

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Henry Bialowas
December 4, 2006
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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Henry Bialowas, conducted on December 4, 2006 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

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HENRY BIALOWAS

December 4, 2006

Beginning Tape One

Question: Good morning, Henry.

Answer: Good morning fer --

Q: It's very nice to finally meet you.

A: Likewise, Joan, good to meet you, good to talk to you.

Q: Y-Yes, indeed. Tell me, what -- what is your name now?

A: My name now is Americanized Henry. My n-name at home, in Europe was Hershel.

Q: Is that the name you were born with, is Hershel?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what was your last name?

A: Still the same, Bialowas, Bialowas. That and a po -- is a Polish na -- Polish pronunciation. A Bialowas is a white mustache.

Q: White --

A: I mean, we looking through the source of the name, I don't know why, but --

Q: Right. But your name now is a little bit different, your last name.

A: Well, the -- the -- just different pronunciation, but the spelling is the same. The spelling is the same. Bialowas is -- in Polish they pronounce Bialowans.

Q: Wans, I see.

A: It has a -- a [indecipherable] him --

Q: Aha.

A: -- so they said, oh, it's Bialowans. And usually called Bialowa -- Bialowas, and that's all. But was --

Q: And where -- go ahead, what was --

A: Yeah, no, people -- I have no problems with the pronunciation --

Q: Right.

A: -- it-it's -- you know, it's strange, but -- yeah, different, but it's -- it's okay, manageable.

Q: When were you born? What's your date of birth?

A: My birth? 1917.

Q: And the -- and the month?

A: Feb -- February first, that's -- you know.

Q: February first?

A: Yeah.

Q: And where were you born?

A: In a small town, Stopnica, Stopnica, Polish.

Q: And that's near Łódź?

A: No, it's not --

Q: It's not?

A: -- that near from Łódź, not near Łódź.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: It's in a different area in Poland, quite the different area. We -- which we moved later on, when I was already eight years old.

Q: Uh-huh, so you -- so a lot of your young years were spent in s -- in Stopnica?

A: Stopnica, yes, when I first start for school, but when I came to Łódź, I start school in Łódź.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And in the neighborhood of --

Q: And what was your father's name?

A: Pinchas.

Q: And your mother's name?

A: Bayla.

Q: And what did your father do?

A: At home he was [indecipherable] merchant -- merchant from -- my father had -- his -- his father had some farm in Poland. He was a f -- he had some land, not big land, it's about, I guess if -- it's like [indecipherable] farm.

Q: Right.

A: You know, and -- but he was sort of -- he didn't like the farm and he sort of start doing some business, whatever h-he could. Not big business, more in p -- buying from peasants, s -- a -- food -- I mean, grain or other thing, whatever -- whatever he could, whatever the peasants would sell. Something like that, you bring it to town, you sell it, and that's all.

Q: So he would buy from the farmers?

A: From the farmers.

Q: And then go into the town and sell.

A: Go into town, yes, not far.

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh.

A: Next town, where we used to it. Before I was born, we lived in -- in a little village where he -- where they had a farm.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: But this I don't remember. That was later on when my father moved from that area, is they -- is -- he told us later on that he moved from there to sell -- he moved from that farm, from a thing

like that, he says within a year, in the 20's, there was in Poland a struggle between the -- for power between the [indecipherable] became independent, the -- the radical right, and the radical - - you know, they were fighting, and there was a big turmoil that time. So he -- the peasants got wild because they were independent and they had a -- so one friend of his, a peasant came into his house and he says, Pinchas, go escape, go escape the imb -- they gonna kill you.

Q: Hm.

A: You better leave the house. So he listened to him, and he left the house, he went -- moved to Stopnica again. And that's he -- where we stayed in Stopnica til we moved to Łódź.

Q: Right. What -- what sort of a person was your father, how do you remember your father?

A: How do I remember?

Q: Mm.

A: He was a busy man, always running around and thing to do, and he tried to make a living --

Q: So he was --

A: -- which wasn't -- he wasn't a -- he was a poor man, you know, a poor as -- merchant. He -- he -- he didn't have a trade or something, you know, just a merchant.

