KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 1

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

Bob Silverthorne: Wentworth Films. Kovno Ghetto

project. Interview with Ted Pais; T--E--D, P--A--I--S.

5-6-97. Sound roll 20 continued. Camera roll 42 at

the head.

(Tape Cut)

C: One marker.

SB: Mr. Pais, tell me when and where you were born and

the name you were born with.

TP: I was born (cough) August 25, 1915 in St. Peters-

burg, Russia. My name was Pais--same as in United

States. The only thing I used to spell it--I am from

Lithuania so the name use to be spelled P--E--I--I--S.

And the first name in Russian they used to call me

different; Ted--I was changed my name when I came to

the United States and my name--my Jewish name was

Taschum, T--A--S--C--H--U--M.

SB: And tell me about how you ended up in Kovno.TP:

Well that uh--one of the reasons I was born in--in St.

Petersburg--in Russia because in 1914 when the first

World War broke out, the chief--the commander of the

Russian army was Painsnipnicareyenicareyeshvitz, it was

the brother of the Czar issued an order that all Jews,

living in a Baltic countries, had to go deep, Russia

because they were accused of being German spies. So my

grandfather, who was a very well to do man--he had

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 2

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

just--he came back from South Africa with a lot of

money and he--he use to open the mill but he had to

move to Russia. And in--in uh Russia, Jews were not

allowed to live in big cities--only in little Stetchla-

hoisers, nothing special. Because my grandfather had

money, so he was allowed to stay in St. Petersburg and

the war was on, so he opened a factory where they

manufactured what I think--eh for army like holsters

and all kind of acts-acts military things. So, that's

why I was born in Russia--it was my grandfather and

grandmother and it my mother and father they all moved

to Russia. Now from there, we lived until 1918, be-

cause really he's not from Lithuania. In 1918, Lithua-

nia became independent and if the if they revolution,

we all moved back to Lithuania. And my grandfather

continued his business. And I--my father worked for

this business manager and I worked uh--I went to school

there--I graduated at uh Lithuanian high school and

from there I went to university in Kovno that's

Kovno's, they called it in Lithuania. So uh later on

in the 1940, when the Soviet Union occupied the Baltic

countries, my grandfather lost his business because it

was nationalized and I uh my mother--my father was

work--ing in Kovno--he had a job because before--6

months before that, the mill burned down and my father

got a job in Kovno and I was already going out with

this girl and I met--I was in University but we got

married. So this is the reasons we wound up in Kovno.

That we lived in Kovno and that's where the Germans got

me.

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 3

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

SB: And, tell me about--

C: One second.

(Cut)

BS: Speeding.

C: And mark, 2 mark.

SB: Um, and so on the eve of when the Germans came in,

how did things change in Kovno?

TP: Well, the Germans--the Germans came--the worst

start when the Soviet and Germany broke in June the

22nd, 1941. I was married and I was still going for

last year in university and my wife was a nurse working

in a hospital. And I remember Friday, it was June the

21st-eh uh the 20th--yeah the 20th. If you were plan-

ning with a few more couples to go to a picnic, next

day which is the 21st and the uh course that the um

there was--we lived by a river. There was a steamer

and go into the country, for a picnic. It was 3 or 4

o'clock in the morning and I heard exh--explosions. We

woke up and what happened? Say that well maybe, we

lived not far from the airport, maybe they are doing

something at the airport. And in about 6 o'clock in

the morning, the bell rings--someone is at the door--it

was my father. He lived just around the corner. I

said happy too sleepy? There's a war broke out. What

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 4

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

war? We don't know of any war. I turned on

the radio and--and I heard Molatoff make this speech

that the Germans invaded the Soviet Union and you know

then--but there are experiens who--who will survive and

who will defeat them and so forth. Now, I went out and

dressed and went out in the street there was Russian

troops are marching from all states--everywhere. And

it felt like they were retreating us. Stopped to for a

drink of waters--soldiers just--just. So they ask a

hammer are you? And they the Soviet Union, you called

everybody Comrade. He says, 'Are you Jewish.' I says

'Yes.' Said, 'You better run because the Germans,

right behind us and you know what to expect if the

Germans will come here.' And I went out in the street,

I thought well maybe they're just were gonna glance

over so I rode my bicycle in a road to the railway

station. I though maybe I could catch a train and go

deeper into Russia, somewhere. But I wasn't kidding so

that there were people on top the work house and eh

everybody was running so I was I just came home and but

I noticed already that we--we didn't see anymore po-

liceman--uh u--uniformed policeman of the state. We

saw already some kind of hooligans you know wearing

kinda of a arm bands carrying riffles, you know. I

didn't like the looks of them, you know. They were

already taunting, 'You Jews,' that's, 'Your end is

coming. The German army's right is advancing here'--I

think so, we already felt what this--what's going to

happen. So, we neighbors of my wife's were Heliate

Myvaskelens and they say they said that they have some

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 5

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

friends who lived--they own a farm and that we should

join with them and somebody is gonna wait for us with a

horse and wagon eh soon. But said location. It was

such a warm day, it was June 22nd and we, you know, her

mother set us that's a lot of suit cases and winter

clothes, you know, and we carry--it was a long

walk--long walk. Gen--somehow they--the adrenaline

begins to work as you get more slank and you

carried--carried all this that location. And here the

Lithuanians were hanging out--the--the--all the Lithua-

nian national flag because there--there was no Lithua-

nian national flag. There was the Soviet flag with

that--that had a red flag. So here I didn't know and

there were--a lot of them had guns and riffles and they

were all armed. So we finally came to the bridge where

we're supposed to meet these people that uh horse and

wagon and they the--there's an officer with a

whole--soldiers that told us to leave from there be-

cause the bridge is going to be blown up and the explo-

sions and cause this is a major bridge, where there the

all the railroads top it from it from railroad from

Germany of it's kind to Lithuania. So they're going to

blow up the bridge so we had to run from there. Sten-

cil, my father, my mother, my sister was with us and uh

my wife and ands her brother in law. So we wound up

in--in to this suburb of we knew where it was. We

finally we heard shooting in the street. No soldiers.

