people.

505

00:45:19,110 --> 00:45:25,422

Yes, yes. Er, Sasha, and another person, er, they were taken to the

506

00:45:25,422 --> 00:45:31,170

Stalin brigade, and the rest to the Shchors partisan brigade.

507

00:45:31,170 --> 00:45:40,870

But us, the others, five people, we were sent back to that! To the Frunze detachment,

508

00:45:40,870 --> 00:45:50,800

and we, er, showed up, I say, Take us into the partisans, and, well, clearly, we fought

509

00:45:50,800 --> 00:46:00,386

rather well afterwards. I was at first a second-number machine gunner, but when (we)

510

00:46:00,386 --> 00:46:08,490

united with the army I was commander of a machine-gun section, right-o.

511

00:46:08,490 --> 00:46:10,230

Moment.

512

00:46:10,230 --> 00:46:18,560

Er, so, they got separated, Sasha and the second guy, they went to this, er, Frunze brigade, which

513

00:46:18,560 --> 00:46:26,210

had a Jewish union, and the rest of five, they were sent back to that, er, Frunze brigade.

514

00:46:26,220 --> 00:46:26,490

Yeah.

515

00:46:26,490 --> 00:46:32,883

Er, but with an order now to take them as partisans. So, er, and afterwards, he

516

00:46:32,883 --> 00:46:39,277

says, they were good fighters, he was at first a second-number machine gun, and

517

00:46:39,277 --> 00:46:45,510

then, when they joined the army, he was the commander of a machine gun union.

518

00:46:45,830 --> 00:46:55,070

I do want to finish for today, but I have one question, can you say that?

519

00:46:55,070 --> 00:46:56,972

Er, we and you, we will soon finish already, probably, for today,

520

00:46:56,972 --> 00:46:58,640

but there is still one question to you. A final question.

521

00:46:58,640 --> 00:47:01,530

And then tomorrow I want to talk about after the war.

522

00:47:03,640 --> 00:47:06,540

But, tomorrow we will talk with you about what was after the war.

523

00:47:06,540 --> 00:47:07,560

I don't want him to get too tired.

524

00:47:07,560 --> 00:47:12,040

We don't want that you get very tired, that it is not hard for you.

525

00:47:12,040 --> 00:47:12,560

Er, er.

526

00:47:12,560 --> 00:47:16,700

There is a story, he tried to escape.

527

00:47:16,700 --> 00:47:27,790

I have a partisan booklet, this, a partisan's certificate.

528

00:47:27,790 --> 00:47:28,660

I have a partisan passport.

529

00:47:28,660 --> 00:47:30,790

I have a, er, partisan of Belarus.

530

00:47:30,800 --> 00:47:32,930

Passport of Belorussian partisan.

531

00:47:32,930 --> 00:47:41,035

I want, er, there's a story, which I want to tell him. And I want him to reply to that. It

532

00:47:41,035 --> 00:47:48,600

is (the) story that he tried to escape with a group of men before the uprising. Yes.

533

00:47:48,600 --> 00:47:48,770

M-m.

534

00:47:48,770 --> 00:47:50,460

And he was forbidden to do so.

535

00:47:50,460 --> 00:47:50,460

M-m.

536

00:47:50,460 --> 00:47:55,620

Can he tell me if the story is true or not.

537

00:47:55,620 --> 00:48:05,933

M-m. Er, well, when she read about Sobibor, yes, she, er, found a story,

538

00:48:05,933 --> 00:48:16,819

in which it was said that you and a few other people wanted to escape before

539

00:48:16,819 --> 00:48:26,130

the uprising, but you were forbidden to. Is this true, or is this

540

00:48:26,130 --> 00:48:33,680

No, I say, it was like this. We wanted (to get) through this wire, get through [?]

541

00:48:34,170 --> 00:48:49,338

Er, well, right, of course they forbade us, they said that an uprising is being prepared,

542

00:48:49,338 --> 00:49:01,440

and you won't escape, er, separately, there wasn't something like that.

543

00:49:02,640 --> 00:49:05,790

Yes, the story is

544

00:49:05,790 --> 00:49:13,428

Well, but no, well, er, this was only talks. Not any preparations, well, (no) reconnaissance, there was

545

00:49:13,428 --> 00:49:21,066

nothing at all. These were talks, talks, well, well, a few people, us, they found out, Sasha found out,

546

00:49:21,066 --> 00:49:27,740

and he said, er, he sent for (us) and said, Don't do that, we will an, er, overall escape.

547

00:49:27,740 --> 00:49:33,932

M-m. But is was only talk, we never did anything to prepare it for real, we were just

548

00:49:33,932 --> 00:49:40,343

talking that we should go under the barbwire and escape, and when Sasha heard about that

549

00:49:40,343 --> 00:49:46,536

he called us and said that you mustn't do it because there is big uprising and if you

550

00:49:46,536 --> 00:49:51,999

try it you won't escape and you won't let others escape too because of you.

551

00:50:02,630 --> 00:50:03,370

Thank you.

552

00:50:06,430 --> 00:50:08,540

Thank you very much, thank you.

553

00:50:08,540 --> 00:50:14,220

It was just necessary to check the microphone.

554

00:50:14,220 --> 00:50:14,460

[coughs]

555

00:50:14,460 --> 00:50:14,770

Hello.

556

00:50:14,770 --> 00:50:14,910

[laughs]

557

00:50:14,910 --> 00:50:40,610

We hear you talking. Er, we had stopped yesterday, that you were joining the partisans.

558

00:50:40,610 --> 00:50:52,510

Yesterday we finished on the point where you joined the partisans

559

00:50:52,510 --> 00:50:52,920

Yes.

560

00:50:52,920 --> 00:50:53,150

after the war.

561

00:50:53,150 --> 00:50:53,150

Yes.

562

00:50:53,150 --> 00:51:04,840

Er, would you please talk about how you found the partisans and how it was to be with them?

563

00:51:04,840 --> 00:51:19,283

Can you tell a little bit about, well, how you joined this partisan detachment and how, er,

564

00:51:19,283 --> 00:51:33,410

which events happened there, how you felt, during participation in the partisan struggle.

565

00:51:33,410 --> 00:51:38,789

Well that, er well, at first, they would not take us at all into this detachment. But then from,

566

00:51:38,789 --> 00:51:44,224

er, the Stalin brigade they sent us that way, and, er, I for example, was appointed second-number

567

00:51:44,224 --> 00:51:49,491

machine gunner. Right. I participated in several events, we, er, with our machine gun, we went

568

00:51:49,491 --> 00:51:55,039

to a region of Ukraine to prepare provisions [grins] for our detachment, well [coughs]. Er, already

569

00:51:55,039 --> 00:52:00,698

within a couple of months there was an offensive, er, by the Polizei and the Germans into our region,

570

00:52:00,698 --> 00:52:06,133

so we, er, took the defence and our machine gun distinguished itself well on that (occasion), and

571

00:52:06,133 --> 00:52:09,719

after this I was appointed commander of the machine-gun section.

572

00:52:09,720 --> 00:52:09,930

Moment.

573

00:52:09,930 --> 00:52:18,652

Er, so at first he was, he was saying, he was not taken by the partisans, but then for the second

574

00:52:18,652 --> 00:52:27,914

time, when there was an order from the Stalin brigade, so to say, er, they were taken into the partisan

575

00:52:27,914 --> 00:52:36,907

union and, er, he was, er, second number machine gun. They had different things going on, they went,

576

00:52:36,907 --> 00:52:45,719

er, to Ukraine, for example to, to get foods for the partisan group. And also, in some months, the

577

00:52:45,719 --> 00:52:54,442

Germans and the police started attacking the region where the group was, and they had, er, better

578

00:52:54,442 --> 00:53:03,614

events with that Germans at, and his machine gun was taking, er, good care of that, so that afterwards

579

00:53:03,614 --> 00:53:09,010

he was given the rank of commander of the machine gun union.

580

00:53:09,840 --> 00:53:21,560

Was it still important he was a Jew?

581

00:53:21,560 --> 00:53:34,700

But did it play a role up to that time that you were a Jew?

582

00:53:34,700 --> 00:53:44,299

I don't think, but, yes, er, when they already accepted us, we (were) just like

583

00:53:44,299 --> 00:53:54,142

all, there was not any animosity, we didn't feel (any), in this detachment. Well,

584

00:53:54,142 --> 00:54:03,499

er, right, we were not, we were all experienced soldiers. We all participated

585

00:54:03,499 --> 00:54:11,520

in the war and endured a lot and we were not, how to say, er, like

586

00:54:11,520 --> 00:54:11,970

I

587

00:54:13,170 --> 00:54:16,936

not like, er, newcomers, knowing nothing at all, yet, we were experienced

588

00:54:16,936 --> 00:54:19,980

soldiers, and therefore the disposition to us was like that

589

00:54:19,980 --> 00:54:26,428

When we were taken into the union we were like anyone else, it did not match

590

00:54:26,428 --> 00:54:33,130

any more that we were Jewish, and also we were not young, we were soldiers, who

591

00:54:33,130 --> 00:54:39,070

had lots of experience, and that's why we also were taken back to them

592

00:54:39,070 --> 00:54:47,610

Could he talk about his experience? In Sobibor? Or did he never talk about it.