Q: So it was difficult?

A: Difficult.

Q: Right.

A: Difficult always. And so my -- he stayed with my mother home, you know, that was the -- my brother and sister, they [indecipherable] I was the youngest.

Q: And your brother was the oldest?

A: Ba -- my brother was the oldest, my sister in the middle.

Q: And how many years older was your brother?

A: My brother was about 10 years older from me.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Yeah.

Q: There was a big difference.

A: [indecipherable] yeah.

Q: And your m -- your mother, so she was home.

A: She was home.

Q: And how do you -- how do you remember your mother?

A: My mother was very close to the kids.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Close to th -- she [indecipherable] how difficult it was to keep up the home, keep up the -- to feed us, to feed the ki -- family, she always managed to make Shabbat and things like that, everything should be in sh -- we shouldn't go hungry, we shouldn't be fed, and things like that. Very [indecipherable] very -- so devoted. Kids were really the main thing, to keep them -- keep them going, keep them fat and put them on whatever it is [indecipherable]

Q: Was it difficult because -- because it --

A: It was very difficult, you know --

Q: -- because you were poor?

A: -- the a -- th -- I know there was always no money.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Always was no money, and to -- the kids grew up a little bit. I mean, my brother and my sister, and something was a little easier, not much, but at least they could have their clothes made, or whatever they -- my brother was also tailor. He started out in -- in Stopnica, then he --

as he grew up a little older, he -- he took off, he didn't stay in this -- in the -- in tow -- in little town, he went to different towns, bigger towns, to work, to achieve something, he ca -- I don't know.

Q: Right.

A: But that's the -- that was the drive.

Q: Did he send -- did he send money back home, do you remem --

A: My -- my brother?

Q: -- your brother.

A: Well, it -- then I -- this I don't remember, I don't know these things, I -- I was too small --

Q: Right.

A: -- not to -- I didn't know it, if he did.

Q: And what was -- what i -- what is your brother's name?

A: Max.

Q: Max. And your sister?

A: Meir.

Q: Ma -- Meir?

A: Meir in Yiddish is -- later on when he grow up, he -- he changed -- he changed his name.

Q: Right.

A: Or the friends changed their name -- changed his name.

Q: Right.

A: They -- they like it, mat -- they like Max. They always go [indecipherable] all the time, you know, the younger generation went out, you know [indecipherable] and things like that, they

didn't follow the father's start -- sort of living, you know, they always just sh -- sh -- sh-shul or something like that.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: They always let -- they start -- the young one -- the young people -- the young people start to play soccer [indecipherable] football. When it comes to Shabbat, they don't want to go to shul. But h-he was the one young generation who --

Q: Who went.

A: -- went mo -- sort of modern way.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Different than the older generation.

Q: And what about you? When you were growing up, did you go to shul?

A: Well -- well, I di -- I also didn't have, you know, because I -- I didn't at -- when I have to work, so I just -- I start to work in my -- in Łódź.

Q: Yes, but before, with [indecipherable]

A: Before I start Łódź, I wasn't a big shul-goer. But --

Q: When you were in Łódź, you went to shul?

A: In Łódź, I -- when I grew up, I [indecipherable] like the teens, you know [indecipherable] and my father want me to go to shul, you know, it was Shabbat, I should come. Yeah, and I went just to please him. You know, everybody respect the parents.

Q: Right.

A: [indecipherable] harder --

Q: But you didn't wa -- you didn't want --

A: I -- I didn't want it, but I went to my -- for my father.

Q: For your father.

A: For my father, he is a -- he wanted me to come, he wants to see me, he said, well, I like to see you. So I went -- I came to shul, he saw me, so then I could le -- you know, could do whatever I wanted, but I -- I -- I know that -- I remember that I went fo-for my father, who -- cause my father wants me to come.

Q: Right.

A: And I did it for him.

Q: Were you Bar Mitzvahed?

A: Yes. I was Bar Mitzvah and then -- not a big Bar Mitzvah --

Q: Right.