By civilians when I saw the civilian Lithuanians speak,

wearing all kind of old Lithuanian army insignia with

little killing the--all the Lithuanian flag were shoot-

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 6

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

ing at--at--at the Russian soldiers in the back. And

then they dead soldiers rob them, they took his watch

way, took his money away, you think later. It is not a

beautiful sight. It was so worried that when they told

us to so that us the latest and even the house, he says

would you like something to drink? So I said well just

water. And he said--I said you know, she was a Jewish

woman, so she says, 'You better--you better come into

the house. You all come into the house because things

don't look to good because this is death--death suburb

was uh this little Lithuanian partisans not

scal--liberators and organized and so we can see these

people can took a scene and somehow we lost my mother

in law and we lost my brother in law. They disap-

peared. There was no way we were later when we came

back home we found that they we home--they'd been back

home. So to spend the 3 days and the Lithuanian's

partisans came the took us to work. Remember they took

us Tuesday. That was the twenty...? third right? 23rd

and says we should go and clean every stage rather that

there might have been soldiers and dead horses and--and

bird dreek or something. They have to clean up because

the German army's coming in. So, the uh--they

worked--they get the brooms and shovels and worked on

the street and then they took me and my father into the

uh place. There was a big metal factory. And there was

people lined up--all Jewish people and there was uh

fellow in a Lithuanian old army uniform trying to make

writing uh take people's names down. So there's one

thing I did when I heard that the Russians are leaving,

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 7

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

I burned my Soviet Passport and I took it with only uh

an identification card I have plus the discharge papers

from--from the Lithuanian army. So finally, told them

to came to the table that the guy was registering, he

says, 'Are you Jewish?' 'Yes, I am a Jew.' 'Where's

your Soviet passport?' I says I didn't get one. 'What

do you mean?' Well, I didn't recognize the Soviet

occupation for Lithuania. Right eh--eh you know you

want to save your lives you try to save you sister.

'What do you have?' I showed him the discharge papers

from the Lithuanian army. So he looks at it and says,

'Oh, you--you served in the first infantry regiment in

a such and such company. I served that too.' He says

'You remember the name of the Sarge?' I says, 'Yeah, I

do!' 'Oh, I remember it too.' He says you know,

'You're not a communist.' I says, 'No, I'm not a

communist. I was never a member of the party and I was

just a student, university student.' So he says,

'What--what is your address?' I says, 'I live in the

city of Kovno.' 'But what are you doing here?' he

says. 'Well the war broke out, so I thought I gonna

join some relatives and spend the time with them. 'So,

you can go back home.' So he gave me a soldier to

accompany me--take me home, take me to the place where

we were. And you know where he was taking me to the

little late in the afternoon. I had to drance a German

Bachelor playing--a German soldiers marching--

SB: Wait, he's gonna put another roll of film.

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 8

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

(Cut)

BS: Go to camera roll 43. Sound roll 21. Slate 3 is

up.

(Cut)

C: Marker 3. 3 mark.

SB: So back up just a little bit to where you were

showing your papers--papers.

TP: Yes, so in a way by showing him these papers, I

kind of saved my life because all these people--there

were hundreds and hundreds of these armed Lithuanian uh

partisans who were Nazi collaborators. They were--the

same day, they murdered many Jews already and at the

same city. So that he assigned an armed guard to take

me back where I was staying, I felt like well maybe

that saved my life. At the moment he did and he took

me through side streets because he heard the radio, the

German marches playing and soldiers marching and there

was an order from the German high command that no

civilian people would be in the street when they march

in or everybody will be shot. So, because I knew about

the order already. So they dropped me out there and

went so, that's what the Germans arrived already. Now,

that was Tuesday. We stayed another day or two with

those people. They were very nice to us. They fed us.

There was a house full of people. The have some family

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 9

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

members, some friends that they are they had a big

house the decided to go home. So the started they went

home getting their belongings again but all this sol-

diers did was German military personnel. At one

place--if--if my uh wife's grandmother was with us, and

eventually an officer with her you know we felt, as

Jews, already that we don't belong to any of

them--there gonna kick us out but the--the army--the

combat troops--they had nothing to do with the Jewish

they batik. A couple of officers apologized--they were

blocking our way in the sidewalk. So we came home, we

found our my wife's mother with her brother. They went

home the same day and they were safe--nobody touched

them. Well, and then our troubles started. The Lith-

uanians started to drag people from every--everywhere

and then take them to different execution places. The

felt free--the uh--they felt so free to do what

they--what they want to do because that's was the first

of the post of the uh General Ye--Yeager, from the S.S.

that he stops in Lithuania for the killing the Jews was

easy because due the collaboration of the local people.

So if some eh leader says Jewish community went to the

German high command, they could talk to some of them

and say they had nothing to do with the local people.

The local people want to murder you just stay bactisow.

So we knew that we are also the lower level you gonna

protect us. So then they started to issue all kinds of

ord--first of all there was they, or the rabb--food

rationing. The rations for Jews was very

meager--barely--but could--but the Soviets who could

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 10

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

get but you starves to--they're are all out of food.

And the Jews came to--to--the Jews couldn't stand in

the same line with the 'Gent-tiles.' So, uh, and then

issued there was the order issued that you that we half

to where a yellow Jewish star on the left side of the

your chest and--and--and one on the back too. We can

not walk on the sidewalks and uh a few days came out

the order that all Jews had to move out of the city to

a ghetto. And that was they called it the Vililampolay

or Slobatka they called it in Jewish. That was a--a

suburb where mostly Jewish people live in it. So but

Jewish people did who lived--they had houses in the

city. They had--they--but some gentiles live there had

to trade houses for a little check they gave a big

building away. Hell, there was no papers thrown

up--nothing because the German military installation

wrote the whole thing. So then we had to move--that

they gave us a rule that we have to move to the ghetto

by August 15th--

SB: Let's stop for a sec. Let's just get room tone.

Just cut.

(Cut)

SB: Okay let's just back up to the decree to form the

ghetto, and moving in to the ghetto.