593

00:54:47,610 --> 00:54:56,880

But could you at that time talk about what had happened in Sobibor,

594

00:54:56,880 --> 00:55:05,460

or did you not mention it? While you were among the partisans.

595

00:55:05,460 --> 00:55:14,326

I'll tell you, no, no one was particularly interested. Not interested. Er, perhaps Sasha, er,

596

00:55:14,326 --> 00:55:23,384

was close to the leadership of this Stalin brigade, and he began immediately to take up contact

597

00:55:23,384 --> 00:55:32,727

with Ehrenburg and with others, Sasha began, and that would be for some(one) else. We lost contact

598

00:55:32,727 --> 00:55:41,594

with him, when we were already in this Frunze (detachment). He and I didn't keep in touch any

599

00:55:41,594 --> 00:55:50,937

more. And only already after the war we found each other again. He was occupied with these things,

600

00:55:50,937 --> 00:55:59,709

er, still from the partisans he contacted Ehrenburg and others, and told about, er, Sobibor.

601

00:55:59,709 --> 00:56:08,385

And there even appeared an article in, I think, the Komsomolskaya Pravda, about this, about

602

00:56:08,385 --> 00:56:13,820

the uprising in Sobibor, still before we joined the army.

603

00:56:13,820 --> 00:56:13,980

M-m.

604

00:56:13,980 --> 00:56:24,367

Er, so, no one was pretty much interested in what happened in Sobibor, and I did not talk much so no

605

00:56:24,367 --> 00:56:35,066

one was asking, er, but Sasha, who was closer to the Stalin brigade authorities, went into contact with

606

00:56:35,066 --> 00:56:45,557

Ehrenburg and others, other people who were interested, and he talked much to them, because, er, when

607

00:56:45,557 --> 00:56:56,153

I went to Frunze to the partisans and he was at Stalin brigade we lost touch, and er, we rejoined only

608

00:56:56,153 --> 00:57:07,267

after the war. But during that time he was making contacts and even one of the articles on Sobibor uprising

609

00:57:07,267 --> 00:57:15,370

appeared probably in Komsomolskaya Pravda newspaper, er, still during the war.

610

00:57:15,370 --> 00:57:16,310

Oh really, I didn't know that.

611

00:57:16,310 --> 00:57:19,020

Because Sasha was pressing much.

612

00:57:28,550 --> 00:57:36,646

Er, and can you talk ? about your time in, as a partisan?

613

00:57:36,646 --> 00:57:43,180

Did you stay in the same region, did you move?

614

00:57:43,180 --> 00:57:49,126

M-m. When you were among the partisans, did you stay in

615

00:57:49,126 --> 00:57:54,640

one region, did you move around, how did it happen?

616

00:57:54,640 --> 00:58:04,390

We were basically in our own region. We were basically in our own region. Only when our troops already

617

00:58:04,390 --> 00:58:14,522

occupied Western Ukraine, and our people and Belarus were (being) liberated, er, there was a big offensive

618

00:58:14,522 --> 00:58:23,890

of German troops towards our region and we were moving around, in short, retreating, all the time,

619

00:58:23,890 --> 00:58:33,353

and then crossed the border of Ukraine and joined the army in Ukraine. I say, we retreated from our

620

00:58:33,353 --> 00:58:40,810

region and the front, the front settled on the border of Ukraine with Belarus.

621

00:58:40,810 --> 00:58:48,095

We mostly stayed at our own region, er, but then later, when the Soviet army came, they

622

00:58:48,095 --> 00:58:55,297

first liberated Western Ukraine and the Belarus was not yet liberated. And the Germans

623

00:58:55,297 --> 00:59:02,498

started a big attack and then we had to retreat and retreat, and we joined the army in

624

00:59:02,498 --> 00:59:10,538

Ukraine, and then the border between the German occupation and the Soviet army was approximately

625

00:59:10,538 --> 00:59:16,400

the Ukrainian border. And at that border they joined the regular army.

626

00:59:16,400 --> 00:59:19,890

M-m. Okay, and then?

627

00:59:29,800 --> 00:59:39,800

But then what happened, when you joined the army?

628

00:59:39,800 --> 00:59:59,570

Well, we joined, er, our units were disbanded and handed over to, er, units of the army.

629

00:59:59,570 --> 01:00:06,627

I got into, er, a machine-gun battalion, (there) was a battalion, and then, I say, er, into a training

630

01:00:06,627 --> 01:00:13,615

company, and then they left me training machine gunners. I hang around there, how to say, in short, a

631

01:00:13,615 --> 01:00:20,534

couple of months, I was teaching machine gunners, in the army, but then I got (involved) in forcing,

632

01:00:20,534 --> 01:00:26,900

already got (involved) in, in forward position got (involved) in forcing the Oder, the Oder.

633

01:00:26,980 --> 01:00:28,450

M-m.

634

01:00:28,450 --> 01:00:36,790

So, when we joined the army the partisan union was totally reformed, the people were sent to different

635

01:00:36,790 --> 01:00:44,721

units of the regular army. I was sent to a machine gun battalion, where I was for some time, then

636

01:00:44,721 --> 01:00:52,652

for several months I was teaching young soldiers to use the machine gun. And afterwards I went to

637

01:00:52,652 --> 01:00:59,930

the front and I was taking part in the liberation of Oder, the Oder, in forcing the Oder.

638

01:00:59,930 --> 01:01:00,610

Order?

639

01:01:00,900 --> 01:01:03,320

The river, the river.

640

01:01:03,320 --> 01:01:04,790

OK, and then you crossed the Oder?

641

01:01:04,790 --> 01:01:08,010

And then you crossed the Oder?

642

01:01:08,090 --> 01:01:13,740

Well, yes, of course

643

01:01:13,740 --> 01:01:14,280

Of course.

644

01:01:14,630 --> 01:01:15,930

I finished, er, the war in Wismar.

645

01:01:15,930 --> 01:01:15,930

I understand.

646

01:01:15,930 --> 01:01:15,930

Yes.

647

01:01:15,930 --> 01:01:28,080

Er, and did he participate in the liberation of Jews and Jewish camps?

648

01:01:28,080 --> 01:01:37,510

But did you somehow participate in the liberation of Jewish camps, or did you see any Jews?

649

01:01:37,510 --> 01:01:43,022

No, I didn't come across. I think, er, I think by then I didn't even know that there

650

01:01:43,022 --> 01:01:48,010

were Jewish camps, I think we thought they had all been annihilated already.

651

01:01:48,010 --> 01:01:51,731

N-n-no, I met no one, and I didn't even know that the Jewish camps

652

01:01:51,731 --> 01:01:54,890

exist, we thought that everyone was killed by that time.

653

01:01:54,890 --> 01:01:54,890

M-m.

654

01:01:54,890 --> 01:01:54,890

the camps were annihilated.

655

01:01:54,890 --> 01:01:54,890

M-m.

656

01:01:54,890 --> 01:02:01,230

What does he say?

657

01:02:01,230 --> 01:02:04,460

He is saying that he means that the camps were destroyed.

658

01:02:04,460 --> 01:02:11,740

Yes, I understood already, yes, er, I can, that you can see here between the lines.

659

01:02:11,740 --> 01:02:11,740

M-m.

660

01:02:12,240 --> 01:02:21,996

Er, so, was it a hard life in the Russian army, was it we hear stories it was a very

661

01:02:21,996 --> 01:02:31,520

hard life, was it hard in the partisans, was it hard in the army, can you compare?

662

01:02:31,520 --> 01:02:33,072

M-m, well, if you compare, was it harder with the partisans, or harder

663

01:02:33,072 --> 01:02:34,668

in the army? Because, well, she has heard that, well, in the army it was

664

01:02:34,668 --> 01:02:36,110

very hard, in the Russian, but well, if you compare how you felt.

665

01:02:36,110 --> 01:02:45,011

It was hard in captivity. Er, in the army it was like this as it was

666

01:02:45,011 --> 01:02:54,567

for all and, of course, serving there was hard. But it cannot be compared

667

01:02:54,567 --> 01:03:02,160

with captivity, er, let alone with the concentration camp.

668

01:03:02,160 --> 01:03:07,205

It was hard in captivity not in the army, and er, in the army it was like for everyone

669

01:03:07,205 --> 01:03:11,430

and you cannot compare it to the captivity or to the concentration camp.

670

01:03:11,430 --> 01:03:22,858

Please tell him that I do understand he assumed that people

671

01:03:22,858 --> 01:03:33,900

were killed, that I understand, that I really understand.

672

01:03:33,900 --> 01:03:34,070

M-m.

673

01:03:34,070 --> 01:03:34,070

Please tell him.

674

01:03:34,070 --> 01:03:34,070

She understands, well, what you said, that you thought that all had

675

01:03:34,070 --> 01:03:34,070

already long, all camps had already long ago been annihilated

676

01:03:34,070 --> 01:03:34,070

Yes.

677

01:03:34,070 --> 01:03:39,650

and that the people had perished already. She understands this well.

678

01:03:39,650 --> 01:03:39,650

Yes.

679

01:03:39,650 --> 01:03:40,560

I understand why he couldn't believe that people had survived [?].