A: -- was just simple.

Q: So you could read Hebrew and understand it?

A: I could read Hebrew, understand not so much.

Q: Not so much.

A: No.

Q: And what about your father?

A: My father?

Q: Yeah, could he read it?

A: He could read the Hebrew, everybody could read the Hebrew [indecipherable] I think, what he understood?

Q: Yes.

A: I also doubt if he -- some of them -- you know, as we learned in the [indecipherable] we learned to translate the -- the Chumash.

Q: And your -- your moth -- was this an Orthodox synagogue?

A: There was no -- a different [indecipherable]

Q: There wasn't anything different. So, was your mother and sister upstairs, or did they not go?

Do you remember?

A: Well, they -- they went sometime. My mother went sometimes to -- I remember she got [indecipherable] good clothes --

Q: And did she light candles on Friday night?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: She did.

A: Sure, sure.

Q: So --

A: My mother was religious [indecipherable]

Q: She was religious?

A: Yeah.

Q: And you were kosher?

A: Oh definitely, sure.

Q: And did you celebrate all the holidays?

A: Celebrate the holidays. The -- the thing is, holidays was not because we were religious or not, it was a day like Saturday, nobody worked. It's -- it was a day off, it was a day --

Q: Right.

A: A Saturday like everybody, both religious or non-religious --

Q: They took off.

A: -- so -- you know, Saturday was a day free, you can go out, free from work, you go out and whatever you want to do. But nobody worked Saturdays, is a -- it was a free day.

Q: So did you grow up in Stopnica in -- in a mainly Jewish environment?

A: Yes.

Q: Yes. And the same in Łódź?

A: In Łódź we moved in a neighborhood also -- predom -- predominantly Jewish --

Q: Jewish.

A: -- neighborhood. It was a -- in Łódź we -- they -- we moved to a neighborhood, a Jewish neighborhood which is called Balut.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It's the old p -- old part of the city, and there were a lot of temples, shuls --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- stebuls. You know, don't have to go far to the shul. And there were big shuls, what we -- I -
- we went to the small stebul in -- in Austrid. And it was easy, not too far --

Q: Right.

A: -- a walk too far.

Q: Was life a little easier for you in Łódź, or did your father have to work as hard?

[indecipherable]

A: Well, I went to school.

Q: You went to school, uh-huh.

A: And [indecipherable] still school as -- and my father had some work, but not too much, he couldn't do a lot. He didn't know any trades, he didn't have any -- but a ki -- the -- the sist -- my

sister and brother, they were -- they really were the earners, they -- they worked, and they supported the house.

Q: I -- they did. Did they live with you, or did they --

A: They lived with us for -- til -- til my brother got married later on when my father passed away already.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: My father passed away in -- after [indecipherable] little bit -- between [indecipherable] or something like that.

Q: So --

A: In 50 -- in the 30's.

Q: In the 30's. So befo -- not long before the war?

A: Yeah, before the war.

Q: Before the war.

A: Yeah. I was growing up -- in the 30's, my -- there was a recession in the -- in the 30's, same like here, but the -- the recession in Poland was just very bad. And my sister lost her job, she couldn't work because the if -- there was no work, and my brother -- and my brother also didn't work. And very -- it was very bad. And as we were sitting at a table, around a table, my brother had a Yiddish newspaper, daily -- the yi -- Jewish daily, and there was a ad on the pape -- in the paper that they are looking for a y -- they are looking for a young man, you could make right away money, not difficult work. So they show it to me, you know, that I -- that I understood what they mean.

Q: Go to work, yes?

A: They said this -- the ad said, paid right away. In other words, you do it -- worked whatever this, you're getting paid.

Q: And you get paid.

A: And I went over, and I got the job. I got five zlotys a week. And I remember I have this gentleman who I worked for, he is a small shop with a -- he made the house slippers -- house slippers, and about four people. On Friday he gave me the five zlotys. Is -- was a big silver coin, and I took that silver coin and gave it to my mother.

Q: Yeah.