TP: Yes, I don't know if I mentioned it. The war broke

out June the twe--22nd on a Sunday. The 24th on a

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 11

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

Tuesday afternoon, the city was occupied by the German

army already. The German army didn't do anything to

the Jews--nothing until the--there were special groups

assigned to--to beat the Jews but the Lithuanian took

care of many Jews already. So that he came out the

Jews have to move to the ghetto. So they had to find a

place where the--the ghetto could only--there was at

that time, in Kovno, was about, I would say,

around--30,000 Jews when the war broke out and I think

you probably know the percentage--maybe 3 or 4 thousand

of these survived in concentration camps and so forth.

So, so the time my parents tried to find a place where

to live and so my wife and I and her parents. So

scattered my uh wife and I found everywhere were some

relatives and my parents found some other place and my

father and mother in another place and finally eventu-

ally later we joined up together so but the--but the

situation the city was terrible. The Lithuanians use

to grab you's who moved into the ghetto moving around

and they use to take him to the different river by the

Fort. We had several forts: number 4, number 5th and

number 9th Fort. So uh this is all Russian Fortresses

where the under the Czar they built it for military

purposes. So the before we moved to the ghetto. We

didn't yet moved to the ghetto, they built a fence--a

barbed wire fence and I participated in building the

fence too; dig holes and all that; they carried the

lumber and. And August 15th was the day when the locked

up the ghetto. They could not go without armed guards

and so we thought we were protected now. We later

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 12

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

realized that's where the trouble started because they

had all the Jewish in one place and they knew how to

take care of them. I mean they knew what they wanted

to do to them. And the--the fought the Jewish adminis-

tration there were eh Jewish litgesvages--nice people

but--but not everybody wanted to help the Jews; be in

the Jewish administration because there are all have to

take orders from the Germans. What happens when they

ask for a hundred or thou--or thousand people to be

killed. The life in the ghetto was not easy. We lived

in very crowed conditions because that time it was late

summer so it uh we didn't need any uh heat in the house

but the rations that they gave us were meager but

whatever people tried to prepare food for what they

call the prences my mother would play the piano. So my

mother--we were not allowed to take musical instruments

into the ghetto so she sold the piano to some Lithuani-

an family and she use to work everyday. Jews were not

allowed to take any public transportation. Unless

horse and wagon if you could find one. And they uh,

she walked many many miles everyday carrying bundles of

flour or potatoes or all kind of stuff she could get.

Sold it and money they--they couldn't do nothing with

money anyway. They didn't have a value with money. So

uh we started work after we the fence was built and the

ghetto was locked up and then we started form all kinds

of uh labor groups to work with the German army. I

went to work for the German army with to build--in

Kovno they had an airport but a small airport but the

Lithuanian aviation had only about six or seven planes

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 13

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

from the first flew were. And they uh there's no

runways to first were the German needed to see little

concrete runways for there liftrafa, that the Air

Force. That when I was exposed to the first time to

the German Air Force. Incidently, from the first days

though the day I was liberated I was working for the

German Air Force. So it was very hard work. It was 12

hours and the two shifts--day shifts and night shifts

and--and four was a problem it was raining and the had

the didn't use any bulldozers. They had the Jews to

did with shovels with and you know what happens to clay

when it gets wet. We could uh lose our shoes uh and it

was terrible. So I worked there for the airport for

the rest--several months and it was very hard. My wife

worked in a uh--there was an infirmary and a hou--so

she worked part time in a hospital. Course there was

no pay but just to do something for the people, you

know. My father got a job to work for the food distri-

bution center and how could you get a job that you knew

little. Because there was no employment office some-

thing like but is was established an employment office.

So later I--I used some eh like some of the people that

was here before--what is their names, I forgot.

SB: Oh, Meriam Gershwin.

TP: Gershwin, yeah. So, uh my father who knew some of

the officials in the administration and became a uh

like a group--a group leader at the airport. So they

gave me a group what they use to unload the railroad

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 14

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

cars eh all the building materials; gravel, cement, and

uh construction steel and what not. I had a group of

hundred and twenty women and forty men. It was very

hard work for the men and do you know the--the

German--the forma and the assistants were very well--

SB: We got to put another roll up. Could I get you

something.

(Cut)

C: 5 marker.

SB: Ted, let's talk about the actions now that we're at

the beginning. The Intelligencia Action?

TP: Yes, yes. That was about, I would say in August

18th when they after the closed the ghetto. And what

they needed 600 or 500 people to work in some archives

and uh it was people were in order would be nice. We

wouldn't have to did ditches and work in the airport

and later. So my father and I decided to go too. And

my mother was preparing sandwiches for us because you

had to have something to eat you know. Mothers always

worry. So by the time my went we didn't have any other

refrigeration to keep perishable foods in the cellar so

my mother went down to the cellar to get some pickles

for the sandwiches. By the time she got the pickles

cuz the sandwiches were ready, my father walked up

the--and there were people were marching out to regular

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 15

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

closing gates and the rest of the Germans who were

there eh six hundred and forty or five hundred and

forty I did--I really don't remember. They don't need

anymore. There they started to force them back off.

You know, you have to go back to work in the airport.

So that they started spread rumors all of the people

are working. They work in Germany. They work in

different places. They are doing some nice work there,

you know. Nice uh lodging. Gestapo were spreading the

rumors that so and so got a letter from her

husband...so an so got a letter from her son. And she

specifically asked and I say did you ever see your girl

here. No. They killed them the same day. And the

Fort number 4 that was in the outside of Kovno. There

was a little Jewish society when the upper contactals

and the professors and teachers and doctors that were

they asked that they should of been intelligent, edu-

cated, well-dressed. So that's where they--I always

wondered why they did they want this is well I would

think this is because uh because intelligent people,

educated people are the ones who would revolt. Not

that the revolt that I think there are a couple ghettos

and the Warsaw ghetto. The couldn't--the thought

that--that a couple time is Kovno they called us one

day, the same place where the Big Action on the October

the 28th. The called us the people who would come out

and they're going to talk to us about uh black outs.

Not a little trouble--black outs. They kept us for the

night and serve and then they told us to go home.