680

01:03:40,560 --> 01:03:47,619

And why it was so difficult to believe that someone still survived

681

01:03:47,619 --> 01:03:52,860

after the Germans, that someone had stayed alive.

682

01:03:52,860 --> 01:03:53,140

Tell him.

683

01:03:53,140 --> 01:04:04,725

Well, we thought that we were left over by accident, this [траки?] there is, we didn't even

684

01:04:04,725 --> 01:04:16,310

think that so many had stayed alive, I thought these seven people with whom we were, (that's it),

685

01:04:16,310 --> 01:04:28,014

but still there were probably left some fifty or more people, saved from, er, from the camp. Many,

686

01:04:28,014 --> 01:04:37,450

many already perished in Poland, quite a lot were killed by Poles, and many got

687

01:04:37,450 --> 01:04:52,564

to Ukraine and they were killed after this, well er, in short, er, there

688

01:04:52,564 --> 01:05:07,050

was such such a feeling that, wherever we get, we don't belong there.

689

01:05:07,050 --> 01:05:14,514

We also thought that we were the only seven who survived and that everyone else was killed,

690

01:05:14,514 --> 01:05:22,143

pretty much by chance that the seven of us survived, I only later got to know that there were

691

01:05:22,143 --> 01:05:29,444

more people who, who survived, like about thirty, a, or fifty, and then, some were killed

692

01:05:29,444 --> 01:05:37,155

by Poles, some got the Ukraine were killed, and many were killed during the war. But whenever,

693

01:05:37,155 --> 01:05:42,980

whenever we went, we felt we're not, er, we're others. We're different.

694

01:05:42,980 --> 01:05:44,100

And alone, I assume.

695

01:05:44,100 --> 01:05:48,290

And, and probably lonely, yes, not just strangers, but also loners, she thinks.

696

01:05:48,290 --> 01:05:49,570

No, just strangers.

697

01:05:49,570 --> 01:05:51,250

Nu, rather enemies than lonely.

698

01:05:51,250 --> 01:05:54,250

Loners, m-m.

699

01:05:54,250 --> 01:05:55,190

The strangers.

700

01:06:00,270 --> 01:06:26,040

Strangers, yes. Yes. So where was he when the war ended?

701

01:06:26,040 --> 01:06:38,930

Where were you when the war ended?

702

01:06:38,930 --> 01:06:50,320

When the war was coming to its end, we were stationed in Wismar.

703

01:06:50,320 --> 01:06:55,590

In Wismar, Wismar he was when the war ended.

704

01:06:55,940 --> 01:06:58,240

And then?

705

01:06:58,240 --> 01:06:58,600

And then?

706

01:06:58,600 --> 01:07:03,382

sighs Er, then? What then, I already don't remember where we went

707

01:07:03,382 --> 01:07:07,870

after that. Mmmm, where were we stationed in the final period

708

01:07:07,870 --> 01:07:08,920

He can't remember the place.

709

01:07:08,920 --> 01:07:17,109

Well I was, er, sergeant major of the company, in the final period, well, and then we were separated,

710

01:07:17,109 --> 01:07:25,136

those from (19)21 and older, I say, were liable to the first demobilization, well, so (they) almost

711

01:07:25,136 --> 01:07:33,244

didn't participate in instruction. There we fulfilled our duties, I was given an assistant, er, as a

712

01:07:33,244 --> 01:07:41,758

sergeant major, I introduced him to the current affairs, well, to the work of a company's sergeant major,

713

01:07:41,758 --> 01:07:48,650

well and so, (a few) months, some six months perhaps, until we, er, were demobilized.

714

01:07:48,650 --> 01:07:58,503

So, I was head of compartment, and for about six months we stayed somewhere

715

01:07:58,503 --> 01:08:08,881

around, we had to fulfil our functions, I had an accomplice whom I had to teach

716

01:08:08,881 --> 01:08:17,290

what and where, and then everyone who was born in 1921 or before

717

01:08:17,290 --> 01:08:18,850

Basically

718

01:08:18,850 --> 01:08:19,000

were demobilized.

719

01:08:19,000 --> 01:08:24,985

Basically, basically we were busy with instructing the reinforcements that came, er,

720

01:08:24,985 --> 01:08:30,400

'27, 1927 was drafted and we kept ourselves busy with, er, instructing them.

721

01:08:30,400 --> 01:08:35,775

We mostly had to teach the newcomers, born in 1927, and then, er, as I

722

01:08:35,775 --> 01:08:40,920

said, they had to be all demobilized, because they were old enough.

723

01:08:40,920 --> 01:08:40,920

M-m, and where did you go?

724

01:08:40,920 --> 01:08:40,920

When?

725

01:08:40,920 --> 01:08:40,920

After he was demobilized.

726

01:08:41,740 --> 01:08:42,040

M-m. And where did you go after the demobilization?

727

01:08:42,040 --> 01:08:45,560

sighs I didn't know, didn't know where to go.

728

01:08:45,560 --> 01:08:45,820

Didn't know where to go.

729

01:08:45,820 --> 01:09:02,521

Such was ? the time. Still when a partisan I sent a letter to our village and received an

730

01:09:02,521 --> 01:09:19,223

answer that all those near to me had perished, and, er, I knew that I had no one. I came,

731

01:09:19,223 --> 01:09:35,550

came to my village when I was demobilized, well but there I found out that in Zaporozhe

732

01:09:35,550 --> 01:09:36,660

lived cousins of my father. Cousins

733

01:09:36,870 --> 01:09:37,190

M-m.

734

01:09:39,210 --> 01:09:55,988

of my father. Well, and I went that way, found out about their address, went to them. Er, on the

735

01:09:55,988 --> 01:10:13,117

whole they very much loved my father, I say, er, these, er, maternal cousins. Well And They wanted

736

01:10:13,117 --> 01:10:29,895

to get me as a teacher in the village, in ours. I had finished ten-year school with distinction,

737

01:10:29,895 --> 01:10:46,849

I was, in short, I had studied well, right but then I consulted my father's cousin and I say that

738

01:10:46,849 --> 01:11:04,327

I will work as a tutor and want to go to college. To study. But I didn't have any documents. Neither

739

01:11:04,327 --> 01:11:22,154

this, nor that (document) on having finished ten-year school and everything. This cousin had graduated

740

01:11:22,154 --> 01:11:38,758

from a teacher training college in Zaporozhe. He went to the rector and said, Look, my relative

741

01:11:38,758 --> 01:11:56,061

was in the army, he studied very well, and finished ten-year school with distinction, and he hasn't

742

01:11:56,061 --> 01:12:05,500

any documents, how can we get him into (this) college?

743

01:12:05,500 --> 01:12:05,500

Moment, moment.

744

01:12:05,500 --> 01:12:13,031

Er, so, I did not know where to go, because, back when I was in partisans I sent a letter to my

745

01:12:13,031 --> 01:12:20,643

village and I got an answer that everyone I knew was killed, so I first came back to the village

746

01:12:20,643 --> 01:12:28,174

and then I knew that in, er, in Kherson, in Zaporozhe, there were second brothers of, er, of my

747

01:12:28,174 --> 01:12:35,865

father, on the mother's side, and then, er, I came there I knew the address, I came to them, they

748

01:12:35,865 --> 01:12:43,555

liked my father very much, and, er, at first, they wanted me to become teacher, because I had ten

749

01:12:43,555 --> 01:12:51,246

grades of education, with excellent education, er, and then I decided I would do private lessons,

750

01:12:51,246 --> 01:12:58,857

and then to enter institute, or university, to get higher education, but I had no documents, not

751

01:12:58,857 --> 01:13:06,468

any documents, that I finished ten grades or anything, so that brother went to rector, and asked

752

01:13:06,468 --> 01:13:11,859

what to do and how, because this is the guy and he has no documents.

753

01:13:11,860 --> 01:13:11,860

And

754

01:13:14,970 --> 01:13:27,670

But, and to the rector, or what?

755

01:13:27,670 --> 01:13:38,680

I went to Kalinindorf, again, and there at school the teachers were my former students, er, fellow-students,

756

01:13:38,680 --> 01:13:49,080

and they, I say, well, they wrote such a document that, they didn't have copies of diplomas there, but

757

01:13:49,080 --> 01:13:59,683

the teachers confirm that he really finished there in, er, '39, I think, finished ten-year school, well,

758

01:13:59,683 --> 01:14:10,286

with distinction, and signed. And by this document I got into the college. Well, already the first grade

759

01:14:10,286 --> 01:14:20,481

I immediately finished with distinction, the first semester. In this college all the time my picture

760

01:14:20,481 --> 01:14:31,084

hung as (one of) the best students, well, and on the whole I was a very good mathematician, right. Well,

761

01:14:31,084 --> 01:14:37,100

and I graduated from the college with distinction, as well.

762

01:14:47,900 --> 01:14:56,713

So I had no documents and I had to go back to, to my village and at school there worked my former

763

01:14:56,713 --> 01:15:05,073

classmates. Of course they did not have any documents, but they made a letter, saying that I

764

01:15:05,073 --> 01:15:13,796

graduated together with them in 1939, was it, and they signed that letter, and using that letter

765

01:15:13,796 --> 01:15:22,156

I got to the university. I was studying with honours, I was a very good mathematician and my

766

01:15:22,156 --> 01:15:28,880

picture was on the award desk all the time and thus I finished university.

