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ø˛˛jjjj KEY: JF - Josey Fisher [interviewer]

MT - Marian Turzanski [interviewee]

Interview Date - December 28, 1983

Tape one, side one:

JF: Mr. Turzanski, can you tell us where and when you were born, and a little bit about your childhood?

MT: I was born in Poland, southeast part of Poland, now taken by Russia, on January 18, 1934.

JF: What was the name of the town?

MT: Zupanie, it was a village. Z-U-P-A-N-I-E. Zupanie. My parents were wealthy in Poland. They had quite a bit of land, forest, and the village consisted of about ten Polish families, I think they were all Catholic families, three Jewish families, and they were the business-oriented families in the community.

JF: The Jewish families were the business-oriented?

MT: Business. They were the ones that were running the store and lumber yard, as far as I can remember, stories I heard about them. And the rest of the community was a Polish minority, which were Ukrainians. They were individuals that fought for their rights for many years, for centuries. They settled in Poland and they worked for my parents. They were not slaves, but they were the servants.

JF: Your family, then, was one of the ten Polish Catholic families that held the primary holdings in the village?

MT: Correct.

JF: And was your father, then, the owner of this forest land that you are talking about?

MT: That is correct. He had two mountains of forest ready to be cut down. One was a pine forest and another one was oak.

JF: Had his forebears also lived on this land? Had they also been from this section?

MT: Yes, and his father, unfortunately, died in the First World War in the Leipzig Camp in Germany. I donít know whether they called them concentration camps. It was also a camp. My father survived, so he came back as a 12-year-old boy.

JF: He was in the camp also?

MT: Yes.

JF: Did he tell you of his experiences there?

MT: Not too much, because each time I wanted to discuss it with him, it would choke him up. He felt very guilty about the whole thing that, as a l2-year-old boy, he should have done more than he did, because when they came back from the camp, back to Poland, whatever his father started, the neighbors took it from him.

JF: The other large families in the town?

MT: The other, whoever were, whoever needed lumber, his father started to build a house or something, whatever building they started, he said that within a short time all of it was gone.

JF: Why, was the whole family in this camp in Leipzig?

MT: Yes.

JF: For what reason were they taken?

MT: Well, because, again, they were the evils of the territory. They were Poles. Poland went through this each time there was a misunderstanding between Russia and Germany, or Eastern Germany needed to expand, or needed a corridor to move through. Poland was the corridor of Europe. They just walked back and forth.

JF: Were other families like your grandfatherís family also incarcerated, or were you...

MT: Yes, because they were actually a minority in their location. Not far from that village was another well-established community, Felicenthal [phonetic]. I think that they called it. It was a German colony. A lot of Germans had colonies in Poland in those days, and they were the-- not as much merchants as mechanics, etc. They were the people that would fix your equipment, farm equipment, and they would have the parts for it, and they would also supply the territory with certain shoes, and so forth. There were some wooden shoes used by some people, that the Germans were making and selling, so everybody was-- had a place, the way I see it, in that territory. They were well-organized; they had orchestras-- my father, when he got married, my parents, this was when they had the big blow-out, a German band and everything, etc.

JF: And the Jewish families that you were familiar with were primarily these merchant families?

MT: Yes.

JF: The business families?

MT: Families that were as well off as my parents were, Goldreich [phonetic] I heard quite a bit of when I was growing up, were the-- they had a lumber yard. They were right across the little creek from us, within eyesight. I remember seeing the place, and they were right next to the border patrol barracks. As a matter of fact, I asked my parents, my father and my mother--they are still alive, my father was just 80, he just celebrated his 80th birthday-- the story about Goldreich [phonetic] being hidden in our house. It was not during the German occupation, because we were out of it.

JF: When was this?

MT: It was when Poland was still free. He was involved in some kind of trade that was not quite legal and was not quite illegal, and my father, being a, not a mayor, only a recognized individual in the territory, he asked if he could stay there, and I think they gave him two weeks. For two weeks, if heís not caught or whatever, then he doesnít have to answer to the authorities for that.

JF: This was the Polish authorities?

MT: Yes, the border, something-- border. He did not have permission to trade across borders which he was doing, and was quite successful dealing with certain things: not selling arms or anything like that, it was some kind of a business deal-- sugar, horses, and things like that. Normal deals, but there was not a written contract, I think, for it, so the government could not get their tax.

JF: I see.

MT: He asked my father if he would do that, and he said, ìYou do realize that the border patrol is right across the street from us.î He said, ìYes, but they do look up to you.î He did.

JF: So he and his family came.

MT: No, just him, just him, and they asked him not to go back in those two weeks, because he can get caught going from my house by the border patrol that would look to your house at night. As a matter of fact, when he was staying at our house, the individuals were coming over for dinners and so forth, and the border patrols to our house also, so it was quite safe.

JF: This was the border to...

MT: Hungarian border. We were within about three and one half kilometers to Hungarian border which is what, like one and one half mile, not too far from the Hungarian border.

JF: What was the relationship like, generally, with the Jewish families? Youíre talking about 13 families, which were essentially the primary economic base for this village. What was the...

MT: I feel that they had very good organization and relationship, not co-existence, was actually more than that. They supplied the territory with necessary things, so they were recognized as such. Poles had land. They always treasure land, like my father, he had land because of his ancestors. Ukrainians were the forgotten people, I would call now. There was no welfare in those days. They were not starving, but they had to work for their food and, as a matter of fact, kids would be sent out early in their life, like the girl, the woman that was taking care of us, I think she came to my parents, given by her parents, at age of 14, if they would please give her a job, which is working for [unclear]. I think she had it very enjoyable. I donít think we were that rotten. I had three brothers. She was taking care of us; she was our governess. She was taking care of us, correcting our language and manners and keeping eye on us. My mother was a very brave young lady. She liked horses and she liked to ride an awful lot. It was against territorial wisdom, and when my father married her, that caused a lot of talk in the community.

JF: Why was that?

MT: Because he brought in a woman thatís modern. All she wants to do is just ride horses, and she was quite a woman.

JF: She was from outside this territory?

MT: Yes, yes, but later on she proved to be quite a brave woman during the war. So, then it came to September 20, 1939.

JF: You were born in 1934? Do you have much recollection of the pre-war period? Of the atmosphere in your home village?

MT: The only thing I remember there was no church. The Polish people did not have a church. The Ukrainians had a church, so I remember going to the Ukrainian church once, and I believe that either at that church or in a German church that we were baptized, but I think that it was in the Ukrainian church, because they made some kind of deal that, as long as you didnít have your own, itís the same deal if you go to theirs; itís a Russian Orthodox church. As far as with Jewish families, I remember around Christmastime they would come to our house. We had a post office--when I say a post office there was always only one post office in a territory, and, of course, they have the big landowners, which one, I donít know, I donít think it was the Goldreich from the lumber yard. I think there was three families. I think there was one like a rabbi--he was not a rabbi--but he had the right to give weddings to Jewish individuals, and he had all those other rights that they needed in that territory as a religious group. He would come to visit us, but I think it was only to show us his concern for our holiday, the way I see it now. Because why would he stop into our house when there was preparation going on? I remember that he was dressed in dark--dark hat. He was always very intelligent, very nicely spoken. I used to listen to people speak. For some reason it would give me a good feeling if somebody spoke a beautiful language. I remember that individual was very intelligent, he spoke a nice language, and, of course, I remember that parents did their utmost to accommodate that individual. What his purpose was, I donít know. I did not have a chance when I went up for my fatherís birthday that I could talk about it. It was such a short time, and we just talked about what we went through and then we cried a little bit. To start talking about a war is bad. Itís always bad, it just finishes everything. We never had a chance to touch base on that. But I remember they were saying that anytime a bishop or some individual would be coming to that territory, he would be representing a Jewish community. He would be there with the religious people way up front where the bishop is, not where the people are. He would be with them, so whatever they did, they did it, the way I see it, the way I would like to see it done; they did it right. They were co-operating with the territory.

JF: The Jewish families?

MT: The Jewish families, because why would they have to send a--why would he go there and sit at the pulpit whatever, with the Catholic representative, when Poland was free?

JF: This was in a church that this meeting...

MT: In a church.

JF: And he would go alone, or he would have other Jewish people with him?

MT: That I donít know, but I know that my parents said that he was the representative of the Jewish community, so he would also welcome the other head, of the religious head, into the community.

JF: What about the children? Was there contact between the Jewish and...

MT: From Poland. I donít remember. Like I said...

JF: You were quite young.

MT: Yes, I was in a kindergarten, but nobody ever said that somebody is Jewish, so I donít, actually from Poland I donít remember except that individual, that he spoke so well. He was something special. I only remember that he was something special. I thought he was a doctor, but then I was talking to a friend and they said he was like a rabbi, but not a rabbi. He was a special individual with a special philosophy of life, perhaps. But in Hungary, in Keszthely, Hungary--I was already eleven, I think...

JF: Before we get to that, perhaps we can speak of what happened in 1939 with the invasion, as you recall it.

MT: Well, as I recall, it was one beautiful morning around 10 oíclock. My aunt was with this girl who was taking care of us. My aunt was crippled. She was my fatherís sister, I donít know whether it happened in a camp, but something happened to her, and she was crippled, and my fatherís mother in the First World War, Iím going back to that, lost her marbles. She got mentally ill, I guess because the death of her husband or something. Depression. Yes, she had depression. She was not mentally ill, but--she was not old, she was not feeble.

JF: You said she was depressed.

MT: But she was depressed, and there could be some medical term for it. She did have some mental problem later on, so thatís what actually hurt my father more than anything else, I guess. He lost his father, and his mother and his sister was messed up. Well, going back to this, in--we were before the war or when the war started?

JF: Just in ë39.

MT: Just in ë39. When it started, we were in the garden playing around--I remember my father had bees there and bee hives and he told me to stay away from them, and it was so nice to sit there, observing them land on the flowers and then go back into beehive, and all of a sudden, something is flying over our heads, something I never heard before. This sound that I never heard before, big birds, airplanes.

JF: You had never seen them before?

MT: No. Airplanes flew over our heads. Since we had a post office, we had a radio. Somebody yelled out, ìHitler started a war.î Those were the German planes and then there was some explosions, or machine gun fires--I remember something. But there was nothing around us that happened, but I remember that my aunt was hiding us under trees. I think they were using machine guns, the fighter planes, probably, now I am thinking about how it is. This squadron is organized, bombers and fighter planes to make sure that nobody will start anything. Because later on I heard stories that they were machine gunning the cabbage patches because it looked like organized army or something. They were in rows, and could have looked like army men. Then, I donít remember too much. That happened like, I guess, for two weeks. It was a lot of commotion, and we were like being neglected. There was always something going on. Everybody was always meeting and lot of talking, an awful lot of talking and not too much time to spend with us. Everybody was always busy. Now, all of a sudden my father is leaving, and I couldnít tolerate it. I started banging my head, my mom tells me, I didnít even remember it, against the ground, crying, ìWhy do you have to leave us?î He was going to the war. He was going to jump on one of the tanks that were driving by us, by our territory, to go to the war to fight the Hitler. But one of his officers that knew him from the military service, said, ìMr. Turzanski, your place is at home with your children. This is going to be a terrible war. I am a professional and I am telling you that.î And, he, more or less, threw him off the tank, so my father came back.

JF: He had been in the army previously, then?

MT: Everybody had to be in Europe. You had to serve, and, I think, itís longer than in the United States. I think you had to serve four years or something like that.

JF: But, this is after the First World War.

MT: After the First World War. Yes, and he had a rank of officer. He did his duty. Then one morning I remember, I heard a dog bark. Now, I learned it was September 20, 1939. Early in the morning, the dog started to bark something terrible outside. We didnít have dogs inside the house, only outside. It was to protect the house from the wolves and the strangers, I guess. He was on a chain, and then I heard some kind of yelling, screaming, and the dog did not bark anymore. Then my mother screamed. She ran out. So, we ran out. They were trying to kill my father. Now at that time I did not know who ìtheyî were, so-called ìtheyî. It was Ukrainians from different village that came to our village with the news that Poles are killing Ukrainians in their territory, so they came to revenge that act, and to stir up the rest of the Ukrainians to do the same. Well, they killed that dog and he wanted to--he lifted, one of the leaders lifted the cane to hit my father who was bald-headed--I donít know how it happened but they said it happened overnight. Something, maybe when the war started. He was going to smash him on the head with a cane. A cane was a weapon in those days. The cane had a sharp metal tip on the end, very sharp; this was to protect yourself from wolves, because you had to do an awful lot of walking through the woods, and, the wolves were the bad thing in those days. Dogs were no problem, but wolves were, and the people, in case you would have to protect yourself. It was just like in the old days, they had what? The sword. The cane was just like that.

JF: So this was cane that grew and was then supplemented by an iron or metal tip of some kind...

MT: Yes it was a regular walking cane, a walking cane with a special tool. Some of them had even long knives inside. When you turned the handle, you could pull it out, there was a sharp knife.

JF: Almost like a bayonet.

MT: Yes, they had those things in those days, for some reason, thatís what they used to kill the dog with, that sharp point they pierced the dog with, and he went. He wanted to do that to my father. Thatís when my mother, I guess noticed, she screamed, she ran out, ìYou have to kill me first before you kill him.î Well, then, there was an awful lot of excitement. The guy in charge of our post office, he was Ukrainian. They were all Ukrainians, people living in our facility, not the same house, the girl did with us, but the rest of them just had their facilities. He jumped in and he grabbed the cane and says, ìI am in charge here.î They wanted weapons; my father had a lot of weapons. ìI am in charge here. I have the keys. I have the weapons. You talk to me.î

JF: So, your own Ukrainian friend saved you?

MT: Yes, and then he whispered in my parentsí ear, ìRun, because all they are looking for is the taste of blood, and then nobody will be able to stop them.î That was six in the morning. My youngest brother was two weeks old, so my mother was just after delivery, and in those days you delivered at home if everything was normal. My younger brother--there was four of us--my younger brother didnít even have his shoes on his feet yet. Nobody had a chance to put on--there was so much commotion. We grabbed something. Somebody put shoes on us, I guess. We ran towards the Hungarian border to run away from this. It was in the fall, so that means after the wheat was cut down. There was no corn, but there was wheat, and those jaggedy things were sticking up. My younger brotherís feet started to bleed, so then I donít know who had to carry him. My mother was carrying the youngest. There was no shoes. But two Ukrainians ran after us, I remember they were shooting in the woods, but in the woods when you shoot, the bullets donít travel too far. They were after us to catch us, but finally they realized that we were running away, that we would get away, and I also remember when I looked back, the flag, the Polish flag on the barracks of the border patrol was being broken off.

JF: By those Ukrainians?

MT: They had horses. It was just like cowboys. They attached a rope to it, and they started pulling. They were beating the horse and they finally broke that.

JF: So these two Ukrainians who were following you, were following you on foot with guns?

MT: Yes. We got to the border, running. Hungarians stopped us at the border. My father could speak Hungarian, some Hungarian. They said that they cannot let us, in because they have only one machine gun, three guys on the border, and they would not be able to stop the revolution. And if they would let us in, that would just start their problems.

JF: They were afraid of the Ukrainians coming into Hungary.

MT: Exactly. To get us and, actually, to get even with them why do they

let us in. My father was very angry then. And he snapped at the border patrol and he said, ìI want to speak to an officer in charge of this,î and there was a guy, right behind us. The guy was very scared. He said, ìI am also an officer, I will give you everything I can; I will do everything I can for you as a military man, but you let my family in back of that into Hungary, and I will stay with you to protect you.î Well, that was the beginning of our running experience. We ran through quite a few camps in Hungary. Every camp we were foreigners, every place we went to, we were foreigners. We did not go to school for quite a while.

JF: When you say camps, what do you mean?

MT: It means that the Polish Government-in-Exile was given some...

Tape one, side two:

JF: You were talking about the...

MT: Camps in Hungary were actually prepared, or maybe not even prepared... individual homes that we went to, but they were in close vicinity... all the people, immigrants would live in certain quarters.

JF: These were provided by the Polish Government-in-Exile?

MT: I think some of it was provided perhaps, but my parents had to work right away, so perhaps they had to work to pay for it. But there was some organization., maybe it was just churches, but we called them camps because we were all grouped in one territory.

JF: Was it collective housing, or did you have separate dwellings?

MT: There was no collective housing. I remember once we were in a military establishment. The first one we were in was a military establishment when we just crossed the border. The only thing that I remember from that was that there was an awful lot of uniforms, and then the latrine, I had never seen anything like it in my life. You had to go outside and there was a ditch, and there was like a board that you had to hang on to so you didnít fall into the ditch, and it was terrible. There was a shower. You had to cover things up yourself after you were done. Then we went into some kind of--like a hotel, I remember, for another two or three days we were interrogated and separated. They were looking-- Hungarians were not too friendly to us because they wanted to stay neutral, I think. I am not sure about that, but they also wanted to make sure that there is no political individuals there so they donít have to answer for.

JF: Did you ever find out whether or not the Ukrainians who were chasing you caused any trouble at the border?

MT: At the border, no, but I have some stories to tell about what happened later on in the same territory with Jewish families and with Polish families.

JF: These were stories that you heard afterwards?

MT: I heard stories from the son of Goldberg, Goldreich. I donít even know the spelling, it would be like a Polish spelling, but itís a German word. It means ìGoldrich,î right? Goldreich. But it would be spelled somehow the way Poles would spell it, I think. Going back to the camps. So finally we end up in Keszthely, Hungary, where they organized a Polish school. It was the first time I had a chance to go to school.

JF: The spelling of that?

MT: K-E-S-Z-T-H-E-L-Y. Itís next to Balaton, which is their big lake, and they call it their sea, because they did not have access to the sea. Now, in Keszthely-- I am losing some of my thoughts-- if we could just stop this for a second.

JF: Sure.

MT: I am ready to come back.

JF: When you got to this village or town...

MT: Town. It was a very nice town in Hungary, very nice It was 1944 already, that means we traveled already that many years.

JF: You were on the road then for 5 years?

MT: Constantly.

JF: Constantly, stopping in these camps, as you described them?

MT: Yes, and just running. Exactly why we were doing that, I think, that whatever was running out, either jobs or something, that we had to keep on going.

JF: Did you attend school in any of these areas?

MT: No, we had private lessons through some educated individuals. Older people, they were giving us. No schooling. In Keszthely was the first time that I went to school.

JF: Not until 1944?

MT: No, that was before we left in ë44. So I would say 1942. I think, in Keszthely. Thatís the place where we actually stayed until the end before the Germans took us.

JF: I see. This was also a camp?

MT: It was a city, but we were always kept an eye on. We were the foreigners. We were the unwanted ones.

JF: You were always kept with other Poles who were running the same way that you were?

MT: Thatís correct. We were just like those Cubans in Miami that came from Cuba by boat. Unwanted ones.

JF: Were you under guard?

MT: No, but we had to report. We had to report to police stations.

JF: How often?

MT: My parents had to report, but perhaps it was only my parents, because my father was organizing a underground movement in Hungary. Hungarians deadly were afraid of that, and he was traveling constantly to Budapest, which is the Hungarian capital, and wherever we were he was on the go, from beginning.

JF: He was organizing a Polish underground?

MT: Yes.

JF: Was this linked up with the Polish underground in Poland itself, or was this another?

MT: This was linked up, I believe, if I see it correctly now, with the military

in Rumania and so forth we had. We had Polish Army outside Poland and it was linked up with them, so what we were doing was actually making artificial passports and smuggling young men through Hungary to Rumania and then they would go to wherever they had to go to fight the Germans.

JF: Smuggling the young Polish men, who had escaped from Poland to the Polish armies in these other countries?

MT: There were young Polish men and there were also young Jews. They were all young, I mean they were all Polish, all Polish citizens. Smuggling Polish citizens. They were willing to fight Hitler.

JF: So this group then included both Christians and Jews?

MT: That is correct.

JF: When your father and your family left Poland, initially it was to escape the Ukrainians who were after you?

MT: Yes.

JF: Was he involved in any kind of movement at that time? Was he a political person then, or was it not until he got to Hungary?

MT: No, he was not. That is the sad thing. He was not. They were, I think, double-crossed, by the government. They were not aware of whatís going to happen. They were constantly told by government that are ready and able to stop any aggression from Hitlerís side, ëcause Hitler was making a lot of noises, and the world knew it.

JF: But your father, then, felt deluded by the Polish government? And he was, therefore, not prepared for the invasion?

MT: Yes. Correct. As a matter of fact he often says that we should have had something. We were told we have it. They would take an airplane, they would take a new machine gun and drive it from place to place and show it to the people what we are doing, the government.

JF: The government would do this?

MT: And it would be the same airplane, new airplane and new weapon of some sort, that would travel from city to city, from village to village, just to keep the people confused that things are fine.

JF: But people as educated and knowledgeable as your father trusted that this indeed was what was going on?

MT: Yes.

JF: So that his feeling upon leaving must have been betrayal?

MT: Betrayal. When somebody made something out of it. Itís a betrayal.

JF: And yet he was willing to get involved in an underground to restore Polish...

MT: That is correct, because actually our duty was from then on to fight Hitler with everything you have. Now, he had family. I donít know whether I could do that, to give up my kids and my wife and go ahead and spend all the time on the road, knowing if I would be caught, their lives are in danger.

JF: He was supposed to be working, according to this plan, of being in the camps?

MT: Yes, he had to report to the police station.

JF: How did he finesse that?

MT: So, my mother-- we also had other people there, and one of them was like a cousin to us. She grabbed him and she said, whatever his name was, Walter or something, ìYou are coming with me. You are Marian Turzanski.î I am junior; my father is also Marian. So they went to the police station.

JF: Your mother took him?

MT: Yes. They went hand by hand and they signed that report. My mother is Ottelia and he was Marian. Later on my father came, and I think that is what actually made them move again. They discovered that my father-- ìWhoís he?î ìOh, heís my husband,î Somebody else was signing, and that is what kicked us out of one place to another. I think that was the reason. I am not sure what made us move so much. Or, maybe it was to get away from Polish border, but no, we didnít want to do that so that we wanted to stay as close as we could...

JF: How much could your parents share with you during this time of what was going on? What was the role of children in that time? Were they included in any of this discussion?

MT: We were excluded from all serious talks, because I donít remember any serious meetings, and they had a whole lot of them. We had a lot of parties, and, of course, in Europe children are not part of the adult world. They have their own place. So even at the dinner table, if there is a big party, children do not participate in that because it is for adults. Family gatherings, yes, children have their own place. I remember all those big people coming, with big degrees. There was an awful lot of intelligentsia that left Poland. Actually, thatís all that left Poland, educated individuals that could care less about their wealth. They just took off with their lives. They would always gather and it seemed like a party, but now I understand that those were political meetings.

JF: This was the time; that was the cover.

MT: And they even had to hide the radios, thatís in Hungary. Hide the radios and listen to BBC, London.

JF: What youíre saying is that the parties you are describing were also in Poland?

MT: No, that was in Hungary.

JF: This was all in Hungary?

MT: I am in Hungary now, It was all in Hungary. It was in Keszthely. I remember thatís where a lot of things were happening. Now in Keszthely also, it was 1942, I believe, or maybe it was later, maybe it was ë44 when Goldreich-- and his first name--I just talked to my parents on the phone yesterday--was Samuel. They went to our priest in Felicenthal [phonetic]. That was the next village, a German village, and asked him for our baptismal certificates

JF: This was after you had already left?

MT: After we left. And I understand that my parents had made an agreement, or asked the priest when they took-- because they were in custody of the, the birth certificates, for some reason. They took it to the priest, and if somebody needs it, give them our certificates.

JF: Goldreich would not have come directly to your parents to ask for this?

MT: No, we were not there. After we left he went, because he knew our relationship, I guess. The priest knew our relationship or something. He went and the priest gave him our birth certificate of our cousin because they were trying to match the ages. Our cousinís name was Walter Turzanski, and he traveled and met us in Keszthely, Hungary, with that birth certificate.

JF: Mr. Goldreich.

MT: I remember him, curly hair, tall, good-looking young individual. Young, he was in his 30's. Good looking man. But he came. I thought my father stole him from the train going to Germany, but it was not so. When things got very rough in Poland, he took the birth certificate prior to the-- secured it, he left as a Turzanski.

JF: What about his family?

MT: His family was very sad. He told us that his wife-- they were constantly shepherd by Ukrainians. The community was not that big, of us Poles and Jewish, only three families. They were helped out by certain individuals, certain Ukrainians. Well, it happened prior to, I believe July 4, 1944. July 4, 1944, they picked, like a 4th of July celebration to kill off Jews, I think.

JF: The Germans or the Ukrainians.

MT: The Ukrainians. In that territory, cause my grandfather and Walter told us that. His wife for some reason went outside and they shot her. His wife, and we are not certain whether he witnessed that or just did not go out because he knew that he would be destroyed immediately. But his mother, Goldreichís mother, went out to help her daughter-in-law and she was also killed, right there.

JF: These were by the Ukrainians who lived in the territory?

MT: Territorial-- there was organized by Hitler a movement prior to the war. Somebody must have known about it, and they were given an authority to clean out the territory, and itís going to be theirs. They always wanted the Ukrainians. So the Poles and, of course, the Jews, had to go. So, I remember my parents were telling me, one Jewish girl took a refuge in a Ukrainian house. She took their name. She took their religion and she took their garments. She would go to the Orthodox Church with them. On July 4th, my parents just told me, they took her out of the church. There was some service and walked her so many kilometers to kill her with the rest of the group there.

JF: This was the family that had sheltered her, or other Ukrainians?

MT: No. The family-- my parents-- the family were not able to stop...

JF: The family that she was staying with could not stop the other Ukrainians from killing her.

MT: Yes. Correct. So actually they did not do it, but they could not stop this from happening.

JF: In other words, it was known that she was not Ukrainian among the...

MT: It must have been because she...

JF: Um...

MT: So, shortly after that, Poles had to go.

JF: The death of the Goldreich women that you talk about, were the Ukrainians that lived in your immediate area and worked for you and knew you, were they also involved in this? Do you know?

MT: I am afraid, yes, because my father wanted to got to Bayonne, New Jersey. There is quite a few that came over here.

JF: Quite a few...?

MT: Ukrainians. I work with some. They were in the same camp, and will describe that later on. The Ukrainians that were in charge of the deals, I work with them now. Many times I want to take a camera to work with me, but I am afraid that if I take a picture and show it to my parents, they will die. So I still donít know what I am going to do with that. Walter Turzanski--Samuel Goldreich-- needed shoes. My father took his attachÈ case that he was traveling to Budapest back and forth, to the nearest shoemaker, and I didnít know that at that time, but now my parents say it was illegal for a shoemaker to make shoes for somebody because everything was controlled, leather and everything. And, even, why you are making shoes for somebody. But my father paid him He was quite an individual, anyway, because he knew certain men. He knew who to go to. Perhaps this was a Jewish shoemaker that he went to.

JF: Your father?

MT: Yes, and they made them, and within three hours he had new shoes.

JF: He needed new shoes?

MT: He needed shoes.

JF: He had no shoes. He had escaped.

MT: No, he had shoes with an awful lot of holes He said that my brother doesnít have any. His other brother was Ossias, and they donít know what name he had.

JF: He escaped with his brother?

MT: Yes, and a sister.

JF: Uh huh.

MT: And his sister took my motherís birth certificate. She was slightly older than my mother, ten years older, I think. But she ended up as a Ottilia Turzanski, and somebody ran into Ottilia Turzanski in Mexico, in a Polish camp in Mexico, what year I donít know, but my mother was approached, ìWhy were you so snobby? Why didnít you want to talk to me in Mexico?î

JF: And it was this woman? The sister of...?

MT: She said, ìI was not,î and she said, ìYes, you were.î This guy must have been bothering her in Mexico. ìCome on, Ottilia, don't you remember me?î and she probably said, ìNo, leave me alone.î My parents were a little bit hurt by that. They were going to ask Red Cross to find these people, but then after they found out, I think it was in Williamsburg where we were, that Ottilia Turzanski was, but maybe there was another Turzanski. Turzanski name is a small family.

JF: When you say that your parents were hurt...

MT: That these people did not contact us.

JF: They never contacted you after the war?

MT: No, that. Nobody wants anything but there is always, ìThank you.î That helps a little bit.

JF: Of course.

MT: But, having so many hurts, this is actually-- these people probably got hurt also tremendously. They are all at an age. I was going to check in Israel. If they are alive, they would be in Israel now, because where else could they go? They could not go back to Poland. They couldnít go any place. They would be there. Someday perhaps-- have to do it fast. I can do that for my parents.

JF: Were there any children involved? Were there any Goldreich children from that marriage?

MT: I havenít heard of Walter saying anything, or my parents saying that there was a child left behind. I think there was another family, Reinhart.

JF: This was another Jewish family?

MT: Yes, They left, but they left their son in Poland with somebody, and my parents feel that he is still in Poland, that he survived.

JF: They left their child with a Christian family?

MT: Yes. That is correct.

JF: And they donít know what happened to that family? They assume that they might have died.

MT: The Reinharts probably are not alive because whoever ran would be caught eventually. Jews had one problem in Europe, that they were circumcised. Nobody else was. When my boy was born, and I donít know why--first thing I wanted, I insisted on, but my wife was objecting to it, that he get circumcised, ëcause I donít want him to be different from the people that live here. Heís a native.

JF: Because the American males are all circumcised?

MT: And I am also circumcised.

JF: You were circumcised after you came to the United States?

MT: Yes, three or four years ago, I donít know why. Gives me a tremendous, I donít know, something...

JF: I think you are answering why-- the feeling of that being a differentiating factor from the...

MT: I think itís the fear or something, but then you get so much pleasure when you become wanted, just like somebody accepts you, or something. They had that problem, so I often-- nobody talks to you, because in Europe you donít talk to children about sex or anything. But I often wondered if he was clever enough, he could have got circumcised.

JF: Walter?

MT: Sure. I mean, he was circumcised, the opposite. Thatís what was bad. As a child I wasnít exposed to that. How easy it was to separate the Jewish male from the rest of the people in the territory.

JF: Your parents gave their papers, their baptismal certificates, at what point, to the church?

MT: When the war started, when my father was going to go to war, they both went. For some reason, like I said, there was an awful lot of talking and everything was uncertain, whatís going to happen. I donít think they were planning to go to Hungary, but they were planning to run someplace from where we are because the territory was not proper to survive.

JF: Did this leave them without any papers of their own?

MT: We didnít need any. In your own country you donít need yourself, but Jews would need the papers.

JF: So, he assumed, then, that Jews would use these papers?

MT: Thatís the only reason priest would even have the name of a priest. Otherwise he would never release it to anybody. They even gave him the name of the priest, someplace...

JF: And the priest was cooperative, obviously?

MT: And the priest gave them-- matter of fact, Walter Turzanski started by saying, ìI hope you forgive me, but I have taken my name because my parents call him Samuel Goldreich. No, Iím Walter Turzanski; please forgive me I took your name.î

JF: And where was the cousin, the Walter?

MT: Walter Turzanski went to war. He was in military. Just like my father was going. I think thatís what happened, they going to jump on the tanks. The military movement, they were going to join and go. I think thatís when they decided to get rid of their whatever.

JF: So, the real Walter Turzanski went into the army?

MT: Went into the army and he is probably dead.

JF: They never heard from him?

MT: No, no, we never heard from him.

JF: So, when you talk about Walter now you are referring to Samuel Goldreich?

MT: Yes, but after the war again, but I donít know why, but Hannah Goldberg, Goldreich, still stayed as Ottilia Turzanski, my motherís name.

JF: Which is your motherís name.

MT: Yes, because I would first thing after the war go back, but maybe it was still so uncertain, still scared, perhaps because you never know what can happen, and once you get scared like that you donít trust anybody. Matter of fact, I donít like to open up to anybody. I am a closed person. Even when I go to school, I went to Temple University to take some psychological counseling courses, and they would ask each student to say something about himself, open up his heart to the rest of the class so they know him, and I didnít want to. I said, ìMy life is my story and, if you donít mind, I would just like to get education here,î and they didnít like that. That was in Hungary. Then shortly after that, when Walter left...

JF: Walter left for where?

MT: For, Iím not sure. He was given the shoes and he was given some money and a passport. Now, I donít know whether as went to Rumania, or whether he went to-- I think he went back to his brother, but they were traveling, they were free. They had some plan, I think. They had a name [unclear] I am not sure, actually I would have to check on that, and if I may, I mean if you need it, I can follow up on that. Then we heard that shortly after, it was July 4, 1944, when they finished off the territorial Jews...

JF: Did you hear about that at the time?

MT: No.

JF: You found out about it later?

MT: I heard it when Walter in Kesthely, in Hungary, when he cried when he talked about his wife and his mother killed.

JF: Thatís when you heard about it?

MT: By Ukrainians.

JF: The date of this massacre was July 4th.

MT: 1944.

JF: 1944, and it was shortly after that that Walter came-- was able to escape.

MT: No, it war prior to that, I believe. I think it was prior to that, but they killed his wife sooner, but this was a mass movement

JF: A mass movement?

MT: It was like they were removing them from the territory. Not telling us, they would never let you know whatís happening. They were walking them from one territory to another and then at mid-point they would just kill them.

JF: And the Ukrainians were doing this in 1944? Was it a deportation, or was it more a round-up?

MT: It was like deportation, to remove them from the territory. They needed that territory, because otherwise the word would get out and they did not want the word to get out, that something is happening to you. Jews or Poles never knew that something will happen to them. They were just being moved from one place to another and then something happened, in the meantime, and they were removed from this earth.

JF: So, what had happened to his family then had happened on a more of an individual basis before these mass...

MT: Yes they either disregarded an order not to go out or something that they shot them...

Tape two, side one:

MT: Now, to give you comparison of evil forces working during the war, I talked about Jewish families being round up and killed, and Jews did have a special problem because they wore picked out prior to the rest of the country. They were put on a list to be eliminated yet nobody knew about that, that this will happen. That was the sad part about it. The people that you trusted would actually be the ones that would carry the hidden knife. My father stayed behind. My grandfather stayed behind - he was like a mayor of that territory.

JF: You are talking now, then, about your motherís father?

MT: My fatherís, my fatherís father brother...

JF: Had died...

MT: Yeh. So, my fatherís father that died, his brother.

JF: So your fatherís uncle...

MT: My fatherís uncle, he stayed behind, because he did not believe when those Ukrainians said that if Poles are killing, then we are going to no and investigate, so he formed a commission. He formed a delegation from his village, and they all went to the next place, and they found out that itís not true. When than came back it was quite late, because things had started already to take place. Now thatís after we left, and my grandfather did that, after we ran away to Hungary. At night, he was it must have been in the fall or winter, because he said the stove would not-- a belly-stove, I guess you call them pot-belly stove, it wouldnít burn too well and he had a hard time keeping that going. There was another man with him, not Ukrainian, though, because they were no lower allowed to be with Poles. So he stayed out late playing around with that fire and then he heard shots. He looked out the window and he saw horses driving around one of the Polish homes and shooting at the house, and then they set fire to the house people tried to escape the house and they were shot right there, and then they would go to the next house and again surround and start shooting anybody that tried to escape, shoot them and burn the house down. One of the guys that stayed with him, I believe-- oh, itís coming next, so my grandfather ran out and this guy, and they hid in the cemetery behind the tombstones. The cemetery was not too far from our home where I was born, and they observed all this terrible thing going on. One family had 5 daughters, 5 girls, and the parents, father end mother and 5 girls. They lined them up, father, mother, oldest daughter to the youngest, they took out a wooden, whatever you call it that you cut wood on...

JF: An ax?

MT: Well, an ax plus the wooden block. They would lay the kids on the block and chop their heads off. Everybody would scream, they faint, and they would bring them back to it, pour water on them, and then next execution. And they killed them all like that, the whole family, and then they burned their house.

JF: This was a Polish family?

MT: Polish family killed by Ukrainians. Thatís right. They were not political people, but they had rights to the territory. Jews were not political people, but they had rights to the territory. They were the owners.

JF: The family was Polish Christian or Polish Jews?

MT: Polish Christian.

JF: But the feeling of the Ukrainians against the Poles who had rights to land that they felt should have been theirs...

MT: I believe that they had struck a deal with Hitler. If they cleaned that territory out, itís theirs. Of course it was false belief on their side. Later on, Hitler got even with them in Lemberg, in Lvov. They got a little too independent, and they wanted to form their own government, and Hitler surrounded them with the SS troops and cut them down,. I think 2000 of them and killed them. Because he also didnít want organization, he wanted people to work for him, but donít organize on your own. In the morning, that young man, that was Matkowsky-- heís in Chicago now-- he ran over to his house where his father was and knocked off ashes off his-- his chest was still there, the rest was all burned.

JF: Matkowsky was...