Later I found out that they were testing us--what would

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 16

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

Jews do when they are attack assembled in a large

group? In under a big audience. So came the large

action that time they told everybody to get up and

everybody to assemble in the they call it the Democratu

Iksteadi. The uh square of the Democrats. And every-

body had to be there and they could Gestapo. Gestapo

men were there and the started to direct whether to go

to the right or to the left. We didn't know which is

the good side, which is the bad side. But we saw that

once they went to the one side they took them back to

the small ghetto--there was a ghetto--first it was

divided in two parts and they build a bridge to go from

one ghetto to the other one. And then the Jews were

evacuated from the ghetto one day on the right and were

killed. So some of the people, when they took the

right action to go to the left, they took them to

the--to the small ghetto. And people started to fight

a little they gonna have apartment or nothing but the

next morning we saw they were all going up the hill

toward the 9th Fort--the direction of the 9th Fort.

And they were all killed. The had I would say between

10 and 12 thousand were killed the same day.

SB: You saw them going up the hill?

TP: Yes I saw it--the next morning. And the

guards--the Germans and Lithuanian guards.

SB: And did the people know where they were going?

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 17

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

TP: I guess they knew where they were going because the

9th Fort was the only way. They know that was the

direction of the 9th Fort. I was never in the 9th Fort

until--until March 1944, when they arrested me with the

Jewish Police. Then--then I was there for 3 days.

SB: Um, okay let's get to that in a little while.

Let's um did you get--did your wife have a baby any-

time?

TP: Yes. My wife became pregnant in the ghetto. There

was a dead line when women can bear children. After

dead line, babies had to be aborted. But my baby

didn't want to go through it an abortion. And the baby

was born after the dead line. But the papers regis-

tered in the ghetto records, it was born before the

dead line. It was born--the baby was delivered by a

mid-wife because my wife knew what from the hospital,

she was an excellent mid-wife. The next morning out

beared the placenta in the back yard. And I didn't

witness but I time, I heard the birth of the baby but I

uh the baby looked healthy and you know it was fine.

But the baby didn't know what is what he was what kind

of life he was coming to but the little. So the baby

was born I would say October the 42--something like

that. So when the baby was killed he was about 2 and a

half years old or something like that. The wife with

the baby went to Studhoff--that's where they took the

women from Kovno ghetto before they took the men to

Dakow, they took them to Studhoff.

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 18

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

SB: Um, so how did you keep the baby in the ghetto?

TP: Well, it was hard. You couldn't get uh milk. My

brother worked--worked in a place use to sometimes the

Germans gave a little milk. It was hard. It was rough

to raise a child. Clothes--there was no baby clothes

they have here. They had to take some old clothes and

make it--cut it down and make fit for a baby or uh

shoes--it was very hard. I think that people here who

live in the worst economic conditions in slums, things

like that, had a much easier way to raise baby then it

was in the ghetto. And you know, here we spoke Yid-

dish. Everybody spoke Yiddish. And they spoke a lot

but German. You know when he started--the baby started

to talk and understand a little bit, he use to say,

'I'm afraid there's a German. I'm afraid there's a

German.' In Yiddish, he use to say it. And he--and I

built an underground he--to hide ourselves because we

thought--we knew that the war is coming to an end and

the Russians are coming closer. So in a couple days we

could hide over here. So at night I used to dig it and

take the dirt throughout not the Germans could see it.

And the rest that was the uh ghetto police and a stay

and stay oysh and my wife kept the baby in the cellar.

It was kinda a sickly temp--than going into a cabinet

that in order for the baby not to cry, she gave him

injections in his thigh. I don't know what injections

were but the baby acted terrible after it was, I came

back from the 9th Fort because the Germans did come.

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 19

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

The dogs and they responded with guns on the floor and

say there is a uh underground shelter or a thing like

that; but...

SB: Tell me about the life in the ghetto and trying to

get food.

TP: Well, they gave us rations; very small rations; how

much bread that we eat and so much flour; never got any

sugar or never gave us salt and once in a while they

use to give us horse meat. But you know, your horse

meat--if you season it right, it tastes very good. It

tastes almost like beef. It's a little bit tough

sometimes but if you grind it up, it's--you can make a

horse burger. And uh people use to go to work, they

use to try to organize something or uh. Like when I

went to the airport, the Germans already were short a

few because they use all the trucks on the Russian

front. So they use to hire Lithuanians with horses and

with wagons. And they use to deliver all this stuff.

So when they came to work, use to take manage to put

pants or a shirt. Women use to put an extra dress or

another pair of underwear and take it in trade with the

Lithuanians for a uh for flour for--for bread, for if

you like to get a couple eggs or little butter or

something. That's what that--so in the morning, when

you woke up, if they made little tea or

something--coffee we didn't have. So if you had a

little piece of bread that the whole family use to--use

to divide the bread in little slivers, you know for

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 20

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

everybody a little piece. Or you if you get a few

potatoes, use to boil a few potatoes and you know

everybody, at home, the mother would arrive and her

mother used a ration for this--only way we could feed

ourselves. There was no second helping.

SB: What about community life?

TP: Well, community life--it's not that there were--the

Germans did not want there any schools but somehow

there was sch--there was schools there was--af--after

the first year, somehow, after the Big Action, they

said life is gonna be--they took already about 12

thousand people out, so they don't have to feed so

many. So maybe we can organize a little bit. But uh,

university students, we organized a group like we

belonged to Zionist fraternities. So we use to meet

every once in a while, you know. We could talk about

our troubles. Then there was--well there was an or-

chestra. There was several people in the police force

who were good musicians and then and they--

SB: Ran out. Reload. We got to put another roll on.

(Cut)

(Sound Roll 22 Next)

BS: Wentworth Films. Kovno ghetto project. Interview

continued with Ted Pais. Sound roll 22. Camera roll

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 21

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

25 is up.

(Cut)

C: Marker 6.

SB: Um, we we're talking about how hard it was to have

a baby in the ghetto.

TP: How do you--to raise a baby--to bring up a baby.