767

01:15:28,880 --> 01:15:44,728

Er, I already studied in college, (when) I received a letter from a girl from our village, well,

768

01:15:44,728 --> 01:16:00,246

who was studying one grade below mine. I was in tenth class, she was in the ninth. But she was

769

01:16:00,246 --> 01:16:15,599

studying in a Ukrainian school. Er, in [?березноватой?] like that, it was called.

770

01:16:15,599 --> 01:16:30,787

Well. Her father was working at the oil factory I don't know, he was a specialist. Well. She

771

01:16:30,787 --> 01:16:46,966

was studying in Kharkov when the war began. And when our district was occupied she dropped college

772

01:16:46,966 --> 01:17:02,484

and went to the Donbass, there in the Donbass lived an uncle of hers she had, a brother of her

773

01:17:02,484 --> 01:17:12,390

mother. And with this uncle she was evacuated to Uzbekistan.

774

01:17:12,390 --> 01:17:12,570

M-m.

775

01:17:12,570 --> 01:17:12,630

Speak.

776

01:17:12,630 --> 01:17:21,198

So when I was already in the university I received a letter from a girl, er, whom I knew she was studying

777

01:17:21,198 --> 01:17:29,441

at school, she was one year younger than me, er, but she was studying in a Ukrainian school, and when

778

01:17:29,441 --> 01:17:37,846

the war began, er, she was studying in Kharkiv, er, then she left university and went to Donbass, where

779

01:17:37,846 --> 01:17:44,620

her uncle was, and after they were both evacuated. So I received a letter from her.

780

01:17:57,580 --> 01:18:10,774

So, well, after the first grade I came, they had already returned from evacuation, and they lived again

781

01:18:10,774 --> 01:18:23,711

in the Donbass. All her parents, her parents and relatives had perished as well, she was also lonely,

782

01:18:23,711 --> 01:18:36,649

well, she was only with this uncle of hers, well, I went to her, right, and we married, and er, lived

783

01:18:36,649 --> 01:18:47,410

together, more than fifty years. She died in, '03, in '04, in '04, in 2004 she died.

784

01:18:47,410 --> 01:18:56,314

So she was also, er, lonely and after the first year in the university they returned from evacuation

785

01:18:56,314 --> 01:19:05,040

and went to her, er, we got married, we lived together over fifty years happily, she died in 2004.

786

01:19:06,080 --> 01:19:10,750

He says he was lonely. Er

787

01:19:10,750 --> 01:19:11,110

She was also very lonely.

788

01:19:11,110 --> 01:19:11,310

Ja, but

789

01:19:11,310 --> 01:19:13,640

Because every, all her relatives were killed, and

790

01:19:13,640 --> 01:19:35,520

Sure, but he says he was lonely. Did he think of Sobibor, did he have nightmares of that period?

791

01:19:42,950 --> 01:19:43,180

M-m.

792

01:19:43,180 --> 01:19:45,600

He had a special past, er

793

01:19:45,600 --> 01:19:47,383

M-m, you said that you were lonely then, you felt lonely, were left alone. But

794

01:19:47,383 --> 01:19:49,212

did you have any (specific) thoughts about Sobibor at that time, perhaps you had

795

01:19:49,212 --> 01:19:50,789

certain bad dreams, or didn't you have, or didn't you think about it?

796

01:19:51,550 --> 01:19:59,185

Well, about Sobibor, er, I had experiences during wartime, a lot. Er, in Sobibor I

797

01:19:59,185 --> 01:20:06,913

was a month in all, of course that was a huge experience, in Sobibor, but this was,

798

01:20:06,913 --> 01:20:13,990

er, one out of (many) wartime experiences, I didn't exactly single it out.

799

01:20:13,990 --> 01:20:18,910

M-m. I had many impressions during the war, and I was only one month

800

01:20:18,910 --> 01:20:24,048

in Sobibor, it was of course a very big impression but I did not single

801

01:20:24,048 --> 01:20:28,390

it out from many other impressions I got during the wartime.

802

01:20:29,420 --> 01:20:31,150

Are there impressions which are as dreadful as Sobibor?

803

01:20:31,150 --> 01:20:31,150

But, were there, well, specific memories or events that

804

01:20:31,150 --> 01:20:31,150

were as dreadful as Sobibor during the war for you?

805

01:20:31,150 --> 01:20:31,899

Well, so, I was on the first, when in the hospital for prisoners of war, in the hospital for prisoners

806

01:20:31,899 --> 01:20:32,611

of war the deputy head of the hospital appeared to be a Jew. And after that they did a full check

807

01:20:32,611 --> 01:20:33,339

for Jewry in the hospital. Already then I was, er, I had a leg broken in two places, well, er, this

808

01:20:33,339 --> 01:20:34,059

had already grown together with me, I even worked as an orderly in this hospital. And some seventy

809

01:20:34,059 --> 01:20:34,793

people of us were revealed as Jews, and, er, more than half of the staff, er, of doctors and medical

810

01:20:34,793 --> 01:20:35,513

attendants appeared to be Jews. And we were put, this hospital was situated near a forest camp, as

811

01:20:35,513 --> 01:20:36,255

it was called, but (we were put) in an evacuation camp, er, from which the prisoners of war were sent

812

01:20:36,255 --> 01:20:36,990

to Germany. Well. And they put us all in a cell, an underground cell. And it was so narrow, we would

813

01:20:36,990 --> 01:20:37,710

turn to the other side on command. Well. They would give hundred, hundred and fifty grams of bread

814

01:20:37,710 --> 01:20:38,437

once and on top of that balanda every other day. Well, balanda it was called, this brownish thingy.

815

01:20:38,437 --> 01:20:39,172

Soup with a couple of potatoes, there would float some. Well. And we were told that there was a note

816

01:20:39,172 --> 01:20:39,892

by Molotov that the Germans are killing our prisoners of war. If this will continue, I say, er, we

817

01:20:39,892 --> 01:20:40,619

will act likewise, he says, with Germans. And, well, therefore, they say, we are not going to shoot

818

01:20:40,619 --> 01:20:40,950

you, but you will die here of hunger. Slowly.

819

01:20:40,950 --> 01:20:40,950

Moment.

820

01:20:40,950 --> 01:20:45,064

Er, so, back when I was in hospital for prisoners of war, er, I remember it only turned out that the

821

01:20:45,064 --> 01:20:49,178

deputy head of that hospital was Jewish. And then the Germans made an inspection for Jewishness. And

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01:20:49,178 --> 01:20:53,374

it turned out that there were, er, about seventy people who were Jewish and many of them were doctors.

823

01:20:53,374 --> 01:20:57,529

At that time I was wounded, my leg was broken in two places but by that time I was well, so they took

824

01:20:57,529 --> 01:21:01,150

us all and they put us in, er. There was a camp, a forest camp, er, and it had a carcer,

825

01:21:01,150 --> 01:21:01,455

we were all put there under the ground, it was very, small space, we had to turn all together if

826

01:21:01,455 --> 01:21:01,766

we were to turn, we were given very little food, some porridge and a bit of bread and we were told

827

01:21:01,766 --> 01:21:02,074

that there was a note by Molotov that the Germans are killing our Soviet prisoners of war, and if

828

01:21:02,074 --> 01:21:02,389

they don't stop it, Soviets will start killing German prisoners of war. So they were told that they

829

01:21:02,389 --> 01:21:02,650

are not executed because of that note and now they would be left to die of hunger.

830

01:21:02,650 --> 01:21:02,650

And how long did you stay there?

831

01:21:02,650 --> 01:21:02,650

How long were you kept in that cell?

832

01:21:02,650 --> 01:21:05,669

And there, there we stayed, when already less than half of us was left suddenly we were led

833

01:21:05,669 --> 01:21:08,722

out and lined up and sent somewhere. It appeared, we were brought to Minsk to the camp, this

834

01:21:08,722 --> 01:21:11,742

one, and well we were deported, to this Minsk concentration camp. There was, er, a camp for

835

01:21:11,742 --> 01:21:14,828

Jewish prisoners of war. Well, by that time still there were also non-Jews as well. But then,

836

01:21:14,828 --> 01:21:17,550

then they were deported, the final period there were only, only Jews in this camp.

837

01:21:17,550 --> 01:21:17,550

And when

838

01:21:17,550 --> 01:21:18,237

Well, there I was so thin, well, like, see, you have in pictures, see, in pictures, on the whole I

839

01:21:18,237 --> 01:21:18,924

was young-looking, like a young, well, er, and I didn't swell up, and so thin, like, er, legs like

840

01:21:18,924 --> 01:21:19,625

sticks. Right, and this way I provoked such compassion in people, and this Blatman, who assigned the

841

01:21:19,625 --> 01:21:20,327

jobs, sent me into this [?себерсау?], [?семфаустский?] court, there worked a lot

842

01:21:20,327 --> 01:21:21,021

of German Jews. And I was transferred to there, and I was sent to this boiler-house, I didn't work,

843

01:21:21,021 --> 01:21:21,722

and the German Jews there, er, would take something out and give it to me, I got alive a little, and

844

01:21:21,722 --> 01:21:22,424

er, then I was already sent to other jobs. Well, and I, er, had become more, er, strong, er, at that

845

01:21:22,424 --> 01:21:22,949

point, when we were deported to Sobibor I was full, a fully healthy person.