MT: He was with my grandfather hiding in the cemetery and in the morning when the smoke went down and everything, he snuck up to his house and his fatherís body was there in ashes. Only his chest was still intact.

JF: He had been burned?

MT: He was killed and burned.

JF: He was killed also, and burned.

MT: So our house is still there; it was not burned because nobody was killed in it. Any house that somebody was killed in it, they burned it to the ground.

JF: Matkowsky was Christian, or was he Jewish?

MT. Was a Christian.

JF: Christian also. How did you find out these stories?

MT: Matkowsky, we met in Germany later on, and grandfather-- we got in Germany after the liberation and after ë45, May ë45, my grandfather was someplace not too far from Bremen. I forgot the name already because I cannot think too clear now. He told us awful lot of was happening. He was on the list once.

JF: Your grandfather?

MT: Yes, to be sent to the old peopleís camp, and what they would do then, a lot of them were sent to the old peopleís camp, because they are unable to work, and it will be easier for you. They were sent to a special place and they will be given bedding, or at least they were shown a room, a bed and blanket, and given a piece of paper and a pencil to write to their family how wonderful they are being treated. And right after that they will be poisoned.

JF: This is in Poland?

MT: In Germany.

JF: In Germany. He was on a list.

MT: And right after that they would be poisoned.

JF: How did he escape from that?

MT: He worked-- he pretended that he is younger than he is. Nobody escaped but they worked. There was a plan to use us to the last minute, and then you go. The plan was not to kill everybody. They could have done it, I think, but they starve you. Day to day you got weaker.

JF: Why was your grandfather - actually it was your fatherís uncle - why was he taken? Why did they want to kill him?

MT: Well, Poles, in general, were lower than the dirt. We were the enemies of the state. Jews were not enemies. We were the enemies of the German nation. With Jews they started in Germany. They had a special reason for it because they start with them in Germany. Most Jews in Poland had German names, like the ones that I am familiar with: Goldreich, Reinhart, and so forth. They had German names, but I think that they had a little more freedom in Poland than in Germany, or maybe more opportunity to expand. Itís a new territory. They went to Poland.

JF: But not all Poles were arrested in such a way.

MT: No.

JF: What was it that determined that your great-uncle was taken, or your grandfather, as you call him.

MT: Maybe it was because of the Ukrainian deal, perhaps.

JF: Because of that territory.

MT: That territory had to be cleared, and the people had to be removed from that territory, probably. The others wanted it and since he was not killed, he had to go.

JF: I see. So he was captured?

MT: He went to-- his wife was very ill. She was paralyzed. My grandfatherís wife was paralyzed, so they had never children. Itís prior to that. I am confusing. He took her to Stry [Strey: phonetic] which is a big town, nearest town, a big town, to a cousin or to hospital, took his wife, when the whole thing started, when we ran away. And he found out that the Poles are not killing the Ukrainians. He realized he will not be able to take care of his wife himself, because we had people taking care of her. He drove her to Stry. Then he came back, and then all those things started happening. But Jews went first, and then the Poles, in a very brutal way. The Jews actually did not have to witness, except in Goldreichís case, the mother witnessed her daughter-in-law being killed in the yard, shot, and then she was shot. But the tragedy of these others I never heard of before, and it makes you really wonder why people would do that and how could they? How could you take a, any kind of person and cut their head off and then make sure the other one is watching, and get the big enjoyment out of it?

JF: The amount of...

MT: There wasnít even hatred. These people hadnít done anything. I was always questioning myself, why am I evil? Why am I hated?

JF: You questioned this when? When it was happening during the war, or later?

MT: During the war, in Hungary. Why am I foreigner. It was a very dirty word, but they did not use the word foreigner it was like American work Pollack,

JF: Derogatory?

MT: Derogatory. But also with a meaning that we will get you.

JF: The Hungarians talked this way?

MT: Yes, and when Hitler went through Hungary to go to Russia to fight in Stalingrad, he formed, like Hitlerjugend in Germany, people for Hitler, national guard, young people. Not too young, not like children, but in their teens and higher. They would have a special sign on their arms. It was not like swastika, it was like arrows, on each end of the cross, arrow heads. They called themselves (Hungarian word) - that means Arrowhead [actually Arrow Cross]. Ever since Hitler went through Hungary, we experienced nothing but fear.

JF: On the part of the Hungarians?

MT: Fear , it was in the air; you could feel it. We went to school early in the morning and we found out that the German soldiers had invaded the town of Keszthely, maybe two oíclock maybe three in the morning. Nobody knew. We went in there and the Germans yelled at us and grabbed. My older brother has blue eyes, so they looked at him and said, ìYou must be German,î or something and they sent him for wine. He went to get them a bottle of wine, for the soldiers, and then they let us go.

JF: This was in the school?

MT: Yes, from school. We were in school uniforms, you wore a uniform, and we had special bags, duffel bags.

JF: A knapsack.

MT: Yes, to carry your books

JF: Were you in school with Hungarian children? Or was this a special school for the Polish community.

MT: Yes, yes, it was all Polish. We even had a Polish high school.

JF: This was the school that you attended, then. It was not until 1942.

MT: Something like that, thatís correct.

JF: And, you were about eight?

MT: I was around eight.

JF: When you started?

MT: I started I think second grade. First I had to skip. It was naturally known that I know something, the alphabet, or something like this. I went to second, third, and started my fourth grade. I didnít finish my fourth grade, when armed Germans were coming back from Russian front and then things started to happen When Germans started coming back, this is when they started persecuting Jews and Poles and that must have been in early ë44 or something like that.

JF: Up until then, you were living in a Hungarian town?

MT: A Hungarian town.

JF: Within a Polish community?

MT: Within a Polish, well, in Keszthely we were not grouped too close. We were spread out all over the city, but it was like in the cheaper sections. Cheaper homes.

JF: And Jews as well as Christians?

MT: Jews were part of the territory. Jews were not affected by anything.

JF: You are talking about Polish Jews now? Or are you talking about Hungarian Jews?

MT: No Polish Jews, there were none.

JF: There were no Polish Jews there?

MT: No, but Hungarian Jews were again the merchants. They were the people that we had to go and ask for food . We didnít have too much money, but we were also unwanted in a territory and when we were waiting in line, to buy a bread, for instance, to buy a bread, it was a Jewish bakery, I forgot the name, but my mother had a good relationship with that woman, but that woman said that I canít treat you better than Hungarians or I am out. And in a line you would be kicked around because they also wanted, needed to eat.

JF: By the Hungarians?

MT: By the Hungarians.

JF: Before you had said that some of the people who came, some of the Poles. who came into Hungary were Jews and were in these camps with you as you moved around.

MT: No, no, I believe what I meant is when my father was smuggling the young men, there were also the renegades from Poland that needed a home, and the only home that Polish organization knew at that time was army to defeat Hitler.

JF: So, these were only, then, young men who were going into the Polish army in exile, as opposed to families?

MT: Yes. No, families. I donít recall any, because they had their own-- Jews traveled differently than we did. Of course, we unfortunately ran out at 6 oíclock in the morning and we ran out without money. When they decided to go they went prepared, usually. They went out and they bought their way through the border or whatever, and they knew how far they would go, the ones that did travel. The ones that wanted to stay behind, the more stubborn ones, older people, they didnít want to go.

JF: Those were the ones who were deported?

MT: No, those were the ones that really went through terrible things later on. Some were deported, some were killed.

JF: Okay.

MT: In a lot of cases, like in the case where I was born, it was by their own people.

JF: What do you mean? By their own people?

MT: People that lived in that territory.

JF: The Ukrainians

MT: Sure. There were some outsiders that were in charge of this movement, I am sure, Ukrainians that were infiltrated, individuals put in there. They were giving the orders, but still itís the local people that did that.

MT: So that when you were living in this town, the Jews that you were in contact with were Hungarian?

JF: Were Hungarian Jews. As a matter of fact, across a. little yard, big yard, a big empty yard, there was a Jewish family. There were younger girls, two girls, younger than I was, and I was around seven, but they were my younger brotherís age because they played together. So it was not something that you stayed away, and I guess it was a blessing to us that we were allowed to play with them, because we were actually nobodies in a new territory. Hungarian boys we had trouble with, because we had to fight all the time.

MT: Thatís where the hostility was, with the Hungarians?

JF: We had to fight. They didnít want us around. We were not stealing their women because we were just kids, but we were not part of the deal. Going back to waiting in line to get food, we would have to form some kind of a set-up where early in the evening we would go and stay in line. At night it would be my parents, but since my father had to work, he didnít spend that much time in line, because he had to have his sleep, and his strength to work next day. Now, my mother also worked, but she was a tough cookie, I guess, and younger, by ten years of my father, so it was I and my older brother, and we would stand there for three to four hours in the evening, until we were replaced by the next one. So I would be the first one since I was the younger one. My two younger brothers did not participate in it, then my older brother would stay until probably about eleven oíclock at night, and then my mother, no, then my father would go and stay for so many hours, and then my mother would stay until she gets into the store. Thatís how long the lines were formed outside the stores to buy food.

JF: And everything was rationed, I would assume.

MT: No, it was not rationed, but they would not sell you too much.

JF: Just shortages?

MT: Yes, they would not, they were not allowed to sell you too much. That Jewish woman that had the bakery, she would always prepare something for my mother to take out later on through the back door, but for some reason that never worked out because I guess they ran out of it.

JF: You mean for a time?

MT: After you get in you could only buy, letís say 10 rolls, but she had four kids and herself and her husband. She would say she would put something away for her, a couple more rolls, but then for some reason, it never actually happened. Because I imagine they were breaking down the door and there was nothing. Everybody cried and everybody had a child-- things were bad but they were not to the point where you could realize what is happening. But then, all of a sudden, I noticed yellow stars which now I am familiar with, the Star of David, being worn by some people but not all. And I would study the star. It was two right angle triangles. Cardboard covered with cloth, yellow cloth turned separately and pinned together. Thatís how they made those things. Two separate triangles placed on top of each other, turned so that it becomes a star, and they had to carry on their lapel. I donít remember women wearing it, but I remember men had to wear it, in the city of Keszthely, Hungary. So, all of a sudden the places we go to buy food, we notice that they have a star on themselves, but still they did not know what is in store for them, because as soon as you would do that to me, I would try to sneak out, if I would know. But only it shows that nobody knew what the plan was.

JF: You are thinking that now, or at the time...

MT: I am thinking that now. At that time I just questioned why? So my parents explained it to me. That that is the Star of David. These are Jewish people and they are being singled out, like we are. They are being put on a list, and nobody knows what is going to happen, but it is not good. So from that moment everybody was so afraid. We were afraid to go out on the street, and afraid to say something, and you always looked back who was walking behind you from then on.

JF: About from what point was this that you recall seeing the stars and having this more intense feeling?

MT: That was when Hitlerís army was coming back all chewed up. I know we had...

JF: Coming back from Russia?

MT: From Russian front badly chewed up, and there was such a good feeling in us youngsters, politically brought up in hating Hitler, that they are coming back destroyed. Thatís when they started destroying us.

JF: It didnít last long, that feeling?

MT: So they gathered Jews later on into ghetto. Ghetto was part of the city that they boarded off.

JF: Was there a ghetto in your town?

MT: Yes, every city, I imagine. I was not in every city. They boarded off with boards. It was not just a ghetto that was part of the city. Itís a closed off the city, guarded by armed guards. Evacuated from their homes into the ghetto with their belongings, as much as they could take, I guess. What would they take? The best they had, probably, and thatís what probably the territory wanted.

JF: That is when the Germans occupied...

MT: That is correct.

JF: Until that time was there any Russian involvement, where you were in Hungary?

MT: No. No, we feared Russians, that was why we ran. We feared Russians deadly. We thought that Germans are more humane, but they turn out not to be in the Second World War. Matter of fact, we would go to church. I was alter boy. The Hungarians didnít like us, but the priests did. For some reason we were more kind, probably, and we were not as arrogant as some of those other boys. We were always shy and kind because you had to be kind to survive. You had to be extremely kind to everyone.

JF: Why do you say that?

MT: Knowing that everybody hates you, you become extremely kind. If somebody does not kick you or something. Extremely shy. At least we were brought up that way, to be kind.

JF: It might be a correction, not to show aggressiveness in some way?

MT: Angry or anything, yes. German soldiers, not too many, but I remember twice or three times, a single soldier walked in the church and he would make the sign of the cross in the German way, using his thumb and making crosses on his forehead, his chest and arms, his shoulders, with his thumb, and having that uniform on him. I lifted my head to God and said, ìGod, why canít he be nicer to us when he leaves this house?î We feared him in the church when he walked in, because that was a deadly force that walked in. A force that had all the rights to life and death. It was all up to him. Nobody else. No courts. He could decide right on the spot, yet he walked in, because perhaps he had a family in Germany that he thought greatly of. But, yet, we didnít mean anything. I never had received one candy from any German soldier or one kind word when I was in Hungary. Because once we were in Germany, it was something else.

After two weeks, like I said, they were put into the ghettos. Shortly after - I didnít think they kept Jews in ghetto more than two weeks - they were transported to Germany. Now, from that moment when they were wearing their Star of David, the word went around that we are in trouble. The Poles are in trouble, big trouble, because if in Hungary the Hungarian citizens are being singled out, we are in terrible danger, terrible danger. I talked to my mother recently-- she said that she wanted the girls that my younger brother was playing with, she wanted to take those two girls before they put them-- when they start putting them in the ghetto, if her parents would allow us to take with us. But, then, she said that she spread the word that she would like to take those kids, the uproar was such that we knew what would happen to us if we take them.

JF: The uproar from home?

MT: The Polish community. ìDo you know what you are doing to us? Not to yourself. Do you think about us?î And also, ìHow do you know whether this will be better for you?î I mean, would that be better for them with us or with their own parents? Nobody knew actually that they are going to be destroyed.

JF: There was no...

Tape two, side two:

JF: Youíre saying then that the Poles were unaware that the deportations of the Jews meant death?

MT: Death. And Jews are unaware of it. Thatís the sad part, because I remember these people walking and nobody cried. They were just-- it was sad that they had to leave their homes. I imagine that it was very sad. But there was nothing like that, ìOh my God, they are being killed.î Nothing like that.

JF: None of your farther contacts with the underground government gave him any clues as to what was happening in concentration camps?

MT: For some reason, when we were taken on the train, we still believed, at least my parents believed, or maybe they just tried to pretend to us, that we are going to be alright.

JF: Do you think that your father knew?

MT: I donít know, but I think he would have told me by now that he knew. The gypsies went first in Hungary, I forgot about them, but there were gypsies...

JF: Did you know any gypsies in the area where you lived?

MT: Yes, I knew one, I donít remember his name anymore, but he was a very famous gypsy in the town, and he would always walk around. They had axes that they always carried on their shoulder because they used axes to make different dishes out of wood. That they were selling, and it was legal for them to carry an ax as a gypsy, and gypsies would constantly stop in at our homes, at everybodyís home, when they were eating at dinnertime in the evening. A whole bunch of gypsies was very dangerous. You opened the door, and you had to watch everything in your house, because one will talk to you and play on a violin, and the rest of the gang goes around the house and grabs everything that they can.

JF: I see.

MT: So gypsies were known to rob you blind. They lived in the mountains and caves they did not live in the city, and we would go to the mountain to pick pine cones to heat the home. That was a big thing for the Poles. We could not afford to buy anything else, so we would go and we would take sacks and sacks, and fill them with cones and bring them home, on Sundays, on weekends, when we had no school, we [unclear] home to heat the homes with pine cones, so we would hit the gypsy territory, and we would see that their lifestyle was a little bit different, they were a different type of people. Anyway, they took them. It was all in summertime and their king-- they had a king that looked like a Buddha, a very fat man, had always something wrapping around his waist. He was all naked, very fat and he had, like, four women around him, fanning him, I guess. They were his harem or something, and they took whole bunch of them, maybe around a hundred gypsies, maybe less - but they didnít have much, they just had some horses and whatever. They took them on wagons, horse-buggy thing. Shortly after, itís the Jews that went. It was still in the time summer.

JF: This is the summer, then, of 1944?

MT: 1944. In the fall of ë44 the Poles were rounded up and thrown into the ghetto. Not the same ghetto as Jews were because we were a small group. We had like a study hall or something they were renting for Poles where they played chess and so forth. Thatís where they gathered us, it was one big mansion, I think, at one time.

JF: They gathered you in this mansion in the fall of 1944?

MT: In this mansion they put us all Poles in there. Now, as a youngster my experience was that they came from one house to another and they arrested everybody in the house, took them out on the street and walked us under guard to the next house where the Poles lived, so you could not give signals or anything.

JF: Who was doing this?

MT: Those were the German soldiers. And Hungarians. Both. The Hungarians, I guess, knew where we lived, and the Germans made sure that it was done. Then they put us into that place, though, it was only German soldiers that guarded us. They did not trust, maybe, Hungarians. Perhaps they felt that some Hungarians were too friendly with us prior to this, prior to the arrests, and there might be something.

JF: They might have some feeling for you.

MT: Yes. I donít remember, for some reason I have so many blanks in my mind, Iíve often tried to figure out why I am scared to ask my parents. Because each time that I do that it is opening a wound, and then I feel so terrible for such a long time because I know that they feel terrible and I hate to go and visit them to give them a load, to cheer them up; here comes your son and then leave them in such agony. But I remember my friend Lotsie [phonetic], Louie, Hungarian. We lived in the same building. They were occupying the first floor and we were occupying the second floor in that building that my parents were renting. He was also renting that place. And his father was sailmaker, for sailboats. He was very good friend of ours. As a matter of fact, we spent more time in his place than ours. When my parents needed us, they always went down and got us. When they took us into that what I call a prison, one morning I saw Lotsie at the fence. It was all fenced in, iron fence, real big fence. The property was all fenced in. And I went up to him. ìLotsie,î and he went away from the fence before I got there. Iím sure he cried. When he went away, that he was not allowed to have any deals with us. At that time I didnít understand but it hurt so much; it hurt so much that my best friend, my best friend in the whole world would not speak to me anymore. He ran away. From then on I never saw him anymore. But we did not stay there that long. (pause) So then, a few days later, they started to prepare us to evacuate from that building to the railroad station.

JF: Where did you think you were going to go?

MT: We were going to Germany to the camps. Thatís what I was told, to work. For work.

JF: What do you think your parents thought? Do you think they believed that?

MT: At that time, looking at it now, they must have believed it, because we already heard the Russian guns at t distance and they chose Germany instead of being caught by the Russians. So that actually what they did is choose the better from two evils. I believe they trusted the Germans more than they trusted the Russians. I believe they felt the Germans were more intelligent individuals, civilized than the eastern Russian hordes There were terrible stories about Russians from the First World War, how they were raping young women and doing whatever they wished to with everybody. We were not girls, but parents still didnít want to face that enemy.

JF: At this time you were 11 years old.

MT: I was 11 and then...

JF: You had an older brother who was 12. And your younger two brothers were...?

MT: I think itís about a one year difference. So then my younger one was 10 and my youngest one was-- He was born in ë39. So he was five. My oldest brother was born in ë32 and I was born in ë34, but he was born in November ë32 and I was born in January ë34, so that gives us only two years apart. Right? And my younger brother was born in ë36 and then ë39 the youngest. Now prior to that, they were taking, arresting, after they sent the Jews out to Germany in the summertime, they started to arrest the Polish male, including young boys from age of 12 and over, to walk to Germany. My father, at that time, and my brother were hiding. We were hiding them in the basement behind a pile of wood to be used in the furnace. We formed like a little hideout for them and they stayed there until the men were removed from our territory.

JF: Your father and your brother?

MT: My father and my brother were hiding. My mother didnít want to let them go. ìNo way,î she said, ìwhatever happens we will go together.î So, shortly after, they went through all the homes and they arrested everybody, like I was mentioning before. They took us all out into the ghetto. So now we were ready to go to the railroad station. A lot of men are gone already. Younger and younger boys. A lot of women are left behind. A lot of old women and children.

JF: They were just left? They were just not picked up?

MT: The first group of males had to walk to Germany because they were able to. It was tough, the way we picture, walking all the way to Germany. Half of them will die on the way. So they took us. So now comes this moment of leaving the ghetto, home, for the railroad station. The last hurrah. We are trying to take everything dearest to us with us. The dearest thing that I had was a stamp collection. A lot of those stamps were the latest stamps of Hitler, the latest issues of Hitler, but, yet, as a stamp collector, to me, it meant a treasure because I had a full set of each issue and they were beautiful. Hitler stamps were large and colorful. The other stamps were not as pretty. These were extremely large for that time. They were like an inch and a half by two inches. Stamps. So, I had all kinds of stamps; Hungarian stamps and French stamps and English stamps, and I was exchanging with Hungarian boys who collected stamps. It was a big hobby. There was no drugs that we played around with. We were much too young to think about women, so we collected stamps. It was a big hobby, and it was something that we got deeply involved in. So, I had these two or three books of stamps, and I was carrying them under my arms, and this German soldier kicked me, and the stamps fell out of the books from under my arm. So I started grabbing them, and he put his foot on it. I was not allowed to. So I grabbed one from under his foot. Big foot, big boots. Very big boots. Wintertime. And I started tearing up the stamp collection, crying and tearing it up. Well, one good kick in my butt made me fly and that was all left behind. For some reason, that was the most important thing to me at that moment. My parents probably thought about whatís going to happen to us. I was thinking about my stamp collection. I had spent two years probably collecting it, or a year and a half, or a year...

JF: In tearing it up, what were you feeling?

MT: I didnít want him, them, to have my treasure. I wanted to destroy. If I canít have it, I will not allow you to enjoy my pleasure, and I felt good about the few pages that I ripped up. That ended right there. We were allowed to take one, like a box of goodies, goodies of our clothes and so forth, for the whole family. It was like a basket type. What would you call it? A basket type?

JF: Like a wicker basket?

MT: Yes, wicker, it was quite large, like a desk size.

JF: Like a hamper? A wicker hamper?

MT: Like a hamper. It was rectangular. I would say it was not quite a yard in width and maybe 2 yards in length, and maybe another yard in height. And we put our things in it. Now, prior to that, my mother was preparing, knowing that we were going to be leaving - she was taking - there was no-- it was hard to make up her mind, I guess, what to take with us, but food was important. Now, what can you take in food? Nothing. There was nothing instant like we have now. Dried food, none around. She would take yeast, a block of yeast and mix it with flour and dry it out that way, and then she packed it into bottles and we took some yeast with us. I donít know what for, and one bag of flour, which they didnít allow her to take with us. Then my mother started to rip the sack apart, so finally one of them - she went actually wild. She couldnít take it anymore. A nervous breakdown, I guess, and she started to scream, yelling and crying and they said, ìAh, let her have that sack. Big deal.î In other words, ìI wouldnít use it anyway.î So we took it. It was December 31, 1944. There was a lot of snow all around. Cold. But for some reason, this excitement, this everything, I donít remember being cold. But it was tremendously windy and a whole lot of snow. They took us maybe three and a half kilometers, so thatís what about one and a half mile to the railroad station.

JF: You walked?

MT: We walked, sure, and we had to drag that stuff. But it wasnít too bad on the snow. It was sliding. There was no sleds, we just had to carry and drag whatever we had. We got to the railroad station and there was a lot of soldiers there. All helmets, uniforms, boots, and a lot of guns. It was a very uncomfortable set up. There was no more civilian life at all. Just us; a small herd of people. Empty railroad cars, animal cars, with open doors, and us. Well, we started I guess, they were cold or something, they started counting us out and throwing us into the animal wagons. If I remember, there were 79 people in our wagon, packed like sardines. They slammed the door shut - It was a sliding-type door, and they put the kind of lock you put on that if somebody breaks it you know theyíve broken into it. With lead, wire and lead, so nobody was allowed to open the wagons. There were big cracks in the wagon, just like we see animal wagons. You can see animals through the wagon. This was December 31, and it was probably like 2:30 or 3 oíclock in the afternoon. They did not feed us that day at all, we probably did not eat anything. They locked us in that train and we stayed there till midnight. I remember the whistles, the sirens welcoming New Yearís Eve. New Yearís and we were all in a cage already.

JF: Just waiting at the station?

MT: Just waiting. All those hours cold, windy, but then it got worse because the wind started to whistle. And the people started to sing. They started to do different things to occupy their minds. And I remember that the men were yelling out every so often to change place. change place. At that time I didnít realize what they were doing, but they were changing places on the outside against the wall. Whoever was, had to change. First he was facing the outside, then he would turn around back towards the outside and then they would move in and next group would take the outside line, because they realized that they would all freeze. Constantly, they had to move their feet and everything with a boom, boom, boom, boom. Everybody was marching someplace, and yet you couldnít lift your feet high or anything because you were hitting next person. It was very, very crowded.

JF: The group that you were with were all Polish refugees like yourself?

MT: All Polish refugees, and this group was mostly old women and, of course, women with children, wives that had been left behind from the husbands that had already left, and older, intelligent people. People that had positions. They all had big titles and in Europe it was very fashionable to use a title. If you spoke to the wife of a doctor, you would have to say, ìMrs. Doctor and so and so,î and if it was the wife of an engineer you would have to say, ìMrs. Engineer,î and if it was the wife of a judge, ìMrs. Judge.î Titles were very important in those days. All those people I remember had very big titles. So, finally, around after midnight, after two oíclock in the morning I think, they started moving us out from the railroad station and we started to go and then things got worse. When the train picked up a speed then the wind was really cutting right through the whole thing. I didnít realize it. When we were standing still, we were still warm, but when we started to move, then it was cold, even for us.

JF: How many cars were there? You said there were about seventy-nine people in your car.

MT: Seventy-nine people to the car. I imagine when they let us out, I would say there was around six cars. Not too many. There was an awful lot of horse manure on the floor of that wagon. Later on I heard the adults say that thatís what saved our lives. Horse manure has the heating capacity or something. Whatever they meant by that, I donít know, but it was the insulation from the floor.

JF: How long were you on the train?

MT: We were on the train probably three days until we got to Austria, the first camp.

JF: Were you able to get out of the train at any time? Or receive any food at any time, or were you totally locked up?

MT: No. We were totally locked up. They were not allowed to unlock that door. That door was not padlocked, only was sealed. A wire and lead type lock and if you would break it, they would know. Somebody would have to answer for it, why it was opened. The first stop that they made, that they were allowed to open it, was at some field. It was probably very early in the morning. It was not in the evening. It must have been in the morning, because I can remember the sun coming out, shining over the snow valleys. They allowed us to make a circle and take care of our needs as human beings; to urinate, etc. It was very cold. I know we were huddling around my mother and not knowing what to do. We never did anything like that in the presence of other people, surrounded by people with guns around. Circle was small. They made so many circles, I guess, each wagon, I guess, was not allowed to mingle with the other. They were separate. Each circle. And I remember just one old lady, she was saying to my mother, "How can I?" She also had a very big title, whatever it was. "How can I do it?" I think a judgeís wife. "How can I do this?" No. My mother said, "How can I do this in front of all this?" And the old lady says, "Just lift your skirt, and donít worry about it. We are in a cage now. We are no longer humans. Donít worry about that." So they kept us there for quite a while. I donít know why. Whether they couldnít make up their minds what to do...

JF: You mean they kept you outside?

MT: Outside in the snow. Finally they told us to get back. I donít know if they were searching the wagons. Perhaps somebody was hiding something, some kind of a radio, I donít know, but finally they let us back into the wagons. It felt funny. When I went back to the wagon, the first time I felt like I am secure again, like I am in a house, in a home, because I was brought in from that terrible snow and wind and everything. Back at home. Terrible. Then they locked us up again and started moving slow, choo, choo, choo-- picked up speed and then there was this very ungodly sound, because it was whistling [makes whistling sound] right through the whole darn thing.

JF: The wind was whistling?

MT: The wind, yes.

JF: Did you know exactly your destination? Or you were just told it would be a camp?

MT: Was told Germany. No. Exactly where nobody knew. Then they stopped at some railroad station, still in Hungary, later on in the day and we were yelling, "Brothers," in Hungarian, "Brothers, water, water, brothers, water," because they were watering the tanks. They were not diesels at that time. They were coal. Trains run by coal and they needed water. So they were watering the engine but they would not give us any water. We could hear the water going and we needed water. We wanted water, but I guess they were not allowed to give us any. The next stop was Prague, Czechoslovakia. That was in the daytime, maybe two oíclock, maybe a little bit earlier. They let us out. They opened the trains and Czechs spoke similar language as we did. Similarity is probably like English to South Carolina or something. British to South Carolina. You could tell-- you could figure out; it was enough you could be able to figure out what they were saying.

JF: Was this in the city of Prague, that they stopped the train?

MT: Yes.

JF: In the main railroad station?

MT: Not in the main station. They never stopped in the main. They pulled over to some side a little further, never where you had a roof over your head. Someplace to the side, some kind of spare parking place, probably. There we were allowed - I guess Czechs made that deal with somebody - we were allowed to go to the nearest restaurant. I know we had some hot dumplings, made over steam. And it was so good. They were hot.

JF: You went under guard to the restaurant?

MT: That I donít remember, whether we all went in a group. I know we were in a restaurant and I know they had something red, like red beer, something that people were drinking. I think they even gave it to us; they didnít have milk, I think they gave it to us kids. Something red to drink.

JF: Did you pay for this food?

MT: We had money at that time. We had a lot of money. Hungarian money. Yes. We had actually quite a bit of money, even in the camps, but we couldnít use it. Iíll tell you later on what we did with the money.

Tape three, side one:

JF: You said that the Czechs made an arrangement?

MT: Yes, we are in Prague right now, in a restaurant. Again, I donít know whether I seen other people or whether it was just us children that they allowed out, or whether we snuck away from the train to get something to eat, because we became like hunted animals later on. On instinct we would run and do things, which I will tell you later on what we did in Vienna.

JF: This was after you were in Prague, now?

MT: After we were in Prague. I know that we were some small restaurant, not too far from the railroad station; not a restaurant, something like quick-foods something where you could get something to eat.

JF: This was the stop after Prague?

MT: Yes, in Prague. And we had some food but we didnít bring any food with us so I guess we ate some there and drank some red liquid. I think it was probably beer or wine; it was probably wine because we drank in Hungary; it was like in France, in Hungary everybody drank wine. Not in our house, but we went to Hungarians, to Lotsieís house, and they would give us wine to drink. My parents would get tremendously upset. We would come back, "What did you drink?" We were happy. We would say, "Well, they gave us wine." "What!" Well, in Prague, I think they give us beer, but it was red or at least dark, maybe bock. So the Czechs made some kind of deal At that time I didnít know. They offered my father, they told him to run, to escape from the train and theyíll help us.

JF: Why did they single out your father?

MT: He had Czech-- his mother was born in Czechoslovakia.

JF: How did they know that?

MT: I guess he mentioned it to them, probably. He probably mentioned something about the place where his mother was born. How far is it from here? or something. He probably asked.

JF: Was it in this little restaurant where you were, or were these Czech guards?

MT: Thatís something I just found our recently. I mean afterwards. I do not remember, given this opportunity to hear that we were offered something. And, of course, I didnít know what was happening anyway. To me it was a great thing that I was eating something.

JF: As he told you about it, where had he met these people?

MT: That was in a railroad station. I donít know exactly where, but Czechs whispered to him that you may run and we will help you, but then my mother said, "You must be kidding. Look at my children." And then, of course, we had my fatherís mother with us and a crippled sister. She said, "You must be kidding. They will shoot us on the first -- They will get us before we have a chance to run." So, we stayed. I guess they thanked them for the offer. Somebody must have approached them and said, "You know what? We can help you." But there was no chance because, yes, you can run alone, but you canít run with a family. Nobody can run with four kids, six, eight people just. Then they locked us up again and we were on our way to Germany. There wasnít much we could see through there-- cracks on the train. But we were observing. The territory was changing. Once it was mountains, one was trees and then city, and then again just open fields. Finally we were in Austria. We were driving by a big concentration camp, big towers on the corners, and tremendous fencing around like I never saw in my life. Thatís the kind of setup-- and they were saying, "That that is where Horthy, Miklos is-- was taken to." Now Horthy, Miklos was President [Regent] of Hungary at the time I was there. Thatís a name I remember because they had a lot of songs written about him, Horthy, Miklos. He was arrested and taken there by Germans and thrown into the camp.

JF: What camp was this?

MT: It was in Austria. I donít know. I really donít know, and I still donít know because I never did inquire. I remember seeing-- I still see the picture and they said, "Thatís where he is," and we wonder what kind of camp we will be in. Shortly after that we landed in Vienna, Vienna shortly, I donít know how shortly, but my next memory is Vienna, Austria. A big ferris wheel. In Poland, they call it ìVienna wheelî, a big one, not too far from the railroad station that I can see. A real huge one. Looking at it the way I see it now itís probably like 200 feet in diameter, probably. A real huge ferris wheel; the railroad station not too far from it. Awful lot of destruction in the area from bombs. A lot of small fragments of bombs and a lot of small, like metal, more bigger than beebees that they put into bombs-- shrapnel type things, laying all around and we were asking, ìWhat is that?î ìThatís from the bombs. That kills better-- All of that metal flying around.î Then we were let out of the trains because we have reached our destination. They were going to do something with us in Vienna, now. We had to wait and wait. No food.

JF: You had been on the train three days?

MT: Three days. Three days, I think, at least. Maybe it was four by the time we got to Vienna. I think it took about three days to get to Prague and then another day probably from Prague to Vienna, American planes, or, was it some other instance when we were traveling? Perhaps it was later. It was not that early because I donít think American planes were in that area. But one time we were chased by American planes, and they parked the train in a tunnel for quite a while and then they started again, but I think it was later on when they took us from one camp to another. In Vienna, here we are in Vienna. We are all out of the train now, waiting under guns. Now we, as boys, I and my older brother, we were the messengers in Hungary for my father. Whatever messages he wanted to send, political messages, signals from him to his subordinates, he would use us and we would deliver the messages, not knowing what is in them but deliver the envelope, deliver the piece of paper.

JF: You were aware of what kind of work he was doing?

MT: Yes, and we were very strongly taught that we are Poles and our-- we owe our country our lives, so whatever we did to destroy the enemy, you must remember that you are a Pole. So, in Vienna we saw the express trains for the first time in our lives. They were electrical trains, full of German brass, soldiers. In the windows, we could see them. Somehow we got away, me and my brother, far enough that we found a piece of railroad track, a good sized metal, maybe about 4 feet, 31/2 feet in length, and we went and we put it across the railroad track on one side, propped it up with rocks, and ran back to our group, to our parents, and we said, "Do you know what we did? Just watch this. The next train that comes through here is going to go off. We put a piece of steel across the tracks." And my mother said, "Do you know what you did? We are all dead, as soon as the train goes off, we are all dead, these soldiers with these guns will shoot us immediately." We had to sneak back, crawl back, almost, pull and jerk this thing out, we had a hard time pulling it out. I donít know how we pulled it out, it was a heavy thing, and within seconds, half a minute or so, the train comes through. (makes sound). Electrical. And that was the end. Now we are very happy that we did something wonderful, but it was actually something very stupid.

JF: You felt good when you did it?

MT: We felt good, but it was a stupid act. Maybe a hundred or soldiers or whatever would have got messed up but, then, all of us would have been dead, because they never did hesitate to do that, I guess. From there they took us to the nearest camp, Strasshof. Strasshof from Vienna is probably 3 Ω kilometers, something like that, not too far. It is a small community, probably, but it was a camp, with snow all over. They had...

JF: This was in Austria?

MT: Austria. The first camp we went to, Strasshof. As soon as we went in, who meets us at the gate, in beautiful German uniforms, shiny, scary, but the language is Ukrainian. "Welcome to the camp," in their language. I didnít realize what that meant, but my parents must have. Not everybody was from the same territory that we were in that group. Some people came from Warsaw, some came from completely different parts of Poland, and they just ended up in Hungary. Now, we were from the territory that they were after us. We ran away from them. They recognized one man, two men. One was a police chief in one city, another was his assistant to the police chief.

JF: Who recognized them?

MT: The Ukrainians.

JF: The Ukrainian guards recognized them.

MT: They werenít even guards. They were hired. They had almost SS uniforms, almost Gestapo-type uniforms; they were the Gestapo-type something. They had those dark uniforms, not the regular grey. They had the beautiful officerís thing. I remember in a barrack, they walked up to him and took out the big gloves. They had the big gloves behind their belts, just like knights, and hit him across the face and said, ìMeine liebe Plata,î my dear Plata. His name was Plata, and he looked at the guy and he got white all over. I didnít know what that meant, and that was the only incident, and they called him out. They went out, a couple goonies came in, Ukrainians in regular uniforms, gray uniforms, took him...

JF: Took Plata?

MT: Took Plata, and I forgot the other guyís name, older guy. The other guy was like 60 or 70 years old...

JF: This was the police chief?