It was hard--it was hard--because had to manage with

what we had. Incidentally, I was, after mentioning I

was working at a airport at one time I had a German

guard who's a very--he was from the German air

force--with the ground crew. And he was very nice

fellow--he was a friend with me and he happened to tell

me he was in concentration camp too because he was a

socialist and they socialists little in use and he was

put into Dakow. Then he was--in the war--in the war,

he was released from Dakow and put in the army and the

uh--I happened to mention that I have a child--he don't

live in the ghetto, so--so he brought--one day he

brought me a bag of sugar and he brought some flour, I

think like that. Because I thought of the--but the

food situation it was and when I was--and later he

became--was a cook in the uh--in the uh air force

barracks when they had their pilots just to use--so use

to ask with the comrade 12 or 1 o'clock and use to give

me lunch. It was very delicious lunch too you know

what the pilots were eating who were going to bomb

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 22

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

Russia a thing like that. But you know it was a

very--their food was getting already--they tried to

skimp on food more and more. First it use to a nice

soup with meat. Later is was just like a potatoes with

the grave--a think like that. It gave you the idea

that they're running out of everything you know.

SB: Um, tell me how you became a ghetto policeman?

TP: Oh. Well, it was--ra--get--when I--in 19

forty...three--forty three--only before. There were

rumors started circulated they um--the Germans want to

take most of the people who worked for the air port.

You see they didn't have enough uh guards to guard us

from--there was a shift--was a shift--there was a

thousand people they use to go work, you know. They

need almost a--a regiment of soldiers to accompany them

because there were so many Jews and so many soldiers

guarding--like that. So they wanted to build barracks

at the airport. They should live in the airport.

Women separate from the men and work right there. We

had a family. We didn't want to be separated, so if we

got--I tried to use the influence, what I had from my

father in law, what he knew very important people and

says uh. As a matter of fact, I wanted to become a

policeman when the ghetto first started. I was not

accepted. You're too educated for it. We need rough

characters you know. But later I don't--they cleaned

the ranks of the policeman because they didn't--they

misbehave you know. So they had to get people who use

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 23

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

their head more than their mouth you know. So I was

accepted and they uh--and they gave me a--a job with

the to be at some ghetto shops. Where they use to

bring uh German army uniforms to wash them and clean

them and mend them and--and so it was like a plant

guard. So that was that. That was easy. You worked

for 12 hours and 12 hours you--you go home. So that's

how I became a policeman. Until--until the day when

they arrested the Jewish policeman. I have to

give--the reason why they just--the Jewish police.

That was already 19 forty...end of '43 and '44, when

the ghetto was converted--instead of a ghetto and a

concentration camp. When the S.S. when they became the

head of the ghetto. See before they had was

they--they--the district commission of the S.A. was

the member but then the S.S. took over. That's why the

concentration camp had the Daskimblovia or Gulka maybe

that his name. He was a uh S.S. colonel. So uh--so

you figure--so why do we have policeman--yes there was

an underground movement. People use to go into fights

you know--fight the Germans, the Partisans and then of

course, a certain people the police knew about the

underground movement but the guards wouldn't here a

thing like that. So they called the police that par-

ticular day--that was in a--that was the day of the

uh--I think was in March 1944. That was the took the

children and old people away. But I thought the

date--I think March '44. And the uh--and they took us

all. We had to assemble all the front of the commander

of the ghetto. Shiny boots there from and there stuff

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 24

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

from operate and we--somebody exactly 8 o'clock in the

morning and see a couple buses drove up with the win-

dows were painted white. And the buses were a bunch of

Ukrainian, Nazi collaborators and S.S. men with machine

guns got out. So they got out. This is--we use to

call--the Jewish people--this was a hundred and twenty

years you know. So they started to talk to us about

the uh like that we're not watching the uh you know

Russians began to fire cannons those planes over Kovno.

The front was coming closer and closer but we don't

when they uh we the guards would turn off the lights in

Kovno they uh.

SB: Oh, the curfew at night?

TP: Not that the--there was curfew anyway.SB: A black-

out?

TP: Blackouts. The black lights uh. All the police

are not watching the blackouts. Police isn't doing was

he is supposed to do you know--uh anyway. That how

they--they told us to go in the buses. And I see

really one bus was going af--was really he had that the

shoulder fell off. So they tell the people not in the

first buses. And then--it was going the direction of

the 9th Fort. Now remember one fellow refused to go

into the bus. He just refused to go into the bus. So

he says--he says to the Germans and the S.S. man who

want to take him there. 'Well, if you want to kill me,

kill me now!' So get the game and all though some

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 25

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

German come over to knock him down. So they shot him.

You could see later the bullet hit him right here

(pause). Of course he died. So they took us to the

9th Fort. They kept us there for 3 days. They--the

Gestapo--members of the Gestapo came, a few times to

themselves tell who else was here--tell us--tell us who

are the leaders, who are the underground, where are the

guns hidden. Who has buried money and gold. Where are

they uh underground shelters--the Bookers?, they call

it. Where are bunkers? And who is--and where is it?

If you tell us you go back to the ghetto as pol--po-

licemen. If you're not, they said it in German: So-

dahelamhelamgoff. So the deal, guard there was uh--go

out there was a smoke cause they showed us to window

where they were digging out the bodies from the Great

Action and from the other Jews who from France or from

Germany who are brought here to execute. So you're

going up with the smoke to dear God, you know. So we

were there. A hundred and forty were taken there. 97

came back. They were all administration. They are

soldiers and Adolf killed and I was among the 97 who

came back. There was a negotiation with some who

worked for the Gestapo that uh they tried to uh

ob--obey the orders of the S.S. and think like that.

And be good boys and behave who'll behave

ourselves--cooperating with the authorities. So it

came after that they took us Monday, Tuesday, Wednes-

day, Thursday afternoon they brought us back to the

ghetto. That's when I saw my child, I survived and he

was so--he didn't recognize me from all those injec-

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 26

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

tions and that he was so. And from there on, we were

just uh waited to--

SB: Let me--let me ask you something. Did they torture

so at the 9th Fort?