846

01:21:22,950 --> 01:21:23,240

Moment.

847

01:21:23,240 --> 01:21:23,906

Er, so when less than half of us remained, we were all taken to, er, Minsk camp, at first there

848

01:21:23,906 --> 01:21:24,566

were not only Jews, but later only Jews, and I was thin like the pictures you can see from the

849

01:21:24,566 --> 01:21:25,240

war, my legs were like sticks. And, er, the Blatman guy who was, er, selecting for jobs, he sent

850

01:21:25,240 --> 01:21:25,914

me to some court where German Jews were working, and they were very sympathetic with me, I would

851

01:21:25,914 --> 01:21:26,566

be brought there, then sent to a boiler and I did not work there, I rested and sometimes they

852

01:21:26,566 --> 01:21:27,233

gave me some food and that's the way I recovered, er, to, to the point when we were all sent to

853

01:21:27,233 --> 01:21:27,760

Sobibor I was more or less recovered from, from that carcer, incarceration.

854

01:21:27,760 --> 01:21:27,760

That must have been a horrible experience.

855

01:21:27,760 --> 01:21:28,020

This was probably a very hard memory, of course.

856

01:21:28,020 --> 01:21:28,590

Well, goo

857

01:21:28,590 --> 01:21:29,190

This cell.

858

01:21:29,190 --> 01:21:59,046

What, there were quite a lot of cases, well, yet another case I

859

01:21:59,046 --> 01:22:28,430

had, also there. When I worked, the head would say, there were

860

01:22:28,430 --> 01:22:28,910

00:40:00]

861

01:22:28,920 --> 01:23:22,891

four of us, four together, we, er, lived together, four people, so well, I, this, er, Zyamka worked

862

01:23:22,891 --> 01:24:18,497

at the gendarmerie, there was such a commando, we and Fimka worked at, how was it called, the commando

863

01:24:18,497 --> 01:25:11,378

for something, I forgot, in short, we worked with the stove-repairer. And there was another group

864

01:25:11,378 --> 01:26:06,440

of ours working (at the) power-saw bench. We sawed wood, and chopped. But there was another commando,

865

01:26:06,440 --> 01:26:59,866

Truppenwirtschaftslager, this was the most prestigious one with us, there worked dockers, and they

866

01:26:59,866 --> 01:27:52,746

in point of fact fed the whole camp, 'cause they brought in, well, food-stuffs like potatoes, and

867

01:27:52,746 --> 01:28:45,082

gave them away and particularly to those who were in need of them, well, this is so. So you see,

868

01:28:45,082 --> 01:29:37,418

this group, there were healthy guys, good-lookers were they, and they linked with one Ukrainian,

869

01:29:37,418 --> 01:30:30,844

and they agreed there, I say, at the arms depot, they stole weapons, and they agreed with him that

870

01:30:30,844 --> 01:31:07,370

he would bring them somewhere as if to work and they would run away

871

01:31:07,370 --> 01:31:07,580

Moment.

872

01:31:07,580 --> 01:31:45,820

to the partisans.

873

01:31:45,820 --> 01:31:46,000

Moment.

874

01:31:46,000 --> 01:31:56,894

Er, so on another case, he remembered, yesterday I told you that there were four of us living together

875

01:31:56,894 --> 01:32:07,041

in one room, and we had different groups at that camp, er, some were into the gendarmerie, some

876

01:32:07,041 --> 01:32:17,402

on the woods, er, some were loaders and they who were giving food practically to everyone because

877

01:32:17,402 --> 01:32:28,190

they had a chance to steal, er, so I remember that the loaders, they got connected to some Ukrainian,

878

01:32:28,190 --> 01:32:38,444

er, they stole weapons from, er, a storage, and so he had to bring them somewhere as if to work,

879

01:32:38,444 --> 01:32:45,280

and then they had to escape, they wanted to escape. In this way.

880

01:32:45,280 --> 01:32:45,910

Er, yes.

881

01:32:47,970 --> 01:32:51,760

You told, er, in which group, commando I was?

882

01:32:51,760 --> 01:32:51,760

Yes, yes, yes.

883

01:32:51,760 --> 01:33:06,706

So, well, this Polizei betrayed them, and when they were loading the weapons they were

884

01:33:06,706 --> 01:33:21,826

encircled, and there, straight on the spot, all were shot. And apart from that, whoever

885

01:33:21,826 --> 01:33:34,340

was in the court at that time, from other, er, commandos, was also shot.

886

01:33:34,340 --> 01:33:44,851

And this Zyamka for some or another reason happened to be in the court and he was shot. But we were

887

01:33:44,851 --> 01:33:55,574

working at the power-saw bench. So, this power-saw bench was in the court. We were with seven people.

888

01:33:55,574 --> 01:34:06,192

But Fimka worked at the stove-repairer's, he cooked potatoes and called me, er, sent for me to come.

889

01:34:06,192 --> 01:34:16,703

I went during the break, I went to him to eat. But the other six people straight there were already

890

01:34:16,703 --> 01:34:27,320

shot. And a German came there, where I was, and at this stove-repairer's, Aren't there any strangers

891

01:34:27,320 --> 01:34:35,390

here with you? He looked at him, No! That was all, and they didn't touch me.

892

01:34:35,390 --> 01:34:35,550

M-m.

893

01:34:35,550 --> 01:34:43,040

And then with us, well, these others were brought into the camp, well, but all others were shot.

894

01:34:43,040 --> 01:34:43,490

Moment.

895

01:34:43,550 --> 01:34:50,300

So, they were, er, for he was in that room, but when, as the story goes, that police

896

01:34:50,300 --> 01:34:56,810

guy, Ukrainian, he betrayed them and at a some point in a court they were all, er

897

01:34:56,810 --> 01:34:57,820

Shot.

898

01:34:57,820 --> 01:35:06,705

they were all taken by the Germans and shot, but also every one who was in that court at that point

899

01:35:06,705 --> 01:35:15,501

from all other brigades, it did not matter, they were also shot. And the matter is that one of our

900

01:35:15,501 --> 01:35:24,477

four guys was shot, there, and at that time I was working at the sawery, er, cutting wood, and there

901

01:35:24,477 --> 01:35:33,362

were seven of us working also near that court. During the break, er, one of our colleagues who were

902

01:35:33,362 --> 01:35:41,979

was working together with that at the other guy, he told me that I can come because he made some

903

01:35:41,979 --> 01:35:50,685

potatoes. And so during the break I went to him and the rest six people were executed at the same

904

01:35:50,685 --> 01:35:59,481

point. And the Germans went to that premises where I was, my friend who called me and that guy who

905

01:35:59,481 --> 01:36:08,007

worked with the ovens, he asked if there is anyone strange in, er, not belonging to this group,

906

01:36:08,007 --> 01:36:16,534

and the head of us said, No, everyone here is, er, belongs here. And that's how I survived that

907

01:36:16,534 --> 01:36:21,830

part. And after we were all sent to the concentration camp.

908

01:36:21,830 --> 01:36:22,240

I understand.

909

01:36:22,240 --> 01:36:25,080

Well, who also ? they appeared to be.

910

01:36:25,120 --> 01:36:30,310

He was inch away from death.

911

01:36:30,310 --> 01:36:31,400

Yes. You were lucky.

912

01:36:31,400 --> 01:36:34,150

You were very lucky there.

913

01:36:34,150 --> 01:36:35,320

Enough! Enough with (those) coincidences!

914

01:36:35,320 --> 01:36:38,890

Is that enough with the stories!

915

01:36:38,890 --> 01:36:38,890

[laughs]

916

01:36:38,890 --> 01:36:46,819

I wanted to come back, if he allows me, to after the war was finished. Did he also go

917

01:36:46,819 --> 01:36:54,190

to look for his friends, er, Pechersky and the other guys with whom he escaped?

918

01:36:54,190 --> 01:36:59,051

M-m. If possible, we will now go back to the moment when the war was over, see, when it was

919

01:36:59,051 --> 01:37:03,860

over, did you try to find Sasha and other people with whom you escaped from the camp then?

920

01:37:03,860 --> 01:37:19,036

[coughs] I want, er, tell you a little bit more. I was lucky somehow, during the period of captivity

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01:37:19,036 --> 01:37:34,820

and er, well, in these concentration camps. It did not happen even once that I was beaten up. There were

922

01:37:34,820 --> 01:37:50,452

? something, twenty-five there, what's that, in particular. Well, but me they somehow didn't ever (beat

923

01:37:50,452 --> 01:38:06,236

up), (perhaps it was) I had such looks, non, er, non-opposing. Well, somehow I was lucky, I would almost

924

01:38:06,236 --> 01:38:21,413

say. Well, right, this (is how it is). I say I haven't sought no one, but only Sasha found me as the

925

01:38:21,413 --> 01:38:36,590

first. Sasha, er, he had my address at the colony, and he wrote to this, er, our village, that he is

926

01:38:36,590 --> 01:38:52,070

searching for, in short, Arkadii Weisspapier. Well. And from there they wrote to me to that college in

927

01:38:52,070 --> 01:39:08,461

Zaporozhe that you are being searched for from, er, Rostov by, er, Alexander Pechersky. Here is his address.