MT: Police chief. Plata was-- I went to school with his children, his sons. He was a little bit younger than my father was, I think, the assistant police chief. It turned out later on, that they took them out, both of them, and maybe 6 hours later, at night, it was late at night, when the old man came back.

JF: The old man was the assistant or the chief?

MT: The chief.

JF: The chief and Plata was the assistant.

MT: The old man came back to the barrack, like that.

JF: Holding his head?

MT: Holding his head with no teeth-- I donít know, like a regular train ran through his head and everything. And they were talking to him. I guess he couldnít hear, just very-- probably beat up. The other guy never came back.

JF: Plata never came back? MT: No. Plata, I found out, because we were all so curious what happened, we talked to the sons, what happened. He arrested a guy for stealing a pig.

JF: The Ukrainian guard?

MT: The Ukrainian was in jail. Plata arrested him and put him in jail. Now I did not mention it. When Germans came to Poland, the first thing they did is they released the prisons. All the prisoners got a rank of some sort and they said, "You know whom to get, go and get them." So there was the one thing, to control the territory like that when you just take over, you release the prisoners and those people know who the people were in charge, who the people they hated. "Go and get them." So he was one of them. He had already a beautiful position in German hierarchy, in German organization. Well, things were very sad. Awful lot of Ukis. They were very happy. They were cheerful at night, they were singing in their quarters. They had a beautiful sculpture, a still remember a beautiful sculpture of a naked woman in front of their quarters. One of them must have been an artist. Made from snow.

JF: Made from snow?

MT: Snow. Because there was so much snow. It was a huge sculpture. Huge. So they had a ball, they had fun.

JF: You were totally in a barrack?

MT: Totally in a barrack. Yes.

JF: Just kept in a barrack, with your family?

MT: Yes.

JF: Not separated in any way?

MT: No, with everybody. In barrack I guess you can put in 100 people, I donít know.

JF: With any kind of bedding or...?

MT: That I donít remember whether we had any bedding. I know there was a wooden Pritsche that was a German word, Pritsche they call it, a wooden type, like a table. Thatís your bed. I donít remember whether they had straw, sacks on top that you could lay on the straw or not, I donít know. I donít remember. I remember straw from one place, someplace, I donít know which camp, maybe it was Strasshof. On straw maybe. From there on when we went to the next camps it was just wooden planks and nothing else, and a wooden pillow that tapered off at the end of the bed. That was for your head.

JF: What kind of food were you given?

MT: The food in Strasshof I donít even remember, because I guess it was too much of a shock. First camp, the first complete captivity, one hundred percent control of our time and everything, but they took us from Strasshof later on to Neumark. Neumark is Bavaria, I think. No, we went from Strasshof to Berlin. We went through Berlin. Yeh, we went through Berlin, I remember that experience.

JF: What is this that you have written?

MT: Austria, close to Vienna, is Strasshof.

JF: Oh, okay.

MT: From then...

JF: How long were you in Strasshof?

MT: Not too long. This was like a processing camp where they did what they had to do. They segregated, they divided, they squeezed out all the juices. The next one-- we went outside Berlin-- but I remember-- okay, we went into Berlin. We were in Berlin maybe three days.

JF: You were taken off the train?

MT: No, from Strasshof, they put us on a train and they were taking us towards Berlin, to a camp.

JF: A camp in Berlin?

MT: In Berlin. Now, we spoke Hungarian well, and there were Hungarians also in Berlin area that were traveling to Berlin. We got mixed up with Hungarians and we spoke very well. We mingled with the Hungarians and in the evening - they always had air raids in Berlin. It was the first time I saw a big city, huge city. Beautiful buildings. And I remember air raid shelters had maybe about two feet of rubber cover on the top of the bunker, and it was explained later on that when the bomb hits that it will kick the bomb off, or the bomb will not go off directly on the shelter. We were taken as Hungarians, so we were taken into an air raid shelter during air raid. After the air raid, they took us into the Red Cross facility, like a hotel, in Berlin to feed us, but before we finished eating, something happened. They discovered that we are Poles.

JF: Were you under German guard at that point?

MT: Air raid got-- something got messed up during the air raid. We were chased-- we joined the wrong group when we were running.

JF: I see.

MT: We joined the wrong group, and we went without guns, and these people were taken with guns. So, we ran with the Hungarians because we knew what they were saying. ìThey are bombing, letís go, letís go, letís go.î So we yelled same way the kids, ìLetís go.î But they start feeding us, somebody discovered that we were talking in Polish or something-- oh, my God. It was just like the world came to an end. Everything was grabbed from in front of us and we were pushed, pulled, turned, and finally we were back under guns again. They wouldnít even allow us to finish whatever we had on our plate. So, there we were back, and my parents were saying, "Well, we knew it would happen, but we wanted you to eat." I donít know, I think it was my younger brother, the youngest, that made a sound that sold us out. Polish sound. From there they took us to Wilhelmshaven, about 13 kilometers from Berlin, east from Berlin.

JF: And what was that?

MT: That was a camp, again controlled by Ukrainians. Every camp I was in, Ukrainians fully controlled each camp.

JF: Now, in Berlin, were you actually in a camp?

MT: No, in Berlin, we went just through Berlin.

JF: You just went through Berlin?

MT: A couple of days we spent there, because of air raids they could not move us, and we got messed up with Hungarians for about 6 hours or so, and then went back. But we stayed in Berlin in captivity there, and another-- it was a facility of some sort, but it was not a nice facility. Where Hungarians were, it was a nice facility that we got chased out of. Wilhelmshaven was another camp. Now this camp, again, is wires, towers, and all this nonsense and everything else. There I remember very good food, for a change. I donít know why, but I remember a piece of bread in the morning, piece of margarine and a little bit of some kind of jelly. Jello.

JF: Jelly? or jello?

MT: Sweet. Made from...

JF: To put on the bread?

MT: Yes.

JF: Jelly.

MT: Jelly. Made from fruit of some sort. They had that. I donít know whether they had milk for us in the morning, but I was surprised, the way I remember, the food was best of everything we had so far, that was in that camp.

JF: What kind of camp was this?

MT: It was a typical camp again for the Poles, I think.

JF: Primarily Poles?

MT: It was not a political-- it was for the Poles, I think. It was for working.

JF: It was a work camp?

MT: A work camp, I think, because it was not one of those major ones that they had, strictly political where they threw Jews and Poles in. Political Poles. It was not whatever you call them.

JF: Concentration camps?

MT: Yeh. Well, no, the names I was going to go through [unclear]. The only one I can think of is Auschwitz.

JF: Not an extermination camp?

MT: No. It was not one of them. We did not have to wear a striped uniform, but we had to wear a "P" on our heart.

JF: "P" for...

MT: Pole, but it was a "P" in the color of the Ukrainian flag. It was a yellow "P" on a blue background. Ukrainians have yellow and blue as their national flag. Now ours is white and red, so we had to use their color and you had to wear it on your heart and it was in the shape of a diamond. My mother has one and I was going to bring it and I forgot to. We still have one. Then we had to have it sewn on our clothes.

JF: This was in Wilhelmshaven?

MT: No, that started from Strasshof. From then on we always had to have "P".

JF: This was on your own clothes, not on any uniform?

MT: Yes. Perhaps maybe in Strasshof we didnít have it because they would have recognized us. Maybe it started with Wilhelmshaven, because I know that we were marked later on. Maybe it was because of a mishap or whatever. But this was organized camp. This they knew what they were doing and we had to wear this and then we were started to feel, like I mentioned-- The food, I thought, was excellent, but here they started to dig around about peopleís background in Wilhelmshaven. Every individual had to go and be interviewed or interrogated to find out what his background was, what he was doing, what he was doing in pre-Poland, what kind of job he had...

JF: Who was doing the interrogation? The Germans or the Ukrainians.

MT: The Ukrainians, because we could not speak German. My parents could speak German and Ukrainian because that was the territory that had German colony and so forth.

JF: Were the Germans in control of the camp and the Ukrainians were the workers who were...?

MT: The workers. Well, Germans were more or less on the outside. I could not touch the Germans, but they were the last closing gate, but closer to us were the Ukrainians. The ones that would kick you and talk to you and so forth were the Ukrainians.

JF: You were then interrogated, also?

MT: No, I was not.

JF: Just your father and your mother?

MT: My father and mother and all the elders.

JF: What did they find out?

MT: Thatís when, a lot of-- I just remembered that my father said something to my mother one night, that he will not talk. "He will not talk. I can trust him. He will not talk." He was-- they must have been talking about underground activities they had in Hungary, the individual that they were suspecting, and they were interrogating more and more and more. And my father said, "He will not talk, I am sure. He will not talk." And so, they were trying to remove all the organization from the group, the way I see it now. They didnít want anything to let go, to pass by their fingers. If somebody was doing something against the system, or if he was doing something for the system, prior to the war, for the other system, then he is evil and not worth anything. But they had pillows and they had sheets in that camp. I still canít figure it out, ëcause itís the only camp they had. Perhaps itís because it was close to Berlin, to tell somebody that this is how we run the camps. I donít know.

JF: So it might have been shown as a model camp?

MT: Perhaps. Perhaps some Germans, perhaps wanted to see what the camps looked like. I donít think the Red Cross had anything to do with it, but I think perhaps some individuals in their hierarchy wanted to know, "What do you mean you are making camps? What do they look like? And, sure, it was closest to, letís drive up to, we will show you." So they had that. So perhaps that is why they also had food, but they were very, very nasty, because everybody was tight-lipped, more and more. Pretty soon, nobody wanted to talk. Nothing. Everybody just-- so things were happening there.

JF: You were still with your family?

MT: Yes, I was still with the family.

JF: In a mass kind of sleeping arrangement?

MT: Yes, the open barracks, open barracks and latrines, whatever you call them, bathrooms, were outside. Never inside a building, you had to go outside. It was a wooden type, with a hole in the ground, but you could more or less sit down on it, but in that camp I donít remember if it was too dirty, but in the others...

Tape three, side two:

MT: So, we stopped at Wilhelmshaven, the camp. It was the first camp that I saw sheets on the bed. It was very nice and that was the camp that I finally realized what my mother saved, the yeast, dry yeast. It was not in existence at that time. The cooks, the people in charge of cooking, people in charge of everything, were Ukrainians. Now, we, living with the Ukrainians, it was no big deal speaking their language for my parents. They still felt probably comfortable to talk to them. My mother made a deal with the cook, one of the cooks, and I remember him speaking a beautiful Polish language. They were all Polish citizens who went to schools. Of course, they were just like anybody else, except they were fighting for something that they never had, their country. She told him that she has yeast. He said, "What?" I said, "Yeast." And he says, "Yes, but itís probably spoiled." And she says, "No, itís dry." "Never heard of it." She says, ìI have it here. If I can, if you allow me to use your oven to bake something" -- we had still some flour from Hungary and yeast-- ìI will give you some." He said, "All right." So she had to give him a certain amount of yeast and he allowed her to use the oven to put her mixture into it and, then, also as a token of appreciation, he gave her a bottle of butter, melted butter. Thatís how how he kept it, in a bottle, so we would have to put it on something. So I remember she baked, not too much. I guess she didnít have too much flour or he wouldnít give us too much, but she baked cakes, similar to [unclear]. They had no nuts on them or raisins or anything but about that size, maybe about 30 of them, just ...

JF: Small rolls.

MT: Small rolls. I donít know if they had eggs, whether he gave her eggs or not, I donít know.

JF: This was Ukrainian.

MT: Ukrainian, because he was, that was his kitchen. They were in charge of everything, but they allowed her to do that. So, she brought to the barrack, and put it under the pillow and I remember each time I went there under the pillow to take one out, I felt so guilty, because I knew that my parents didnít eat any of them, and I was also, I felt terribly guilty that my younger brother probably wants it, that this will run out.

JF: Had they designated how many rolls each of you was to have, or did they just put them there-- knowing that you would get them?

MT: They just put them there.

JF: And you knew that they werenít eating any?

MT: We knew, and we also knew that each other, of each one was not getting their share and I, as an older brother, the other two-- I felt bad about reaching for it.

JF: For your younger two brothers?

MT: Yes.

JF: You didnít think that they were getting...

MT: I felt that I shouldnít-- I should leave it so they have more, because I knew that this was only something that just happened now and we wouldnít have it anymore. And that was true. We never had that anymore because I guess she didnít have anymore because I guess she didnít have anymore yeast. She must have probably used part of it and gave the rest of it away and that was the end of it. But then, again, thatís not quite right because I donít whether you need yeast, no, you donít need yeast for piroges. They had bunkers, not bunkers, underground holes, and in those holes they also had little cooking facilities like barbecue things.

JF: Where was this, in Wilhelmshaven?

MT: Because constantly the Americans were bombing Berlin, constantly.

JF: Oh, so they built the bunkers as part of the camp?

MT: Built the bunkers underground. Yes, oh yes, because you were the necessary commodity. You had to hide. You could not-- in the first place, you could give Americans a signal. You had to hide. In the second place, they needed you to clear up the territory after the bombing. My mother made some pirogis, I remember. Thatís something like-- uh Jewish have something like, a dumpling.

JF: Kreplach, a dumpling.

MT: But something happened. They yelled because there was some smoke getting out so that was like a signal to the Americans.

JF: Was she also involved with the Ukrainian cook when she made the perogies, or...?

MT: No, that was-- I think she still had water-- I mean flour and I think thatís all it is flour and water-- and they had heat like a barbecue thing that you put a few sticks together and you did something.

JF: So, she made it in the bunker?

MT: I remember she made like 6 of them, I think, and again there was that pain of whoís going to eat. And, then, shortly after that, one day came the big bombing of Berlin. What a sight and what a sound! We were tremendously scared but so eagerly happy about the event.

JF: You were hidden in the bunker?

MT: We were-- yes, but we were only thirteen kilometers from Berlin and that bombing lasted like 4 or 4 Ω hours. Wave after wave of Americanís planes were just coming in and dumping all of their load on Berlin. For 3 days or more after the bombing, Berlin was on fire and money was coming down even into our camp, German Marks, but they were all burned. Of course, what was the difference? You couldnít buy anything anyway.

JF: Where was the money coming from?

MT: Banks were hit, I think, and the heat took them up in the air and the wind threw them around. Tremendous heat. It was, like I said, Berlin was burning for a long time.

JF: And pieces of money were actually floating down?

MT: Yes. We had pieces was burned. But things started getting nastier and nastier. The Russians were coming. Father had to work to fortify the roads. They were building-- blockading like roads, forcing the traffic through the middle of the roads. They were building site-- something.

JF: Was this the first time that you had been in a work situation in a camp? This was the first one you were in long enough to be in this situation.

MT: This was the first time we were actually put into work.

JF: Were you also working?

MT: Not in that camp, yet. In that camp, I did not know what work was, and I donít believe my older brother-- He was 12 already and was still not working either.

JF: He was twelve.

MT: He was not working either.

JF: How long were you in this camp?

MT: This camp, we were probably 2 months, 3 months. My parents, somehow, for some reason my father didnít like that set-up there near Berlin. Maybe the Ukrainians were too strong in control or something. He was afraid of something. They found out, I still donít know how, that somebody needs workers, and they made some arrangements with somebody. "Why donít you send us Poles, x number of people to the working site there?" I donít know what happened, but finally they did take a whole bunch of us. They sent us from Wilhelmshaven to Bayreuth, and there again we didnít stay too long, but Neumark was the last one.

JF: B-A-Y-R-E-U-T-H. Which was the camp that you were at after Wilhelmshaven?

MT: Wilhelmshaven. But that one I hardly remember. There was a short camp and I told my father, "Isnít that something? I remember Strasshof. I remember Berlin and Wilhelmshaven."

JF: Did he volunteer to go?

MT: No, they either heard through this Ukrainian that they are thinking about shipping some people, or something. But he asked if we could do some work in that area. If you need people? And now, later on, actually I found out that that was a very good move that they did, because Russians were coming. I gather the reason they did this, they were, again afraid of Russians. Russians were coming very rapidly towards Berlin. War was coming to the end. My father was working on those preparations to welcome Russians. German defense system. To stop them, to destroy them. We were moved through Bayreuth. I donít remember how long we were there, to Newmark.

JF: Now Bayreuth was also a camp for Poles?

MT: They were all camps.

JF: But was it for Poles in particular though or...

MT: The only place, where there were non-Poles in the camp was Neumark. There were some Russians and there were some French, but all the others-- I never talked to anybody. But I still donít remember talking to anybody anyway except your immediate barrack surrounding. I donít know if we werenít allowed to go another barrack. I never was in another barracks, just my own, ever.

JF: The people who were in the camps that you are describing were primarily refugees? They were not political?

MT: No, they were all political but they were trying not to be labeled as political.

JF: Okay. The Jews were not in these camps, or Gypsies.

MT: I donít recall. No. No-- where they were-- Gypsies because I would recognize them. Jews, I would not recognize them as such, but I would hear...

JF: They would be labeled?

MT: In camps, perhaps not. I donít know.

JF: You were wearing ìP.î

MT: We were wearing "P". That is correct. That is true, I donít remember a Star of David in the camps, none of the camps. I would probably hear Ukrainians use the word, derogatory word "Jew," like "Pole," because that I would recognize and I donít remember anything like that.

JF: The Russians and the French that you are describing do you have any idea how they ended up in Germany?

MT: I believe that they were deserters, or something, some kind of...

JF: But, not prisoners of war? That would have been a separate, totally separate.

MT: No, they were like civilians, but some civilians that were not to be trusted, I guess. They were captured civilians, just like us Poles, that they could not trust them on their own.

JF: They were in the wrong place at the wrong time.

MT: Yes, they didnít want to leave them free, so they had to lock them up, to keep an eye on them.

JF: So, the fifth camp, the fifth location that you were in-- you pronounce it N E U M A R K?

MT: Yes.

JF: Which was where, approximately?

MT: In Bavaria, I think.

JF: This was in Bavaria?

MT: I think. Neumark. I am not sure, but in that camp I was a woman. That I labeled myself. I think I heard my parents talk about that. I had to go to work with my mother until before the war ended. Then I went with my older brother and father to work. Men were men and any male below 12 was a woman, went to work with the women.

JF: This is your label?

MT: That is my label because I was not allowed to go with men to work, and there were no children, so we went with women.

JF: How did you feel? With that separation?

MT: There I felt very bad, because I loved my father. I loved my brother and I loved my mother, but I felt that I am, even within our own group, that I am something not right. I canít go with my brother, and I canít stick to my father. I am forced to be with my mother and I donít know-- just felt that I just donít fit into this worldís puzzle. Like there is something wrong with me, something terribly wrong. I didnít realize that I was actually lucky that I wasnít able to be used fully yet.

JF: You understood the technical cutoff of the age of 12?

MT: Yes.

JF: But the feeling of working with the women and not being identified with the male side...

MT: It wasn't that much. It was my own feeling of what is wrong with me. What is actually wrong with me? I understand that I am not quite 12 but I am capable, I am the same size as my brother; I am capable of doing the same thing. It was actually false man's ego, I think; I wanted to do more. Isnít that something?

JF: So you felt that you should have been picked anyway, that the age was an irrelevant issue, that somehow they had not chosen you to go with the men?

MT: Yes, that I am with women.

JF: What kind of work were you doing with your mother?

MT: It was mostly gathering wood for kitchen. They would not allow us to work in the kitchens because then we would grab some food.

JF: Did you feel that the work was beneath your abilities, you know, beneath your strength?

MT: No, there was-- actually work was hard.

JF: The work was still hard?

MT: It was very hard and I remember one incident that is deeply buried in my mind. It was very snowy. For some reason it was always snowing. Always cold. We went out into woods, again Ukrainian guards, no guns, just with big sticks, night sticks. Each guard had two people, or something like that, to watch. We went into woods, to pick woods, to gather them up, make big bundle, put in on your shoulders and bring it back. They tell you when the bundle is big enough. Prior to that, airplanes went by and there were some leaflets dropped. God help you if you touched a leaflet! Somehow, somebody managed to bring one back to camp, and the word went around about what was happening in the world. I had no socks. I had some kind of shoes. Snow was up to my knee, cutting, going up the mountain. I told my mother that my feet are freezing. She said, "Take off your shoes and start rubbing them with the snow, your feet." First she went up to help me and he yelled terribly, so we had to separate, but then she said, "Don't forget. Rub your feet with snow." I did that and my feet started to freeze up to my ankles, hot ankles, up to my knees. They started losing the feel of it, and I remember my mother started again rubbing it. She ripped off part of her dress and wrapped it around my feet and told me to stick my feet with that stuff into the shoes. She took my load of wood on her back and the jerk ran up and knocked her down and told me to carry mine and she is to carry her own. "What do you think this is?"

JF: This was the Ukrainian guard?

MT: Yes. Then we get to the gate, close to the camp, then the siren blows. Air raid. Who cares? An air raid would probably liberate us from the whole thing. You are not allowed to go back into barrack. You have to crawl into the very ugly hole they have in the ground. It was probably about 8 feet, six, seven feet deep and about 4 or 5 feet wide, just like a ditch, with some lumber on top, some cut wood on top and some dirt thrown on it, full of water, mud. When you get in it you are in mud up to your knees again. Terrible. They chase us in there. [unclear] My mother says, "When I give you the signal, you run for the barrack." I said, "But what about you?" "I'll take care of myself." So she started arguing with the Ukrainian. "He says, "I guess my cane didn't hit you in the back yet," and she says, "It's not going to," So then he started swinging at her, and she says, "Run!" and I started to run. Then he realized what we were doing. He wasn't allowed to run in the yard, either, because there was an air raid. So he takes the stick and he throws it like they used to get rabbits in Europe.

JF: The stick would move in a circular motion?

MT: Yes, so you can get somebody like that. Well, I ducked, and it went over me. He was a good thrower, you know. He had strength. And I dove into the barrack and I crawled into a corner under my pritcha, under my bed, and I just stayed there.

JF: Shaking?

MT: There was no heat in the barracks either, or whatever. Well, after a while, my mother came in, everybody came back. He was looking for me and my mother told me not to get out from under the bed. He was looking, I guess for me, to do something to me also. From then on I always experience problems with my feet, when it gets cold. In wintertime, summertime, it's okay, but in the wintertime I start getting this problem.

JF: What kind of problem? Pain?

MT: No, my, it like itches, my skin starts cracking and I have some kind of skin problem I guess.

JF: A skin problem, primarily, with your feet?

MT: In summertime it's okay, but in the wintertime when it starts getting cold, and then it gets pain, like I get cold, like at work, I can be sitting and everybody is warm, and I start feeling this cold all the way up to my knees. This cold, real cold. At home when I sleep in the wintertime I have to put socks on. In the summertime I am okay. Maybe it's psychological, or something. But it is giving me some pain.

JF: Were you ever punished for escaping from the line like that, at that time?

MT: No, not really that I remember. The worse thing that I would get was a good kick. And then you would fly. But that was no punishment. For some reason I never cried. Never experienced any-- or showed anything that would make my parents' day worse. I never asked for food, or asked for anything.

JF: You never showed anything that made your parent's day worse? Were you feeling it, or did you have to push down those feelings at that time?

MT: I guess you always feel it. [Long pause] You try not to. Knowing that actually by doing so you would hurt more your parents.

JF: You were trying to protect them from more hurt?

MT: You were trying to be a super adult and it's unreal. It's hard to become an adult at such and early age.

JF: You didn't have much opportunity to be a kid?

MT: No, but I actually don't miss it too much except when my kids are going through something now at school. Parties or something, dances, I want them so badly to participate in it. I want to have so much fun in everything they do. I want them to experience their time in life. I'm telling-- often I tell them, "Don't watch that TV. That has nothing to do with you." That soaps or something, like my daughter would be watching. "That's way over your head. Over your age. Why don't you live your own age, because before you know it, it is gone and you will miss that. Don't get involved in that. Live your own time, your own age." So actually, I am very conscious of somebody being young and enjoying it, but I don't really know what it is. To be honest, I don't miss that. I don't think I miss it. I want somebody else to have it.

JF: When you were in this camp, was there any opportunity, with your brothers or with any other boys of your own age, to do anything you would have done outside the camp? To have talked, to have joked, to have shared any kind of child-like experience? Was there any escape among you?

MT: No, there was no such thing. That's the whole thing. There was no such thing. Not even making a ball out of a rag or something. There was no such thing as playing. I don't know why there wasn't. I know why, because it wasn't to be. But nobody even tried, because I think that everybody sensed and felt and knew the terrible thing we were in. And you tried to pitch in and not make it any worse. People were hungry, and you don't want to cry because some did. Some kids would cry that, "Mother, you ate more than we did," when she would get something. And that, to me at that time, it was terrible. How could they say that? She was a woman and she needs to eat. I couldn't say that and I didn't ever want to say it. I told myself that I would never say it. So, you tried not to. The food that they gave us was terrible.

JF: Were you living there still with your father and brother, even though you were in separate work details?

MT: Yes, yes, we were all living-- but that's true, just at night we would see each other. We didn't see each other all day. There was nothing to eat. That's the sad part of it. It was terrible. That was the worst that I remember.

JF: Food was the worst?

MT: The worst camp period the attitude, everything was just terrible. Adults would ask for food and they said, "You need food?" and they would call us stinking Polacks, the Ukrainians.

JF: Was there any effort that you know of to try to form some resistance in the camp, or escape?

MT: There was actually, probably it was even actually played down. There was no escape once you were deep into the enemy's territory. It would have actually have been the worst thing.

JF: It would have been very dangerous.

MT: No, because later on I became, I guess 12, and was capable, or allowed to go with my brother to clean out, after bombing, the men would be sent to town to clean up the place and take unexploded bombs-- some things did not explode and the Germans would hide far away and the Ukies, and tell you where to dig a hole, where to carry the bomb, where to put it in, drop it in-- the men would try to put it in carefully, slowly, and then mark it, mark the place. But it was all walking-- was not somebody takes you. You walk to town, you walk back. You carried those bombs around and you don't bury them in the center of the city. You took them far outside the city and bury them.

JF: This is when you were working with the men?

MT: So what I am saying is that escape was not even thought of, because there were the Hitlerjugend. They were young children. They would chase us because my father would try to tell us a few words in German, Knochen. We would buy Knochen, bones, Blutwurst.

JF: You could buy bones?

MT: We had money.

JF: And you were allowed to spend it?

MT: My father would say, "Go try the butcher shop and maybe he will sell you some bones."

JF: And you were allowed to do that?

MT: No, you would have to break away from that-- but as a kid it was no big deal, because kids are sneaks and they can always-- they, I guess, don't pay attention too much to the adults they watch. So we would break away. But here we had this so we would try to hide that.

JF: Try to hide the [unclear].

MT: And of course we looked like scrounges, like bums from the worst. I mean we never washed our clothes or anything. Whatever we had was with us.

JF: You were wearing your own clothes during all this time?

MT: Yes, whatever it was that we had, yes. I would go-- my brother was older, I would hold the door to the butcher shop, first we would look to see if there were any people there. If there was too many people, don't try to get in because you are in trouble. But if there's only one person or maybe nobody, just the butcher, I open the door and hold it there. He walks in. Knochen, and if the guy doesn't yell, then I come in also. If he yells and the door is open then he runs out like a dog. If he says something, whatever he says, probably "Just a minute," he would take out, would not even put it in a bag just throw a couple of bones to us. I guess he had to be careful. So we would hide the bones under the shirt. It was Knochen. Then I go in. Of course when I opened the door I was hiding. He comes out, "Yes, I got some." Then I go in. Knochen. He gives me a bone. Then my brother messes up his hair. Goes in Knochen.

Tape four, side one:

JF: So your brother and you would alternate going in and asking for bones and if there were more than two boys.

MT: Yes, and then we tried-- and he knew that. Because he would recognize, anybody would recognize, but you were so hungry and so anxious, and here's a person who was willing to give you something, so you keep on going, and so we just keep on switching, and going in and changing our-- take off the jacket and put the jacket on, mess up your hair-- there was no makeup. Finally he yells, "Enough." I imagine. "Heraus." [Get out]. That word we knew. So we get out and we go to the next, look around the next butcher shop. Then we need Blutwurst. Thatís only two things we could buy; Knochen and Blutwurst. Wurst made out of blood. Delicious if you could get it. So they would give us a piece of Blutwurst, the kind ones, usually the older ones, not the younger ones, older butchers.

JF: Did they know you were Polish?

MT: Oh, yes, yes. It was hard to get that. That's the whole thing. Sometimes we got some, sometimes we didn't.

JF: Were you ever caught by the Ukrainian guards for sneaking in?

MT: No, no, but...

JF: How long were you working with your mother and the women?

MT: I would say about, almost the whole time except maybe the last two months of captivity, I was allowed to go with my brother. I think we were in a camp about a year and a half.

JF: You were in this last camp? Or the whole of it?

MT: No, the whole thing. I think the last two or three months I was working with my brother.

JF: Once you were 12?

MT: Yes.

JF: How did it feel to switch over to the men's battalion...

MT: There was no feeling anymore. I think all of the feeling was removed. There was no transition. No big deal. Except I knew that my responsibility now was to get something for the family. To bring something in. To cheat as much as I can, to sneak away from the work force and to buy something. We had money, but we used that money instead of toilet paper, just to get even.

JF: The Polish-- the money you had was Hungarian money?

MT: But it was changed into German Marks.

JF: But you used it anyway.

MT: But we used it because we didn't want them to get it. It was on purpose. It gave us tremendous feeling to use the German Marks for toilet paper. There was no toilet paper anyway. But to use that and just destroy it. There was nothing we could buy.

JF: You've mentioned several things, so-called small things, but things that gave you a good feeling that somehow you were getting back or outsmarting the system. Were there any other instances like that that gave you a little boost, sort of an opportunity to give vent to some of your anger and frustration?

MT: Not really. Because when things later on started to happen, when we were being liberated-- I might as well start from the beginning. Actually one more incident.

JF: Yes.

MT: We had one at that camp, Neumark. I remember when we first arrived, the farmers from the territory came in to the camp to examine the new catch, new people that we were. This was the first time again in my life-- I wasn't that old-- I didn't live that long-- to see people checking human muscles, to see a farmer walk up to a man and check out his muscles, tell him to take off his jacket or whatever he had, a shirt or whatever, and check his muscles or check his teeth. I knew from that time that's how you were checking horses, I knew that, that you have to check horses by their teeth. The teeth would tell you their age and their health. And that's how we were examined, and then the farmer says, "Yes, I will take this and I will take that." But never a family. He just takes what he wants. The rest of the people stay in the camp. He took them to farm to work for them. And that was like being liberated because there should be some food there, there should be something. But one of the younger men were chosen like that that we knew, that the parents knew, to go to the farm. My father, knowing some German, because with Ukies you couldn't make any arrangement in that camp, none whatsoever, because they were very nasty to us, very nasty.

JF: What do you mean, the Ukrainians would not let you work in a German farm?

MT: No, you could not make any agreements with them. Talk to them or anything. They were very nasty to us, very nasty.

JF: And, if the German farmers came to get people from that camp, the Ukrainians...?

MT: That was all right.

JF: That was all right.

MT: Oh, yes. But then later on, in camp you couldn't talk to them. Like "Could I cook something or this or that?" No. Nothing. They were in full control, they were in nasty control. I was just a youngster but I knew like, they had lice problem or whatever, some kind of problems in camps like that, because there was no cleaning facilities. We never took showers, we never did anything, so every so often, I think twice that I remember, they would chase us into the shower room. So, again, when I remember, I went with women, but it was all together, anyway. One side was women and the other side was men. but what they did: there were two tables, small tables, the women were sitting at one table, men had to walk by her table, but his organ on the table and she examined him. Not a doctor, a worker, a camp worker -- a woman.

JF: What was she examining?

MT: Just him as a male. Just for kicks. The women went by guys, and they were just regular workers, they worked for us, and they were just exchanging, sitting there, you know. She sat there for a certain length of time until she got tired of it and then another woman took over and so forth. They were just...

JF: The were not there to be looking for some kind of...

MT: No. Not. They were just to dehumanize you. To remove another part of your natural instinct to be...

JF: Modest?

MT: Yes, and to be yourself, not-- and women the same thing. Men were just sitting there just making a big deal out of it. "There's a woman." The woman would stand in front of his desk and he would do his thing, whatever he wanted to do.

JF: What would they do?

MT: They would just examine them. They were touching them and they were joking to each other and so forth, whatever. Big kicks.

JF: What happened to you?

MT: They would not do anything to me, so I guess they did not have gay individuals there or something, and I was not interesting enough for older women, for mature women. I was never molested or made a fool of that way, but I had to undress and run around naked. I would hide around my mother. Then would come the time that they turned the water on. I don't remember soap or anything, but they put the water on. They would turn the water on. It was so cold you could die. So everybody's shivering. There I was hiding under my mother to protect me from the cold water, and pretty soon the water stops. Thank God. Aha! Another shower, hot, as hot as you can make it. You can't stand it. You start screaming and the kids were screaming, hiding. Just playing around, those people. That was showers...

JF: Toying with you?

MT: Terribly.

JF: And again, these were Ukrainian guards all the time.

MT: Ukrainian. Yes, and I am working with one right now. I don't remember him. I know my mother would and I still don't have enough guts to take a picture of him.

JF: He-- the Ukrainian man that you are working with, do you think this is someone that your parents knew or...?

MT: They would recognize him because we go, once a week, to a dinner, certain groups, individuals that work there, we go outside to dinner. It's more or less like a restaurant - beer place, so we have hot meal and a beer or a cognac, whatever, with it. Well, this guy had a few brandies and he started talking about Germany and what camps he was in. He was Ukrainian. So I said, "Which camp were you in?" and he says, "Neumark." Well, I should have kept my mouth shut but I say, "I was in Neumark," and that killed the whole thing. I said, "How comes you were in Neumark?" You are in Ukrainian," and he says, "Yes, but they kept me as a prisoner." "Prisoner of what?" Neumark was divided into two camps. One side of the wall was the animals, us, and the other side were the privileged people, that that took care of us. So he was one of them.

JF: The guards.

MT: Yes, the guards, the workers.

JF: Workers?

MT: The real guards were Germans. They walked with German shepherds. There were towers. It was not a concentration camp where they had uniforms and they were determined to kill you right away, but it was a camp that they were eliminating somebody everyday. Just beating them to death until they didn't move. You didn't know if they died, they just removed them from the premises and you never saw them again. You just-- constantly-- we went to one funeral like that. You never went to a funeral, but something happened and my mother insisted that she wants to have a funeral for that woman, I think it was.

JF: This was in the camp?

MT: In the camp. So they allowed us. Couple, I know that I went there. I was always altar boy. So there we were. There were no priests; they were also removed from our premises. They were in separate places, camps. Funeral, there was no funeral. Somebody said some kind of prayer. Guards. The body was in a paper sack. It was just thrown into a ditch and youíre not allowed to even cover it. On the side there were other bodies laying, like ash. They must have been burning them. There was one young girl that still made some movement. She was laying on that pile of the bodies...

JF: She was still alive?

MT: She was partially alive, and you couldn't do anything.

JF: Were there any kind of public executions, or was it more impromptu beatings?

MT: No, there was no-- in those camps I was in, there was nothing like that. Other camps they had some. No. This was just constant, constant cut-down on food and...

JF: Illnesses and starvation?

MT: If you would ever get ill, that's it.

JF: Was there any medical facility at all? Any medicine?

MT: No, there was no doctor. No way. When the Americans liberated-- that's, that comes later, we went to that farmer, a young man, that was picked by a farmer. Somehow my father made arrangements, like I said, you couldn't make arrangements with Ukrainians, so he made arrangements with a Lagerf¸hrer, or was it a Oberlagerf¸hrer - his assistant lager, camp director, assistant camp director, to allow two of his sons to walk over to that farmer, to go there to visit this guy and came back. No way...

JF: You and your brother?

MT: Ya. "No way." How could-- somehow they made out that we can go. Only us two.

JF: What were you supposedly going to do?

MT: We were supposed to-- they knew that they would not allow us to bring any food in, but eat as much as you can, whatever you can.

JF: And the Lagerf¸hrer...?

MT: No, we were just allowed to go to visit this guy.

JF: That was the premise?

MT: The premise, yes, to go to visit him, because we knew him, and after all, these are young kids and everything, and they were together for x number of years. Why can't they go there and perhaps later on they will be working for this farmer, whatever, blah, blah, blah. So they allowed us to go.

JF: Did he bribe the guard, or the Oberf¸hrer, Lagerf¸hrer?

MT: I don't think you could bribe them. No! They would not be interested in any money; there was nothing like that, because everything that they had-- it was all theirs. Just like a canary you have in a cage. They can bribe you. "If you let me, I'll give you my egg-- oh, you don't have to let me..." [unclear] So my father explained, you can't take a piece of paper to show a map or anything-- explained how to go there. We went there. We found the place, I don't know how. You can't ask anybody, you just have to go through the wilderness, never through populated area, and we got to the place. We recognized it from a distance. We couldn't even run. We were very weak. We got there. Right away he started making signs...