TP: No. Not that, not that, not that--they just ask

questions. They told us--tell us what you know so one

guy pipes up this bunker--this and this and this and oh

they knew we were dead already. Tell us what you know.

What you don't know, don't tell us. I didn't know very

much--I just kept my mouth shut. No they didn't tor-

ture us. But however one fella was brought into our

cell. He was so beaten up it was terrible. He was

bleeding. He was later dead--he was brought you know.

We knew who he was. He was also policeman. I says,

'What happen to you.' They beat him up because they

all before the war, his parents owned a very elegant

fur shop. They use to sell their furs and before they

went to the ghetto, he gave--they gave their furs to

some Lithuanian people they know and so she couldn't go

out of the ghetto and they were gonna pay them back

with food--I think like that. So sometimes she went to

the walls and they refuse to give them more food or

money whatever it was. So he says--she says she is

going to complain to the Gestapo about you. Don't go

complain to the Gestapo about Lithuanians. So they

got--they get a very important the Gestapo, that his

wife was there and they accused him that they stole

their furs and I think like that. He was beaten up so

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 27

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

badly and I--I don't think he--he didn't come back. He

remained at the 9th Fort.

SB: And how did they choose who they killed and who

they let go?

TP: Pardon me?

SB: How did they choose who they killed?

TP: Oh, this they--they killed all the top

officers--the top officers: the captains, the lieuten-

ants, you know in a police force. The use to set up

certain ranks seargent, I think like that. Also were

in the leading place uh they also killed, as a matter

of fact, they took one, La--Levine then, he was the

chief of the police he forces uh. It was winter, that

time was, a nice at a fakir and one of our guys were

taken for interrogation and uh and he saw his boots and

his coat hanging there, so the Gestapo ask him says,

'Do you know whose coat it is?' He says, 'It's

Levine's.' He says, 'He doesn't need it anymore. He's

not--he's not alive anymore.' The executed him right

there. They--they the ones who made the decision and

those who were liberated uh to some influence--to some

one Jew who worked for the Gestapo and the uh so he

said uh he came to talk to us at the 9th Fort. He

says, 'You know, I'd like to get you out you know, back

to your family, something like that.' Well--

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 28

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

SB: We have to put another roll.

(Cut)

BS: Go to camera roll--go to camera roll 45. 45 is up.

(Cut)

BS: Correction camera roll 46 is up.

(Cut)

C: Seven mark.

SB: Early in the ghetto, did you know or did you see

the hospital burning?

TP: Yes. Because my--my--my--my wife worked there but

she had just, I don't remember. Was he finished the

night shift? Or--my sister was a medical student, so

she worked at the hospital too but I think--I can't

recall--that she just finished the night shift and she

left the hospital. The hospital was on the small

ghetto, on the other side of the bridge. And she

because the bridge soldiers and Lithuanian Partisans

were surrounding the hospital. I knew they were burn-

ing the hospital, I knew it. I saw it burning from a

distance.

SB: Why did they burn the hospital?TP: Because they say

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 29

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

it was Typhoid cases of Typhoid fever. There was no

Typhoid fever. Speaking about--but burning, I have to

tell you something that has nothing to do with the

ghetto but I saw it when I was in the ghetto. We use

to march--go by everyday a prisoner of war camp or

Russian prisoners were there. There's a big 3 or 4

story brick building--we use to see it because

they--the prisoners worked at the airport too. And one

day, the guards we were marching to a different street.

So I asked a German guard, I says, 'Why uh--why we

going to different street?' And he says, 'Oh that was

the end a fire or something.' We didn't works that

Sunday. He says, 'I'll tell you next week.' Next

Monday, we were going back to work. There were bull-

dozers leveling go. The burned down the whole prisoner

of war camp--I told you Russian prisoners in there.

And bulldozers were leveling those ground. I speak

back to the ghetto. You know the ghetto. How was life

in the ghetto. In the ghetto there were no more wooden

fences being built--use them for fuel to keep our

houses warm in the winter time. We burned chairs, we

burned furniture what we could live without--live

without things like that--that would--they didn't give

us any wood, you know, or coal anything.

SB: What--what--tell me about the orchestra. We were

starting that.

TP: Yes, the orchestra was uh--the would openly smile

but when they all good musicians and they organized an

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 30

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

orchestra. They was a--we had some good violinists who

played in the opera orchestra and they--they use to

have concerts once in a while. They use to have con-

cert that was in an old synagogue--they use to have the

concerts. I attended one concert and the uh it was

beautiful. And they--the German administration use to

go watch the concert--a thing like that.

And--and they say incidentally, you know in Germany,

you could not play any works of composers who were part

Jewish or Jewish but over there you could play a Mendel

song and other things you know. But the--the German,

the S.S. man or the S.S. officer stood up to listen to

this concert. They like music sure. They played music

in Aushwitz and they led them to the--to the gas cham-

bers.

SB: What else about you know religious practices were

forbidden in the ghetto?

TP: Well, the religions you practiced you know the uh,

they practiced uh--I have to think about Kosher cause

we didn't get any uh Kosher meat so they had uh no

meat. They uh--if somebody was lucky to get a chicken

someplace, so they use to--sel--slice a little and eat

your way and all so they let the Jews could have chick-

en. I had chicken once in the 3 years you're in the

ghetto--only once. My brother in law got a chicken

somewhere and we cooked lately. It was such a great

fiesta. And the uh the Jews yes they use to play. The

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 31

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

had--they did an official--they had their own synagogue

but they use to get together and play and they was no

Matsa--Matsas for Passover but I don't know, some

people use to mo--when they get flour, use to make

Matsas for themselves so. As a matter of--in the camp,

in Dakaw in the camp, there was no--else use to give me

bread but I knew some very religious Jews who use to

trade their bread for the potato and not to eat the

bread.

SB: What about ceremonies in the ghetto or sec--secret

ceremonies? Secret religious.

TP: Ceremonies no. There was none of that. But maybe

some people bet married. Some people did get married

because they uh, because some of it, you're afraid you

not only will take people out to different camp so

people didn't want to be separated. So couples who were

going out--going out together--in a date. So they uh

use to get married. But not that they celebrate. You

use to get--get married--you need an Ghetto Administra-

tion you know--just for a record.