928

01:39:08,461 --> 01:39:18,629

I wrote to him that I'm alive, so, well, the first he found was me.

929

01:39:18,630 --> 01:39:18,690

M-m

930

01:39:19,040 --> 01:39:25,754

So back in the wartime I want to mention that it seems I was very lucky, because I was never beaten

931

01:39:25,754 --> 01:39:32,401

up during the wartime, many people were, and I wasn't. Maybe I had some special looks or something

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01:39:32,401 --> 01:39:39,116

but anyway I was very, very happy, and very lucky not to be beaten up. And coming to your question,

933

01:39:39,116 --> 01:39:45,898

I was not looking for anyone but, er, Sasha found me first, because he wrote a letter to my village,

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01:39:45,898 --> 01:39:52,477

he had the address of my village, where I used to live before the war, and from that village they

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01:39:52,477 --> 01:39:58,920

sent a letter to the institute, in Zaporozhe, saying that, er, from Rostov, Alexander Pechersky

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01:39:58,920 --> 01:40:05,635

is looking for you, and there was an address, and that's in this way I was the first whom he found,

937

01:40:05,635 --> 01:40:09,230

'cause I responded to the letter and we got in touch.

938

01:40:10,510 --> 01:40:16,010

And you married. Can you talk about the years that followed? Er, yes?

939

01:40:16,010 --> 01:40:19,256

M-m. But well, when you married, er, can you tell a little bit about those years, well,

940

01:40:19,256 --> 01:40:22,280

after the wedding, after the wedding, what happened, well, after you got married?

941

01:40:22,280 --> 01:40:35,860

Which wedding? There was no wedding at all [laughs], we got married and, well, that was it.

942

01:40:35,860 --> 01:40:49,589

And she worked as a teacher, well, she ? me, she helped me. She didn't earn very much, well,

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01:40:49,589 --> 01:41:03,467

right, er, during the years, during the semester she would dry rusks and I would take (those)

944

01:41:03,467 --> 01:41:17,346

rusks with me, er, when I was going to the first lecture, er, to study. Well, right. A little

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01:41:17,346 --> 01:41:31,075

bit, in summer, in summer I would be at her uncle's, there we would eat well, of course, but

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01:41:31,075 --> 01:41:41,820

hard it was, of course. Right, but then I got work and we lived not bad.

947

01:41:41,820 --> 01:41:48,886

M. Er, so we had no special ceremony of course, er, but when we got married she helped

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01:41:48,886 --> 01:41:55,789

me much, for example, er, she dried bread, and I would take that dried bread with me

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01:41:55,789 --> 01:42:03,184

when I went to studies in Zaporozhe, and then in summer, er, I spent the summer in Donbass

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01:42:03,184 --> 01:42:10,334

at her uncle's place, and we had some food there, she was working as a teacher, she did

951

01:42:10,334 --> 01:42:17,483

not earn much, but still she helped me somehow, and after I graduated at the university

952

01:42:17,483 --> 01:42:22,660

I started to work myself and, well, we lived more or less well.

953

01:42:22,930 --> 01:42:30,340

When did he come to Kiev?

954

01:42:30,340 --> 01:42:44,870

When did you come to Kiev?

955

01:42:44,870 --> 01:42:59,678

To Kiev I came already for my son. I say, I worked well in this [coughs], er, at first, well

956

01:42:59,678 --> 01:43:14,648

? When, I say, I finished college, I first worked in Lugansk, I worked as a shop foreman, and

957

01:43:14,648 --> 01:43:28,170

then, when Khrushchev came, they sent, er, all young specialists to the countryside.

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01:43:28,170 --> 01:43:28,170

M-m.

959

01:43:28,170 --> 01:43:31,749

I was everywhere and always getting in all [laughs] (such) events [laughs], and,

960

01:43:31,749 --> 01:43:35,239

in short, I was sent to Bryansk province, I worked as a deputy shop foreman in

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01:43:35,239 --> 01:43:38,549

an MTS (Machine and Tractor Station), well I worked there for three years.

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01:43:38,550 --> 01:43:43,426

But then I left, I worked in Artyomovsk at a factory, as head of the

963

01:43:43,426 --> 01:43:47,730

technical department. You tell, or afterwards you'll forget.

964

01:43:47,730 --> 01:43:56,722

M-m. Good, thanks. Er, to Kiev I already came to my son. Because when I graduated university I first

965

01:43:56,722 --> 01:44:05,714

worked in Lugansk, er, at a power plant, as head of the workers' union. Then, er, I, when Khrushchev

966

01:44:05,714 --> 01:44:14,526

came, they were all kind of events, and to all of these events I was taken, and I went to villages

967

01:44:14,526 --> 01:44:21,630

in Bryansk region, and then, er, back I worked in Artyomovsk, on another plant.

968

01:44:23,330 --> 01:44:27,300

Did he, er, was he bothered by Soviet anti-Semitism?

969

01:44:27,300 --> 01:44:32,310

Did you somehow feel Soviet anti-Semitism yourself?

970

01:44:32,310 --> 01:44:59,983

sighs I have to tell you about one fact in my life that I didn't want to touch on. There's been a very

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01:44:59,983 --> 01:45:27,114

dreadful thing in my life. In 1938 my father was repressed. He was alleged to have been a Zionist in

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01:45:27,114 --> 01:45:55,059

1920. And he, apparently, er, I got a letter that he was convicted to ten years, but well, he was shot.

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01:45:55,059 --> 01:46:17,850

So apart from, er, being a Jew I was also the son of an enemy of the people. Say it.

974

01:46:17,850 --> 01:46:29,719

So, er, I will have to tell you something about my life that I did not intend to tell, first,

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01:46:29,719 --> 01:46:41,588

er, in 1938 my father was repressed. He was falsely accused of being a Zionist somewhere back

976

01:46:41,588 --> 01:46:54,095

in the twenties. And I was told that he got ten years of imprisonment but he was in fact executed.

977

01:46:54,095 --> 01:47:04,050

So I was first of all a Jew and secondly son of a repressed person. I said it.

978

01:47:04,280 --> 01:47:04,820

Go on.

979

01:47:04,820 --> 01:47:17,847

And so, I [coughs] worked at the Artyomovsk factory as head of the technical department, then I

980

01:47:17,847 --> 01:47:31,423

was deputy chief technology officer of the factory, and then, when our factory director was elected

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01:47:31,423 --> 01:47:44,313

[coughs], er, president of the City Executive Board, I was acting director. But I could not be

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01:47:44,313 --> 01:47:58,163

appointed director, because I was, well, er, a son of. Er, they already wanted to confirm my position

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01:47:58,163 --> 01:48:11,464

as director, but they kept saying, you had to join the party. I said that, er, I had a father who

984

01:48:11,464 --> 01:48:25,177

was repressed and that they wouldn't take me. "Hand in your application and they will take you."

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01:48:25,177 --> 01:48:33,679

Well, I handed in the application and was taken as a candidate

986

01:48:33,680 --> 01:48:46,743

and then, when I should already have been confirmed as, er, party member [coughs], well, I thought, er,

987

01:48:46,743 --> 01:48:58,920

in short, I was taken into the party at the meeting, but the regional committee did not confirm.

988

01:48:58,920 --> 01:48:59,560

M-m.

989

01:48:59,770 --> 01:49:18,843

And so I was excluded from, er, the candidates. Well, they said, you keep working

990

01:49:18,843 --> 01:49:37,210

as chief technology officer. Then I decided on the spot to leave this factory.

991

01:49:37,210 --> 01:49:37,540

M-m.

992

01:49:37,540 --> 01:49:37,710

Moment.

993

01:49:37,710 --> 01:49:45,808

So, when I was working in Artyomovsk, I was first of all head of technical department, and then

994

01:49:45,808 --> 01:49:53,566

main engineer. And then at some point our director was elected to the administration, and I

995

01:49:53,566 --> 01:50:01,324

had to fulfil the position of deputy director. And at some point I could have been made the

996

01:50:01,324 --> 01:50:09,422

director of that industry, er, but for that I had to be party member. And I said that my father

997

01:50:09,422 --> 01:50:17,436

was repressed and they would not take me to the party. And the administration replied that you

998

01:50:17,436 --> 01:50:25,194

fill in the form and apply for it, they should. So I filled out the form, they took me as a

999

01:50:25,194 --> 01:50:33,122

candidate to the party, and then the local party meeting, er, joined me to the party. But the

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01:50:33,122 --> 01:50:40,965

regional one declined, and I was excluded from the candidates to the party, and they told me

1001

01:50:40,965 --> 01:50:48,723

you're working as a main engineer and you should be staying working as a main engineer. And

1002

01:50:48,723 --> 01:50:54,520

after that I decided to quit the job and go away from that industry.

1003

01:50:59,270 --> 01:51:05,833

Well sniffs I had a good acquaintance working in our technical department, er, an engineer. His

1004

01:51:05,833 --> 01:51:12,120

father worked in Donetsk in, er, how was it called then, well, the holding administration]

1005

01:51:12,120 --> 01:51:12,250

M-m.