JF: Who? The young man...?

MT: The young man because of the farmer, because he is around and keeping eye on me. We said, "Is there any food around?" and he says, "No." I said, "Come on, we are very hungry." Then we heard chickens in a chicken coop. There must be eggs in it. We got to the chicken coop and grabbed some eggs and the chickens started making an awful lot of noise and the farmer came out. [unclear]. No, no, no, no! We didn't have a chance to say "hello" to this guy or anything. I grabbed a whole egg and pushed it in my mouth and just swallowed it pretending that I don't have anything and I guess my brother even did do it or-- and we had to just run and go before they turned the dogs on us. It was actually more wasted energy than it was worth because-- on the way back...

JF: There was no danger of you being picked up in a situation like that?

MT: I don't think that anybody cares, except my father told us to stay away from populated areas. Don't go through populated areas. We went through just open fields and woods.

JF: Did it cross your mind to keep on going?

MT: No. No. No language. We couldn't.

JF: You didn't have the language?

MT: No. Never. You had something very dear left behind; and the only thing you could do is think how to free them. There was no way you-- It was a tough situation that you were in. Say you could run away. So, where could you go? I don't know. On the way back, there was a German convoy going not too far from the camp, and Americans caught up with them. Three planes, one coming down, going up, constantly just working right through the whole convoy, [made noise] dropping small bombs, napalm, I think, and they just destroyed that convoy beautifully. We knew-- It looked to us that they were bombing the camp. We cried, we kissed, we hugged. That was the end of our parents, the end of everything. As closer we got to the camp, the more we realized, it's not the camp, it's German soldiers, the convoy was caught. They were destroyed right on the road that goes by the camp. Horses-- they still had horses, killed, just upside down, [unclear] trucks, vehicles burning, everything. Well, we got to the camp and told them the news-- Nothing, Germans killed all over. For the next three weeks, I think, all we had to eat, and that is not right away. It was-- it must have been summertime, because those horses blew up real big and after they had exploded already they drug them, and we had to-- the man had to drug the horse in one at a time; one day, one horse, and they would cut the horse's head off and put it at the door of the kitchen, where you walk by to pick up your food. Flies all over it, prop it up so you can see the teeth they even put one-- you can put the stick into the mouth of the horse so it's open and you can really see the teeth, and all the smell and everything. They would give us food made from that meat. But you know? That didn't make any difference. That didn't make any difference.

JF: You were too hungry-- or too desensitized?

MT: I don't know. It didn't change the taste. It didn't do anything. It's unreal, you know. I think about it now. It didn't make any difference. The food didn't taste different. The food was not different.

JF: You said the food in this camp was particularly bad?

MT: It was very bad. The Ukrainians would cook for themselves, let's say, potatoes, in those big kitchen-- whatever they call them, real huge floor-type pots, like what, 150-gallon jobs.

JF: The vats?

MT: The vats, whatever you call them, I donít know what you call them, that steam heats those things. They would cook their food in that, then they would throw some soap in or something, I don't know what, something that made it bluish-- they would throw a lot of water, they would throw a lot of potato peelings, unwashed, and whatever leftovers they had, I imagine they would throw into those containers. Put water, and I think they were putting some soap in probably to get even with us. But soap was hard to get. I don't know what made it bluish. All bluish water. Ugly. And then they would feed it to us, not hot, not cold, like lukewarm.

JF: And that's what you would have, when, at noon-time?

MT: Only once a day, once a day they would give it to us. It was-- when I was with women-- I guess it was around noon-time. Now, in the evening, men, I guess. So maybe it was twice a day.

JF: But that's the only food you got? There was no bread?

MT: No, and when we would get us this liquid, and it would go right through you. It was unreal. And if somebody would find a piece of meat, or something, they would share it, give it to the kid. Share it. By mistake there is meat in this mixture.

JF: You describe the horse and the horse meat that must have been used at some point. Was that-- that was an exception, then?

MT: That was an exception because they were killed a couple of days prior to this. But that was all not sanitary, and everything was cooked to be sanitary. I remember looking around the trash, finding some potatoes and grabbing that. That was more delicious than apples. If you found a potato some place, that was very good. You got completely dehumanized. You had no more feelings about anything. After a couple showers like that, and all that food, and all that nonsense. In the morning, "Good morning" was Ukrainians would open the door and yell, "Alles M‰nner heraus. Verfluchte Donnerwetter, alles M‰nner heraus!" "Damn it to hell whatever. All men, get out." That was good morning. Let's work. Then you had to work, but you always had Verfluchte Donnerwetter! "Damn it to hell," or "God damn it to hell! All the men out!" Then you went.

JF: Was there any kind of religious observance in the camp?

MT: There was once that I remember. I'm glad that you asked that. And I think that's why I can't-- I feel very blue around holidays: Easter, Christmas, I feel terribly depressed. We had, I think it was Easter or something, in one of their garages or something. I remember a big Hitler's portrait, very high, a very big one and underneath they had some kind of a table, altar, Ukrainian Orthodox. Monks were all around it, they dressed differently, and they were singing to Hitler, praying to Hitler, but mentioning God in there, for God to help Hitler, and [unclear] the whole German nation. Ya, that was the religious ceremony we went to.

JF: This was in the last camp?

MT: The last camp, yes.

JF: Who was leading them?

MT: There? There it was their side that they felt probably we need religion. They were Ukrainians. They were allowed to have their religion but they probably felt that this was a sacred time. We should probably allow the rest of the animals to also enjoy this. But I still remember praying, not us, but them praying to Hitler in their language. I never took Ukrainian, but I could understand, because the words are similar. They were Slavish.

JF: It was the one time that that would happen?

MT: That was the only time that I remember. No other thing. Never any school, there was never any medical, nothing.

JF: There was no schooling?

MT: Never. Nothing.

JF: Were you able to maintain any kind of time, either individually or with your family, for any kind of prayer? Did that help at all?

MT: It never happened. On the trains I remember that they were singing religious songs, never political, just religious, to keep them alive because it was cold. Just to get everybody involved, I guess, psychologically to get them involved. Not to give up. Later on, as soon as we hit the camps, they removed all that. Nobody ever talked. Period. About anything.

JF: Did you find that you used or relied on religion at all as an individual?

MT: Yes. Yes. Deeply. For some reason that is the only thing I think that helped us to survive: hoping that there is a miracle around the corner. That something will happen. This cannot be allowed to go any further. May I stop at this point? [tape off and on] Religion actually was the only thing that even us as kids helped us to survive from day to day. For some reason we could communicate by just looking at each other into the eyes, and we all thought about the same thing, that perhaps tomorrow will change. Things will change, but we did not say it out loud because, I guess, you were not allowed to say it aloud.

JF: This was you and your brothers?

MT: Us. Me and my brothers and the parents. Every so often would try to catch their eye, which was very sad. Once you are in that type of situation, it is so sad that just the glimpse of somebody's eye tells you the whole story. You don't want to say why. Like my children. I get so upset. You tell them something and right away comes, "Why? Why?" And I say, "Well, can't you figure out something by yourself?"

JF: There was, in other words, much more non-verbal kind of communication...?

MT: Yes, it was like feeling. It wasn't body language, because there wasn't much of a body. But I think it was just like a...

JF: There was certainly an intimacy about your experiences, shared knowledge of how you were feeling and what you were going through, really seemed to bring your family very close together.

MT: I think that every family at that time was a very closely knit family. All the families in Europe, Jewish, Polish, all of them, and it must have been a terrible tragedy in each case, for each one of them, because what I am saying what I went through, which I didn't go through anything the feeling-- What kind of feeling did a parent have when he saw his child killed in front of him? We all were starved in front of our parents. Something else, something we could not allow right now to happen. If you have a child, to see somebody systematically cut down on food and eliminate their health and their well-being, systematically.

JF: Did you have close contacts with other families or with other children in the camp, or was the family unit the key emotional nucleus for you?

MT: It was actually a family unit, I would say, even though we were in the one barrack, but we were just a group of family.

JF: The six of you, the eight of you?

MT: Yes, I mean as far as the real intimate feeling of sharing this heat, of love that was not allowed to be expressed, I guess, through emotionally, just-- but kindness and sharing there was-- I remember it was throughout the whole system. If somebody was unable to walk, everybody would try to help him because soon as he fell, that was the end of it.

JF: There was mutual support?

MT: It was mutual because, I guess, they all knew they were in the same boat. There is no way out.

JF: You talked before about the one boy who was working for the farmer and you and your brother had known him. Was there any talking, any dreaming, or remembering of times when you were not in this situation, or fantasies about what would be if you were not in this situation as far as what you would be doing? What kind of life you would be leading?

MT: You see, I went through that same question. I asked myself many times. I did not have that. I believe what happens, once you are reduced to that level, you don't have any dreams. You don't recall anything. You just are where you are, but all that is not there. I don't have any recollection of wonderful-- in my case it was Christmas. It was always such a thing where you get presents. Nothing. Never. Never about anything. Or my friends, or playing ball, or something? Never. Yet I was so active before. Bicycles, everything.

JF: You didn't think about these things?

MT: No, never.

JF: Do you think that the dehumanization process that you talked about before...?

Tape four, side two:

JF: We were talking about whether or not such memories would have been part of the dehumanization process, or whether it was too painful to dream outside the present.

MT: Well, I think it was perhaps two, both, but I think the dehumanization did play the major part in it. They removed this beautiful human dream, of becoming, of growing up to become somebody and to live up to your parents' dreams or perhaps to-- whatever. It was all removed. Then it was also painful to go back and, I believe, to play around with something you had before. Something that gave you pleasure. But, also, I think there was a third factor involved: that we were not given the opportunity, the chance, to actually think. That was taken. Each time you were yelled at, and you were pushed and you were moved, so whatever they did, somebody either thought of that, that that's the way to handle people or, if not, they did do a good job and they constantly kept you disturbed and ducking or whatever...

JF: Your energies went toward that instead?

MT: Yes, you never had actually a minute chance. I don't even remember dreaming. I just don't know how I slept, but I never had dreams. I often thought that perhaps when somebody is in jail he dreams about his family, dreams of that. That's not true. I don't believe you have those dreams. They are removed, or maybe it's the defensive mechanism in our subconscious mind that locks everything away. To keep you from losing whatever you have. You had a little mind. It is so easy for a child to lose his mind altogether, if you would realize and compare it to...

JF: How was it when you were liberated, as far as this kind of thinking was concerned? Were you able to resume the fantasies and the thoughts of normal adolescence and that of an average adolescent at a later point, or do you feel that this time affected what happened to you later?

MT: No, it did do something. It was a shock of a tremendous importance in my life. When we were liberated, first the Germans at night chased us out of the camp. The Americans did not bomb camps. Many times Germans would mark the camp with red cross on the roofs just to protect themselves. They could hide wherever they wanted in the camps, I guess. They were not destroyed. At night they switched places with us. The army went into the camp and they chased us into the woods. In the morning we were caught in the middle of war front. Americans are coming. We were in the woods, I think for three days. Again, no food. But we-- my father parked us and we made a little bed of leaves. It must have been-- it was May-- when we were liberated.

JF: This was the liberation. You were kicked out into the woods so that the Army could...

MT: Yes. Could take our place so that they would not be touched by the planes.

JF: That was liberation?

MT: That was liberation. So then we were caught between the fire, from Germans to the Americans. We were right in the middle. All the artillery and the machine guns and everything flying back and forth. We were very close to a stream, so we had water. Right next to the stream bed, we made our beds, just leaves and dried grass and we were laying on it, sleeping on that, just huddling together. I don't remember much sleeping. Anyway, there was constantly boom, boom and explosions everywhere. Every morning when my mother woke up she said, "I smell Darlings." Darlings were English cigarettes that she smoked in Hungary. They had a specific aroma. They were the good cigarettes which she forgot what a cigarette smells like, I guess. "I smell Darlings," and my father said, "No, there is no British forces here. It's wrong." And she said, "I smell it." Shortly after two soldiers came out with grenades hanging on their chest, different helmets that I ever saw.

JF: British?

MT: With guns. Americans.

JF: Um'm.

MT: My father had found an old ax, because we went through some caves that were a castle not far away, they chased us out. Not too far from the camp was a big castle. He found an ancient ax, with a part of the handle on it. It was to protect us from what, I don't know. He reached for the ax and they screamed, and yelled at him and jumped on his hand. He said, "Polisher" in German: "We are Polish." They called-- the guy didnít couldnít speak any language, I guess. The American, he called an interpreter. It was a Polish guy from around upstate Pennsylvania, I think. He spoke some Polish. My father prepared bunkers around the castle, protective bunkers from-- if invasion forces will be coming. So he sketched out the plan of the bunker. He said, "You are bombing the castle. It is not the castle that the Germans are in," and he showed them what-- He said, ìI was working there and I know, and it is so far from the camp, and in the camp there are no civilians anymore, they are army." Well, everything went on alert and they sent us back, but they would not give us any kind of protection. They just told us to go back. My mother ripped whatever she had. We put it on a stick and we were carrying it like a flag. It wasnít too white, because we didnít have anything white. It must have been very grayish, but that was the only cloth that she had. Airplanes would be diving right, almost hitting us, and recognizing that we were just a bunch of nothing, that we were not soldiers-- an awful lot of shooting. Everybody was shooting. Everything was going on and we were just walking. Artillery shells were exploding all around, but we thought after we told them that they would give us some protection, and take us on a jeep or something. Of course, we didnít know what a jeep was. Now we worked our way back towards the American back lines. They told us not to touch any food. Americans are big eaters; they had an awful lot of cans, cans of food, and it was laying all around, and they told us not to touch it because a lot of it was booby trapped by Germans and it could explode. Well, that didnít mean anything. Nobody heard that. We were grabbing everything we could. And Americans didnít finish their food. They just start something open, they didnít like it, I guess and we were-- no utensils or anything. Just eating all that-- butter. They had cans of butter. Butter was like-- I wouldnít touch it now. Well, we went back and one of the soldiers asked my mother or my father what time it is. My mother still had her watch, it was a Wittnauer, not Wittnauer, but Longines. As soon as she went like that, he removed it from her hand. Oh, my God. This was when my father went berserk. On Hungarian border, he said he wants to see an officer. They gave her back her watch. It was a mistake. I guess they didnít realize weíre Polish, or something. Just straight out of-- nonsense camp. Thatís the brutality of the war, that actually even the good people will get sucked into it, do things that were not necessary. But he thought he will get whatever he can from, because this was his first probably encounter with-- anyway. But then, they gave me a bar of chocolate, a soldier, and I went out like a light. I ate maybe a Hershey bar. I remember. I ate maybe one fourth of it and I was out, unconscious for two weeks. It was not poison, but my body was not able to handle that rich food, and I was in terrible fever and everything. They told me later on I had whatever some kind of poison and they put everybody on a strict diet.

JF: Where were you during the time that you were so ill?

MT: It was in camp. After that they took us back in camp; I donít know how we got back to camp. I got back to camp. I remember it was night and then everything, the lights went out.

JF: This was in Neumark.

MT: Neumark. All day we were running around. Theyíre fighting and they captured without killing one soldier, without losing their soldiers or killing anybody. They captured all those Germans. Actually, as a matter of fact, my father should get some kind of prize for that. There was nothing: no loss of life, capturing all those Germans. On either side. They were just surrounded and then they gave up.

JF: You say your father should have gotten...

MT: A medal for that. Some recognition for telling them where they are and they were able to take them without a fight. They just surrounded them and told them, "You are surrounded and it is up to you." Somebody was smart and they gave up. Well, I was out for two weeks and later on I developed a brain-cell inflammation. It is meninges, or something.

JF: Meningitis?

MT: Of the brain, meningitis? The brain-- it was. It got inflamed on me. So, again I was out. There was no medical facility. The first American troops that went through, they did not have medical staff for us. They were just a fighting force, and when the second wave came through, the mop-up patrol, they came through with medics. But before they got to me, I was already again unconscious, a terrible temperature and nothing to fight it. My father had to dig a hole in the ground and have two bottles, like wine bottles, fill them up with water, let them down as deep as he can. Cool it, then they would apply compresses to my head to cool me. There was nothing, no ice, no aspirin even, no nothing.

JF: Who was in charge of the camp?

MT: At that time nobody. Nobody. It was sad. There was nobody but, of course, it was better than those other animals. If I would have developed any of that sooner, I would have died. They would have just thrown me to the side. So, that was it. But before-- I jumped over one thing. When they did liberate, before I got this brain-cell inflammation, Americans gave the camps, camp people, three days to settle their differences with people that were in charge of them, people in town, whatever. Well, for some reason, my parents knew what it meant. I guess every adult knew what it meant: settle your differences, because after these three days there would be courts and everything. There would be no more free hand, get-even. They removed us from that scene, so I havenít seen anything, but later on I heard of terrible things that were happening. They removed us to a village nearby. Veen, they called it, and I remember I had some kind of sour soup that the German farmer prepared, and they had to take us in. Farmers didnít have a choice. They had to take us in as guests, into the farmhouse, because that was already occupied by American forces. So we went in there and they had rooms and they had to take us in.

JF: What was their attitude towards you?

MT: Not bad. I donít remember anything nasty from them. The food was tremendous. We never saw that much food in our lives. They were not nasty, but at night it was very scary, and they were scared and I guess they told my parents that we are making it worse. They had those shutters, window shutters, that they had to close at night, because that was the type of territory they lived in. At that time there was a lot of German soldiers that were still hiding in the forest. They did not want to surrender. There was still like guerrillas fighting, quiet tactics, and they would come around to those homes, I remember, at night. They would be hitting on the window and telling them in German, "Open up. We are your brothers. We need food and we need this," and they would not open it for them. They were afraid.

JF: You were recovered by this time from the illnesses that you had?

MT: No, it was only the chocolate I had recovered from-- Not from Veen, sorry. When we went to Veen it was right after we went through the front. We went through the terrible front and everything, and we swung around to the camp and Americans declared three days of cleaning up. They finally captured the Germans and they have re-liberated the camp. At that time I was given a chocolate bar and I went unconscious.

JF: And you were in the camp during that time?

MT: I was in the camp. Huh. Thatís good. I was in the camp. But when did they give us? So that means the first group, the first group of soldiers that went through, they did not give us permission to kill or anything, but it was the second group of soldiers that came through, I guess...

JF: It was a group of Americans that gave you permission.

MT: Oh, yes. They were all Americans. The first group is the fighters. They just go through like a bulldozer and fight for the territory. The second group comes in and cleans up whatever wasnít done by the first group. Then the third group was the medical and the full established companies.

JF: So it was the second group that gave you permission to pillage or kill, or whatever?

MT: Not to pillage. Just to kill whoever was terrible to you, because they said, after this, they will have to be brought to court.

JF: Was that common?

MT: I think it was, but I think itís very-- not stupid. Itís very uncivilized. Itís something you donít want to do to a person whatís hurt badly. You donít want to give him the privilege.

JF: To unleash all that aggression.

MT: To get even, because then he will never live through this again. I think it was very, very bad.

JF: But it was the American army that did this?

MT: Oh, yes. I think they did it with the thought that after they saw what was happening to people, that this must be revenged some way. But some people, they were still capable of doing it. I heard they did capture some Ukrainians. They would try, with whatever they had, shovels or anything, to finish them off, and they said that they never knew that a person was so hard to kill, because always an arm or something was still moving. Now, I never saw this, because I was in the village. When we came to the village-- so that must have been-- it was still the second group that came through then. I ate the chocolate and then I went out, but we still did not have medics. Then the medical group came through and they put the whole camp on a strict diet of water, warm cereals, oatmeal, I think, water, and then after so many days there was a little milk in it, and oatmeal, and then finally, it was milk and oatmeal; you could drink milk separately, and so forth.

JF: So, that when you talk about this brain-cell infection that you had, that was during the time that the medics were there?

MT: Nope. That was before the medics got there, yet.

JF: How was that diagnosed? How did they know what was going on with you?

MT: There were some individuals in camps from Hungary-- and I donít know how it was diagnosed. It was diagnosed that I had a-- thatís a good one! There was nothing that they were giving me. I think, just cold compresses on my head. But I know that my parents were saying-- I always have to remember that because some day I might need to know that if some problems would develop, that I had that. I never questioned that. Itís a good point. I donít know how they diagnosed it, whether somebody knew enough, or whether my parents later on investigated it, and had somebody determine what, I donít know. And then things, you said, did things start coming to normal? Then, yes. There was no schools, but us as young boys-- I donít remember girls. We were not interested in girls at all for some reason. And I was at an age when I should have been looking already at girls.

JF: It was an age, you said, when you should have been looking, but you werenít interested.

MT: No, not at all. After I got well and so forth, a certain time, I donít even remember, my brother got well, we started to form like boy scouts. My older brother was always the leader. He would be the group pack leader and we would go and try to imitate what we did in Hungary, when we were boy scouts there, younger, and going with parents, with father into the woods with the rest of the boys, organized. We started doing the same things. Walking around and trying to pick the berries, because there was nothing else. You couldnít make hamburgers or hot dogs. But we would pick the berries and so forth, and we would play, not army, but play like we were Knights of the Round Table, or something. That was the only getting back to normal. There was nothing, no toys, no nothing.

JF: You were at that time about 12?

MT: Twelve. Must have been 12 in ë45. I was ë34. [born in ë34]

JF: Twelve and a half, perhaps. You were still living in the camp?

MT: Oh, yes, but that was a sad set-up. We lived in camps until we left Germany.

JF: How long was that?

MT: Until ë49. I arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, on August 27, 1949.

JF: Were you still living in the same camp?

MT: No.

JF: These were different DP camps, then?

MT: Yes. Neumark was the first one. Then we went to Hochenfels.

JF: Neumark was the camp from which you were liberated, but you stayed there for about how long?

MT: I donít know, probably months, two months, three months. At least 3 months. Six months.

JF: And then the next one is H-O-C-H-E-N-F-E-L-S.

MT: Hochenfels, correct; Ansbauch.

JF: A-N-N-S-B-A-C-H... [correct spelling is Ansbauch]

MT: W-I-L-D-F-L-E-C-K-E-N-- and then there was-- see, what happened, we ended up, Neumark was the camp we were in, but from then on we were in German military camps.

JF: These were German military?

MT: Without Germans in them. They were old and some of them were new. Military barracks.

JF: H-E-I-L-B-R-O-N-N.

MT: Yes, Heilbronn, thatís near Stuttgart. Thatís Wittenberg.

JF: And the last L-U-D-V-I-G-S-B-U-R-G. [Ludwigsburg].

MT: Ludwigburg, and then Bremenhafen.

JF: B-R-E-M-E-N-H-A-F-E-N [Bremerhaven]

MT: Yes, but now these last two, Ludwigsburg and Bremenhaven [Bremerhaven], they were-- where we were being watched-- we were leaving Germany, so they were pre-- preparatory camps for coming to the United States. So in Ludwigsburg, they screened us, they did everything, they checked our health, to make sure that we are capable of doing things for ourselves. In Bremenhafen, [Bremerhaven] we just waited for the ship. That is the port, from which we left for New York City, but we never made it to New York because of the storm. We ended up in Boston, Massachusetts. We had to go around it.

JF: When we spoke before, you told me that after you were liberated and, whether it was in Europe or whether it was upon coming to the United States, that you had dreams that were quite pronounced. Could you describe those to me?

MT: Yes. I always would wake up not just dream about it, would wake up in the middle of the night. The Germans were after me.

JF: Was this still in Europe, or was this once you came here to America?

MT: It wasnít too much in Europe. It was when I came here, when I finally, I believe, I experienced a total relaxation and freedom. My dream of my life was to own a gun. A gun meant life to me.

JF: When you say dream, youíre not talking about an actual dream, you are talking about a wish.

MT: Yes. My wish. My desire was to put my hand on a gun, to have a gun, because gun meant so much when I was in captivity. A gun meant everything. Money didnít mean anything, but a gun meant power. A gun meant freedom. A gun meant everything. So as soon as I had a chance, I bought a weapon to go hunting. Ten dollars it cost me to buy a shotgun, a cheap shotgun. I treasured it. I cleaned it and everything, and then I went into the military, and I bought a 45 pistol soon as I came out.

JF: You were in the American military?

MT: Yes, the 82nd Airborne, and I bought a 45 pistol, as soon as I came out of the military. Of course, I had it registered and I had to send to the FBI or whatever, and I still have it. Iím still the owner of a 45, and I used to play with it something terrible. On the weekends I would clean it in the yard so everybody could see it. Like a child with a new toy and I had to take it apart, and I had to oil it and pretend that I am looking at the barrel and, finally it left me. I am free. I donít have to have a weapon.

JF: How long did that feeling last?

MT: That feeling was for quite a while, because as soon as I had the weapons, then it rekindled the old memories, I think. So when I would go to bed, then the dreams would change that Germans are not just chasing me, but if I could only get to my gun, to my pistol, that was even after I got out of the military, if I just could get to my pistol, things will change.

JF: So the initial dream was that the Germans were chasing you?

MT: They were chasing me and I was running away and it is so hard when you are asleep to run. Itís like they are getting closer and your legs are so tired. You canít run because of blankets or whatever you have over you. You canít move. And they are getting closer and closer, and finally you wake up and they are not here. Phew. They are not here.

JF: When you got your rifle, or when you got your 45?

MT: When I got the 45. The rifle did not turn me on because they did not carry rifles, but the pistol.

JF: It was the pistol that was significant?

MT: Yes.

JF: And then you were trying to get the pistol in your dream?

MT: To get the pistol and get even with them.

JF: Did you reach the pistol in the dream?

MT: I never reached the pistol.

JF: It was trying to get it?

MT: Yes. Never. I was always trying so hard. So terribly hard to get it, and I never got to it. I never had a chance or did kill anybody in my dream.

JF: Was there anything in particular that happened around the time that these dreams stopped, as you recall, or did they just end?

MT: Perhaps. No. I think I loosened up a little bit, mentally, I think. I started having more fun and found out more about women. And I think it partially moved everything out of my old mind and replaced it with new.

Tape five, side one:

JF: You said that you loosened up, you were able then to become involved with women.

MT: Then I started to become a human again. I started having human feelings. I wasnít afraid to-- I was shy prior to that. Tremendously shy. I never had a chance to play my role as a growing up boy. For some reason, perhaps, because I thought I was a woman, I didnít feel right in any kind of situation, so if a girl would talk to me I would blush immediately and I would get so red in the face; I wished I would die right there.

JF: You are talking about when you were here already you still had some of those feelings that you did when you were working in the womanís side of the camp?

MT: I think that that perhaps had an effect on me. I was just trying to see why I was that way, because I was tremendously shy. My brother wasnít like that. I was tremendously shy. I could not talk to a girl without completely falling apart. Completely. I didnít want even to get a job where girls were working because I couldnít handle it. It was very-- I took shorthand in high school in Williamsport, and I had to drop it because all the girls were in the class.

JF: You were in high school?

MT: In high school. When I came here I was 16.

JF: So you were in Williamsport, Pennsylvania?

MT: Yes, thatís where my parents are.

JF: And thatís when you were put really for the first time in a typical adolescent atmosphere?

MT: Exactly. I never went to our high school prom; I didnít want to ask a girl and the girls would ask me and I just couldnít do it.

JF: It was not until you were out of the service, after high school?

MT: Yes, after the service then I started learning something about myself. It was, I think, the service probably that did open up my mind. I had exposure to the weapons and everything and started even hating that part of the life, perhaps, weapons, in the service because I had so much of it in the service.

JF: Iím sorry, instead of hating?

MT: Then I perhaps started to hate some of it, I mean, the weapons itself, but, nevertheless, when I did come home I did reach that point where I bought myself a pistol to fulfill my need, and it did. It fulfilled my need very quickly.

JF: Did you enlist in the service after high school? Was that something you wanted to do?

MT: I joke around that there were 20 volunteers that left my neighborhood that morning. There was I and 20 MPís. No, I did enlist. And, I had a weird experience in the military. There was one German fellow straight from Germany. Couldnít speak English too well yet. He was in my company, and on the maneuvers, he happened to be in back of me and I ordered him in front of me and I said, "You will never again be in back of me with a weapon." And I felt very bad about that. He never asked for an explanation, but I did reflect on that many times later on and said to myself, "Why did you do that?" Because, I guess, I couldnít control it. I couldnít stand a German right in back of me with a weapon. Yet here I was in the American army.

JF: But you still were fighting old battles?

MT: I also told them later on that I was sorry for that but donít ever send me to Germany. Send me any place in the world as a soldier. Donít send me to Germany, because I will not be able to control myself. You donít want to do that and I donít want to do that. Later on I got sick and tired of stateside duties, being in the States. Everybody was going all over the world and here I am. I asked to be sent to Germany, but they would not do it. So finally I pressed for it, pressed for it. They took out my papers. They read a little statement. "Turzanski, this is what you said," so I was never sent out, and Iím glad I wasnít because I would have probably done something that I shouldnít have. Try to as an adult to undo something that I shouldnít try to undo, because people that I would do to would be the people who actually had nothing to do with it.

JF: Is there anything else that you want to add?

MT: The only thing that I would like to add is that hatred is the worst thing in our lives. Hatred should never be put into childrenís minds because it will destroy, even when it comes to the enemy. They should be taught about the enemy, but not actually how to hate them, only what he is. I feel quite comfortable with my parents and I still give them credit, more and more credit each time I read something about psychology of the human behavior and so forth; how well they handled that. They removed that hatred from us. I know what Ukrainians did to us. I know what Germans did to us. But it happened at that time. It does not mean that all of them did that to me, that all of them wanted to do it, etc. We made a pledge, all four of us, when we were liberated in Neumark, that we will take 120 Ukrainian lives before we are dead, because we lost all our family.

JF: All the rest of your family?

MT: Yes, during the war. All the cousins-- all wiped out. We donít have anybody.

JF: These were people who stayed in Poland?

MT: Yes, yes. And they were executed: one, because he was suspected to be an underground soldier, young man, my cousinís brother. She still cries about it. And they were also talking about that she married a Jewish guy to save his life. She was Catholic and there was a lot of it going on just like anyplace else when things were happening fast. I donít believe the women were taking advantage of the situation, but I think also that they felt that they could do something.

JF: You knew of other cases like that, where Polish girls would marry Jewish men to save them?

MT: Yes, to save them. Now, also...

JF: Did they stay married?

MT: Yes, this is very strong. It is unreal, what happens. When you make a bind like that, when you sign a contract like that, a mental contract, I donít think that there is much that can break after that.

JF: Did they stay living in Poland?

MT: Oh no. They are in New York, in a Jewish community, where they feel comfortable.

JF: They live in a Jewish community?

MT: Yes.

JF: Did she stay Catholic or did she convert?

MT: She didnít stay much one way or the other because she probably didnít care, but her husband, a Jewish fellow she married, wanted to make sure that their daughter will be a Catholic child. So, it is actually, thatís a big sacrifice for him.

JF: They have one child?

MT: Only one child. But it was, I think, because of the old man, Mr. [unclear].

JF: Her father?

MT: His father. He wanted to make sure that he never leaves this woman, no matter what, even if she loses her mind or whatever, because what she had done for us, for them, and make sure that her child will be protected if he dies later on. Tremendous individual.

JF: His father told him to raise his child as a Catholic?

MT: Yes. And his father...

JF: As a way of thanking her for her sacrifices?

MT: It is sad, you know, when you really think about it, from a human point of view. Those are tremendous sacrifices that one does to pay-- you donít pay-- to thank, and I donít even know if thank is the word. ëCause she wanted a man and she had a man, but I think itís that other side, his side, that he feels that he should do something, which is another part of being human. Now, what really hurts individual like I-- I went through rough things in my life and enjoyed some good times here-- is what I read about Polish behavior in Second World War, where we are worse than Hitler is, in the eyes of the Jewish community, at least I was told that, and there must be reasons for it. But then I also did the same thing as you do. I also want to reach in and look for answers, because I donít want to build on old tradition. I want to build on something I have here. And I had a map that I thought I could find and bring it in here of Poland during the Second World War. Itís like a map of Pennsylvania. If you would take a pepper shaker and shake it over the map, some places the more pepper would fall than others. The whole Poland was one concentration country for Germany, and under each black spot on that map they tell you how many people were murdered, murdered, murdered. And then they show bigger spots, and the chimneys where they formed the camps, and how many died there. The whole country was totally taken over, terrorized, dehumanized and everything. Minorities were given big roles, and also the criminal element was given big roles. But I am not a historian, but I just know what I went through and itís tough. But, of course, itís always tough if itís sad about you. That, again, is human.

I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk to you. By doing this, I think Iíll be a better person. I hope I can sleep better, and this is selfish of me and I hope Iíll free myself to become one of you, to freely think and act as one should in the proper manner in a given situation. Sometimes I feel I am lacking a whole lot to reach the level of the free society. Thank God for a free society and letís hope, pray and hope this will never, never occur again, because if it happens in midst of your own, people that you know, people you had contact with, people you touched, you talked to, itís very hard to remove from your memory, from your mind, but, yet, as a human, intelligent human, you donít want to spread a disease of hatred. That makes it much tougher to control that feeling. I thank you.

JF: I cannot thank you enough, Mr. Turzanski.

The Germans began their occupation of Hungary in March 1944.

MARIAN TURZANSKI [1-1-]

From the collection of the Gratz College Holocaust Oral History Archive

MARIAN TURZANSKI [1-2-]

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MARIAN TURZANSKI [2-1-]

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{\plain JF:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We had one at that camp, Neumark. I remember when we first arrived, the farmers

from the territory came in to the camp to examine the new catch, new people that we were. This

was the first time again in my life-- I wasn't that old-- I didn't live that long-- to see people

checking human muscles, to see a farmer walk up to a man and check out his muscles, tell him to

take off his jacket or whatever he had, a shirt or whatever, and check his muscles or check his

teeth. I knew from that time that's how you were checking horses, I knew that, that you have to

check horses by their teeth. The teeth would tell you their age and their health. And that's how we

were examined, and then the farmer says, "Yes, I will take this and I will take that." But never a

family. He just takes what he wants. The rest of the people stay in the camp. He took them to

farm to work for them. And that was like being liberated because there should be some food

there, there should be something. But one of the younger men were chosen like that that we

knew, that the parents knew, to go to the farm. My father, knowing some German, because with

Ukies you couldn't make any arrangement in that camp, none whatsoever, because they were very

nasty to us, very nasty.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What do you mean, the Ukrainians would not let you work in a German farm?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, you could not make any agreements with them. T5@@úz@Ï

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øgÀK˛ˇ’Õ’ú.ìó+,˘Æ0§@HT\dlt‰ @Â,KEY: JF - Josey Fisheralk to them or anything.

They were very nasty to us, very nasty.\par

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{\plain JF: \tab And, if the German farmers came to get people from that camp, the Ukrainians...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That was all right.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab That was all right.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Oh, yes. But then later on, in camp you couldn't talk to them. Like "Could I cook

something or this or that?" No. Nothing. They were in full control, they were in nasty control. I

was just a youngster but I knew like, they had lice problem or whatever, some kind of problems in

camps like that, because there was no cleaning facilities. We never took showers, we never did

anything, so every so often, I think twice that I remember, they would chase us into the shower

room. So, again, when I remember, I went with women, but it was all together, anyway. One side

was women and the other side was men. but what they did: there were two tables, small tables,

the women were sitting at one table, men had to walk by her table, but his organ on the table and

she examined him. Not a doctor, a worker, a camp worker -- a woman.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What was she examining?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Just him as a male. Just for kicks. The women went by guys, and they were just

regular workers, they worked for us, and they were just exchanging, sitting there, you know. She

sat there for a certain length of time until she got tired of it and then another woman took over

and so forth. They were just...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The were not there to be looking for some kind of... \par

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{\plain MT:\tab No. Not. They were just to dehumanize you. To remove another part of your

natural instinct to be...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Modest?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, and to be yourself, not-- and women the same thing. Men were just sitting

there just making a big deal out of it. "There's a woman." The woman would stand in front of his

desk and he would do his thing, whatever he wanted to do.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What would they do?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They would just examine them. They were touching them and they were joking to

each other and so forth, whatever. Big kicks.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What happened to you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They would not do anything to me, so I guess they did not have gay individuals

there or something, and I was not interesting enough for older women, for mature women. I was

never molested or made a fool of that way, but I had to undress and run around naked. I would

hide around my mother. Then would come the time that they turned the water on. I don't

remember soap or anything, but they put the water on. They would turn the water on. It was so

cold you could die. So everybody's shivering. There I was hiding under my mother to protect me

from the cold water, and pretty soon the water stops. Thank God. Aha! Another shower, hot, as

hot as you can make it. You can't stand it. You start screaming and the kids were screaming,

hiding. Just playing around, those people. That was showers...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Toying with you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Terribly.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And again, these were Ukrainian guards all the time.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Ukrainian. Yes, and I am working with one right now. I don't remember him. I

know my mother would and I still don't have enough guts to take a picture of him.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab He-- the Ukrainian man that you are working with, do you think this is someone

that your parents knew or...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They would recognize him because we go, once a week, to a dinner, certain

groups, individuals that work there, we go outside to dinner. It's more or less like a restaurant -

beer place, so we have hot meal and a beer or a cognac, whatever, with it. Well, this guy had a

few brandies and he started talking about Germany and what camps he was in. He was Ukrainian.