SB: Uh huh. What about the partisans? Did you do

any...?

TP: Oh incidentally, after my baby was circumcised. He

was circumcised. There are more real that uh--outra-

geous people performed circumcision, yes. So he died a

real Jew. And now you're talking about the uh...

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 32

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

SB: Partisans, underground.

TP: Well, I knew certain people who were active in the

partisans. They uh, I knew one of them was of the

leader of the partisans. I knew him in person. But I

never see much in the ghetto. They use to do all the

work was underground, you know. And they, incidental-

ly, he was just before they closed the ghetto, he was

ambushed by a bunch of Gestapo men. He was supposed to

meet somebody but they was Gestapo, there were traitors

you know and but I think there was an underground

movement. I thought that certain people were growing

beards and mustaches and things like that. And I knew

it this--uh this for a reason not to be recognized and

to look differently. But so when I was a guard, of

that in that uh factories where they had the--the

shops.

That they supplied the uni--the German army uniforms

for the partisans. Because they used to bring the

uniforms from dead soldiers and they use to wash them,

and clean them and mend them and there were so many of

them, nobody kept track of them and that's why the

partisans us to get their German army uniforms to--to

be disguised themselves as German soldiers.

SB: So you--

Jim Ball (Operator): Got a battery change.

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 33

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

(Cut)

C: 8 marker.

SB: The uniforms, um the extra, did you--did some get

put aside for the partisans?

TP: Well they--they use to--we use to steal it from

there. The--the police use to steal some--we were

guards at night of the shops. So we opened the doors

and some use to steal and then give it to the partisan

leaders--German army uniforms. They needed them you

know to be--

SB: Did you steal anything else at night?

TP: Well I didn't steal a thing. You know that--that

certain policemen did but I not--you know

the partisan movement had to be so secretive that you

can not trust everybody, you know. I knew what is this

but I knew a couple policemen who were there--helped to

steal this uniforms--a thing like that. I knew it

was--it was going on. I'm glad it happened you know.

SB: Um, the ghetto organization, were the ghetto--

TP: Administration, a Ghetto Administration yes. I you

know, there was Dr. Elkish, he was uh, they use to call

the Orbayuda. He was the head of the Jewish council

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_

KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 34

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

there, the Udaendulster. He was a very fine doctor and

was a great doctor too you know, in his profession.

And then there was--you want me to name the uh names of

the people?

SB: No, I want you to tell me what you thought of the

council.

TP: I thought that they did a wonderful job. I think

they uh--the one thing, they never submitted any list

of people to be killed like there are so many in other

ghettos, they forced the uh the ghetto, in the state to

give a list of people they--they didn't want to be

responsible for picking people. But when the Germans

came and they take them--they say they take a thousand

people to work with them. We tried to believe that

they came to work but we never heard from them anymore.

But they tried to do the best job under the circum-

stances. I guess that they had uh--in the ghetto

court, if somebody was caught stealing--we had a little

ghetto jail. A couple times I was watching the guys in

jail who arrested--a thing like that. Well there were

even a couple guys that uh--a couple guys murdered a

family and robbed them their money and the police

caught him later.

SB: All within the ghetto?

TP: Within the ghetto yes. We had a court. Some--some

for little misdemeanors thing like that, you know and

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 35

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

uh then was talking to the people use to be--the one of

the jobs, the police once. See people who, on the

airport was very hard work. So some people worked in

factories in the city and it was easy work and they

could get some food--something like that. So the

ghetto administration put up a rule that these people

who worked ev--on those easy jobs should give one day a

week to work at the airport so the people from there

could be relieved, you know. So it was like this.

Like my sister worked on time in a--in a German mili-

tary hospital. She was a medical student but she use

to wash--uh wash floors over there you know. Because

that was an easy job. They use to give her food over

there and there was work indoors. So my sister had to

go for one week and work at the airport to relieve some

women to relieve some women who worked seven days at

the airport.

SB: Okay, I think we're just about to run out, right?

JB: Yes.

SB: So, we let's put on one more.

TP: Okay.

(Cut)

BS: Sound roll 23. Camera roll 47.

(Cut)

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 36

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

C: And 47 marker 9.

SB: So you're gonna tell me about the liquidation of

the ghetto.

TP: Yes, in spring of 1944. Rumors began to in the

ghetto that eventually the ghetto will be liquidated.

What they gonna take us to concentration camps and we

of course, thought of the worse you know what liquida-

tion means? Of course the S.S. was already in charge

of the ghetto and they were talking about different

places. They're gonna build barracks and move part of

the ghetto there but uh. And until it came about the

June--June/July forty.. forty four. And they uh the

orders that to come the ghettos what the remaining the

ghetto was already small. So many people were killed

and moved to camps but some will go by and together

we've taken. Some people will go by boat to Germany,

or to other camps, thing like that. It finally came

that day I think it was July 15th already, I don't

remember. It was a terrible day. It was very hot

and--and it rained very hard. And they took us to

the--we marched of course by foot to uh not the rail-

road station but to the uh--place where there's a

railroad tracks there. And there was a cattle cars

there. We sit with our--with family--with children

whatever--and we got in there. The cars were full of

manure thing like that. Incidentally, this baka, the

head of the top command until Dr. Elkis who was the--he

was a very good terms with this. So I says, you can

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 37

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

take you library with, take you books along with you.