1006

01:51:12,250 --> 01:51:12,450

in a People's Holding Council.

1007

01:51:12,450 --> 01:51:12,450

M-m.

1008

01:51:12,450 --> 01:51:27,967

Well. And he took me to Donetsk, er, as head of transport management. And I don't

1009

01:51:27,967 --> 01:51:42,910

know, in short, I was transferred to Donetsk, they made me head of management.

1010

01:51:43,400 --> 01:51:43,940

M-m. So]

1011

01:51:43,940 --> 01:52:12,717

Well, there I also was immediately given a good flat, well, a nice one, all right. We lived

1012

01:52:12,717 --> 01:52:37,700

fine, financially, and both my sons studied there. This was the last job I had.

1013

01:52:37,700 --> 01:52:45,638

Mm. So, then I knew one of the engineers, who had relatives in Donetsk in Sovnarkhoz,

1014

01:52:45,638 --> 01:52:53,483

so called the, er, also another employment. And he, I was transferred there, as head

1015

01:52:53,483 --> 01:53:01,047

of transport department, and I was given a good apartment and it was good salary,

1016

01:53:01,047 --> 01:53:08,612

and that's the place where I stayed, and where I worked, till, well, er. That was

1017

01:53:08,612 --> 01:53:15,150

my last working place and my both sons studied there too in that city.

1018

01:53:15,150 --> 01:53:21,690

Did he ever talk about the war?

1019

01:53:21,690 --> 01:53:22,900

When?

1020

01:53:22,900 --> 01:53:22,900

After that]

1021

01:53:22,990 --> 01:53:23,280

Mm.

1022

01:53:23,280 --> 01:53:37,030

Did he have chance to talk about the war, or]

1023

01:53:37,030 --> 01:53:37,960

About the war]

1024

01:53:37,960 --> 01:53:37,960

Yeah.

1025

01:53:37,960 --> 01:53:49,240

Mm. Er, did you, well, afterwards, often talk about the war?

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01:53:49,240 --> 01:53:56,350

Well, with whom? I just didn't try to tell it ? to anyone. Later there were these correspondents, er,

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01:53:56,350 --> 01:54:03,250

I would tell everything, but, er, er, the way I told you just now I never told to anyone [laughs].

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01:54:03,250 --> 01:54:09,083

Er, I was not very much willing to talk, of course, if some

1029

01:54:09,083 --> 01:54:14,620

journalists came and asked I would be telling something.

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01:54:14,620 --> 01:54:16,840

Now already, I'm saying to Olga, before my death [laughs].

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01:54:16,840 --> 01:54:19,389

Er, I haven't been telling that of course to anyone like I do

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01:54:19,389 --> 01:54:21,730

now to you, and it's now like before death I'm speaking.

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01:54:21,730 --> 01:54:33,780

time, I didn't tell about my father, no, I didn't. And I didn't write it down

1034

01:54:33,780 --> 01:54:46,457

in documents, after the war, I studied and, er, got a job, and no, er. But later,

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01:54:46,457 --> 01:54:58,664

already when this rehabilitation began, then I only applied, er, for my father

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01:54:58,664 --> 01:55:08,680

to be rehabilitated. Well. Right, and I got this rehabilitation.

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01:55:08,680 --> 01:55:09,920

Moment.

1038

01:55:09,920 --> 01:55:15,055

For a very long time I did not talk about the fact that my father was repressed,

1039

01:55:15,055 --> 01:55:20,062

and only while I got the university, I got the job and I was not mentioning it

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01:55:20,062 --> 01:55:25,069

anywhere, or writing it in any documents, but only when rehabilitation began I

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01:55:25,069 --> 01:55:29,370

wrote, asking for rehabilitation of my father and I got that paper.

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01:55:29,370 --> 01:55:29,370

I understand very well.

1043

01:55:29,370 --> 01:55:29,370

She understands you well, what you

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01:55:29,370 --> 01:55:36,110

But he, but he lived in a country which was very anti-Zionist, anti-Semitic, it was the same.

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01:55:36,110 --> 01:55:36,350

M-m.

1046

01:55:36,350 --> 01:55:37,730

Did, well, can he talk about that?

1047

01:55:37,730 --> 01:55:45,552

She understands well what you mean, well, you lived in a country that was,

1048

01:55:45,552 --> 01:55:52,530

well, anti-Zionist, anti-Semitic, but how did you experience that?

1049

01:55:52,530 --> 01:56:12,120

I'll tell you, me and my children, I think we didn't feel any oppressions.

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01:56:12,120 --> 01:56:15,900

A, I tell you I think that me or my children did not feel

1051

01:56:15,900 --> 01:56:19,160

any pressure, did not feel any oppression on that.

1052

01:56:19,160 --> 01:56:32,607

I think so, er. True, my eldest son as a doctor, my youngest as an engineer well, er,

1053

01:56:32,607 --> 01:56:46,688

they're very talented, my Vadik, and he as a businessman as well, (he's) very successful,

1054

01:56:46,688 --> 01:57:01,085

right. And he already got us, me and (his) mother right here, in Kiev, in Kiev, completely.

1055

01:57:01,085 --> 01:57:14,533

All okay, we sold our flat in Donetsk and I bought, er, us a flat here. And we're all

1056

01:57:14,533 --> 01:57:25,450

here, in Kiev, well, yes, I don't remember in which year I came here.

1057

01:57:26,840 --> 01:57:34,440

So and my both sons are also very talented, the older one is er, a doctor, er, and the younger

1058

01:57:34,440 --> 01:57:41,798

one is an engineer, and he is also very talented, er, as an engineer, as a businessman, and

1059

01:57:41,798 --> 01:57:48,510

then he brought me here together with my wife and, and that's how we moved to Kiev.

1060

01:57:49,670 --> 01:57:49,830

Mm.

1061

01:57:49,830 --> 01:58:07,430

Did you keep the contact going with Sasha? And did you meet the others?

1062

01:58:07,430 --> 01:58:20,480

Er, did you maintain some sort of contact with Sasha and did you meet with someone else from, er?

1063

01:58:23,860 --> 01:58:31,880

Constantly, we, met very often, very often. Either at Sasha's, at first, er, he found

1064

01:58:31,880 --> 01:58:39,430

me first. But then he found this, er, Semyon Rosenfeld, he found, er, Pechersky]

1065

01:58:39,430 --> 01:58:44,859

and it's true, er, I received a letter from, er, Sasha, that, well, yet another man

1066

01:58:44,859 --> 01:58:50,157

from Sobibor has appeared. True, (he) didn't know that (he was one of) the group,

1067

01:58:50,157 --> 01:58:55,391

well, er, Semyon Rosenfeld. Do you know him? I don't know such a one. And, well,

1068

01:58:55,391 --> 01:58:59,969

later he told that, er, he sort of even participated in this uprising.

1069

01:58:59,970 --> 01:59:01,230

M-m, m-m.

1070

01:59:01,230 --> 01:59:01,480

Well.

1071

01:59:01,480 --> 01:59:06,370

So we did keep in touch, first Sasha found me, and then, er

1072

01:59:06,370 --> 01:59:06,370

Semyon.

1073

01:59:06,370 --> 01:59:17,260

er, there was this Semyon Rosenfeld, who found Sasha, and Sasha wrote me, do you know him, because

1074

01:59:17,260 --> 01:59:28,150

he was not from our group, and so Sasha wrote me if I knew him, but I didn't, though it turned out

1075

01:59:28,150 --> 01:59:38,040

that he was there and maybe he also took part in the uprising but we did not meet before.

1076

01:59:38,040 --> 02:00:08,780

I went to visit him, tell him.

1077

02:00:08,780 --> 02:00:10,540

M-m. She's seen Semyon.

1078

02:00:10,540 --> 02:00:25,440

Yes. Well. And then this, er, Wajtsen was found. Well.

1079

02:00:25,440 --> 02:00:25,440

I-I visited him also.

1080

02:00:25,440 --> 02:00:25,440

M-m. She's also seen him.

1081

02:00:25,440 --> 02:00:32,550

Yes. Then there was, er, not Tsyn, Tsybulsky, but that

1082

02:00:33,970 --> 02:00:35,040

Plotnitsky. Plotnitsky.

1083

02:00:35,120 --> 02:00:35,720

Oh, oh.

1084

02:00:35,720 --> 02:00:38,020

Plotnitsky, yes, Vadim, Vadim is suggesting.

1085

02:00:38,020 --> 02:00:38,210

Old age.

1086

02:00:38,210 --> 02:00:39,290

Plotnitsky, isn't it?

1087

02:00:39,290 --> 02:00:39,690

What?

1088

02:00:39,690 --> 02:00:41,200

V-Vadim is suggesting, Plotnitsky.

1089

02:00:41,200 --> 02:00:42,841

Plotnitsky, yes. Plotnitsky. Right, er, this, er, [Форталераф?] and ? must look

1090

02:00:42,841 --> 02:00:44,520

her Well, in short, we began, I say, like [coughs] every five years, then, I say, they meet.

1091

02:00:44,520 --> 02:00:45,980

Now at Sasha's, now at my place, now at Rosenfeld's, well, and so we would meet.

1092

02:00:45,980 --> 02:00:52,330

We started to meet every five years, either at my place or at Sasha's place or at Rozenfeld's place.