So I said, "Which camp were you in?" and he says, "Neumark." Well, I should have kept my

mouth shut but I say, "I was in Neumark," and that killed the whole thing. I said, "How comes

you were in Neumark?" You are in Ukrainian," and he says, "Yes, but they kept me as a

prisoner." "Prisoner of what?" Neumark was divided into two camps. One side of the wall was the

animals, us, and the other side were the privileged people, that that took care of us. So he was

one of them.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The guards.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, the guards, the workers.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Workers?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The real guards were Germans. They walked with German shepherds. There were

towers. It was not a concentration camp where they had uniforms and they were determined to

kill you right away, but it was a camp that they were eliminating somebody everyday. Just beating

them to death until they didn't move. You didn't know if they died, they just removed them from

the premises and you never saw them again. You just-- constantly-- we went to one funeral like

that. You never went to a funeral, but something happened and my mother insisted that she wants

to have a funeral for that woman, I think it was.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was in the camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In the camp. So they allowed us. Couple, I know that I went there. I was always

altar boy. So there we were. There were no priests; they were also removed from our premises.

They were in separate places, camps. Funeral, there was no funeral. Somebody said some kind of

prayer. Guards. The body was in a paper sack. It was just thrown into a ditch and you\'92re not

allowed to even cover it. On the side there were other bodies laying, like ash. They must have

been burning them. There was one young girl that still made some movement. She was laying on

that pile of the bodies...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab She was still alive?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab She was partially alive, and you couldn't do anything.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were there any kind of public executions, or was it more impromptu beatings?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, there was no-- in those camps I was in, there was nothing like that. Other

camps they had some. No. This was just constant, constant cut-down on food and...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Illnesses and starvation?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab If you would ever get ill, that's it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was there any medical facility at all? Any medicine?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, there was no doctor. No way. When the Americans liberated-- that's, that

comes later, we went to that farmer, a young man, that was picked by a farmer. Somehow my

father made arrangements, like I said, you couldn't make arrangements with Ukrainians, so he

made arrangements with a }{\plain \i Lagerf\'fchrer}{\plain , or was it a }{\plain \i Oberlagerf\'fchrer}{\plain - his assistant lager, camp

director, assistant camp director, to allow two of his sons to walk over to that farmer, to go there

to visit this guy and came back. No way...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You and your brother?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Ya. "No way." How could-- somehow they made out that we can go. Only us

two.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What were you supposedly going to do?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We were supposed to-- they knew that they would not allow us to bring any food

in, but eat as much as you can, whatever you can.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And the }{\plain \i Lagerf\'fchrer}{\plain ...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, we were just allowed to go to visit this guy.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab That was the premise?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The premise, yes, to go to visit him, because we knew him, and after all, these are

young kids and everything, and they were together for x number of years. Why can't they go there

and perhaps later on they will be working for this farmer, whatever, blah, blah, blah. So they

allowed us to go.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did he bribe the guard, or the }{\plain \i Oberf\'fchrer, Lagerf\'fchrer}{\plain ?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I don't think you could bribe them. No! They would not be interested in any

money; there was nothing like that, because everything that they had-- it was all theirs. Just like a

canary you have in a cage. They can bribe you. "If you let me, I'll give you my egg-- oh, you

don't have to let me..." [unclear] So my father explained, you can't take a piece of paper to show a

map or anything-- explained how to go there. We went there. We found the place, I don't know

how. You can't ask anybody, you just have to go through the wilderness, never through populated

area, and we got to the place. We recognized it from a distance. We couldn't even run. We were

very weak. We got there. Right away he started making signs...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Who? The young man...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The young man because of the farmer, because he is around and keeping eye on

me. We said, "Is there any food around?" and he says, "No." I said, "Come on, we are very

hungry." Then we heard chickens in a chicken coop. There must be eggs in it. We got to the

chicken coop and grabbed some eggs and the chickens started making an awful lot of noise and

the farmer came out. [unclear]. No, no, no, no! We didn't have a chance to say "hello" to this guy

or anything. I grabbed a whole egg and pushed it in my mouth and just swallowed it pretending

that I don't have anything and I guess my brother even did do it or-- and we had to just run and go

before they turned the dogs on us. It was actually more wasted energy than it was worth because-- on the way back... \par

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{\plain JF:\tab There was no danger of you being picked up in a situation like that?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I don't think that anybody cares, except my father told us to stay away from

populated areas. Don't go through populated areas. We went through just open fields and woods.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did it cross your mind to keep on going?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No. No. No language. We couldn't.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You didn't have the language?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No. Never. You had something very dear left behind; and the only thing you could

do is think how to free them. There was no way you-- It was a tough situation that you were in.

Say you could run away. So, where could you go? I don't know. On the way back, there was a

German convoy going not too far from the camp, and Americans caught up with them. Three

planes, one coming down, going up, constantly just working right through the whole convoy,

[made noise] dropping small bombs, napalm, I think, and they just destroyed that convoy

beautifully. We knew-- It looked to us that they were bombing the camp. We cried, we kissed, we

hugged. That was the end of our parents, the end of everything. As closer we got to the camp, the

more we realized, it's not the camp, it's German soldiers, the convoy was caught. They were

destroyed right on the road that goes by the camp. Horses-- they still had horses, killed, just

upside down, [unclear] trucks, vehicles burning, everything. Well, we got to the camp and told

them the news-- Nothing, Germans killed all over. For the next three weeks, I think, all we had to

eat, and that is not right away. It was-- it must have been summertime, because those horses blew

up real big and after they had exploded already they drug them, and we had to-- the man had to

drug the horse in one at a time; one day, one horse, and they would cut the horse's head off and

put it at the door of the kitchen, where you walk by to pick up your food. Flies all over it, prop it

up so you can see the teeth they even put one-- you can put the stick into the mouth of the horse

so it's open and you can really see the teeth, and all the smell and everything. They would give us

food made from that meat. But you know? That didn't make any difference. That didn't make any

difference.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were too hungry-- or too desensitized?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I don't know. It didn't change the taste. It didn't do anything. It's unreal, you know.

I think about it now. It didn't make any difference. The food didn't taste different. The food was

not different.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You said the food in this camp was particularly bad?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was very bad. The Ukrainians would cook for themselves, let's say, potatoes, in

those big kitchen-- whatever they call them, real huge floor-type pots, like what, 150-gallon jobs.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The vats?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The vats, whatever you call them, I don\'92t know what you call them, that steam

heats those things. They would cook their food in that, then they would throw some soap in or

something, I don't know what, something that made it bluish-- they would throw a lot of water,

they would throw a lot of potato peelings, unwashed, and whatever leftovers they had, I imagine

they would throw into those containers. Put water, and I think they were putting some soap in

probably to get even with us. But soap was hard to get. I don't know what made it bluish. All

bluish water. Ugly. And then they would feed it to us, not hot, not cold, like lukewarm.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And that's what you would have, when, at noon-time?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Only once a day, once a day they would give it to us. It was-- when I was with

women-- I guess it was around noon-time. Now, in the evening, men, I guess. So maybe it was

twice a day.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab But that's the only food you got? There was no bread?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, and when we would get us this liquid, and it would go right through you. It

was unreal. And if somebody would find a piece of meat, or something, they would share it, give

it to the kid. Share it. By mistake there is meat in this mixture.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You describe the horse and the horse meat that must have been used at some

point. Was that-- that was an exception, then?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That was an exception because they were killed a couple of days prior to this. But

that was all not sanitary, and everything was cooked to be sanitary. I remember looking around

the trash, finding some potatoes and grabbing that. That was more delicious than apples. If you

found a potato some place, that was very good. You got completely dehumanized. You had no

more feelings about anything. After a couple showers like that, and all that food, and all that

nonsense. In the morning, "Good morning" was Ukrainians would open the door and yell, "}{\plain \i Alles

M\'e4nner heraus. Verfluchte Donnerwetter, alles M\'e4nner heraus}{\plain !" "Damn it to hell whatever. All

men, get out." That was good morning. Let's work. Then you had to work, but you always had

}{\plain \i Verfluchte Donnerwetter}{\plain ! "Damn it to hell," or "God damn it to hell! All the men out!" Then you

went.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was there any kind of religious observance in the camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There was once that I remember. I'm glad that you asked that. And I think that's

why I can't-- I feel very blue around holidays: Easter, Christmas, I feel terribly depressed. We had,

I think it was Easter or something, in one of their garages or something. I remember a big Hitler's

portrait, very high, a very big one and underneath they had some kind of a table, altar, Ukrainian

Orthodox. Monks were all around it, they dressed differently, and they were singing to Hitler,

praying to Hitler, but mentioning God in there, for God to help Hitler, and [unclear] the whole

German nation. Ya, that was the religious ceremony we went to.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was in the last camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The last camp, yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Who was leading them?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There? There it was their side that they felt probably we need religion. They were

Ukrainians. They were allowed to have their religion but they probably felt that this was a sacred

time. We should probably allow the rest of the animals to also enjoy this. But I still remember

praying, not us, but them praying to Hitler in their language. I never took Ukrainian, but I could

understand, because the words are similar. They were Slavish.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab It was the one time that that would happen?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That was the only time that I remember. No other thing. Never any school, there

was never any medical, nothing.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab There was no schooling?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Never. Nothing.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you able to maintain any kind of time, either individually or with your family,

for any kind of prayer? Did that help at all?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It never happened. On the trains I remember that they were singing religious

songs, never political, just religious, to keep them alive because it was cold. Just to get everybody

involved, I guess, psychologically to get them involved. Not to give up. Later on, as soon as we

hit the camps, they removed all that. Nobody ever talked. Period. About anything. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you find that you used or relied on religion at all as an individual?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. Yes. Deeply. For some reason that is the only thing I think that helped us to

survive: hoping that there is a miracle around the corner. That something will happen. This cannot

be allowed to go any further. May I stop at this point? [tape off and on] Religion actually was the

only thing that even us as kids helped us to survive from day to day. For some reason we could

communicate by just looking at each other into the eyes, and we all thought about the same thing,

that perhaps tomorrow will change. Things will change, but we did not say it out loud because, I

guess, you were not allowed to say it aloud.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was you and your brothers?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Us. Me and my brothers and the parents. Every so often would try to catch their

eye, which was very sad. Once you are in that type of situation, it is so sad that just the glimpse of

somebody's eye tells you the whole story. You don't want to say why. Like my children. I get so

upset. You tell them something and right away comes, "Why? Why?" And I say, "Well, can't you

figure out something by yourself?"\par

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{\plain JF:\tab There was, in other words, much more non-verbal kind of communication...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, it was like feeling. It wasn't body language, because there wasn't much of a

body. But I think it was just like a...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab There was certainly an intimacy about your experiences, shared knowledge of how

you were feeling and what you were going through, really seemed to bring your family very close

together.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I think that every family at that time was a very closely knit family. All the families

in Europe, Jewish, Polish, all of them, and it must have been a terrible tragedy in each case, for

each one of them, because what I am saying what I went through, which I didn't go through

anything the feeling-- What kind of feeling did a parent have when he saw his child killed in front

of him? We all were starved in front of our parents. Something else, something we could not

allow right now to happen. If you have a child, to see somebody systematically cut down on food

and eliminate their health and their well-being, systematically.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you have close contacts with other families or with other children in the camp,

or was the family unit the key emotional nucleus for you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was actually a family unit, I would say, even though we were in the one barrack,

but we were just a group of family.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The six of you, the eight of you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, I mean as far as the real intimate feeling of sharing this heat, of love that was

not allowed to be expressed, I guess, through emotionally, just-- but kindness and sharing there

was-- I remember it was throughout the whole system. If somebody was unable to walk,

everybody would try to help him because soon as he fell, that was the end of it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab There was mutual support?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was mutual because, I guess, they all knew they were in the same boat. There is

no way out.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You talked before about the one boy who was working for the farmer and you and

your brother had known him. Was there any talking, any dreaming, or remembering of times when

you were not in this situation, or fantasies about what would be if you were not in this situation as

far as what you would be doing? What kind of life you would be leading?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab You see, I went through that same question. I asked myself many times. I did not

have that. I believe what happens, once you are reduced to that level, you don't have any dreams.

You don't recall anything. You just are where you are, but all that is not there. I don't have any

recollection of wonderful-- in my case it was Christmas. It was always such a thing where you get

presents. Nothing. Never. Never about anything. Or my friends, or playing ball, or something?

Never. Yet I was so active before. Bicycles, everything.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You didn't think about these things?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, never.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Do you think that the dehumanization process that you talked about before...?\par

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{\plain \i }{\plain JF:\tab We were talking about whether or not such memories would have been part of the

dehumanization process, or whether it was too painful to dream outside the present.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Well, I think it was perhaps two, both, but I think the dehumanization did play the

major part in it. They removed this beautiful human dream, of becoming, of growing up to

become somebody and to live up to your parents' dreams or perhaps to-- whatever. It was all

removed. Then it was also painful to go back and, I believe, to play around with something you

had before. Something that gave you pleasure. But, also, I think there was a third factor involved:

that we were not given the opportunity, the chance, to actually think. That was taken. Each time

you were yelled at, and you were pushed and you were moved, so whatever they did, somebody

either thought of that, that that's the way to handle people or, if not, they did do a good job and

they constantly kept you disturbed and ducking or whatever...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Your energies went toward that instead?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, you never had actually a minute chance. I don't even remember dreaming. I

just don't know how I slept, but I never had dreams. I often thought that perhaps when somebody

is in jail he dreams about his family, dreams of that. That's not true. I don't believe you have those

dreams. They are removed, or maybe it's the defensive mechanism in our subconscious mind that

locks everything away. To keep you from losing whatever you have. You had a little mind. It is so

easy for a child to lose his mind altogether, if you would realize and compare it to...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How was it when you were liberated, as far as this kind of thinking was

concerned? Were you able to resume the fantasies and the thoughts of normal adolescence and

that of an average adolescent at a later point, or do you feel that this time affected what happened

to you later?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, it did do something. It was a shock of a tremendous importance in my life.

When we were liberated, first the Germans at night chased us out of the camp. The Americans did

not bomb camps. Many times Germans would mark the camp with red cross on the roofs just to

protect themselves. They could hide wherever they wanted in the camps, I guess. They were not

destroyed. At night they switched places with us. The army went into the camp and they chased

us into the woods. In the morning we were caught in the middle of war front. Americans are

coming. We were in the woods, I think for three days. Again, no food. But we-- my father parked

us and we made a little bed of leaves. It must have been-- it was May-- when we were liberated.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was the liberation. You were kicked out into the woods so that the Army

could...\par

}\pard \fi720\sl393\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain MT:\tab Yes. Could take our place so that they would not be touched by the planes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab That was liberation?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That was liberation. So then we were caught between the fire, from Germans to

the Americans. We were right in the middle. All the artillery and the machine guns and everything

flying back and forth. We were very close to a stream, so we had water. Right next to the stream

bed, we made our beds, just leaves and dried grass and we were laying on it, sleeping on that, just

huddling together. I don't remember much sleeping. Anyway, there was constantly boom, boom

and explosions everywhere. Every morning when my mother woke up she said, "I smell Darlings."

Darlings were English cigarettes that she smoked in Hungary. They had a specific aroma. They

were the good cigarettes which she forgot what a cigarette smells like, I guess. "I smell Darlings,"

and my father said, "No, there is no British forces here. It's wrong." And she said, "I smell it."

Shortly after two soldiers came out with grenades hanging on their chest, different helmets that I

ever saw.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab British?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab With guns. Americans.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Um'm.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab My father had found an old ax, because we went through some caves that were a

castle not far away, they chased us out. Not too far from the camp was a big castle. He found an

ancient ax, with a part of the handle on it. It was to protect us from what, I don't know. He

reached for the ax and they screamed, and yelled at him and jumped on his hand. He said,

"Polisher" in German: "We are Polish." They called-- the guy didn\'92t couldn\'92t speak any language,

I guess. The American, he called an interpreter. It was a Polish guy from around upstate

Pennsylvania, I think. He spoke some Polish. My father prepared bunkers around the castle,

protective bunkers from-- if invasion forces will be coming. So he sketched out the plan of the

bunker. He said, "You are bombing the castle. It is not the castle that the Germans are in," and he

showed them what-- He said, \'93I was working there and I know, and it is so far from the camp,

and in the camp there are no civilians anymore, they are army." Well, everything went on alert and

they sent us back, but they would not give us any kind of protection. They just told us to go back.

My mother ripped whatever she had. We put it on a stick and we were carrying it like a flag. It

wasn\'92t too white, because we didn\'92t have anything white. It must have been very grayish, but that

was the only cloth that she had. Airplanes would be diving right, almost hitting us, and

recognizing that we were just a bunch of nothing, that we were not soldiers-- an awful lot of

shooting. Everybody was shooting. Everything was going on and we were just walking. Artillery

shells were exploding all around, but we thought after we told them that they would give us some

protection, and take us on a jeep or something. Of course, we didn\'92t know what a jeep was. Now

we worked our way back towards the American back lines. They told us not to touch any food.

Americans are big eaters; they had an awful lot of cans, cans of food, and it was laying all around,

and they told us not to touch it because a lot of it was booby trapped by Germans and it could

explode. Well, that didn\'92t mean anything. Nobody heard that. We were grabbing everything we

could. And Americans didn\'92t finish their food. They just start something open, they didn\'92t like it, I

guess and we were-- no utensils or anything. Just eating all that-- butter. They had cans of butter.

Butter was like-- I wouldn\'92t touch it now. Well, we went back and one of the soldiers asked my

mother or my father what time it is. My mother still had her watch, it was a Wittnauer, not

Wittnauer, but Longines. As soon as she went like that, he removed it from her hand. Oh, my

God. This was when my father went berserk. On Hungarian border, he said he wants to see an

officer. They gave her back her watch. It was a mistake. I guess they didn\'92t realize we\'92re Polish,

or something. Just straight out of-- nonsense camp. That\'92s the brutality of the war, that actually

even the good people will get sucked into it, do things that were not necessary. But he thought he

will get whatever he can from, because this was his first probably encounter with-- anyway. But

then, they gave me a bar of chocolate, a soldier, and I went out like a light. I ate maybe a Hershey

bar. I remember. I ate maybe one fourth of it and I was out, unconscious for two weeks. It was

not poison, but my body was not able to handle that rich food, and I was in terrible fever and

everything. They told me later on I had whatever some kind of poison and they put everybody on

a strict diet.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Where were you during the time that you were so ill?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was in camp. After that they took us back in camp; I don\'92t know how we got

back to camp. I got back to camp. I remember it was night and then everything, the lights went

out.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was in Neumark.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Neumark. All day we were running around. They\'92re fighting and they captured

without killing one soldier, without losing their soldiers or killing anybody. They captured all

those Germans. Actually, as a matter of fact, my father should get some kind of prize for that.

There was nothing: no loss of life, capturing all those Germans. On either side. They were just

surrounded and then they gave up.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You say your father should have gotten...\par

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{\plain MT:\tab A medal for that. Some recognition for telling them where they are and they were

able to take them without a fight. They just surrounded them and told them, "You are surrounded

and it is up to you." Somebody was smart and they gave up. Well, I was out for two weeks and

later on I developed a brain-cell inflammation. It is meninges, or something.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Meningitis?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Of the brain, meningitis? The brain-- it was. It got inflamed on me. So, again I was

out. There was no medical facility. The first American troops that went through, they did not have

medical staff for us. They were just a fighting force, and when the second wave came through, the

mop-up patrol, they came through with medics. But before they got to me, I was already again

unconscious, a terrible temperature and nothing to fight it. My father had to dig a hole in the

ground and have two bottles, like wine bottles, fill them up with water, let them down as deep as

he can. Cool it, then they would apply compresses to my head to cool me. There was nothing, no

ice, no aspirin even, no nothing.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Who was in charge of the camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab At that time nobody. Nobody. It was sad. There was nobody but, of course, it was

better than those other animals. If I would have developed any of that sooner, I would have died.

They would have just thrown me to the side. So, that was it. But before-- I jumped over one

thing. When they did liberate, before I got this brain-cell inflammation, Americans gave the

camps, camp people, three days to settle their differences with people that were in charge of them,

people in town, whatever. Well, for some reason, my parents knew what it meant. I guess every

adult knew what it meant: settle your differences, because after these three days there would be

courts and everything. There would be no more free hand, get-even. They removed us from that

scene, so I haven\'92t seen anything, but later on I heard of terrible things that were happening. They

removed us to a village nearby. Veen, they called it, and I remember I had some kind of sour soup

that the German farmer prepared, and they had to take us in. Farmers didn\'92t have a choice. They

had to take us in as guests, into the farmhouse, because that was already occupied by American

forces. So we went in there and they had rooms and they had to take us in. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab What was their attitude towards you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Not bad. I don\'92t remember anything nasty from them. The food was tremendous.

We never saw that much food in our lives. They were not nasty, but at night it was very scary,

and they were scared and I guess they told my parents that we are making it worse. They had

those shutters, window shutters, that they had to close at night, because that was the type of

territory they lived in. At that time there was a lot of German soldiers that were still hiding in the

forest. They did not want to surrender. There was still like guerrillas fighting, quiet tactics, and

they would come around to those homes, I remember, at night. They would be hitting on the

window and telling them in German, "Open up. We are your brothers. We need food and we need

this," and they would not open it for them. They were afraid.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were recovered by this time from the illnesses that you had?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, it was only the chocolate I had recovered from-- Not from Veen, sorry. When

we went to Veen it was right after we went through the front. We went through the terrible front

and everything, and we swung around to the camp and Americans declared three days of cleaning

up. They finally captured the Germans and they have re-liberated the camp. At that time I was

given a chocolate bar and I went unconscious.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And you were in the camp during that time?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I was in the camp. Huh. That\'92s good. I was in the camp. But when did they give

us? So that means the first group, the first group of soldiers that went through, they did not give

us permission to kill or anything, but it was the second group of soldiers that came through, I

guess...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab It was a group of Americans that gave you permission.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Oh, yes. They were all Americans. The first group is the fighters. They just go

through like a bulldozer and fight for the territory. The second group comes in and cleans up

whatever wasn\'92t done by the first group. Then the third group was the medical and the full

established companies.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So it was the second group that gave you permission to pillage or kill, or

whatever?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Not to pillage. Just to kill whoever was terrible to you, because they said, after

this, they will have to be brought to court.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was that common?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I think it was, but I think it\'92s very-- not stupid. It\'92s very uncivilized. It\'92s something

you don\'92t want to do to a person what\'92s hurt badly. You don\'92t want to give him the privilege.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab To unleash all that aggression.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab To get even, because then he will never live through this again. I think it was very,

very bad.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab But it was the American army that did this?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Oh, yes. I think they did it with the thought that after they saw what was

happening to people, that this must be revenged some way. But some people, they were still

capable of doing it. I heard they did capture some Ukrainians. They would try, with whatever they

had, shovels or anything, to finish them off, and they said that they never knew that a person was

so hard to kill, because always an arm or something was still moving. Now, I never saw this,

because I was in the village. When we came to the village-- so that must have been-- it was still

the second group that came through then. I ate the chocolate and then I went out, but we still did

not have medics. Then the medical group came through and they put the whole camp on a strict

diet of water, warm cereals, oatmeal, I think, water, and then after so many days there was a little

milk in it, and oatmeal, and then finally, it was milk and oatmeal; you could drink milk separately,

and so forth.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So, that when you talk about this brain-cell infection that you had, that was during

the time that the medics were there?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Nope. That was before the medics got there, yet.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How was that diagnosed? How did they know what was going on with you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There were some individuals in camps from Hungary-- and I don\'92t know how it

was diagnosed. It was diagnosed that I had a-- that\'92s a good one! There was nothing that they

were giving me. I think, just cold compresses on my head. But I know that my parents were

saying-- I always have to remember that because some day I might need to know that if some

problems would develop, that I had that. I never questioned that. It\'92s a good point. I don\'92t know

how they diagnosed it, whether somebody knew enough, or whether my parents later on

investigated it, and had somebody determine what, I don\'92t know. And then things, you said, did

things start coming to normal? Then, yes. There was no schools, but us as young boys-- I don\'92t

remember girls. We were not interested in girls at all for some reason. And I was at an age when I

should have been looking already at girls. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab It was an age, you said, when you should have been looking, but you weren\'92t

interested.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, not at all. After I got well and so forth, a certain time, I don\'92t even remember,

my brother got well, we started to form like boy scouts. My older brother was always the leader.

He would be the group pack leader and we would go and try to imitate what we did in Hungary,

when we were boy scouts there, younger, and going with parents, with father into the woods with

the rest of the boys, organized. We started doing the same things. Walking around and trying to

pick the berries, because there was nothing else. You couldn\'92t make hamburgers or hot dogs. But

we would pick the berries and so forth, and we would play, not army, but play like we were

Knights of the Round Table, or something. That was the only getting back to normal. There was

nothing, no toys, no nothing.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were at that time about 12?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Twelve. Must have been 12 in \'9145. I was \'9134. [born in \'9134]\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Twelve and a half, perhaps. You were still living in the camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Oh, yes, but that was a sad set-up. We lived in camps until we left Germany.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How long was that?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Until \'9149. I arrived in Boston, Massachusetts, on August 27, 1949.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you still living in the same camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab These were different DP camps, then?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. Neumark was the first one. Then we went to Hochenfels.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Neumark was the camp from which you were liberated, but you stayed there for

about how long?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I don\'92t know, probably months, two months, three months. At least 3 months. Six

months.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And then the next one is H-O-C-H-E-N-F-E-L-S.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Hochenfels, correct; Ansbauch.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab A-N-N-S-B-A-C-H... [correct spelling is Ansbauch]\par

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{\plain MT:\tab W-I-L-D-F-L-E-C-K-E-N-- and then there was-- see, what happened, we ended

up, Neumark was the camp we were in, but from then on we were in German military camps.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab These were German military?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Without Germans in them. They were old and some of them were new. Military

barracks.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab H-E-I-L-B-R-O-N-N.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, Heilbronn, that\'92s near Stuttgart. That\'92s Wittenberg.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And the last L-U-D-V-I-G-S-B-U-R-G. [Ludwigsburg].\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Ludwigburg, and then Bremenhafen.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab B-R-E-M-E-N-H-A-F-E-N [Bremerhaven]\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, but now these last two, Ludwigsburg and Bremenhaven [Bremerhaven], they

were-- where we were being watched-- we were leaving Germany, so they were pre-- preparatory

camps for coming to the United States. So in Ludwigsburg, they screened us, they did everything,

they checked our health, to make sure that we are capable of doing things for ourselves. In

Bremenhafen, [Bremerhaven] we just waited for the ship. That is the port, from which we left for

New York City, but we never made it to New York because of the storm. We ended up in

Boston, Massachusetts. We had to go around it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab When we spoke before, you told me that after you were liberated and, whether it

was in Europe or whether it was upon coming to the United States, that you had dreams that

were quite pronounced. Could you describe those to me?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. I always would wake up not just dream about it, would wake up in the middle

of the night. The Germans were after me.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was this still in Europe, or was this once you came here to America?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It wasn\'92t too much in Europe. It was when I came here, when I finally, I believe, I

experienced a total relaxation and freedom. My dream of my life was to own a gun. A gun meant

life to me.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab When you say dream, you\'92re not talking about an actual dream, you are talking

about a wish.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. My wish. My desire was to put my hand on a gun, to have a gun, because gun

meant so much when I was in captivity. A gun meant everything. Money didn\'92t mean anything,

but a gun meant power. A gun meant freedom. A gun meant everything. So as soon as I had a

chance, I bought a weapon to go hunting. Ten dollars it cost me to buy a shotgun, a cheap

shotgun. I treasured it. I cleaned it and everything, and then I went into the military, and I bought

a 45 pistol soon as I came out.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were in the American military?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, the 82nd Airborne, and I bought a 45 pistol, as soon as I came out of the

military. Of course, I had it registered and I had to send to the FBI or whatever, and I still have it.

I\'92m still the owner of a 45, and I used to play with it something terrible. On the weekends I would

clean it in the yard so everybody could see it. Like a child with a new toy and I had to take it

apart, and I had to oil it and pretend that I am looking at the barrel and, finally it left me. I am

free. I don\'92t have to have a weapon.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How long did that feeling last?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That feeling was for quite a while, because as soon as I had the weapons, then it

rekindled the old memories, I think. So when I would go to bed, then the dreams would change

that Germans are not just chasing me, but if I could only get to my gun, to my pistol, that was

even after I got out of the military, if I just could get to my pistol, things will change.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So the initial dream was that the Germans were chasing you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They were chasing me and I was running away and it is so hard when you are

asleep to run. It\'92s like they are getting closer and your legs are so tired. You can\'92t run because of

blankets or whatever you have over you. You can\'92t move. And they are getting closer and closer,

and finally you wake up and they are not here. Phew. They are not here. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab When you got your rifle, or when you got your 45?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab When I got the 45. The rifle did not turn me on because they did not carry rifles,

but the pistol.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab It was the pistol that was significant?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And then you were trying to get the pistol in your dream?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab To get the pistol and get even with them.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you reach the pistol in the dream?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I never reached the pistol.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab It was trying to get it?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. Never. I was always trying so hard. So terribly hard to get it, and I never got

to it. I never had a chance or did kill anybody in my dream.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was there anything in particular that happened around the time that these dreams

stopped, as you recall, or did they just end?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Perhaps. No. I think I loosened up a little bit, mentally, I think. I started having

more fun and found out more about women. And I think it partially moved everything out of my

old mind and replaced it with new.\par

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{\plain }{\plain \i MARIAN TURZANSKI [5-1-\chpgn ]\par }}

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{\plain }{\plain \i Tape five, side one:}{\plain \par

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{\plain JF:\tab You said that you loosened up, you were able then to become involved with

women.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Then I started to become a human again. I started having human feelings. I wasn\'92t

afraid to-- I was shy prior to that. Tremendously shy. I never had a chance to play my role as a

growing up boy. For some reason, perhaps, because I thought I was a woman, I didn\'92t feel right

in any kind of situation, so if a girl would talk to me I would blush immediately and I would get so

red in the face; I wished I would die right there.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You are talking about when you were here already you still had some of those

feelings that you did when you were working in the woman\'92s side of the camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I think that that perhaps had an effect on me. I was just trying to see why I was

that way, because I was tremendously shy. My brother wasn\'92t like that. I was tremendously shy. I

could not talk to a girl without completely falling apart. Completely. I didn\'92t want even to get a

job where girls were working because I couldn\'92t handle it. It was very-- I took shorthand in high

school in Williamsport, and I had to drop it because all the girls were in the class.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were in high school?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In high school. When I came here I was 16.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So you were in Williamsport, Pennsylvania?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, that\'92s where my parents are.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And that\'92s when you were put really for the first time in a typical adolescent

atmosphere?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Exactly. I never went to our high school prom; I didn\'92t want to ask a girl and the

girls would ask me and I just couldn\'92t do it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab It was not until you were out of the service, after high school?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, after the service then I started learning something about myself. It was, I

think, the service probably that did open up my mind. I had exposure to the weapons and

everything and started even hating that part of the life, perhaps, weapons, in the service because I

had so much of it in the service.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab I\'92m sorry, instead of hating?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Then I perhaps started to hate some of it, I mean, the weapons itself, but,

nevertheless, when I did come home I did reach that point where I bought myself a pistol to fulfill

my need, and it did. It fulfilled my need very quickly.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you enlist in the service after high school? Was that something you wanted to

do?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I joke around that there were 20 volunteers that left my neighborhood that

morning. There was I and 20 MP\'92s. No, I did enlist. And, I had a weird experience in the military.

There was one German fellow straight from Germany. Couldn\'92t speak English too well yet. He

was in my company, and on the maneuvers, he happened to be in back of me and I ordered him in

front of me and I said, "You will never again be in back of me with a weapon." And I felt very

bad about that. He never asked for an explanation, but I did reflect on that many times later on

and said to myself, "Why did you do that?" Because, I guess, I couldn\'92t control it. I couldn\'92t

stand a German right in back of me with a weapon. Yet here I was in the American army.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab But you still were fighting old battles?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I also told them later on that I was sorry for that but don\'92t ever send me to

Germany. Send me any place in the world as a soldier. Don\'92t send me to Germany, because I will

not be able to control myself. You don\'92t want to do that and I don\'92t want to do that. Later on I

got sick and tired of stateside duties, being in the States. Everybody was going all over the world

and here I am. I asked to be sent to Germany, but they would not do it. So finally I pressed for it,

pressed for it. They took out my papers. They read a little statement. "Turzanski, this is what you

said," so I was never sent out, and I\'92m glad I wasn\'92t because I would have probably done

something that I shouldn\'92t have. Try to as an adult to undo something that I shouldn\'92t try to

undo, because people that I would do to would be the people who actually had nothing to do with

it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Is there anything else that you want to add?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The only thing that I would like to add is that hatred is the worst thing in our lives.

Hatred should never be put into children\'92s minds because it will destroy, even when it comes to

the enemy. They should be taught about the enemy, but not actually how to hate them, only what

he is. I feel quite comfortable with my parents and I still give them credit, more and more credit

each time I read something about psychology of the human behavior and so forth; how well they

handled that. They removed that hatred from us. I know what Ukrainians did to us. I know what

Germans did to us. But it happened at that time. It does not mean that all of them did that to me,

that all of them wanted to do it, etc. We made a pledge, all four of us, when we were liberated in

Neumark, that we will take 120 Ukrainian lives before we are dead, because we lost all our

family.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab All the rest of your family?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, during the war. All the cousins-- all wiped out. We don\'92t have anybody.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab These were people who stayed in Poland?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, yes. And they were executed: one, because he was suspected to be an

underground soldier, young man, my cousin\'92s brother. She still cries about it. And they were also

talking about that she married a Jewish guy to save his life. She was Catholic and there was a lot

of it going on just like anyplace else when things were happening fast. I don\'92t believe the women

were taking advantage of the situation, but I think also that they felt that they could do something.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You knew of other cases like that, where Polish girls would marry Jewish men to

save them?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, to save them. Now, also...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did they stay married?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, this is very strong. It is unreal, what happens. When you make a bind like

that, when you sign a contract like that, a mental contract, I don\'92t think that there is much that

can break after that.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did they stay living in Poland?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Oh no. They are in New York, in a Jewish community, where they feel

comfortable.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab They live in a Jewish community?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did she stay Catholic or did she convert?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab She didn\'92t stay much one way or the other because she probably didn\'92t care, but

her husband, a Jewish fellow she married, wanted to make sure that their daughter will be a

Catholic child. So, it is actually, that\'92s a big sacrifice for him.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab They have one child?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Only one child. But it was, I think, because of the old man, Mr. [unclear].\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Her father?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab His father. He wanted to make sure that he never leaves this woman, no matter

what, even if she loses her mind or whatever, because what she had done for us, for them, and

make sure that her child will be protected if he dies later on. Tremendous individual.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab His father told him to raise his child as a Catholic?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. And his father...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab As a way of thanking her for her sacrifices?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It is sad, you know, when you really think about it, from a human point of view.

Those are tremendous sacrifices that one does to pay-- you don\'92t pay-- to thank, and I don\'92t even

know if thank is the word. \'91Cause she wanted a man and she had a man, but I think it\'92s that other

side, his side, that he feels that he should do something, which is another part of being human.

Now, what really hurts individual like I-- I went through rough things in my life and enjoyed some

good times here-- is what I read about Polish behavior in Second World War, where we are worse

than Hitler is, in the eyes of the Jewish community, at least I was told that, and there must be

reasons for it. But then I also did the same thing as you do. I also want to reach in and look for

answers, because I don\'92t want to build on old tradition. I want to build on something I have here.

And I had a map that I thought I could find and bring it in here of Poland during the Second

World War. It\'92s like a map of Pennsylvania. If you would take a pepper shaker and shake it over

the map, some places the more pepper would fall than others. The whole Poland was one

concentration country for Germany, and under each black spot on that map they tell you how

many people were murdered, murdered, murdered. And then they show bigger spots, and the

chimneys where they formed the camps, and how many died there. The whole country was totally

taken over, terrorized, dehumanized and everything. Minorities were given big roles, and also the

criminal element was given big roles. But I am not a historian, but I just know what I went

through and it\'92s tough. But, of course, it\'92s always tough if it\'92s sad about you. That, again, is

human.\par

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{\plain \tab I want to thank you for the opportunity to talk to you. By doing this, I think I\'92ll be

a better person. I hope I can sleep better, and this is selfish of me and I hope I\'92ll free myself to

become one of you, to freely think and act as one should in the proper manner in a given situation.