A: So that's why sh-she made the Shabbat, she made everything f -- it was the only --

Q: So that's -- that was great.

A: -- the only source of --

Q: You were the only source of income.

A: -- of income.

Q: And you were how old? 15?

A: How? I was 13.

Q: 13.

A: Yeah.

Q: So you're still going to school?

A: I quit school.

Q: You quit school now.

A: But a -- then, after I worked for about four -- some four or five months --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- I got a summons -- a summons from the government there that I have to go to school, otherwise they [indecipherable] force me.

Q: Right.

A: So I went back to school fi -- for another year, til 14 years there, compulsory school education.

Q: Right. Tell me, do you remember you father dying? Was he ill?

A: Yes, he was ill. I think he was ca -- had cancer.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And I don't know, he was ailing a long time.

Q: So that must have been difficult for you.

A: Yeah. It wasn't easy. At that time already I wasn't in school, I was already in the [indecipherable] process of -- of learning this trade.

Q: Right.

A: And my brother was still home, my sister was home.

Q: And you had a funeral?

A: Pardon?

Q: You had a funeral for him?

A: Yes, had a funeral, yeah [indecipherable] he ail -- he did -- was ill for a long time.

Q: He was?

A: Yeah.

Q: So he couldn't work for a long time.

A: Wha -- I could -- I don't know [indecipherable] I don't know what is -- had this, either the lungs or the stomach cancer or something.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: But he start ailing, I remember not -- wasn't sure what it is, til -- took a long time til the doctors diagnosed. They were -- they didn't have all these kind of modern --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- ways of instruments and tests was -- to know right away. It took a long time til they diagnosed him cancer [indecipherable]. So, but I s-start already -- time I worked already. I went to work as a -- to -- to -- tailoring.

Q: Did you like school?

A: Did I like school?

Q: Yeah.

A: I liked it later on, not in the beginning when I was a little kids.

Q: You didn't --

A: Not really, because the Polish school was a little bit difficult, with anti-sem -- anti-Semitic kids, and things like that, was not -- not a warm kind of [indecipherable] but -- and you know, it -
- I loved school. I loved the school in New York -- in New York, in my -- in Łódź.

Q: In Łódź.

A: In Łódź I loved the school, and I finished up til 14 years --

Q: Right.

A: -- whatever it is, and --

Q: Tell me about th-the -- you -- you experienced anti-Semitism in Stopnica?

A: Oh yeah, yes, in the school --

Q: In school.

A: -- and the kids.

Q: What were they doing --

A: I mean, I was mixed with [indecipherable] with kids when I no -- there were anti-Semitic kids, yeah.

Q: Did they beat you up, or not? They say things?

A: In Łódź? In --

Q: Stopnica.

A: Stopnica?

Q: Right.

A: I n -- not so much because we weren't so close, we lived in -- with Jewish neighbors and things like that, I didn't have -- but in Łódź as a young kid, I was beaten up few times.

Q: You were?

A: In Łódź, when we moved to Łódź, I was here still going to school. We were not in a [indecipherable] in a different neighborhood, I was beaten up few times, a -- anti-Semitic kids. Well, we took it as, ah, there's no way out, there's no different -- you have no choice, you know, you have to live, you have to stay there.

Q: Did you fight back?

A: Did I fight back?

Q: Yeah.

A: No, I -- I think I wasn't much of a fighter, you know.

Q: Right.

A: And besides that, I was [indecipherable] you can see me now, I was still small, even though when I was 12 - 13 -- when -- 13 years old, I was still skinny, little kid.

Q: Right.

A: And there's big guys, I di -- I couldn't fight them back when the big guys attacked me. But, we went wo -- we kept quiet and that's all.

Q: Right. But you also said that it was better for you in -- in -- in Łódz. It was -- it was easier to be there in some way.

A: In what way?

Q: In Łódz.

A: Better in what? Economically?

Q: No, economically, clearly it wasn't better.

A: It was better in Łódz.

Q: Was it [indecipherable] better?