And you'll be--you have a very nice place to live. So

anyway they took us to the camp--took not to the

camp--to--to the--to the train and the train started to

roll and we were--we were riding all evening and all

night until next morning. It was terrible, there was

rot. And those railroad cars were stenciled these

eight horsels or 40 people--that silver train--those

cattle cars were. We were farther a hundred people you

know. The manure--it was terrible--it very. So we

finally arrived in the uh--a place that they stopped

and they yell--the guards open the door and they uh we

saw a sign Diganhoff, was the name of the railroad

station. That was in Germany, in Prussia. And they

said all women and children get out. You will go on a

narrow gates train. You'll go to camp and the men will

follow you later. This is when I said goodbye to my

mother and my father said goodbye to my mother and we

said we'll meet in the United States. A remember the

addresses. My father had 3 brothers here and 2 sisters

(in the U.S.) and he said 928 Shoven, Evanston and 5140

North Central Park Chicago, Illinois. Remember the

addresses. We will try to meet there. Of course

my..my father came here later and my mother died after

the war so they took us there. We never saw the women

again. The women was taken to Studhoff. Studhoff was

a camp with gas chambers and furnaces and my

sister--and eh saw my--my wife a few times there and

then they didn't see them anymore. They took the women

and children away and they put them in the gas cham-

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 38

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

bers, right there, right out. And they took us to--all

the way to the station Calforing which is in the area

of Munich and from there they marched to our camp.

That was camp number 1, and a extension of the concen-

tration camp Dakaw was the war camp number 1. Like a

Einst they called it you know. And it was a very we

came there and started uniforms and for a camp life-

style, some thing like that.

SB: Let me ask you about the liquidation of the ghetto.

Did they--they ended up burning the ghetto at the end.

TP: Yes, people who came--the following day, the more

people came from the ghetto who they found in those

bunkers and that they were. So they tell us they were

burning the ghetto. They came people in those bunkers,

use flame throwers, you know, to get those people out.

And they burned the buildings down, yes. There are

people, many people who were alive hiding inside per-

ished in the fire.

SB: Now, let's go back, can you tell me again about the

hiding place that you had?

TP: Yes, my hiding place was built in a little house

and there was a kitchen--there was cellar. There was

an opening--a door in the floor. And you, with a

ladder, you go down to the cellar. That way you could

keep food--it's colder in the cellar. So what I did

was there was a kitchen cabinet against the wall and I

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 39

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

just covered the opening where you can go to the cel-

lar. I think it's kind of a rug or something I put

there, nailed it down. And I cut out a hole in the

floor that when they opened the cabinet door, you could

climb into the hole in the cellar. I even brought an

electric-- a wire for electricity. We had electricity

in the ghetto for light. And there was kind of a

uh air hole and little windows. I made it bigger to

get air you know. And uh--and I made it so that the

floor was a cabinet. I nailed down a couple pots, you

know, so when you climb into this--to this hole, you

can take this wooden floor, with these nailed in pots

to it, so they open the door and see it's just a cabi-

net wit pots on the uh. That was to camaflouge it.

However, my wife told me later that the soldiers came

there and pounded in the floor and I did something else

to the hidden cellar. I think I put some extra dirt

under the floor or something. They should of they

heard a pounding with a--with a riffle--they didn't

come out there.

SB: What did you do with the dirt?

TP: The dirt we use to put in pails and we use to throw

a little by little outside, you know, and the

had--there's no guard. It was just dirt inside so we

sent the dirt and try not--not to show any puddles. If

you saw The Great Escape, the movie. Did you see The

Great Escape?

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 40

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

SB: Yeah.

TP: How the British uh filled up to their pockets.

They took the dirt in their pockets and they use to uh

hold their pockets and pull a string and the dirt used

to go down their pants and the dirt so it was what I

did is uh take it out to them. Take it in a bucket. A

little bit with my fist; I use to distribute it all in

different places so that there was no--uh pile of dirt.

SB: And um when you got arrested with the other police,

they took the, they took your shoe laces

and glasses. Tell me about that.

TP: Yes, the took the--that's right, the took it was

far most of them were boots. But they took my eye-

glasses away. They had knifes; if anybody had little

scissors--something like that. They said we have any

bullets with you. You can not speed up your death with

us. They took the glasses away because, you know, at

least you can cut your--tried to commit suicide. And

uh--and uh belts, suspenders, anything which you can

make uh hang yourself or something.

SB: And did you get told, while you were there, that

you weren't going to live very longer?

TP: Well, when they first took us. When we first came

to the 9th Fort, so that the S.S. and the German police

guards were there look in the book he says. He says,

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 41

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

'You know this is Fort number 9.' And I quoted the

German, 'From--from here come Canacksoleek, nobody

returns from here. So then he stood to the others said

then took us in--into the cell. The cell was almost

knee-high of water. There was so full. I don't know

where the water was from and we stood there. But then,

you know, we are no more than humans, we have physio-

logical functions to take care of. We have to go to

toilet. So myself with somebody else started knocking

on the door. The guards would come. Say, 'What do you

want.' I says, 'We have no toilet.' 'Then do it right

here because you won't live long.' So that what we

did. But later is was getting dark already and I had

one little electric bulb there burning and they open

the door and he says, 'Five men out.' So I said we

took five men and I was one of the five to whom I

volunteered. So I figured well if there are going to

execute that they took a few people at a time to exe-

cute them.

Hear me, I might as well die now. If I live so I live.

And they took us to another cell. There was light and

there was kind of a sleeping bunks, you know, for

sleeping and there was uh pails for taking care of you

toilet habits, you know. And there was drinking water,

a thing like that. And the table with benches. And

then they brought us bread and soup and I--I--and

that's how they brought us to the cell, five men at a

time. But you see the people who were left didn't know

what happen to use because the can hear, they see us in

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KOVNO GHETTO EXHIBIT Interview w/TED PAIS page 42

Interviewed (5-6-97) by Sandra W. Bradley

Wentworth Films, Inc. 9400 Kendale Rd, Potomac, MD 20854 TIMECODE NOTES:

the cells. So we and they told them this is your new

hotel, you'll sleep here overnight.

SB: Okay, um, I think were just about out. The hanging

of Mac.

TP: Yes I knew about it and I saw him hanging there

when we came back from the airport from work. They put

in such a place that the people will go back to their

houses and 'Yes, I saw him hanging.' I was not there

when he was hung but I saw him hanging there. They did

it purposely that everybody should see it. Yeah I knew

what happened. I knew about it. I knew he was.

SB: We have to get the sound of the room. Just be very

quiet for--

(Tape Cut)

Video Tape No.\_\_\_\_ Camera Roll No. \_\_\_\_ Sound Roll No. \_\_\_\_