1093

02:00:55,120 --> 02:01:04,250

One time, er, one time, er, we were with nine people.

1094

02:01:04,450 --> 02:01:13,930

At some point there were even nine of us. At meetings.

1095

02:01:13,930 --> 02:01:15,830

Er, of these former prisoners.

1096

02:01:15,830 --> 02:01:17,050

The former inmates.

1097

02:01:17,050 --> 02:01:30,003

Well. And then they started to die, one died, another died, and when Sasha had died already,

1098

02:01:30,003 --> 02:01:42,675

then, er, we would already meet rarely. We also met two times in, er, Israel. My sons were

1099

02:01:42,675 --> 02:01:54,080

already organizers of that happening. We travelled with our sons to, er, Sobibor.

1100

02:01:54,080 --> 02:01:54,520

very softly [?]

1101

02:01:54,520 --> 02:02:03,210

Er, well, in short, we looked at this, er, there, how it's called, er, well, how

1102

02:02:03,210 --> 02:02:04,800

She knows, she's also been (there).

1103

02:02:04,800 --> 02:02:07,710

Yes, we looked at these, er

1104

02:02:07,710 --> 02:02:08,400

Museum.

1105

02:02:08,400 --> 02:02:17,121

So we started to meet every five years but then people started to die because of age and then when Sasha

1106

02:02:17,121 --> 02:02:25,592

died we almost did not meet but then twice we've met in Israel and already my sons were organizers of

1107

02:02:25,592 --> 02:02:33,139

that meeting, and once, when we went to Sobibor, and met in that museum to see the museum.

1108

02:02:33,960 --> 02:02:39,230

Yes, I hope he will come at the birthday of Simkha, Simkha will be one hundred.

1109

02:02:39,230 --> 02:02:39,230

O.

1110

02:02:39,230 --> 02:02:39,660

We hope that you will celebrate Simkha's birthday, he'll be hundred this year.

1111

02:02:39,660 --> 02:02:39,660

Er, wh(at)?

1112

02:02:39,660 --> 02:02:40,160

To Simkha.

1113

02:02:40,160 --> 02:02:40,570

Aaa, yes.

1114

02:02:40,570 --> 02:02:41,660

I have promised to come.

1115

02:02:41,660 --> 02:02:48,270

[laughs] She promised to come to him for his birthday [laughs].

1116

02:02:48,270 --> 02:02:49,680

We should celebrate

1117

02:02:49,680 --> 02:02:50,480

Perhaps.

1118

02:02:50,480 --> 02:02:56,350

if somebody gets that age.

1119

02:02:56,510 --> 02:02:59,500

(We) must, must celebrate a hundred years.

1120

02:02:59,500 --> 02:03:07,090

My eldest son has quite a lot of pictures of our meetings.

1121

02:03:07,090 --> 02:03:12,850

My elder son has many pictures of our meetings.

1122

02:03:14,840 --> 02:03:15,110

Yes.

1123

02:03:15,110 --> 02:03:15,110

[?]

1124

02:03:15,110 --> 02:03:21,087

If you'll ask him to bring them and you'll look at these pictures,

1125

02:03:21,087 --> 02:03:26,250

let's say, which of them you would be interested to copy?

1126

02:03:26,250 --> 02:03:31,940

You can ask him to, to see the pictures and maybe to copy some of them if you need.

1127

02:03:32,610 --> 02:03:38,710

Yes. Er, I have promised not to stay too long, so, er, there's some

1128

02:03:38,710 --> 02:03:44,720

questions I still would like to ask but I have to keep my promise.

1129

02:03:44,720 --> 02:03:49,471

Er, we promised that we won't weary you very long today, of course there still

1130

02:03:49,471 --> 02:03:53,980

are some questions, but nevertheless we don't want you to get tired if us.

1131

02:03:53,980 --> 02:03:53,980

Why

1132

02:03:53,980 --> 02:03:53,980

Well, no problem.

1133

02:03:53,980 --> 02:04:02,470

why has he never told the story of his father before, because it's nothing to be ashamed of?

1134

02:04:02,470 --> 02:04:03,910

Before when?

1135

02:04:04,070 --> 02:04:05,300

Before now, clearly.

1136

02:04:05,300 --> 02:04:09,390

M-m. But why, well, didn't you talk up to now about the story with your father?

1137

02:04:09,390 --> 02:04:21,200

I didn't want this, didn't want this, this (is) completely different, er, this here

1138

02:04:21,200 --> 02:04:31,730

is not related to Sobibor, I just didn't want, er, to touch on this issue.

1139

02:04:31,730 --> 02:04:36,323

I just didn't want to touch this question, it's nothing

1140

02:04:36,323 --> 02:04:40,500

to do with Sobibor, so I did not want to touch it.

1141

02:04:40,500 --> 02:04:40,500

But it's your story.

1142

02:04:40,500 --> 02:04:48,686

This is how it turns out. Er, there are many, many, er, (who) want to show off

1143

02:04:48,686 --> 02:04:56,873

how they suffered from Soviet power, well, er and, therefore I didn't like to,

1144

02:04:56,873 --> 02:05:04,010

er, show myself, that I, er, suffered heavily from Soviet power, er?

1145

02:05:04,010 --> 02:05:04,160

M-mm.

1146

02:05:04,160 --> 02:05:07,710

Isn't it that way? I didn't want that.

1147

02:05:12,290 --> 02:05:17,264

Many people are also trying to show how they suffered from the Soviet authorities and

1148

02:05:17,264 --> 02:05:21,830

I did not want to show that I suffered in any way from the Soviet authorities.

1149

02:05:22,010 --> 02:05:26,080

But it's part of the story of Weisspapier.

1150

02:05:26,080 --> 02:05:32,530

M-m. But this is a very important part of the story of Weisspapier!

1151

02:05:32,530 --> 02:05:32,530

Yes.

1152

02:05:32,530 --> 02:05:32,530

And I'm interested in Weisspapier.

1153

02:05:32,530 --> 02:05:32,770

M-m, and she's very much interested in Weisspapier.

1154

02:05:32,770 --> 02:05:33,160

Yes.

1155

02:05:33,160 --> 02:05:40,382

Er, what does Sobibor mean in your life? sighs What is the lesson

1156

02:05:40,382 --> 02:05:47,160

you learned from it? Is there anything you learned from life?

1157

02:05:47,160 --> 02:05:58,338

Er, well, which place does Sobibor take, well, in your life, is there perhaps some kind of lesson that

1158

02:05:58,338 --> 02:06:08,530

you learned from this, some kind of conclusion that you drew for yourself after these events?

1159

02:06:08,530 --> 02:06:09,370

I can't answer this question.

1160

02:06:09,370 --> 02:06:11,120

I cannot answer this question.

1161

02:06:11,120 --> 02:06:15,140

No? It's okay.

1162

02:06:15,140 --> 02:06:31,325

Well, sorry, er, of course, of course this has formed my conscience. It was an offense,

1163

02:06:31,325 --> 02:06:46,580

an offense, that we, we're a talented people, and all of a sudden to organize such

1164

02:06:46,580 --> 02:07:01,835

a machine of destruction, this is, this doesn't sink in, we, what, a conveyor belt

1165

02:07:01,835 --> 02:07:15,229

of destruction! This should, er, should it be like that? What, what for?

1166

02:07:15,230 --> 02:07:15,230

M-m.

1167

02:07:15,230 --> 02:07:16,530

What I still have, of course it's a huge offense.

1168

02:07:16,750 --> 02:07:25,039

Of course, er, it formed my views and it's very painful that, er, we could do that, to

1169

02:07:25,039 --> 02:07:32,750

organize such a machine of killing, and, what for? That's why it's very painful.

1170

02:07:38,190 --> 02:07:38,380

I understand.

1171

02:07:38,380 --> 02:07:38,730

She understands you.

1172

02:07:38,730 --> 02:07:43,748

I understand. Is there anything you would like to add? I am here

1173

02:07:43,748 --> 02:07:48,140

because of the trial of Demjanjuk, maybe you want to say

1174

02:07:48,140 --> 02:07:48,140

M-m.

1175

02:07:48,140 --> 02:07:55,870

something about that or maybe you want to add something.

1176

02:07:55,870 --> 02:08:00,320

Er, perhaps you would like to add something yet, in principle she's here also be, because

1177

02:08:00,320 --> 02:08:04,620

of the Demjanjuk trial, perhaps you want to say something about this, but perhaps also

1178

02:08:04,620 --> 02:08:04,620

Say, everything.

1179

02:08:04,620 --> 02:08:04,620

something about something else.

1180

02:08:04,620 --> 02:08:04,830

I've said, say, everything.

1181

02:08:04,830 --> 02:08:08,350

It seems, it seems.

1182

02:08:08,350 --> 02:08:11,370

What I had to and what I didn't have to tell.

1183

02:08:11,370 --> 02:08:12,420

What I had to and what I didn't have to [laughs].

1184

02:08:12,420 --> 02:08:12,420

[laughs].

1185

02:08:12,420 --> 02:08:12,420

Thank you very much.

1186

02:08:12,420 --> 02:08:14,360

Thank you very much.

1187

02:08:14,360 --> 02:08:15,800

Thank you.