Sometimes I feel I am lacking a whole lot to reach the level of the free society. Thank God for a

free society and let\'92s hope, pray and hope this will never, never occur again, because if it happens

in midst of your own, people that you know, people you had contact with, people you touched,

you talked to, it\'92s very hard to remove from your memory, from your mind, but, yet, as a human,

intelligent human, you don\'92t want to spread a disease of hatred. That makes it much tougher to

control that feeling. I thank you.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab I cannot thank you enough, Mr. Turzanski.\par

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{\plain \tab \tab \tab \tab \tab \tab KEY:\tab JF - Josey Fisher [interviewer]\par

}{\plain \tab \tab \tab \tab \tab \tab \tab MT - Marian Turzanski [interviewee]\par

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{\plain \tab JF:\tab Mr. Turzanski, can you tell us where and when you were born, and a little bit about

your childhood?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I was born in Poland, southeast part of Poland, now taken by Russia, on January 18,

1934.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab What was the name of the town?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Zupanie, it was a village. Z-U-P-A-N-I-E. Zupanie. My parents were wealthy in

Poland. They had quite a bit of land, forest, and the village consisted of about ten Polish families, I

think they were all Catholic families, three Jewish families, and they were the business-oriented

families in the community.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The Jewish families were the business-oriented?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Business. They were the ones that were running the store and lumber yard, as far as

I can remember, stories I heard about them. And the rest of the community was a Polish minority,

which were Ukrainians. They were individuals that fought for their rights for many years, for

centuries. They settled in Poland and they worked for my parents. They were not slaves, but they

were the servants.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Your family, then, was one of the ten Polish Catholic families that held the primary

holdings in the village?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Correct.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And was your father, then, the owner of this forest land that you are talking about?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab That is correct. He had two mountains of forest ready to be cut down. One was a pine

forest and another one was oak.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Had his forebears also lived on this land? Had they also been from this section?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, and his father, unfortunately, died in the First World War in the Leipzig Camp

in Germany. I don\'92t know whether they called them concentration camps. It was also a camp. My

father survived, so he came back as a 12-year-old boy.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab He was in the camp also?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Did he tell you of his experiences there?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Not too much, because each time I wanted to discuss it with him, it would choke him

up. He felt very guilty about the whole thing that, as a l2-year-old boy, he should have done more

than he did, because when they came back from the camp, back to Poland, whatever his father

started, the neighbors took it from him.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The other large families in the town?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab The other, whoever were, whoever needed lumber, his father started to build a house

or something, whatever building they started, he said that within a short time all of it was gone.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Why, was the whole family in this camp in Leipzig?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab For what reason were they taken?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Well, because, again, they were the evils of the terri\-tory. They were Poles. Poland

went through this each time there was a misunderstanding between Russia and Germany, or Eastern

Germany needed to expand, or needed a corridor to move through. Poland was the corridor of

Europe. They just walked back and forth.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Were other families like your grandfather\'92s family also incarcerated, or were you...\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes, because they were actually a minority in their location. Not far from that village

was another well-established community, Felicenthal [phonetic]. I think that they called it. It was a

German colony. A lot of Germans had colonies in Poland in those days, and they were the-- not as

much merchants as mechanics, etc. They were the people that would fix your equipment, farm

equipment, and they would have the parts for it, and they would also supply the terri\-tory with certain

shoes, and so forth. There were some wooden shoes used by some people,}{\plain \sub }{\plain that the Germans were

making and selling, so everybody was-- had a place, the way I see it, in that territory. They were well-organized; they had orchestras-- my father, when he got married, my parents, this was when they had

the big blow-out, a German band and everything, etc.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And the Jewish families that you were familiar with were primarily these merchant

families?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The business families?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Families that were as well off as my parents were, Goldreich [phonetic] I heard quite

a bit of when I was growing up, were the-- they had a lumber yard. They were right across the little

creek from us, within eyesight. I remember seeing the place, and they were right next to the border

patrol barracks. As a matter of fact, I asked my parents, my father and my mother--they are still alive,

my father was just 80, he just celebrated his 80th birthday-- the story about Goldreich [phonetic]

being hidden in our house. It was not during the German occupation, because we were out of it.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab When was this?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab It was when Poland was still free. He was involved in some kind of trade that was not

quite legal and was not quite illegal, and my father, being a, not a mayor, only a recognized individual

in the territory, he asked if he could stay there, and I think they gave him two weeks. For two weeks,

if he\'92s not caught or whatever, then he doesn\'92t have to answer to the authorities for that.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was the Polish authorities?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, the border, something-- border. He did not have permission to trade across

borders which he was doing, and was quite successful dealing with certain things: not selling arms

or anything like that, it was some kind of a business deal-- sugar, horses, and things like that. Normal

deals, but there was not a written contract, I think, for it, so the government could not get their tax.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab I see.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab He asked my father if he would do that, and he said, \'93You do realize that the border

patrol is right across the street from us.\'94 He said, \'93Yes, but they do look up to you.\'94 He did.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab So he and his family came.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No, just him, just him, and they asked him not to go back in those two weeks, because

he can get caught going from my house by the border patrol that would look to your house at night.

As a matter of fact, when he was staying at our house, the individuals were coming over for dinners

and so forth, and the border patrols to our house also, so it was quite safe.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was the border to...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Hungarian border. We were within about three and one half kilometers to Hungarian

border which is what, like one and one half mile, not too far from the Hungarian border.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab What was the relationship like, generally, with the Jewish families? You\'92re talking

about 13 families,}{\plain \sub }{\plain which were essentially the primary economic base for this village. What was the...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I feel that they had very good organization and rela\-tionship, not co-existence, was

actually more than that. They supplied the territory with necessary things, so they were recognized

as such. Poles had land. They always treasure land, like my father, he had land because of his

ancestors. Ukrainians were the forgotten people, I would call now. There was no welfare in those

days. They were not starving, but they had to work for their food and, as a matter of fact, kids would

be sent out early in their life, like the girl, the woman that was taking care of us, I think she came to

my parents, given by her parents, at age of 14, if they would please give her a job, which is working

for [unclear]. I think she had it very enjoyable. I don\'92t think we were that rotten. I had three brothers.

She was taking care of us; she was our governess. She was taking care of us, correcting our language

and manners and keeping eye on us. My mother was a very brave young lady. She liked horses and

she liked to ride an awful lot. It was against territorial wisdom, and when my father married her, that

caused a lot of talk in the community.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Why was that?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Because he brought in a woman that\'92s modern. All she wants to do is just ride horses,

and she was quite a woman.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab She was from outside this territory?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, yes, but later on she proved to be quite a brave woman during the war. So, then

it came to September 20, 1939.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You were born in 1934? Do you have much recollection of the pre-war period? Of

the atmosphere in your home village?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab The only thing I remember there was no church. The Polish people did not have a

church. The Ukrainians had a church, so I remember going to the Ukrainian church once, and I

believe that either at that church or in a German church that we were baptized, but I think that it was

in the Ukrainian church, because they made some kind of deal that, as long as you didn\'92t have your

own, it\'92s the same deal if you go to theirs; it\'92s a Russian Orthodox church. As far as with Jewish

families, I remember around Christmastime they would come to our house. We had a post office--when I say a post office there was always only one post office in a territory, and, of course, they have

the big landowners, which one, I don\'92t know, I don\'92t think it was the Goldreich from the lumber yard.

I think there was three families. I think there was one like a rabbi--he was not a rabbi--but he had the

right to give weddings to Jewish individuals, and he had all those other rights that they needed in that

territory as a religious group. He would come to visit us, but I think it was only to show us his

concern for our holiday, the way I see it now. Because why would he stop into our house when there

was preparation going on? I re\-member that he was dressed in dark--dark hat. He was always very

intelligent, very nicely spoken. I used to listen to people speak. For some reason it would give me a

good feeling if somebody spoke a beautiful language. I remember that individual was very intelligent,

he spoke a nice language, and, of course, I remember that parents did their utmost to accommodate

that individual. What his purpose was, I don\'92t know. I did not have a chance when I went up for my

father\'92s birthday that I could talk about it. It was such a short time, and we just talked about what

we went through and then we cried a little bit. To start talking about a war is bad. It\'92s always bad,

it just finishes everything. We never had a chance to touch base on that. But I remember they were

saying that anytime a bishop or some individual would be coming to that territory, he would be

representing a Jewish community. He would be there with the religious people way up front where

the bishop is, not where the people are. He would be with them, so whatever they did, they did it, the

way I see it, the way I would like to see it done; they did it right. They were co-operating with the

territory.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The Jewish families?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab The Jewish families, because why would they have to send a--why would he go there

and sit at the pulpit whatever, with the Catholic representative, when Poland was free?\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was in a church that this meeting...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab In a church.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And he would go alone, or he would have other Jewish people with him?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab That I don\'92t know, but I know that my parents said that he was the representative of

the Jewish community, so he would also welcome the other head, of the religious head, into the

community.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab What about the children? Was there contact between the Jewish and...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab From Poland. I don\'92t remember. Like I said...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You were quite young.\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes, I was in a kindergarten, but nobody ever said that somebody is Jewish, so I

don\'92t, actually from Poland I don\'92t remember except that individual, that he spoke so well. He was

something special. I only remember that he was something special. I thought he was a doctor, but

then I was talking to a friend and they said he was like a rabbi, but not a rabbi. He was a special

individual with a special philosophy of life, perhaps. But in Hungary, in Keszthely, Hungary--I was

already eleven, I think...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Before we get to that, perhaps we can speak of what happened in 1939 with the

invasion, as you recall it. \par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Well, as I recall, it was one beautiful morning around 10 o\'92clock. My aunt was with

this girl who was taking care of us. My aunt was crippled. She was my father\'92s sister, I don\'92t know

whether it happened in a camp, but something happened to her, and she was crippled, and my father\'92s

mother in the First World War, I\'92m going back to that, lost her marbles. She got mentally ill, I guess

because the death of her husband or something. Depression. Yes, she had depression. She was not

mentally ill, but--she was not old, she was not feeble.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You said she was depressed.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab But she was depressed, and there could be some medical term for it. She did have

some mental problem later on, so that\'92s what actually hurt my father more than anything else, I guess.

He lost his father, and his mother and his sister was messed up. Well, going back to this, in--we were

before the war or when the war started?\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Just in \'9139.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Just in \'9139. When it started, we were in the garden playing around--I remember my

father had bees there and bee hives and he told me to stay away from them, and it was so nice to sit

there, observing them land on the flowers and then go back into beehive, and all of a sudden,

something is flying over our heads, something I never heard before. This sound that I never heard

before, big birds, airplanes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You had never seen them before?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No. Airplanes flew over our heads. Since we had a post office, we had a radio.

Somebody yelled out, \'93Hitler started a war.\'94 Those were the German planes and then there was some

explosions, or machine gun fires--I remember something. But there was nothing around us that

happened, but I remember that my aunt was hiding us under trees. I think they were using machine

guns, the fighter planes, probably, now I am thinking about how it is. This squadron is organized,

bombers and fighter planes to make sure that nobody will start anything. Because later on I heard

stories that they were machine gunning the cabbage patches because it looked like organized army

or something. They were in rows, and could have looked like army men. Then, I don\'92t remember too

much. That happened like, I guess, for two weeks. It was a lot of commotion, and we were like being

neglected. There was always something going on. Everybody was always meeting and lot of talking,

an awful lot of talking and not too much time to spend with us. Everybody was always busy. Now,

all of a sudden my father is leaving, and I couldn\'92t tolerate it. I started banging my head, my mom

tells me, I didn\'92t even remember it, against the ground, crying, \'93Why do you have to leave us?\'94 He

was going to the war. He was going to jump on one of the tanks that were driving by us, by our

territory, to go to the war to fight the Hitler. But one of his officers that knew him from the military

service, said, \'93Mr. Turzanski, your place is at home with your children. This is going to be a terrible

war. I am a professional and I am telling you that.\'94 And, he, more or less, threw him off the tank, so

my father came back.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab He had been in the army previously, then?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Everybody had to be in Europe. You had to serve, and, I think, it\'92s longer than in the

United States. I think you had to serve four years or something like that.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab But, this is after the First World War.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab After the First World War. Yes, and he had a rank of officer. He did his duty. Then

one morning I remember, I heard a dog bark. Now, I learned it was September 20, 1939. Early in the

morning, the dog started to bark something terrible outside. We didn\'92t have dogs inside the house,

only outside. It was to protect the house from the wolves and the strangers, I guess. He was on a

chain, and then I heard some kind of yelling, screaming, and the dog did not bark anymore. Then my

mother screamed. She ran out. So, we ran out. They were trying to kill my father. Now at that time

I did not know who \'93they\'94 were, so-called \'93they\'94. It was Ukrainians from different village that came

to our village with the news that Poles are killing Ukrainians in their territory, so they came to

revenge that act, and to stir up the rest of the Ukrainians to do the same. Well, they killed that dog

and he wanted to--he lifted, one of the leaders lifted the cane to hit my father who was bald-headed--I

don\'92t know how it happened but they said it happened overnight. Something, maybe when the war

started. He was going to smash him on the head with a cane. A cane was a weapon in those days. The

cane had a sharp metal tip on the end, very sharp; this was to protect yourself from wolves, because

you had to do an awful lot of walking through the woods, and, the wolves were the bad thing in those

days. Dogs were no problem, but wolves were, and the people, in case you would have to protect

yourself. It was just like in the old days, they had what? The sword. The cane was just like that.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab So this was cane that grew and was then supplemented by an iron or metal tip of some

kind...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes it was a regular walking cane, a walking cane with a special tool. Some of them

had even long knives inside. When you turned the handle, you could pull it out, there was a sharp

knife.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Almost like a bayonet.\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes, they had those things in those days, for some reason, that\'92s what they used to

kill the dog with, that sharp point they pierced the dog with, and he went. He wanted to do that to

my father. That\'92s when my mother, I guess noticed, she screamed, she ran out, \'93You have to kill me

first before you kill him.\'94 Well, then, there was an awful lot of excitement. The guy in charge of our

post office, he was Ukrainian. They were all Ukrainians, people living in our facility, not the same

house, the girl did with us, but the rest of them just had their facilities. He jumped in and he grabbed

the cane and says, \'93I am in charge here.\'94 They wanted weapons; my father had a lot of weapons. \'93I

am in charge here. I have the keys. I have the weapons. You talk to me.\'94\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab So, your own Ukrainian friend saved you?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, and then he whispered in my parents\'92 ear, \'93Run, be\-cause all they are looking for

is the taste of blood, and then nobody will be able to stop them.\'94 That was six in the morning. My

youngest brother was two weeks old, so my mother was just after delivery, and in those days you

deliv\-ered at home if everything was normal. My younger brother--there was four of us--my younger

brother didn\'92t even have his shoes on his feet yet. Nobody had a chance to put on--there was so much

commotion. We grabbed something. Somebody put shoes on us, I guess. We ran towards the

Hungarian border to run away from this. It was in the fall, so that means after the wheat was cut

down. There was no corn, but there was wheat, and those jaggedy things were sticking up. My

younger brother\'92s feet started to bleed, so then I don\'92t know who had to carry him. My mother was

carrying the youngest. There was no shoes. But two Ukrainians ran after us, I remember they were

shooting in the woods, but in the woods when you shoot, the bullets don\'92t travel too far. They were

after us to catch us, but finally they realized that we were running away, that we would get away, and

I also remember when I looked back, the flag, the Polish flag on the barracks of the border patrol was

being broken off.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab By those Ukrainians?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab They had horses. It was just like cowboys. They attached a rope to it, and they started

pulling. They were beating the horse and they finally broke that.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab So these two Ukrainians who were following you, were following you on foot with

guns?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes. We got to the border, running. Hungarians stopped us at the border. My father

could speak Hungarian, some Hungarian. They said that they cannot let us, in because they have only

one machine gun, three guys on the border, and they would not be able to stop the revolution. And

if they would let us in, that would just start their problems.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab They were afraid of the Ukrainians coming into Hungary.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Exactly. To get us and, actually, to get even with them why do they\par

}{\plain let us in. My father was very angry then. And he snapped at the border patrol and he said, \'93I want to

speak to an officer in charge of this,\'94 and there was a guy, right behind us. The guy was very scared.

He said, \'93I am also an officer, I will give you everything I can; I will do everything I can for you as

a military man, but you let my family in back of that into Hungary, and I will stay with you to protect

you.\'94 Well, that was the beginning of our running experience. We ran through quite a few camps in

Hungary. Every camp we were foreigners, every place we went to, we were foreigners. We did not

go to school for quite a while.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab When you say camps, what do you mean?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab It means that the Polish Government-in-Exile was given some...\par

}{\plain \par

}{\plain \par

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}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab You were talking about the...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Camps in Hungary were actually prepared, or maybe not even prepared... individual

homes that we went to, but they were in close vicinity... all the people, immigrants would live in cer\-

tain quarters.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab These were provided by the Polish Government-in-Exile?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab I think some of it was provided perhaps, but my parents had to work right away, so

perhaps they had to work to pay for it. But there was some organization., maybe it was just churches,

but we called them camps because we were all grouped in one territory.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Was it collective housing, or did you have separate dwell\-ings?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab There was no collective housing. I remember once we were in a military establishment.

The first one we were in was a military establishment when we just crossed the border. The only thing

that I remember from that was that there was an awful lot of uniforms, and then the latrine, I had

never seen anything like it in my life. You had to go outside and there was a ditch, and there was like

a board that you had to hang on to so you didn\'92t fall into the ditch, and it was terrible. There was a

shower. You had to cover things up yourself after you were done. Then we went into some kind of--like a hotel, I remember, for another two or three days we were interrogated and separated. They

were looking-- Hungarians were not too friendly to us because they wanted to stay neutral, I think.

I am not sure about that, but they also wanted to make sure that there is no political individuals there

so they don\'92t have to answer for.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Did you ever find out whether or not the Ukrainians who were chasing you caused

any trouble at the border?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab At the border, no, but I have some stories to tell about what happened later on in the

same territory with Jewish families and with Polish families.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab These were stories that you heard afterwards?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab I heard stories from the son of Goldberg, Goldreich. I don\'92t even know the spelling,

it would be like a Polish spelling, but it\'92s a German word. It means \'93Goldrich,\'94 right? Goldreich. But

it would be spelled somehow the way Poles would spell it, I think. Going back to the camps. So

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{\plain finally we end up in Keszthely, Hungary, where they org˝ˇˇˇÇÉÑÖÜáàâäãåçéèêëíìîïñóòôöõúùûü†°¢£§•¶ß®©™´¨≠ÆØ∞±≤≥¥µ∂∑∏π∫ªºΩæø¿¡¬√ƒ≈∆«»…À˝ˇˇˇÃÕŒœ–—“”‘’÷◊ÿŸ⁄€‹›ﬁﬂ‡·‚„‰ÂÊÁËÈÍÎÏÌÓÔÒÚÛÙıˆ˜¯˘˙˚¸˝˛ˇanized a Polish school. It was the first time

I had a chance to go to school.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The spelling of that?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab K-E-S-Z-T-H-E-L-Y. It\'92s next to Balaton, which is their big lake, and they call it their

sea, because they did not have access to the sea. Now, in Keszthely-- I am losing some of my

thoughts-- if we could just stop this for a second.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Sure.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I am ready to come back.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab When you got to this village or town...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Town. It was a very nice town in Hungary, very nice It was 1944 already, that means

we traveled already that many years.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You were on the road then for 5 years? \par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Constantly.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab Constantly, stopping in these camps, as you described them?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, and just running. Exactly why we were doing that, I think, that whatever was

running out, either jobs or something, that we had to keep on going.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Did you attend school in any of these areas?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No, we had private lessons through some educated individuals. Older people, they

were giving us. No schooling. In Keszthely was the first time that I went to school.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Not until 1944?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab No, that was before we left in \'9144. So I would say 1942. I think, in Keszthely. That\'92s

the place where we actually stayed until the end before the Germans took us.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab I see. This was also a camp?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab It was a city, but we were always kept an eye on. We were the foreigners. We were

the unwanted ones.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You were always kept with other Poles who were running the same way that you

were?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab That\'92s correct. We were just like those Cubans in Miami that came from Cuba by boat.

Unwanted ones.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Were you under guard?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab No, but we had to report. We had to report to police stations.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab How often?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab My parents had to report, but perhaps it was only my parents, because my father was

organizing a underground move\-ment in Hungary. Hungarians deadly were afraid of that, and he was

traveling constantly to Budapest, which is the Hungarian capital, and wherever we were he was on

the go, from beginning.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab He was organizing a Polish underground?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Was this linked up with the Polish underground in Poland itself, or was this another?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab This was linked up, I believe, if I see it correctly now, with the military\par

}{\plain in Rumania and so forth we had. We had Polish Army outside Poland and it was linked up with them,

so what we were doing was actually making artificial passports and smuggling young men through

Hungary to Rumania and then they would go to wherever they had to go to fight the Germans.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Smuggling the young Polish men, who had escaped from Poland to the Polish armies

in these other countries? \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab There were young Polish men and there were also young Jews. They were all young,

I mean they were all Polish, all Polish citizens. Smuggling Polish citizens. They were willing to fight

Hitler.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab So this group then included both Christians and Jews?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab That is correct.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab When your father and your family left Poland, initially it was to escape the Ukrainians

who were after you?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Was he involved in any kind of movement at that time? Was he a political person then,

or was it not until he got to Hungary?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No, he was not. That is the sad thing. He was not. They were, I think, double-crossed,

by the government. They were not aware of what\'92s going to happen. They were constantly told by

government that are ready and able to stop any aggression from Hitler\'92s side,}{\plain \sub }{\plain \'91cause Hitler was

making a lot of noises, and the world knew it.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab But your father, then, felt deluded by the Polish government? And he was, therefore,

not prepared for the invasion?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes. Correct. As a matter of fact he often says that we should have had something.

We were told we have it. They would take an airplane, they would take a new machine gun and drive

it from place to place and show it to the people what we are doing, the government.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The government would do this?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab And it would be the same airplane, new airplane and new weapon of some sort, that

would travel from city to city, from village to village, just to keep the people confused that things are

fine.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab But people as educated and knowledgeable as your father trusted that this indeed was

what was going on?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab So that his feeling upon leaving must have been betrayal?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Betrayal. When somebody made something out of it. It\'92s a betrayal.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And yet he was willing to get involved in an underground to restore Polish...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab That is correct, because actually our duty was from then on to fight Hitler with

everything you have. Now, he had family. I don\'92t know whether I could do that, to give up my kids

and my wife and go ahead and spend all the time on the road, knowing if I would be caught, their

lives are in danger.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab He was supposed to be working, according to this plan, of being in the camps?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, he had to report to the police station.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab How did he finesse that?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab So, my mother-- we also had other people there, and one of them was like a cousin

to us. She grabbed him and she said, whatever his name was, Walter or something, \'93You are coming

with me. You are Marian Turzanski.\'94 I am junior; my father is also Marian. So they went to the

police station.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab Your mother took him?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes. They went hand by hand and they signed that report. My mother is Ottelia and

he was Marian. Later on my father came, and I think that is what actually made them move again.

They discovered that my father-- \'93Who\'92s he?\'94 \'93Oh, he\'92s my husband,\'94 Somebody else was signing,

and that is what kicked us out of one place to another. I think that was the reason. I am not sure what

made us move so much. Or, maybe it was to get away from Polish border, but no, we didn\'92t want to

do that so that we wanted to stay as close as we could...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab How much could your parents share with you during this time of what was going on?

What was the role of children in that time? Were they included in any of this discussion?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab We were excluded from all serious talks, because I don\'92t remember any serious

meetings, and they had a whole lot of them. We had a lot of parties, and, of course, in Europe

children are not part of the adult world. They have their own place. So even at the dinner table, if

there is a big party, children do not participate in that because it is for adults. Family gatherings, yes,

children have their own place. I remember all those big people coming, with big degrees. There was

an awful lot of intelligentsia that left Poland. Actually, that\'92s all that left Poland, educated individuals

that could care less about their wealth. They just took off with their lives. They would always gather

and it seemed like a party, but now I understand that those were political meetings.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was the time; that was the cover.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab And they even had to hide the radios, that\'92s in Hungary. Hide the radios and listen to

BBC, London.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab What you\'92re saying is that the parties you are describing were also in Poland?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab No, that was in Hungary.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was all in Hungary?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I am in Hungary now, It was all in Hungary. It was in Keszthely. I remember that\'92s

where a lot of things were happening. Now in Keszthely also, it was 1942, I believe, or maybe it was

later, maybe it was \'9144 when Goldreich-- and his first name--I just talked to my parents on the phone

yesterday--was Samuel. They went to our priest in Felicenthal [phonetic]. That was the next village,

a German village, and asked him for our baptismal certificates\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was after you had already left?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab After we left. And I understand that my parents had made an agreement, or asked the

priest when they took-- because they were in custody of the, the birth certificates, for some reason.

They took it to the priest, and if somebody needs it, give them our certificates.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Goldreich would not have come directly to your parents to ask for this?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab No, we were not there. After we left he went, because he knew our relationship, I

guess. The priest knew our relationship or something. He went and the priest gave him our birth

certificate of our cousin because they were trying to match the ages. Our cousin\'92s name was Walter

Turzanski, and he traveled and met us in Keszthely, Hungary, with that birth certificate. \par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Mr. Goldreich. \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I remember him, curly hair, tall, good-looking young individual. Young, he was in his

30's. Good looking man. But he came. I thought my father stole him from the train going to Germany,

but it was not so. When things got very rough in Poland, he took the birth certificate prior to the--

secured it, he left as a Turzanski.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab What about his family?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab His family was very sad. He told us that his wife-- they were constantly shepherd by

Ukrainians. The community was not that big, of us Poles and Jewish, only three families. They were

helped out by certain individuals, certain Ukrainians. Well, it happened prior to, I believe July 4,

1944. July 4, 1944, they picked, like a 4th of July celebration to kill off Jews, I think.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab The Germans or the Ukrainians.\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab The Ukrainians. In that territory, cause my grandfather and Walter told us that. His

wife for some reason went outside and they shot her. His wife, and we are not certain whether he

witnessed that or just did not go out because he knew that he would be destroyed immediately. But

his mother, Goldreich\'92s mother, went out to help her daughter-in-law and she was also killed, right

there.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab These were by the Ukrainians who lived in the territory?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Territorial-- there was organized by Hitler a movement prior to the war. Somebody

must have known about it, and they were given an authority to clean out the territory, and it\'92s going

to be theirs. They always wanted the Ukrainians. So the Poles and, of course, the Jews, had to go.

So, I remember my parents were telling me, one Jewish girl took a refuge in a Ukrainian house. She

took their name. She took their religion and she took their garments. She would go to the Orthodox

Church with them. On July 4th, my parents just told me, they took her out of the church. There was

some service and walked her so many kilometers to kill her with the rest of the group there.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was the family that had sheltered her, or other Ukrainians?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No. The family-- my parents-- the family were not able to stop...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The family that she was staying with could not stop the other Ukrainians from killing

her.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes. Correct. So actually they did not do it, but they could not stop this from

happening.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab In other words, it was known that she was not Ukrainian among the...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab It must have been because she...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Um... \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab So, shortly after that, Poles had to go.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab The death of the Goldreich women that you talk about, were the Ukrainians that lived

in your immediate area and worked for you and knew you, were they also involved in this? Do you

know? \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I am afraid, yes, because my father wanted to got to Bayonne, New Jersey. There is

quite a few that came over here.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Quite a few...?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Ukrainians. I work with some. They were in the same camp, and will describe that

later on. The Ukrainians that were in charge of the deals, I work with them now. Many times I want

to take a camera to work with me, but I am afraid that if I take a picture and show it to my parents,

they will die. So I still don\'92t know what I am going to do with that. Walter Turzanski--Samuel

Goldreich-- needed shoes. My father took his attach\'e9 case that he was traveling to Budapest back and

forth, to the nearest shoemaker, and I didn\'92t know that at that time, but now my parents say it was

illegal for a shoemaker to make shoes for somebody because everything was controlled, leather and

everything. And, even, why you are making shoes for somebody. But my father paid him He was

quite an individual, anyway, because he knew certain men. He knew who to go to. Perhaps this was

a Jewish shoemaker that he went to.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Your father?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, and they made them, and within three hours he had new shoes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab He needed new shoes?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab He needed shoes. \par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab He had no shoes. He had escaped. \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No, he had shoes with an awful lot of holes He said that my brother doesn\'92t have any.

His other brother was Ossias, and they don\'92t know what name he had.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab He escaped with his brother? \par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes, and a sister.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Uh huh.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab And his sister took my mother\'92s birth certificate. She was slightly older than my

mother, ten years older, I think. But she ended up as a Ottilia Turzanski, and somebody ran into

Ottilia Turzanski in Mexico, in a Polish camp in Mexico, what year I don\'92t know, but my mother was

approached, \'93Why were you so snobby? Why didn\'92t you want to talk to me in Mexico?\'94\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab And it was this woman? The sister of...?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab She said, \'93I was not,\'94 and she said, \'93Yes, you were.\'94 This guy must have been

bothering her in Mexico. \'93Come on, Ottilia, don't you remember me?\'94 and she probably said, \'93No,

leave me alone.\'94 My parents were a little bit hurt by that. They were going to ask Red Cross to find

these people, but then after they found out, I think it was in Williamsburg where we were, that Ottilia

Turzanski was, but maybe there was another Turzanski. Turzanski name is a small family.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab When you say that your parents were hurt...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab That these people did not contact us.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab They never contacted you after the war?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab No, that. Nobody wants anything but there is always, \'93Thank you.\'94 That helps a little

bit.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Of course.\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab But, having so many hurts, this is actually-- these people probably got hurt also

tremendously. They are all at an age. I was going to check in Israel. If they are alive, they would be

in Israel now, because where else could they go? They could not go back to Poland. They couldn\'92t

go any place. They would be there. Someday perhaps-- have to do it fast. I can do that for my

parents. \par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab Were there any children involved? Were there any Goldreich children from that

marriage?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I haven\'92t heard of Walter saying anything, or my parents saying that there was a child

left behind. I think there was another family, Reinhart.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab This was another Jewish family?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes, They left, but they left their son in Poland with some\-body, and my parents feel

that he is still in Poland, that he survived.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab They left their child with a Christian family? \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes. That is correct.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And they don\'92t know what happened to that family? They assume that they might have

died.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab The Reinharts probably are not alive because whoever ran would be caught eventually.

Jews had one problem in Europe, that they were circumcised. Nobody else was. When my boy was

born, and I don\'92t know why--first thing I wanted, I insisted on, but my wife was objecting to it, that

he get circumcised, \'91cause I don\'92t want him to be different from the people that live here. He\'92s a

native.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab Because the American males are all circumcised?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab And I am also circumcised.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You were circumcised after you came to the United States? \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, three or four years ago, I don\'92t know why. Gives me a tremendous, I don\'92t

know, something...\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab I think you are answering why-- the feeling of that being a differentiating factor from

the...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I think it\'92s the fear or something, but then you get so much pleasure when you become

wanted, just like somebody accepts you, or something. They had that problem, so I often-- nobody

talks to you, because in Europe you don\'92t talk to children about sex or anything. But I often

wondered if he was clever enough, he could have got circumcised.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Walter?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Sure. I mean, he was circumcised, the opposite. That\'92s what was bad. As a child I

wasn\'92t exposed to that. How easy it was to separate the Jewish male from the rest of the people in

the territory.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Your parents gave their papers, their baptismal certi\-ficates, at what point, to the

church?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab When the war started, when my father was going to go to war, they both went. For

some reason, like I said, there was an awful lot of talking and everything was uncertain, what\'92s going

to happen. I don\'92t think they were planning to go to Hungary, but they were planning to run

someplace from where we are because the territory was not proper to survive. \par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Did this leave them without any papers of their own?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab We didn\'92t need any. In your own country you don\'92t need yourself, but Jews would

need the papers.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab So, he assumed, then, that Jews would use these papers? \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab That\'92s the only reason priest would even have the name of a priest. Otherwise he

would never release it to anybody. They even gave him the name of the priest, someplace...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And the priest was cooperative, obviously?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab And the priest gave them-- matter of fact, Walter Turzanski started by saying, \'93I hope

you forgive me, but I have taken my name because my parents call him Samuel Goldreich. No, I\'92m

Walter Turzanski; please forgive me I took your name.\'94\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And where was the cousin, the Walter?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Walter Turzanski went to war. He was in military. Just like my father was going. I

think that\'92s what happened, they going to jump on the tanks. The military movement, they were going

to join and go. I think that\'92s when they decided to get rid of their whatever.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab So, the real Walter Turzanski went into the army?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Went into the army and he is probably dead.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab They never heard from him?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No, no, we never heard from him.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab So, when you talk about Walter now you are referring to Samuel Goldreich?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes, but after the war again, but I don\'92t know why, but Hannah Goldberg, Goldreich,

still stayed as Ottilia Turzanski, my mother\'92s name.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Which is your mother\'92s name.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, because I would first thing after the war go back, but maybe it was still so

uncertain, still scared, perhaps because you never know what can happen, and once you get scared

like that you don\'92t trust anybody. Matter of fact, I don\'92t like to open up to anybody. I am a closed

person. Even when I go to school, I went to Temple University to take some psychological

counseling courses, and they would ask each student to say something about himself, open up his

heart to the rest of the class so they know him, and I didn\'92t want to. I said, \'93My life is my story and,

if you don\'92t mind, I would just like to get education here,\'94 and they didn\'92t like that. That was in

Hungary. Then shortly after that, when Walter left...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Walter left for where?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab For, I\'92m not sure. He was given the shoes and he was given some money and a

passport. Now, I don\'92t know whether as went to Rumania, or whether he went to-- I think he went

back to his brother, but they were traveling, they were free. They had some plan, I think. They had

a name [unclear] I am not sure, actually I would have to check on that, and if I may, I mean if you

need it, I can follow up on that. Then we heard that shortly after, it was July 4, 1944, when they

finished off the territorial Jews...\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Did you hear about that at the time?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You found out about it later?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I heard it when Walter in Kesthely, in Hungary, when he cried when he talked about

his wife and his mother killed.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab That\'92s when you heard about it?\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab By Ukrainians.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab The date of this massacre was July 4th.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab 1944.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab 1944, and it was shortly after that that Walter came-- was able to escape.\par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab No, it war prior to that, I believe. I think it was prior to that, but they killed his wife

sooner, but this was a mass movement\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab A mass movement?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab It was like they were removing them from the territory. Not telling us, they would

never let you know what\'92s happening. They were walking them from one territory to another and

then at mid-point they would just kill them.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And the Ukrainians were doing this in 1944? Was it a deportation, or was it more a

round-up?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab It was like deportation, to remove them from the territory. They needed that territory,

because otherwise the word would get out and they did not want the word to get out, that something

is happening to you. Jews or Poles never knew that something will happen to them. They were just

being moved from one place to another and then something happened, in the meantime, and they were

removed from this earth.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab So, what had happened to his family then had happened on a more of an individual

basis before these mass... \par

}{\plain \tab MT: \tab Yes they either disregarded an order not to go out or something that they shot them...\par

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}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Now, to give you comparison of evil forces working during the war, I talked about

Jewish families being round up and killed, and Jews did have a special problem because they wore

picked out prior to the rest of the country. They were put on a list to be eliminated yet nobody knew

about that, that this will happen. That was the sad part about it. The people that you trusted would

actually be the ones that would carry the hidden knife. My father stayed behind. My grandfather

stayed behind - he was like a mayor of that territory.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab You are talking now, then, about your mother\'92s father?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab My father\'92s, my father\'92s father brother...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Had died...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Yeh. So, my father\'92s father that died, his brother.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab So your father\'92s uncle...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab My father\'92s uncle, he stayed behind, because he did not believe when those Ukrainians

said that if Poles are killing, then we are going to no and investigate, so he formed a commission. He

formed a delegation from his village, and they all went to the next place, and they found out that it\'92s

not true. When than came back it was quite late, because things had started already to take place.

Now that\'92s after we left, and my grandfather did that, after we ran away to Hungary. At night, he was

it must have been in the fall or winter, because he said the stove would not-- a belly-stove, I guess

you call them pot-belly stove, it wouldn\'92t burn too well and he had a hard time keeping that going.

There was another man with him, not Ukrainian, though, because they were no lower allowed to be

with Poles. So he stayed out late playing around with that fire and then he heard shots. He looked out

the window and he saw horses driving around one of the Polish homes and shooting at the house, and

then they set fire to the house people tried to escape the house and they were shot right there, and

then they would go to the next house and again surround and start shooting anybody that tried to

escape, shoot them and burn the house down. One of the guys that stayed with him, I believe-- oh,

it\'92s coming next, so my grandfather ran out and this guy, and they hid in the cemetery behind the

tombstones. The cemetery was not too far from our home where I was born, and they observed all

this terrible thing going on. One family had 5 daughters, 5 girls, and the parents, father end mother

and 5 girls. They lined them up, father, mother, oldest daughter to the youngest, they took out a

wooden, whatever you call it that you cut wood on...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab An ax? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Well, an ax plus the wooden block. They would lay the kids on the block and chop

their heads off. Everybody would scream, they faint, and they would bring them back to it, pour water

on them, and then next execution. And they killed them all like that, the whole family, and then they

burned their house.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab This was a Polish family?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Polish family killed by Ukrainians. That\'92s right. They were not political people, but

they had rights to the territory. Jews were not political people, but they had rights to the territory.

They were the owners.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab The family was Polish Christian or Polish Jews?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Polish Christian.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab But the feeling of the Ukrainians against the Poles who had rights to land that they felt

should have been theirs...\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab I believe that they had struck a deal with Hitler. If they cleaned that territory out, it\'92s

theirs. Of course it was false belief on their side. Later on, Hitler got even with them in Lemberg, in

Lvov. They got a little too independent, and they wanted to form their own government, and Hitler

surrounded them with the SS troops and cut them down,. I think 2000 of them and killed them.

Because he also didn\'92t want organization, he wanted people to work for him, but don\'92t organize on

your own. In the morning, that young man, that was Matkowsky-- he\'92s in Chicago now-- he ran over

to his house where his father was and knocked off ashes off his-- his chest was still there, the rest was

all burned. \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Matkowsky was...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab He was with my grandfather hiding in the cemetery and in the morning when the

smoke went down and everything, he snuck up to his house and his father\'92s body was there in ashes.

Only his chest was still intact.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab He had been burned? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab He was killed and burned.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab He was killed also, and burned.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab So our house is still there; it was not burned because nobody was killed in it. Any

house that somebody was killed in it, they burned it to the ground.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Matkowsky was Christian, or was he Jewish?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT.\tab Was a Christian.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Christian also. How did you find out these stories? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Matkowsky, we met in Germany later on, and grandfather-- we got in Germany after

the liberation and after \'9145, May \'9145, my grandfather was someplace not too far from Bremen. I

forgot the name already because I cannot think too clear now. He told us awful lot of was happening.

He was on the list once.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Your grandfather?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Yes, to be sent to the old people\'92s camp, and what they would do then, a lot of them

were sent to the old people\'92s camp, because they are unable to work, and it will be easier for you.

They were sent to a special place and they will be given bedding, or at least they were shown a room,

a bed and blanket, and given a piece of paper and a pencil to write to their family how wonderful they

are being treated. And right after that they will be poisoned.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab This is in Poland?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab In Germany.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab In Germany. He was on a list.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab And right after that they would be poisoned.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab How did he escape from that?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab He worked-- he pretended that he is younger than he is. Nobody escaped but they

worked. There was a plan to use us to the last minute, and then you go. The plan was not to kill

everybody. They could have done it, I think, but they starve you. Day to day you got weaker.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Why was your grandfather - actually it was your father\'92s uncle - why was he taken?

Why did they want to kill him? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Well, Poles, in general, were lower than the dirt. We were the enemies of the state.

Jews were not enemies. We were the enemies of the German nation. With Jews they started in

Germany. They had a special reason for it because they start with them in Germany. Most Jews in

Poland had German names, like the ones that I am familiar with: Goldreich, Reinhart, and so forth.

They had German names, but I think that they had a little more freedom in Poland than in Germany,

or maybe more opportunity to expand. It\'92s a new territory. They went to Poland.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab But not all Poles were arrested in such a way.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab No.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab What was it that determined that your great-uncle was taken, or your grandfather, as

you call him.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Maybe it was because of the Ukrainian deal, perhaps.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Because of that territory.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab That territory had to be cleared, and the people had to be removed from that territory,

probably. The others wanted it and since he was not killed, he had to go. \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab I see. So he was captured?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab He went to-- his wife was very ill. She was paralyzed. My grandfather\'92s wife was

paralyzed, so they had never children. It\'92s prior to that. I am confusing. He took her to Stry [Strey:

phonetic] which is a big town, nearest town, a big town, to a cousin or to hospital, took his wife,

when the whole thing started, when we ran away. And he found out that the Poles are not killing the

Ukrainians. He realized he will not be able to take care of his wife himself, because we had people

taking care of her. He drove her to Stry. Then he came back, and then all those things started

happening. But Jews went first, and then the Poles, in a very brutal way. The Jews actually did not

have to witness, except in Goldreich\'92s case, the mother witnessed her daughter-in-law being killed

in the yard, shot, and then she was shot. But the tragedy of these others I never heard of before, and

it makes you really wonder why people would do that and how could they? How could you take a,

any kind of person and cut their head off and then make sure the other one is watching, and get the

big enjoyment out of it?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab The amount of...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab There wasn\'92t even hatred. These people hadn\'92t done any\-thing. I was always

questioning myself, why am I evil? Why am I hated?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab You questioned this when? When it was happening during the war, or later?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab During the war, in Hungary. Why am I foreigner. It was a very dirty word, but they

did not use the word foreigner it was like American work Pollack,\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Derogatory?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Derogatory. But also with a meaning that we will get you.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab The Hungarians talked this way?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Yes, and when Hitler went through Hungary to go to Russia to fight in Stalingrad, he

formed, like }{\plain \\*\cs1\i Hitlerjugend}{\plain \\*\cs1 in Germany, people for Hitler, national guard, young people. Not too

young, not like children, but in their teens and higher. They would have a special sign on their arms.

It was not like swastika, it was like arrows, on each end of the cross, arrow heads. They called

themselves (Hungarian word) - that means Arrowhead [actually Arrow Cross]. Ever since Hitler

went through Hungary, we experienced nothing but fear.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab On the part of the Hungarians?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Fear}{\plain \\*\cs1\sub }{\plain \\*\cs1 , it was in the air; you could feel it. We went to school early in the morning and

we found out that the German soldiers had invaded the town of Keszthely, maybe two o\'92clock maybe

three in the morning. Nobody knew. We went in there and the Germans yelled at us and grabbed. My

older brother has blue eyes, so they looked at him and said, \'93You must be German,\'94 or something

and they sent him for wine. He went to get them a bottle of wine, for the soldiers, and then they let

us go.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:}{\plain \\*\cs1\super \tab }{\plain \\*\cs1 This was in the school?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Yes, from school. We were in school uniforms, you wore a uniform, and we had

special bags, duffel bags.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab A knapsack.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Yes, to carry yoˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇur books\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Were you in school with Hungarian children? Or was this a special school for the

Polish community.\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Yes, yes, it was all Polish. We even had a Polish high school. \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab This was the school that you attended, then. It was not until 1942.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Something like that, that\'92s correct.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab And, you were about eight?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab I was around eight.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab When you started?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab I started I think second grade. First I had to skip. It was naturally known that I know

something, the alphabet, or something like this. I went to second, third, and started my fourth grade.

I didn\'92t finish my fourth grade, when armed Germans were coming back from Russian front and then

things started to happen When Germans started coming back, this is when they started persecuting

Jews and Poles and that must have been in early \'9144\pard \qj\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

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}{\plain }{\plain or something like that.\par

}{\plain \tab JF: \tab Up until then, you were living in a Hungarian town?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab A Hungarian town.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab Within a Polish community?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Within a Polish, well, in Keszthely we were not grouped too close. We were spread

out all over the city, but it was like in the cheaper sections. Cheaper homes.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab And Jews as well as Christians?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab Jews were part of the territory. Jews were not affected by anything.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab You are talking about Polish Jews now? Or are you talking about Hungarian Jews?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No Polish Jews, there were none.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab There were no Polish Jews there? \par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab No, but Hungarian Jews were again the merchants. They were the people that we had

to go and ask for food . We didn\'92t have too much money, but we were also unwanted in a territory

and when we were waiting in line, to buy a bread, for instance, to buy a bread, it was a Jewish bakery,

I forgot the name, but my mother had a good relation\-ship with that woman, but that woman said that

I can\'92t treat you better than Hungarians or I am out. And in a line you would be kicked around

because they also wanted, needed to eat.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab By the Hungarians?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab By the Hungarians.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Before you had said that some of the people who came, some of the Poles. who came

into Hungary were Jews and were in these camps with you as you moved around.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab No, no, I believe what I meant is when my father was smuggling the young men, there

were also the renegades from Poland that needed a home, and the only home that Polish organization

knew at that time was army to defeat Hitler.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab So, these were only, then, young men who were going into the Polish army in exile,

as opposed to families?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Yes. No, families. I don\'92t recall any, because they had their own-- Jews traveled

differently than we did. Of course, we unfortunately ran out at 6 o\'92clock in the morning and we ran

out without money. When they decided to go they went prepared, usually. They went out and they

bought their way through the border or whatever, and they knew how far they would go, the ones

that did travel. The ones that wanted to stay behind, the more stubborn ones, older people, they didn\'92t

want to go.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Those were the ones who were deported? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab No, those were the ones that really went through terrible things later on. Some were

deported, some were killed.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Okay.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab In a lot of cases,}{\plain \\*\cs1\sub }{\plain \\*\cs1 like in the case where I was born, it was by their own people.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab What do you mean? By their own people? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab People that lived in that territory.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab The Ukrainians\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Sure. There were some outsiders that were in charge of this movement, I am sure,

Ukrainians that were infiltrated, individuals put in there. They were giving the orders, but still it\'92s the

local people that did that.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab So that when you were living in this town, the Jews that you were in contact with

were Hungarian? \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Were Hungarian Jews. As a matter of fact, across a. little yard, big yard, a big empty

yard, there was a Jewish family. There were younger girls, two girls, younger than I was, and I was

around seven, but they were my younger brother\'92s age because they played together. So it was not

something that you stayed away, and I guess it was a blessing to us that we were allowed to play with

them, because we were actually nobodies in a new territory. Hungarian boys we had trouble with,

because we had to fight all the time.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab That\'92s where the hostility was, with the Hungarians?\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab We had to fight. They didn\'92t want us around. We were not stealing their women

because we were just kids, but we were not part of the deal. Going back to waiting in line to get

food, we would have to form some kind of a set-up where early in the evening we would go and stay

in line. At night it would be my parents, but since my father had to work, he didn\'92t spend that much

time in line, because he had to have his sleep, and his strength to work next day. Now, my mother

also worked, but she was a tough cookie, I guess, and younger, by ten years of my father, so it was

I and my older brother, and we would stand there for three to four hours in the evening, until we were

replaced by the next one. So I would be the first one since I was the younger one. My two younger

brothers did not participate in it, then my older brother would stay until probably about eleven

o\'92clock at night, and then my mother, no, then my father would go and stay for so many hours, and

then my mother would stay until she gets into the store. That\'92s how long the lines were formed

outside the stores to buy food.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab And everything was rationed, I would assume.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab No, it was not rationed,}{\plain \\*\cs1\sub }{\plain \sub }{\plain but they would not sell you too much.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Just shortages?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Yes, they would not, they were not allowed to sell you too much. That Jewish woman

that had the bakery, she would always prepare something for my mother to take out later on through

the back door, but for some reason that never worked out because I guess they ran out of it.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab You mean for a time?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab After you get in you could only buy, let\'92s say 10 rolls, but she had four kids and

herself and her husband. She would say she would put something away for her, a couple more rolls,

but then for some reason, it never actually happened. Because I imagine they were breaking down

the door and there was nothing. Everybody cried and everybody had a child-- things were bad but

they were not to the point where you could realize what is happening. But then, all of a sudden, I

noticed yellow stars which now I am familiar with, the Star of David, being worn by some people but

not all. And I would study the star. It was two right angle triangles. Cardboard covered with cloth,

yellow cloth turned separately and pinned together. That\'92s how they made those things. Two separate

triangles placed on top of each other, turned so that it becomes a star, and they had to carry on their

lapel. I don\'92t remember women wearing it, but I remember men had to wear it, in the city of

Keszthely, Hungary. So, all of a sudden the places we go to buy food, we notice that they have a star

on themselves, but still they did not know what is in store for them, because as soon as you would

do that to me, I would try to sneak out, if I would know. But only it shows that nobody knew what

the plan was.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab You are thinking that now, or at the time...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab I am thinking that now. At that time I just questioned why? So my parents explained

it to me. That that is the Star of David. These are Jewish people and they are being singled out, like

we are. They are being put on a list, and nobody knows what is going to happen, but it is not good.

So from that moment everybody was so afraid. We were afraid to go out on the street, and afraid

to say something, and you always looked back who was walking behind you}{\plain \\*\cs1\sub }{\plain \\*\cs1 from then on.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab About from what point was this that you recall seeing the stars and having this more

intense feeling?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab That was when Hitler\'92s army was coming back all chewed up. I know we had...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Coming back from Russia?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab From Russian front badly chewed up, and there was such a good feeling in us

youngsters, politically brought up in hating Hitler, that they are coming back destroyed. That\'92s when

they started destroying us.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab It didn\'92t last long, that feeling?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab So they gathered Jews later on into ghetto. Ghetto was part of the city that they

boarded off. \par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab Was there a ghetto in your town?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab Yes, every city, I imagine. I was not in every city. They boarded off with boards. It

was not just a ghetto that was part of the city. It\'92s a closed off the city, guarded by armed guards.

Evacuated from their homes into the ghetto with their belongings, as much as they could take, I

guess. What would they take? The best they had, probably, and that\'92s what probably the territory

wanted.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab That is when the Germans occupied...\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab That is correct.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Until that time was there any Russian involvement, where you were in Hungary?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT: \tab No. No, we feared Russians, that was why we ran. We feared Russians deadly. We

thought that Germans are more humane, but they turn out not to be in the Second World War. Matter

of fact, we would go to church. I was alter boy. The Hungarians didn\'92t like us, but the priests did.

For some reason we were more kind, probably, and we were not as arrogant as some of those other

boys. We were always shy and kind because you had to be kind to survive. You had to be extremely

kind to everyone.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab Why do you say that?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Knowing that everybody hates you, you become extremely kind. If somebody does

not kick you or something. Extremely shy. At least we were brought up that way, to be kind.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF: \tab It might be a correction, not to show aggressiveness in some way?\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab MT:\tab Angry or anything, yes. German soldiers, not too many, but I remember twice or three

times, a single soldier walked in the church and he would make the sign of the cross in the German

way, using his thumb and making crosses on his forehead, his chest and arms, his shoulders, with his

thumb, and having that uniform on him. I lifted my head to God and said, \'93God, why can\'92t he be

nicer to us when he leaves this house?\'94 We feared him in the church when he walked in, because that

was a deadly force that walked in. A force that had all the rights to life and death. It was all up to him.

Nobody else. No courts. He could decide right on the spot, yet he walked in, because perhaps he had

a family in Germany that he thought greatly of. But, yet, we didn\'92t mean anything. I never had

received one candy from any German soldier or one kind word when I was in Hungary. Because once

we were in Germany, it was something else.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 After two weeks, like I said, they were put into the ghettos. Shortly after - I didn\'92t think they kept

Jews in ghetto more than two weeks - they were transported to Germany. Now, from that moment

when they were wearing their Star of David, the word went around that we are in trouble. The Poles

are in trouble, big trouble, because if in Hungary the Hungarian citizens are being singled out, we are

in terrible danger, terrible danger. I talked to my mother recently-- she said that she wanted the girls

that my younger brother was playing with, she wanted to take those two girls before they put them--

when they start putting them in the ghetto, if her parents would allow us to take with us. But, then,

she said that she spread the word that she would like to take those kids, the uproar was such that we

knew what would happen to us if we take them.\par

}{\plain \\*\cs1 \tab JF:\tab The uproar from home?\par

}{\plain \tab MT:\tab The Polish community. \'93Do you know what you are doing to us? Not to yourself. Do

you think about us?\'94 And also, \'93How do you know whether this will be better for you?\'94 I mean,

would that be better for them with us or with their own parents? Nobody knew actually that they are

going to be destroyed.\par

}{\plain \tab JF:\tab There was no...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You\'92re saying then that the Poles were unaware that the deportations of the Jews

meant death?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Death. And Jews are unaware of it. That\'92s the sad part, because I remember these

people walking and nobody cried. They were just-- it was sad that they had to leave their homes. I

imagine that it was very sad. But there was nothing like that, \'93Oh my God, they are being killed.\'94

Nothing like that.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab None of your farther contacts with the underground government gave him any clues

as to what was happening in concentration camps?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab For some reason, when we were taken on the train, we still believed, at least my

parents believed, or maybe they just tried to pretend to us, that we are going to be alright.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Do you think that your father knew?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I don\'92t know, but I think he would have told me by now that he knew. The gypsies

went first in Hungary, I forgot about them, but there were gypsies...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you know any gypsies in the area where you lived? \par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, I knew one, I don\'92t remember his name anymore, but he was a very famous gypsy

in the town, and he would always walk around. They had axes that they always carried on their

shoulder because they used axes to make different dishes out of wood. That they were selling, and

it was legal for them to carry an ax as a gypsy, and gypsies would constantly stop in at our homes,

at everybody\'92s home, when they were eating at dinnertime in the evening. A whole bunch of gypsies

was very dangerous. You opened the door, and you had to watch everything in your house, because

one will talk to you and play on a violin, and the rest of the gang goes around the house and grabs

everything that they can.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab I see.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab So gypsies were known to rob you blind. They lived in the mountains and caves they

did not live in the city, and we would go to the mountain to pick pine cones to heat the home. That

was a big thing for the Poles. We could not afford to buy anything else, so we would go and we

would take sacks and sacks, and fill them with cones and bring them home, on Sundays, on

weekends, when we had no school, we [unclear] home to heat the homes with pine cones, so we

would hit the gypsy territory, and we would see that their lifestyle was a little bit different, they were

a different type of people. Anyway, they took them. It was all in summertime and their king-- they

had a king that looked like a Buddha, a very fat man, had always something wrapping around his

waist. He was all naked, very fat and he had, like, four women around him, fanning him, I guess. They

were his harem or something, and they took whole bunch of them, maybe around a hundred gypsies,

maybe less - but they didn\'92t have much, they just had some horses and whatever. They took them on

wagons, horse-buggy thing. Shortly after, it\'92s the Jews that went. It was still in the time summer. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab This is the summer, then, of 1944?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab 1944. In the fall of \'9144 the Poles were rounded up and thrown into the ghetto. Not

the same ghetto as Jews were because we were a small group. We had like a study hall or something

they were renting for Poles where they played chess and so forth. That\'92s where they gathered us, it

was one big mansion, I think, at one time.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab They gathered you in this mansion in the fall of 1944?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In this mansion they put us all Poles in there. Now, as a youngster my experience was

that they came from one house to another and they arrested everybody in the house, took them out

on the street and walked us under guard to the next house where the Poles lived,}{\plain \\*\cs1 }{\plain \\*\cs1\sub }{\plain \sub }{\plain so you could not

give signals or anything.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Who was doing this?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Those were the German soldiers. And Hungarians. Both. The Hungarians, I guess,

knew where we lived, and the Germans made sure that it was done. Then they put us into that place,

though, it was only German soldiers that guarded us. They did not trust, maybe, Hungarians. Perhaps

they felt that some Hungarians were too friendly with us prior to this, prior to the arrests, and there

might be something. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab They might have some feeling for you.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. I don\'92t remember, for some reason I have so many blanks in my mind, I\'92ve often

tried to figure out why I am scared to ask my parents. Because each time that I do that it is opening

a wound, and then I feel so terrible for such a long time because I know that they feel terrible and I

hate to go and visit them to give them a load, to cheer them up; here comes your son and then leave

them in such agony. But I remember my friend Lotsie [phonetic], Louie, Hungarian. We lived in the

same building. They were occupying the first floor and we were occupying the second floor in that

building that my parents were renting. He was also renting that place. And his father was sailmaker,

for sailboats. He was very good friend of ours. As a matter of fact, we spent more time in his place

than ours. When my parents needed us, they always went down and got us. When they took us into

that what I call a prison, one morning I saw Lotsie at the fence. It was all fenced in, iron fence, real

big fence. The property was all fenced in. And I went up to him. \'93Lotsie,\'94 and he went away from

the fence before I got there. I\'92m sure he cried. When he went away, that he was not allowed to have

any deals with us. At that time I didn\'92t understand but it hurt so much; it hurt so much that my best

friend, my best friend in the whole world would not speak to me anymore. He ran away. From then

on I never saw him anymore. But we did not stay there that long. (pause) So then, a few days later,

they started to prepare us to evacuate from that building to the railroad station.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Where did you think you were going to go? \par

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{\plain MT:\tab We were going to Germany to the camps. That\'92s what I was told, to work. For work.\par

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{\plain JF: What do you think your parents thought? Do you think they believed that?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab At that time, looking at it now, they must have believed it, because we already heard

the Russian guns at t distance and they chose Germany instead of being caught by the Russians. So

that actually what they did is choose the better from two evils. I believe they trusted the Germans

more than they trusted the Russians. I believe they felt the Germans were more intelligent individuals,

civilized than the eastern Russian hordes There were terrible stories about Russians from the First

World War, how they were raping young women and doing whatever they wished to with everybody.

We were not girls, but parents still didn\'92t want to face that enemy.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab At this time you were 11 years old.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I was 11 and then...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You had an older brother who was 12. And your younger two brothers were...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I think it\'92s about a one year difference. So then my younger one was 10 and my

youngest one was-- He was born in \'9139. So he was five. My oldest brother was born in \'9132 and I was

born in \'9134, but he was born in November \'9132 and I was born in January \'9134, so that gives us only

two years apart. Right? And my younger brother was born in \'9136 and then \'9139 the youngest. Now

prior to that, they were taking, arresting, after they sent the Jews out to Germany in the summertime,

they started to arrest the Polish male, including young boys from age of 12 and over, to walk to

Germany. My father, at that time, and my brother were hiding. We were hid˝ˇˇˇ

!"#$%&'()\*+,-./0123456789:;<=>?@ABCDEFGHIJKM˝ˇˇˇNOPQRSTUVWXYZ[\]^\_`abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz{|}~Åing them in the basement

behind a pile of wood to be used in the furnace. We formed like a little hideout for them and they

stayed there until the men were removed from our territory.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Your father and your brother?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab My father and my brother were hiding. My mother didn\'92t want to let them go. \'93No

way,\'94 she said, \'93whatever happens we will go together.\'94 So, shortly after, they went through all the

homes and they arrested everybody, like I was mentioning before. They took us all out into the

ghetto. So now we were ready to go to the railroad station. A lot of men are gone already. Younger

and younger boys. A lot of women are left behind. A lot of old women and children.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab They were just left? They were just not picked up?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The first group of males had to walk to Germany because they were able to. It was

tough, the way we picture, walking all the way to Germany. Half of them will die on the way. So they

took us. So now comes this moment of leaving the ghetto, home, for the railroad station. The last

hurrah. We are trying to take everything dearest to us with us. The dearest thing that I had was a

stamp collection. A lot of those stamps were the latest stamps of Hitler, the latest issues of Hitler, but,

yet, as a stamp collector, to me, it meant a treasure because I had a full set of each issue and they

were beau\-tiful. Hitler stamps were large and colorful. The other stamps were not as pretty. These

were extremely large for that time. They were like an inch and a half by two inches. Stamps. So, I had

all kinds of stamps; Hungarian stamps and French stamps and English stamps, and I was exchanging

with Hungarian boys who collected stamps. It was a big hobby. There was no drugs that we played

around with. We were much too young to think about women, so we collected stamps. It was a big

hobby, and it was something that we got deeply involved in. So, I had these two or three books of

stamps, and I was carrying them under my arms, and this German soldier kicked me, and the stamps

fell out of the books from under my arm. So I started grabbing them, and he put his foot on it. I was

not allowed to. So I grabbed one from under his foot. Big foot, big boots. Very big boots.

Wintertime. And I started tearing up the stamp collection, crying and tearing it up. Well, one good

kick in my butt made me fly and that was all left behind. For some reason, that was the most

important thing to me at that moment. My parents probably thought about what\'92s going to happen

to us. I was thinking about my stamp collection. I had spent two years probably collecting it, or a year

and a half, or a year...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab In tearing it up, what were you feeling?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I didn\'92t want him, them, to have my treasure. I wanted to destroy. If I can\'92t have it,

I will not allow you to enjoy my pleasure, and I felt good about the few pages that I ripped up. That

ended right there. We were allowed to take one, like a box of goodies, goodies of our clothes and

so forth, for the whole family. It was like a basket type. What would you call it? A basket type?\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Like a wicker basket?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, wicker, it was quite large, like a desk size.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Like a hamper? A wicker hamper?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Like a hamper. It was rectangular. I would say it was not quite a yard in width and

maybe 2 yards in length, and maybe another yard in height. And we put our things in it. Now, prior

to that, my mother was preparing, knowing that we were going to be leaving - she was taking - there

was no-- it was hard to make up her mind, I guess, what to take with us, but food was important.

Now, what can you take in food? Nothing. There was nothing instant like we have now. Dried food,

none around. She would take yeast, a block of yeast and mix it with flour and dry it out that way, and

then she packed it into bottles and we took some yeast with us. I don\'92t know what for, and one bag

of flour, which they didn\'92t allow her to take with us. Then my mother started to rip the sack apart,

so finally one of them - she went actually wild. She couldn\'92t take it anymore. A nervous breakdown,

I guess, and she started to scream, yelling and crying and they said, \'93Ah, let her have that sack. Big

deal.\'94 In other words, \'93I wouldn\'92t use it anyway.\'94 So we took it. It was December 31, 1944. There

was a lot of snow all around. Cold. But for some reason, this excitement, this everything, I don\'92t

remember being cold. But it was tremendously windy and a whole lot of snow. They took us maybe

three and a half kilometers, so that\'92s what about one and a half mile to the railroad station.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You walked?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We walked, sure, and we had to drag that stuff. But it wasn\'92t too bad on the snow.

It was sliding. There was no sleds, we just had to carry and drag whatever we had. We got to the

railroad station and there was a lot of soldiers there. All helmets, uniforms, boots, and a lot of guns.

It was a very uncomfortable set up. There was no more civilian life at all. Just us; a small herd of

people. Empty railroad cars, animal cars, with open doors, and us. Well, we started I guess, they were

cold or something, they started counting us out and throwing us into the animal wagons. If I

remember, there were 79 people in our wagon, packed like sardines. They slammed the door shut -

It was a sliding-type door, and they put the kind of lock you put on that if somebody breaks it you

know they\'92ve broken into it. With lead, wire and lead, so nobody was allowed to open the wagons.

There were big cracks in the wagon, just like we see animal wagons. You can see animals through

the wagon. This was December 31, and it was probably like 2:30 or 3 o\'92clock in the afternoon. They

did not feed us that day at all, we probably did not eat anything. They locked us in that train and we

stayed there till midnight. I remember the whistles, the sirens welcoming New Year\'92s Eve. New

Year\'92s and we were all in a cage already.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Just waiting at the station?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Just waiting. All those hours cold, windy, but then it got worse because the wind

started to whistle. And the people started to sing. They started to do different things to occupy their

minds. And I remember that the men were yelling out every so often to change place. change place.

At that time I didn\'92t realize what they were doing, but they were changing places on the outside

against the wall. Whoever was, had to change. First he was facing the outside, then he would turn

around back towards the outside and then they would move in and next group would take the outside

line, because they realized that they would all freeze. Constantly, they had to move their feet and

everything with a boom, boom, boom, boom. Everybody was marching someplace, and yet you

couldn\'92t lift your feet high or anything because you were hitting next person. It was very, very

crowded.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The group that you were with were all Polish refugees like yourself?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab All Polish refugees, and this group was mostly old women and, of course, women with

children, wives that had been left behind from the husbands that had already left, and older, intelligent

people. People that had positions. They all had big titles and in Europe it was very fashionable to use

a title. If you spoke to the wife of a doctor, you would have to say, \'93Mrs. Doctor and so and so,\'94 and

if it was the wife of an engineer you would have to say, \'93Mrs. Engineer,\'94 and if it was the wife of a

judge, \'93Mrs. Judge.\'94 Titles were very important in those days. All those people I remember had very

big titles. So, finally, around after midnight, after two o\'92clock in the morning I think, they started

moving us out from the railroad station and we started to go and then things got worse. When the

train picked up a speed then the wind was really cutting right through the whole thing. I didn\'92t realize

it. When we were standing still, we were still warm, but when we started to move, then it was cold,

even for us.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How many cars were there? You said there were about seventy-nine people in your

car.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Seventy-nine people to the car. I imagine when they let us out, I would say there was

around six cars. Not too many. There was an awful lot of horse manure on the floor of that wagon.

Later on I heard the adults say that that\'92s what saved our lives. Horse manure has the heating capacity

or something. Whatever they meant by that, I don\'92t know, but it was the insulation from the floor.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How long were you on the train?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We were on the train probably three days until we got to Austria, the first camp.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you able to get out of the train at any time? Or receive any food at any time, or

were you totally locked up?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No. We were totally locked up. They were not allowed to unlock that door. That door

was not padlocked, only was sealed. A wire and lead type lock and if you would break it, they would

know. Somebody would have to answer for it, why it was opened. The first stop that they made, that

they were allowed to open it, was at some field. It was probably very early in the morning. It was not

in the evening. It must have been in the morning, because I can remember the sun coming out, shining

over the snow valleys. They allowed us to make a circle and take care of our needs as human beings;

to urinate, etc. It was very cold. I know we were huddling around my mother and not knowing what

to do. We never did anything like that in the presence of other people, surrounded by people with

guns around. Circle was small. They made so many circles, I guess, each wagon, I guess, was not

allowed to mingle with the other. They were separate. Each circle. And I remember just one old lady,

she was saying to my mother, "How can I?" She also had a very big title, whatever it was. "How can

I do it?" I think a judge\'92s wife. "How can I do this?" No. My mother said, "How can I do this in front

of all this?" And the old lady says, "Just lift your skirt, and don\'92t worry about it. We are in a cage

now. We are no longer humans. Don\'92t worry about that." So they kept us there for quite a while. I

don\'92t know why. Whether they couldn\'92t make up their minds what to do...}\sect \sectd \sbknone\headery288\footery1323

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{\plain JF:\tab You mean they kept you outside?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Outside in the snow. Finally they told us to get back. I don\'92t know if they were

searching the wagons. Perhaps somebody was hiding something, some kind of a radio, I don\'92t know,

but finally they let us back into the wagons. It felt funny. When I went back to the wagon, the first

time I felt like I am secure again, like I am in a house, in a home, because I was brought in from that

terrible snow and wind and everything. Back at home. Terrible. Then they locked us up again and

started moving slow, choo, choo, choo-- picked up speed and then there was this very ungodly sound,

because it was whistling [makes whistling sound] right through the whole darn thing.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The wind was whistling?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The wind, yes.\tab \tab \tab \tab \par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you know exactly your destination? Or you were just told it would be a camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Was told Germany. No. Exactly where nobody knew. Then they stopped at some

railroad station, still in Hungary, later on in the day and we were yelling, "Brothers," in Hungarian,

"Brothers, water, water, brothers, water," because they were watering the tanks. They were not

diesels at that time. They were coal. Trains run by coal and they needed water. So they were watering

the engine but they would not give us any water. We could hear the water going and we needed

water. We wanted water, but I guess they were not allowed to give us any. The next stop was

Prague, Czechoslovakia. That was in the daytime, maybe two o\'92clock, maybe a little bit earlier. They

let us out. They opened the trains and Czechs spoke similar language as we did. Similarity is probably

like English to South Carolina or something. British to South Carolina. You could tell-- you could

figure out; it was enough you could be able to figure out what they were saying.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was this in the city of Prague, that they stopped the train?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab In the main railroad station?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Not in the main station. They never stopped in the main. They pulled over to some

side a little further, never where you had a roof over your head. Someplace to the side, some kind of

spare parking place, probably. There we were allowed - I guess Czechs made that deal with

somebody - we were allowed to go to the nearest restaurant. I know we had some hot dumplings,

made over steam. And it was so good. They were hot.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You went under guard to the restaurant?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That I don\'92t remember, whether we all went in a group. I know we were in a

restaurant and I know they had something red, like red beer, something that people were drinking.

I think they even gave it to us; they didn\'92t have milk, I think they gave it to us kids. Something red

to drink.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you pay for this food?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We had money at that time. We had a lot of money. Hungarian money. Yes. We had

actually quite a bit of money, even in the camps, but we couldn\'92t use it. I\'92ll tell you later on what we

did with the money.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 }{\plain \\*\cs1\i Tape three, side one:\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1\i }{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab You said that the Czechs made an arrangement?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Yes, we are in Prague right now, in a restaurant. Again, I don\'92t know whether I seen

other people or whether it was just us children that they allowed out, or whether we snuck away from

the train to get something to eat, because we became like hunted animals later on. On instinct we

would run and do things, which I will tell you later on what we did in Vienna.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab This was after you were in Prague, now?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab After we were in Prague. I know that we were some small restaurant, not too far from

the railroad station; not a restaurant, something like quick-foods something where you could get

something to eat.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab This was the stop after Prague?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, in Prague. And we had some food but we didn\'92t bring any food with us so I guess

we ate some there and drank some red liquid. I think it was probably beer or wine; it was probably

wine because we drank in Hungary; it was like in France, in Hungary everybody drank wine. Not in

our house, but we went to Hungarians, to Lotsie\'92s house, and they would give us wine to drink. My

parents would get tremendously upset. We would come back, "What did you drink?" We were

happy. We would say, "Well, they gave us wine." "What!" Well, in Prague, I think they give us beer,

but it was red or at least dark, maybe bock. So the Czechs made some kind of deal At that time I

didn\'92t know. They offered my father, they told him to run, to escape from the train and they\'92ll help

us.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Why did they single out your father?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab He had Czech-- his mother was born in Czechoslovakia.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab How did they know that?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I guess he mentioned it to them, probably. He probably mentioned something about

the place where his mother was born. How far is it from here? or something. He probably asked.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was it in this little restaurant where you were, or were these Czech guards?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab That\'92s something I just found our recently. I mean afterwards. I do not remember,

given this opportunity to hear that we were offered something. And, of course, I didn\'92t know what

was happening anyway. To me it was a great thing that I was eating something.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab As he told you about it, where had he met these people?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab That was in a railroad station. I don\'92t know exactly where, but Czechs whispered to

him that you may run and we will help you, but then my mother said, "You must be kidding. Look

at my children." And then, of course, we had my father\'92s mother with us and a crippled sister. She

said, "You must be kidding. They will shoot us on the first -- They will get us before we have a

chance to run." So, we stayed. I guess they thanked them for the offer. Somebody must have

approached them and said, "You know what? We can help you." But there was no chance because,

yes, you can run alone, but you can\'92t run with a family. Nobody can run with four kids, six, eight

people just. Then they locked us up again and we were on our way to Germany. There wasn\'92t much

we could see through there-- cracks on the train. But we were observing. The territory was changing.

Once it was mountains, one was trees and then city, and then again just open fields. Finally we were

in Austria. We were driving by a big concentration camp, big towers on the corners, and tremendous

fencing around like I never saw in my life. That\'92s the kind of setup-- and they were saying, "That that

is where Horthy, Miklos is-- was taken to." Now Horthy, Miklos was President [Regent] of Hungary

at the time I was there. That\'92s a name I remember because they had a lot of songs written about him,

Horthy, Miklos. He was arrested and taken there by Germans and thrown into the camp.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab What camp was this?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was in Austria. I don\'92t know. I really don\'92t know, and I still don\'92t know because

I never did inquire. I remember seeing-- I still see the picture and they said, "That\'92s where he is," and

we wonder what kind of camp we will be in. Shortly after that we landed in Vienna, Vienna shortly,

I don\'92t know how shortly, but my next memory is Vienna, Austria. A big ferris wheel. In Poland, they

call it \'93Vienna wheel\'94, a big one, not too far from the railroad station that I can see. A real huge one.

Looking at it the way I see it now it\'92s probably like 200 feet in diameter, probably. A real huge ferris

wheel; the railroad station not too far from it. Awful lot of destruction in the area from bombs. A lot

of small fragments of bombs and a lot of small, like metal, more bigger than beebees that they put into

bombs-- shrapnel type things, laying all around and we were asking, \'93What is that?\'94 \'93That\'92s from the

bombs. That kills better-- All of that metal flying around.\'94 Then we were let out of the trains because

we have reached our destination. They were going to do something with us in Vienna, now. We had

to wait and wait. No food.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You had been on the train three days?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Three days. Three days, I think, at least. Maybe it was four by the time we got to

Vienna. I think it took about three days to get to Prague and then another day probably from Prague

to Vienna, American planes, or, was it some other instance when we were traveling? Perhaps it was

later. It was not that early because I don\'92t think American planes were in that area. But one time we

were chased by American planes, and they parked the train in a tunnel for quite a while and then they

started again, but I think it was later on when they took us from one camp to another. In Vienna, here

we are in Vienna. We are all out of the train now, waiting under guns. Now we, as boys, I and my

older brother, we were the messengers in Hungary for my father. Whatever messages he wanted to

send, political messages, signals from him to his subordinates, he would use us and we would deliver

the messages, not knowing what is in them but deliver the envelope, deliver the piece of paper.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab You were aware of what kind of work he was doing?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Yes, and we were very strongly taught that we are Poles and our-- we owe our

country our lives, so whatever we did to destroy the enemy, you must remember that you are a Pole.

So, in Vienna we saw the express trains for the first time in our lives. They were electrical trains, full

of German brass, soldiers. In the windows, we could see them. Somehow we got away, me and my

brother, far enough that we found a piece of railroad track, a good sized metal, maybe about 4 feet,

31/2 feet in length, and we went and we put it across the railroad track on one side, propped it up

with rocks, and ran back to our group, to our parents, and we said, "Do you know what we did? Just

watch this. The next train that comes through here is going to go off. We put a piece of steel across

the tracks." And my mother said, "Do you know what you did? We are all dead, as soon as the train

goes off, we are all dead, these soldiers with these guns will shoot us immediately." We had to sneak

back, crawl back, almost, pull and jerk this thing out, we had a hard time pulling it out. I don\'92t know

how we pulled it out, it was a heavy thing, and within seconds, half a minute or so, the train comes

through. (makes sound). Electrical. And that was the end. Now we are very happy that we did

something wonderful, but it was actually something very stupid.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab You felt good when you did it?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We felt good, but it was a stupid act. Maybe a hundred or soldiers or whatever would

have got messed up but, then, all of us would have been dead, because they never did hesitate to do

that, I guess. From there they took us to the nearest camp, Strasshof. Strasshof from Vienna is

probably 3 \'bd kilometers, something like that, not too far. It is a small community, probably, but it

was a camp, with snow all over. They had...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was in Austria?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Austria. The first camp we went to, Strasshof. As soon as we went in, who meets us

at the gate, in beautiful German uniforms, shiny, scary, but the language is Ukrainian. "Welcome to

the camp," in their language. I didn\'92t realize what that meant, but my parents must have. Not

everybody was from the same territory that we were in that group. Some people came from Warsaw,

some came from completely different parts of Poland, and they just ended up in Hungary. Now, we

were from the territory that they were after us. We ran away from them. They recognized one man,

two men. One was a police chief in one city, another was his assistant to the police chief.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Who recognized them?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The Ukrainians.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab The Ukrainian guards recognized them.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They weren\'92t even guards. They were hired. They had almost SS uniforms, almost

Gestapo-type uniforms; they were the Gestapo-type something. They had those dark uniforms, not

the regular grey. They had the beautiful officer\'92s thing. I remember in a barrack, they walked up to

him and took out the big gloves. They had the big gloves behind their belts, just like knights, and hit

him across the face and said, \'93}{\plain \i Meine liebe Plata}{\plain ,\'94 my dear Plata. His name was Plata, and he looked

at the guy and he got white all over. I didn\'92t know what that meant, and that was the only incident,

and they called him out. They went out, a couple goonies came in, Ukrainians in regular uniforms,

gray uniforms, took him...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Took Plata?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Took Plata, and I forgot the other guy\'92s name, older guy. The other guy was like 60

or 70 years old...\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab This was the police chief?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Police chief. Plata was-- I went to school with his children, his sons. He was a little

bit younger than my father was, I think, the assistant police chief. It turned out later on, that they took

them out, both of them, and maybe 6 hours later, at night, it was late at night, when the old man came

back.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab The old man was the assistant or the chief?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The chief.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab The chief and Plata was the assistant.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The old man came back to the barrack, like that.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Holding his head?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Holding his head with no teeth-- I don\'92t know, like a regular train ran through his head

and everything. And they were talking to him. I guess he couldn\'92t hear, just very-- probably beat up.

The other guy never came back.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Plata never came back?}{\plain \line \tab MT:\tab No. Plata, I found out, because we were all so curious what happened, we talked to

the sons, what happened. He arrested a guy for stealing a pig.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab The Ukrainian guard?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The Ukrainian was inˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇ jail. Plata arrested him and put him in jail. Now I did not mention

it. When Germans came to Poland, the first thing they did is they released the prisons. All the

prisoners got a rank of some sort and they said, "You know whom to get, go and get them." So there

was the one thing, to control the territory like that when you just take over, you release the prisoners

and those people know who the people were in charge, who the people they hated. "Go and get

them." So he was one of them. He had already a beautiful position in German hierarchy, in German

organization. Well, things were very sad. Awful lot of Ukis. They were very happy. They were

cheerful at night, they were singing in their quarters. They had a beautiful sculpture, a still remember

a beautiful sculpture of a naked woman in front of their quarters. One of them must have been an

artist. Made from snow.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Made from snow?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Snow. Because there was so much snow. It was a huge sculpture. Huge. So they had

a ball, they had fun.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab You were totally in a barrack?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Totally in a barrack. Yes.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Just kept in a barrack, with your family?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Not separated in any way?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab No, with everybody. In barrack I guess you can put in 100 people, I don\'92t know.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab With any kind of bedding or...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That I don\'92t remember whether we had any bedding. I know there was a wooden

}{\plain \i Pritsche}{\plain that was a German word, }{\plain \i Pritsche}{\plain they call it, a wooden type, like a table. That\'92s your bed.

I don\'92t remember whether they had straw, sacks on top that you could lay on the straw or not, I don\'92t

know. I don\'92t remember. I remember straw from one place, someplace, I don\'92t know which camp,

maybe it was Strasshof. On straw maybe. From there on when we went to the next camps it was just

wooden planks and nothing else, and a wooden pillow that tapered off at the end of the bed. That was

for your head.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What kind of food were you given?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The food in Strasshof I don\'92t even remember, because I guess it was too much of a

shock. First camp, the first complete captivity, one hundred percent control of our time and

everything, but they took us from Strasshof later on to Neumark. Neumark is Bavaria, I think. No,

we went from Strasshof to Berlin. We went through Berlin. Yeh, we went through Berlin, I remember

that experience.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab What is this that you have written?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Austria, close to Vienna, is Strasshof.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Oh, okay.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab From then...\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab How long were you in Strasshof?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Not too long. This was like a processing camp where they did what they had to do.

They segregated, they divided, they squeezed out all the juices. The next one-- we went outside

Berlin-- but I remember-- okay, we went into Berlin. We were in Berlin maybe three days.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were taken off the train?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab No, from Strasshof, they put us on a train and they were taking us towards Berlin, to

a camp.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab A camp in Berlin?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In Berlin. Now, we spoke Hungarian well, and there were Hungarians also in Berlin

area that were traveling to Berlin. We got mixed up with Hungarians and we spoke very well. We

mingled with the Hungarians and in the evening - they always had air raids in Berlin. It was the first

time I saw a big city, huge city. Beautiful buildings. And I remember air raid shelters had maybe about

two feet of rubber cover on the top of the bunker, and it was explained later on that when the bomb

hits that it will kick the bomb off, or the bomb will not go off directly on the shelter. We were taken

as Hungarians, so we were taken into an air raid shelter during air raid. After the air raid, they took

us into the Red Cross facility, like a hotel, in Berlin to feed us, but before we finished eating,

something happened. They discovered that we are Poles.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you under German guard at that point?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Air raid got-- something got messed up during the air raid. We were chased-- we

joined the wrong group when we were running.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab I see.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We joined the wrong group, and we went without guns, and these people were taken

with guns. So, we ran with the Hungarians because we knew what they were saying. \'93They are

bombing, let\'92s go, let\'92s go, let\'92s go.\'94 So we yelled same way the kids, \'93Let\'92s go.\'94 But they start

feeding us, somebody discovered that we were talking in Polish or something-- oh, my God. It was

just like the world came to an end. Everything was grabbed from in front of us and we were pushed,

pulled, turned, and finally we were back under guns again. They wouldn\'92t even allow us to finish

whatever we had on our plate. So, there we were back, and my parents were saying, "Well, we knew

it would happen, but we wanted you to eat." I don\'92t know, I think it was my younger brother, the

youngest, that made a sound that sold us out. Polish sound. From there they took us to

Wilhelmshaven, about 13 kilometers from Berlin, east from Berlin.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And what was that?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab That was a camp, again controlled by Ukrainians. Every camp I was in, Ukrainians

fully controlled each camp.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Now, in Berlin, were you actually in a camp?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab No, in Berlin, we went just through Berlin.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab You just went through Berlin?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab A couple of days we spent there, because of air raids they could not move us, and we

got messed up with Hungarians for about 6 hours or so, and then went back. But we stayed in Berlin

in captivity there, and another-- it was a facility of some sort, but it was not a nice facility. Where

Hungarians were, it was a nice facility that we got chased out of. Wilhelmshaven was another camp.

Now this camp, again, is wires, towers, and all this nonsense and everything else. There I remember

very good food, for a change. I don\'92t know why, but I remember a piece of bread in the morning,

piece of margarine and a little bit of some kind of jelly. Jello.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Jelly? or jello?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Sweet. Made from...\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab To put on the bread?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Jelly.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Jelly. Made from fruit of some sort. They had that. I don\'92t know whether they had

milk for us in the morning, but I was surprised, the way I remember, the food was best of everything

we had so far, that was in that camp.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab What kind of camp was this?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab It was a typical camp again for the Poles, I think.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Primarily Poles?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab It was not a political-- it was for the Poles, I think. It was for working.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab It was a work camp?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab A work camp, I think, because it was not one of those major ones that they had,

strictly political where they threw Jews and Poles in. Political Poles. It was not whatever you call

them.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Concentration camps?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yeh. Well, no, the names I was going to go through [unclear]. The only one I can

think of is Auschwitz.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Not an extermination camp?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab No. It was not one of them. We did not have to wear a striped uniform, but we had

to wear a "P" on our heart.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab "P" for...\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Pole, but it was a "P" in the color of the Ukrainian flag. It was a yellow "P" on a blue

background. Ukrainians have yellow and blue as their national flag. Now ours is white and red, so

we had to use their color and you had to wear it on your heart and it was in the shape of a diamond.

My mother has one and I was going to bring it and I forgot to. We still have one. Then we had to

have it sewn on our clothes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was in Wilhelmshaven?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab No, that started from Strasshof. From then on we always had to have "P".\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab This was on your own clothes, not on any uniform?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Yes. Perhaps maybe in Strasshof we didn\'92t have it because they would have

recognized us. Maybe it started with Wilhelmshaven, because I know that we were marked later on.

Maybe it was because of a mishap or whatever. But this was organized camp. This they knew what

they were doing and we had to wear this and then we were started to feel, like I mentioned-- The

food, I thought, was excellent, but here they started to dig around about people\'92s background in

Wilhelmshaven. Every individual had to go and be interviewed or interrogated to find out what his

background was, what he was doing, what he was doing in pre-Poland, what kind of job he had...\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Who was doing the interrogation? The Germans or the Ukrainians.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The Ukrainians, because we could not speak German. My parents could speak German

and Ukrainian because that was the territory that had German colony and so forth.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Were the Germans in control of the camp and the Ukrainians were the workers who

were...?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab The workers. Well, Germans were more or less on the out\-side. I could not touch the

Germans, but they were the last closing gate, but closer to us were the Ukrainians. The ones that

would kick you and talk to you and so forth were the Ukrainians.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab You were then interrogated, also?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab No, I was not.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab Just your father and your mother?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab My father and mother and all the elders.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab What did they find out?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab That\'92s when, a lot of-- I just remembered that my father said something to my mother

one night, that he will not talk. "He will not talk. I can trust him. He will not talk." He was-- they

must have been talking about underground activities they had in Hungary, the individual that they

were suspecting, and they were interrogating more and more and more. And my father said, "He will

not talk, I am sure. He will not talk." And so, they were trying to remove all the organization from

the group, the way I see it now. They didn\'92t want anything to let go, to pass by their fingers. If

somebody was doing something against the system, or if he was doing something for the system, prior

to the war, for the other system, then he is evil and not worth anything. But they had pillows and they

had sheets in that camp. I still can\'92t figure it out, \'91cause it\'92s the only camp they had. Perhaps it\'92s be\-

cause it was close to Berlin, to tell somebody that this is how we run the camps. I don\'92t know.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab So it might have been shown as a model camp?\par

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{\plain MT: \tab Perhaps. Perhaps some Germans, perhaps wanted to see what the camps looked like.

I don\'92t think the Red Cross had anything to do with it, but I think perhaps some individuals in their

hierarchy wanted to know, "What do you mean you are making camps? What do they look like? And,

sure, it was closest to, let\'92s drive up to, we will show you." So they had that. So perhaps that is why

they also had food, but they were very, very nasty, because everybody was tight-lipped, more and

more. Pretty soon, nobody wanted to talk. Nothing. Everybody just-- so things were happening there.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were still with your family? \par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, I was still with the family.\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 JF:\tab In a mass kind of sleeping arrangement?\par

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{\plain \\*\cs1 MT:\tab Yes, the open barracks, open barracks and latrines, whatever you call them,

bathrooms, were outside. Never inside a building, you had to go outside. It was a wooden type, with

a hole in the ground, but you could more or less sit down on it, but in that camp I don\'92t remember

if it was too dirty, but in the others...\par

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{\plain MT:\tab So, we stopped at Wilhelmshaven, the camp. It was the first camp that I saw sheets

on the bed. It was very nice and that was the camp that I finally realized what my mother saved, the

yeast, dry yeast. It was not in existence at that time. The cooks, the people in charge of cooking,

people in charge of everything, were Ukrainians. Now, we, living with the Ukrainians, it was no big

deal speaking their language for my parents. They still felt probably comfortable to talk to them. My

mother made a deal with the cook, one of the cooks, and I remember him speaking a beautiful Polish

language. They were all Polish citizens who went to schools. Of course, they were just like anybody

else, except they were fighting for something that they never had, their country. She told him that she

has yeast. He said, "What?" I said, "Yeast." And he says, "Yes, but it\'92s probably spoiled." And she

says, "No, it\'92s dry." "Never heard of it." She says, \'93I have it here. If I can, if you allow me to use your

oven to bake something" -- we had still some flour from Hungary and yeast-- \'93I will give you some."

He said, "All right." So she had to give him a certain amount of yeast and he allowed her to use the

oven to put her mixture into it and, then, also as a token of appreciation, he gave her a bottle of

butter, melted butter. That\'92s how how he kept it, in a bottle, so we would have to put it on

something. So I remember she baked, not too much. I guess she didn\'92t have too much flour or he

wouldn\'92t give us too much, but she baked cakes, similar to [unclear]. They had no nuts on them or

raisins or anything but about that size, maybe about 30 of them, just ...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Small rolls.\par

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{\plain MT: \tab Small rolls. I don\'92t know if they had eggs, whether he gave her eggs or not, I don\'92t

know.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was Ukrainian.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Ukrainian, because he was, that was his kitchen. They were in charge of everything,

but they ˝ˇˇˇÇÉÑÖÜáàâäãåçéèêëíìîïñóòôöõúùûü†°¢£§•¶ß®©™´¨≠ÆØ∞±≤≥¥µ∂∑∏π∫ªºΩæø¿¡¬√ƒ≈∆«»… ÀÃÕŒœ–—“”‘’÷◊ÿóˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇˇallowed her to do that. So, she brought to the barrack, and put it under the pillow and I

remember each time I went there under the pillow to take one out, I felt so guilty, because I knew

that my parents didn\'92t eat any of them, and I was also, I felt terribly guilty that my younger brother

probably wants it, that this will run out.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Had they designated how many rolls each of you was to have, or did they just put

them there-- knowing that you would get them?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They just put them there.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And you knew that they weren\'92t eating any?\par

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{\plain MT: \tab We knew, and we also knew that each other, of each one was not getting their share

and I, as an older brother, the other two-- I felt bad about reaching for it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab For your younger two brothers?\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You didn\'92t think that they were getting...\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I felt that I shouldn\'92t-- I should leave it so they have more, because I knew that this

was only something that just happened now and we wouldn\'92t have it anymore. And that was true. We

never had that anymore because I guess she didn\'92t have anymore because I guess she didn\'92t have

anymore yeast. She must have probably used part of it and gave the rest of it away and that was the

end of it. But then, again, that\'92s not quite right because I don\'92t whether you need yeast, no, you don\'92t

need yeast for piroges. They had bunkers, not bunkers, underground holes, and in those holes they

also had little cooking facilities like barbecue things.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Where was this, in Wilhelmshaven?\par

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{\plain MT: \tab Because constantly the Americans were bombing Berlin, constantly.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Oh, so they built the bunkers as part of the camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Built the bunkers underground. Yes, oh yes, because you were the necessary

commodity. You had to hide. You could not-- in the first place, you could give Americans a signal.

You had to hide. In the second place, they needed you to clear up the territory after the bombing. My

mother made some pirogis, I remember. That\'92s something like-- uh Jewish have something like, a

dumpling. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab }{\plain \i Kreplach}{\plain , a dumpling.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab But something happened. They yelled because there was some smoke getting out so

that was like a signal to the Americans.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was she also involved with the Ukrainian cook when she made the perogies, or...?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, that was-- I think she still had water-- I mean flour and I think that\'92s all it is flour

and water-- and they had heat like a barbe\-cue thing that you put a few sticks together and you did

something.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So, she made it in the bunker?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I remember she made like 6 of them, I think, and again there was that pain of who\'92s

going to eat. And, then, shortly after that, one day came the big bombing of Berlin. What a sight and

what a sound! We were tremendously scared but so eagerly happy about the event.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were hidden in the bunker?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We were-- yes, but we were only thirteen kilometers from Berlin and that bombing

lasted like 4 or 4 \'bd hours. Wave after wave of American\'92s planes were just coming in and dumping

all of their load on Berlin. For 3 days or more after the bombing, Berlin was on fire and money was

coming down even into our camp, German }{\plain \i Marks}{\plain , but they were all burned. Of course, what was the

difference? You couldn\'92t buy anything anyway.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Where was the money coming from?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Banks were hit, I think, and the heat took them up in the air and the wind threw them

around. Tremendous heat. It was, like I said, Berlin was burning for a long time.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And pieces of money were actually floating down?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. We had pieces was burned. But things started getting nastier and nastier. The

Russians were coming. Father had to work to fortify the roads. They were building-- blockading like

roads, forcing the traffic through the middle of the roads. They were building site-- something.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was this the first time that you had been in a work situation in a camp? This was the

first one you were in long enough to be in this situation.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab This was the first time we were actually put into work.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you also working?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Not in that camp, yet. In that camp, I did not know what work was, and I don\'92t

believe my older brother-- He was 12 already and was still not working either.\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain JF:\tab He was twelve.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab He was not working either.\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain JF:\tab How long were you in this camp?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab This camp, we were probably 2 months, 3 months. My parents, somehow, for some

reason my father didn\'92t like that set-up there near Berlin. Maybe the Ukrainians were too strong in

control or something. He was afraid of something. They found out, I still don\'92t know how, that

somebody needs workers, and they made some arrangements with somebody. "Why don\'92t you send

us Poles, x number of people to the working site there?" I don\'92t know what happened, but finally they

did take a whole bunch of us. They sent us from Wilhelmshaven to Bayreuth, and there again we

didn\'92t stay too long, but Neumark was the last one.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab B-A-Y-R-E-U-T-H. Which was the camp that you were at after Wilhelmshaven?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Wilhelmshaven. But that one I hardly remember. There was a short camp and I told

my father, "Isn\'92t that something? I remember Strasshof. I remember Berlin and Wilhelmshaven."\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain JF:\tab Did he volunteer to go?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, they either heard through this Ukrainian that they are thinking about shipping

some people, or something. But he asked if we could do some work in that area. If you need people?

And now, later on, actually I found out that that was a very good move that they did, because

Russians were coming. I gather the reason they did this, they were, again afraid of Russians. Russians

were coming very rapidly towards Berlin. War was coming to the end. My father was working on

those preparations to welcome Russians. German defense system. To stop them, to destroy them. We

were moved through Bayreuth. I don\'92t remember how long we were there, to Newmark.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Now Bayreuth was also a camp for Poles?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab They were all camps.\tab \par

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{\plain JF:\tab But was it for Poles in particular though or...\par

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{\plain MT:\tab The only place, where there were non-Poles in the camp was Neumark. There were

some Russians and there were some French, but all the others-- I never talked to anybody. But I still

don\'92t remember talking to anybody anyway except your immediate barrack surround\-ing. I don\'92t know

if we weren\'92t allowed to go another barrack. I never was in another barracks, just my own, ever.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The people who were in the camps that you are describing were primarily refugees?

They were not political?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, they were all political but they were trying not to be labeled as political.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Okay. The Jews were not in these camps, or Gypsies.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I don\'92t recall. No. No-- where they were-- Gypsies because I would recognize them.

Jews, I would not recognize them as such, but I would hear...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab They would be labeled?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In camps, perhaps not. I don\'92t know.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were wearing \'93P.\'94\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We were wearing "P". That is correct. That is true, I don\'92t remember a Star of David

in the camps, none of the camps. I would probably hear Ukrainians use the word, derogatory word

"Jew," like "Pole," because that I would recognize and I don\'92t remember anything like that.\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain JF:\tab The Russians and the French that you are describing do you have any idea how they

ended up in Germany?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I believe that they were deserters, or something, some kind of...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab But, not prisoners of war? That would have been a separate, totally separate.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, they were like civilians, but some civilians that were not to be trusted, I guess.

They were captured civilians, just like us Poles, that they could not trust them on their own.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab They were in the wrong place at the wrong time.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, they didn\'92t want to leave them free, so they had to lock them up, to keep an eye

on them.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So, the fifth camp, the fifth location that you were in-- you pronounce it N E U M A

R K?\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Which was where, approximately?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In Bavaria, I think.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was in Bavaria?\par

}\pard \qj\fi720\sl395\tx0\tx0\tx720\tx1440\tx2160\tx2880\tx3600\tx4320\tx5040\tx5760\tx6480\tx7200\tx7920\tx8640\tx9360

{\plain MT:\tab I think. Neumark. I am not sure, }{\plain \sub }{\plain but in that camp I was a woman. That I labeled

myself. I think I heard my parents talk about that. I had to go to work with my mother until before

the war ended. Then I went with my older brother and father to work. Men were men and any male

below 12 was a woman, went to work with the women.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This is your label?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab That is my label because I was not allowed to go with men to work, and there were

no children, so we went with women.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How did you feel? With that separation?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There I felt very bad, because I loved my father. I loved my brother and I loved my

mother, but I felt that I am, even within our own group, that I am something not right. I can\'92t go with

my brother, and I can\'92t stick to my father. I am forced to be with my mother and I don\'92t know-- just

felt that I just don\'92t fit into this world\'92s puzzle. Like there is something wrong with me, something

terribly wrong. I didn\'92t realize that I was actually lucky that I wasn\'92t able to be used fully yet.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You understood the technical cutoff of the age of 12?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF: \tab But the feeling of working with the women and not being identified with the male

side... \par

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{\plain MT:\tab It wasn't that much. It was my own feeling of what is wrong with me. What is actually

wrong with me? I understand that I am not quite 12 but I am capable, I am the same size as my

brother; I am capable of doing the same thing. It was actually false man's ego, I think; I wanted to do

more. Isn\'92t that something?\par

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{\plain JF:\tab So you felt that you should have been picked anyway, that the age was an irrelevant

issue, that somehow they had not chosen you to go with the men?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, that I am with women.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What kind of work were you doing with your mother?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was mostly gathering wood for kitchen. They would not allow us to work in the

kitchens because then we would grab some food.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did you feel that the work was beneath your abilities, you know, beneath your

strength?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, there was-- actually work was hard.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The work was still hard?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab It was very hard and I remember one incident that is deeply buried in my mind. It was

very snowy. For some reason it was always snowing. Always cold. We went out into woods, again

Ukrainian guards, no guns, just with big sticks, night sticks. Each guard had two people, or something

like that, to watch. We went into woods, to pick woods, to gather them up, make big bundle, put in

on your shoulders and bring it back. They tell you when the bundle is big enough. Prior to that,

airplanes went by and there were some leaflets dropped. God help you if you touched a leaflet!

Somehow, somebody managed to bring one back to camp, and the word went around about what was

happening in the world. I had no socks. I had some kind of shoes. Snow was up to my knee, cutting,

going up the mountain. I told my mother that my feet are freezing. She said, "Take off your shoes and

start rubbing them with the snow, your feet." First she went up to help me and he yelled terribly, so

we had to separate, but then she said, "Don't forget. Rub your feet with snow." I did that and my feet

started to freeze up to my ankles, hot ankles, up to my knees. They started losing the feel of it, and

I remember my mother started again rubbing it. She ripped off part of her dress and wrapped it

around my feet and told me to stick my feet with that stuff into the shoes. She took my load of wood

on her back and the jerk ran up and knocked her down and told me to carry mine and she is to carry

her own. "What do you think this is?"\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This was the Ukrainian guard?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes. Then we get to the gate, close to the camp, then the siren blows. Air raid. Who

cares? An air raid would probably liberate us from the whole thing. You are not allowed to go back

into barrack. You have to crawl into the very ugly hole they have in the ground. It was probably

about 8 feet, six, seven feet deep and about 4 or 5 feet wide, just like a ditch, with some lumber on

top, some cut wood on top and some dirt thrown on it, full of water, mud. When you get in it you

are in mud up to your knees again. Terrible. They chase us in there. [unclear] My mother says, "When

I give you the signal, you run for the barrack." I said, "But what about you?" "I'll take care of myself."

So she started arguing with the Ukrainian. "He says, "I guess my cane didn't hit you in the back yet,"

and she says, "It's not going to," So then he started swinging at her, and she says, "Run!" and I started

to run. Then he realized what we were doing. He wasn't allowed to run in the yard, either, because

there was an air raid. So he takes the stick and he throws it like they used to get rabbits in Europe.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The stick would move in a circular motion?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, so you can get somebody like that. Well, I ducked, and it went over me. He was

a good thrower, you know. He had strength. And I dove into the barrack and I crawled into a corner

under my }{\plain \i pritcha}{\plain , under my bed, and I just stayed there.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Shaking?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There was no heat in the barracks either, or whatever. Well, after a while, my mother

came in, everybody came back. He was looking for me and my mother told me not to get out from

under the bed. He was looking, I guess for me, to do something to me also. From then on I always

experience problems with my feet, when it gets cold. In wintertime, summertime, it's okay, but in the

wintertime I start getting this problem.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab What kind of problem? Pain?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, my, it like itches, my skin starts cracking and I have some kind of skin problem

I guess.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab A skin problem, primarily, with your feet?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab In summertime it's okay, but in the wintertime when it starts getting cold, and then it

gets pain, like I get cold, like at work, I can be sitting and everybody is warm, and I start feeling this

cold all the way up to my knees. This cold, real cold. At home when I sleep in the wintertime I have

to put socks on. In the summertime I am okay. Maybe it's psychological, or something. But it is

giving me some pain.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you ever punished for escaping from the line like that, at that time?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, not really that I remember. The worse thing that I would get was a good kick.

And then you would fly. But that was no punishment. For some reason I never cried. Never

experienced any-- or showed anything that would make my parents' day worse. I never asked for

food, or asked for anything.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You never showed anything that made your parent's day worse? Were you feeling it,

or did you have to push down those feelings at that time?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I guess you always feel it. [Long pause] You try not to. Knowing that actually by

doing so you would hurt more your parents.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were trying to protect them from more hurt?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab You were trying to be a super adult and it's unreal. It's hard to become an adult at such

and early age.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You didn't have much opportunity to be a kid?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, but I actually don't miss it too much except when my kids are going through

something now at school. Parties or something, dances, I want them so badly to participate in it. I

want to have so much fun in everything they do. I want them to experience their time in life. I'm

telling-- often I tell them, "Don't watch that TV. That has nothing to do with you." That soaps or

something, like my daughter would be watching. "That's way over your head. Over your age. Why

don't you live your own age, because before you know it, it is gone and you will miss that. Don't get

involved in that. Live your own time, your own age." So actually, I am very conscious of somebody

being young and enjoying it, but I don't really know what it is. To be honest, I don't miss that. I don't

think I miss it. I want somebody else to have it.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab When you were in this camp, was there any opportunity, with your brothers or with

any other boys of your own age, to do anything you would have done outside the camp? To have

talked, to have joked, to have shared any kind of child-like experience? Was there any escape among

you?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, there was no such thing. That's the whole thing. There was no such thing. Not

even making a ball out of a rag or something. There was no such thing as playing. I don't know why

there wasn't. I know why, because it wasn't to be. But nobody even tried, because I think that

everybody sensed and felt and knew the terrible thing we were in. And you tried to pitch in and not

make it any worse. People were hungry, and you don't want to cry because some did. Some kids

would cry that, "Mother, you ate more than we did," when she would get something. And that, to

me at that time, it was terrible. How could they say that? She was a woman and she needs to eat. I

couldn't say that and I didn't ever want to say it. I told myself that I would never say it. So, you tried

not to. The food that they gave us was terrible.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you living there still with your father and brother, even though you were in

separate work details?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, yes, we were all living-- but that's true, just at night we would see each other.

We didn't see each other all day. There was nothing to eat. That's the sad part of it. It was terrible.

That was the worst that I remember.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Food was the worst?\par

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{\plain \tab MT:\tab The worst camp period the attitude, everything was just terrible. Adults would

ask for food and they said, "You need food?" and they would call us stinking Polacks, the Ukrainians. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab Was there any effort that you know of to try to form some resistance in the camp, or

escape?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There was actually, probably it was even actually played down. There was no escape

once you were deep into the enemy's territory. It would have actually have been the worst thing.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab It would have been very dangerous.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, because later on I became, I guess 12, and was capable, or allowed to go with my

brother to clean out, after bombing, the men would be sent to town to clean up the place and take

unexploded bombs-- some things did not explode and the Germans would hide far away and the

Ukies, and tell you where to dig a hole, where to carry the bomb, where to put it in, drop it in-- the

men would try to put it in carefully, slowly, and then mark it, mark the place. But it was all walking--

was not somebody takes you. You walk to town, you walk back. You carried those bombs around

and you don't bury them in the center of the city. You took them far outside the city and bury them.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab This is when you were working with the men?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab So what I am saying is that escape was not even thought of, because there were the

}{\plain \i Hitlerjugend}{\plain . They were young children. They would chase us because my father would try to tell

us a few words in German, }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain . We would buy }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain , bones, }{\plain \i Blutwurst}{\plain .\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You could buy bones?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab We had money.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And you were allowed to spend it?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab My father would say, "Go try the butcher shop and maybe he will sell you some

bones."\par

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{\plain JF:\tab And you were allowed to do that?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, you would have to break away from that-- but as a kid it was no big deal, because

kids are sneaks and they can always-- they, I guess, don't pay attention too much to the adults they

watch. So we would break away. But here we had this so we would try to hide that.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Try to hide the [unclear].\par

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{\plain MT:\tab And of course we looked like scrounges, like bums from the worst. I mean we never

washed our clothes or anything. Whatever we had was with us.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were wearing your own clothes during all this time?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, whatever it was that we had, yes. I would go-- my brother was older, I would

hold the door to the butcher shop, first we would look to see if there were any people there. If there

was too many people, don't try to get in because you are in trouble. But if there's only one person or

maybe nobody, just the butcher, I open the door and hold it there. He walks in. }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain , and if the

guy doesn't yell, then I come in also. If he yells and the door is open then he runs out like a dog. If

he says something, whatever he says, probably "Just a minute," he would take out, would not even

put it in a bag just throw a couple of bones to us. I guess he had to be careful. So we would hide the

bones under the shirt. It was }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain . Then I go in. Of course when I opened the door I was hiding.

He comes out, "Yes, I got some." Then I go in. }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain . He gives me a bone. Then my brother

messes up his hair. Goes in }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain .\par

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{\plain }{\plain \i MARIAN TURZANSKI [4-1-\chpgn ]}{\plain \i\fs20 \par }}

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{\plain \\*\cs1 }{\plain \\*\cs1\i From the collection of the Gratz College Holocaust Oral History Archive}{\plain \i\fs20 \par }}

{\\*\pnseclvl1\pndec\pnstart1{\pntxta .}}

{\\*\pnseclvl2\pnlcltr\pnstart1{\pntxta .}}

{\\*\pnseclvl3\pnlcrm\pnstart1{\pntxta .}}

{\\*\pnseclvl4\pndec\pnstart1{\pntxtb (}{\pntxta )}}

{\\*\pnseclvl5\pnlcltr\pnstart1{\pntxtb (}{\pntxta )}}

{\\*\pnseclvl6\pnlcrm\pnstart1{\pntxtb (}{\pntxta )}}

{\\*\pnseclvl7\pndec\pnstart1{\pntxta .}}

{\\*\pnseclvl8\pnlcltr\pnstart1{\pntxta .}}

{\\*\pnseclvl9\pnlcrm\pnstart1}

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{\plain }{\plain \i Tape four, side one:}{\plain \par

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{\plain JF:\tab So your brother and you would alternate going in and asking for bones and if there

were more than two boys.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes, and then we tried-- and he knew that. Because he would recognize, anybody

would recognize, but you were so hungry and so anxious, and here's a person who was willing to

give you something, so you keep on going, and so we just keep on switching, and going in and

changing our-- take off the jacket and put the jacket on, mess up your hair-- there was no

makeup. Finally he yells, "Enough." I imagine. "}{\plain \i Heraus}{\plain ." [Get out]. That word we knew. So we

get out and we go to the next, look around the next butcher shop. Then we need }{\plain \i Blutwurst}{\plain .

That\'92s only two things we could buy; }{\plain \i Knochen}{\plain and }{\plain \i Blutwurst}{\plain . }{\plain \i Wurst}{\plain made out of blood.

Delicious if you could get it. So they would give us a piece of }{\plain \i Blutwurst}{\plain , the kind ones, usually

the older ones, not the younger ones, older butchers.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Did they know you were Polish?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Oh, yes, yes. It was hard to get that. That's the whole thing. Sometimes we got

some, sometimes we didn't.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Were you ever caught by the Ukrainian guards for sneaking in?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, no, but...\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How long were you working with your mother and the women?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab I would say about, almost the whole time except maybe the last two months of

captivity, I was allowed to go with my brother. I think we were in a camp about a year and a half. \par

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{\plain JF:\tab You were in this last camp? Or the whole of it?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab No, the whole thing. I think the last two or three months I was working with my

brother.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab Once you were 12?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Yes.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab How did it feel to switch over to the men's battalion...\par

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{\plain MT:\tab There was no feeling anymore. I think all of the feeling was removed. There was

no transition. No big deal. Except I knew that my responsibility now was to get something for the

family. To bring something in. To cheat as much as I can, to sneak away from the work force and

to buy something. We had money, but we used that money instead of toilet paper, just to get

even.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab The Polish-- the money you had was Hungarian money?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab But it was changed into German }{\plain \i Marks}{\plain .\par

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{\plain JF:\tab But you used it anyway.\par

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{\plain MT:\tab But we used it because we didn't want them to get it. It was on purpose. It gave us

tremendous feeling to use the German }{\plain \i Marks}{\plain for toilet paper. There was no toilet paper anyway.

But to use that and just destroy it. There was nothing we could buy.\par

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{\plain JF:\tab You've mentioned several things, so-called small things, but things that gave you a

good feeling that somehow you were getting back or outsmarting the system. Were there any

other instances like that that gave you a little boost, sort of an opportunity to give vent to some of

your anger and frustration?\par

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{\plain MT:\tab Not really. Because when things later on started to happen, when we were being

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