A: It was stable, I [indecipherable] when my brother and my sister worked, it was --

Q: It was better.

A: -- kind of better.

Q: Yeah.

A: It was sort of a incoming -- the money every day, somet -- oh, every day, every week.

Q: Right.

A: But when we -- the recession came, you know, when they stop working, it was bad.

Q: Right, that was very hard, yeah.

A: It was really bad. Then I had to go to work. And til then -- they slowly went back to work, so it was sort of -- we could make it. We didn't live luxuriously.

Q: Right.

A: We had a little -- a little apartment and -- and we didn't have that many -- that expenses -- expenses to take care.

Q: Your mo -- I assume your mother didn't work.

A: No.

Q: No. So she stayed at home.

A: Stayed at home, she took care of the house, of the -- she cooked, she -- she was always dinner, th -- always foods prepared --

Q: Right.

A: -- no matter what, she made it -- she made food for us, for the kids.

Q: Was she a good cook?

A: What?

Q: Was she a good cook? Do you remember?

A: I couldn't tell that time good or bad, I just -- it's just a -- just a -- to be fed, I'm -- it was good --

Q: Right.

A: -- you know, to be at home and to have your dinner or whatever it is. As I remember exactly what it -- we weren't choosy.

Q: No.

A: We weren't choosy, no.

Q: And you all ate together, I assume? Or not?

A: Not later -- lately -- later on when my brother worked, he couldn't come home. Yeah, he came home in the evening, and it was [indecipherable] weren't si-si-sitting down in a -- all together. Even ever -- whoever comes home ate, and that's all.

Q: And that's it.

A: We came home noontime, or later, it's okay.

Q: Was your big meal usually at noon?

A: The big meal is --

Q: The big meal.

A: -- was in ga -- or -- it wasn't in the evening, was noontime.

Q: It was noontime.

A: Yeah.

Q: Right.

A: The big meal.

Q: And did you come home from school when you were going to school, and then you would eat lunch at home and then go back to school, or not?

A: No, we went -- can't [indecipherable] remember [indecipherable] exactly. I didn't eat, I came home from school at two, three o'clock -- two o'clock or something like that.

Q: So did you eat at school?

A: I took along with me --

Q: You did?

A: --something.

Q: Something to eat.

A: It's not -- something to eat --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- not like a meal.

Q: Right.

A: But I think we ate later on when I came out. When I came home from school -- we didn't care for big ceremonies.

Q: Right, right.

A: You -- you ate, and you op --

Q: So it was simple.

A: -- open the ra -- the school was -- I loved this school, loved the -- the -- we had good friends.

We spend time together with friends, new friends and [indecipherable]. It was good.

Q: [indecipherable] in Łódź, it was n -- new friends, yes.

A: Łódź, yeah, new friends, new people. I -- I was sort of integrated very fast --

Q: Right.

A: -- with the -- with the kids in Łódź.

Q: Whe -- when you started working, when you were 13 and 14 years old --

A: 14 years old.

Q: -- did --

A: I start -- I sort of made a contract -- made -- I made -- I don't know, I [indecipherable] had to -
- I didn't have any better way -- different ways to go --

Q: Right.

A: -- better -- better places. So I stayed there for three years.

Q: What, making the -- the slippers?

A: No, no, that's --

Q: No, that was just a few months, right?

A: -- that was -- that was about six months or something like that.

Q: Right, and then did you --

A: But later on when I worked with -- for a tailor --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- I had to work there like an apprentice for three years. So I went to work every day.

Whatever I did, it wasn't teach -- it wasn't teaching me a trade. Was all kind of work, even the babysitting, everything.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. The sweeping, cleaning, you know, I -- I was a -- you know, all the thing [indecipherable] and you know, but not the -- not a teaching, and not the --

Q: So when did you learn to be a tailor?

A: That's -- you had to be it yourself, you have to loo -- something --

Q: You just have to look and see --

A: Look and see -- a little bit you had start to work, you had to start working while he need -- the boss needs his work --

Q: Right.

A: -- you know, which I could do it. So he told me certain things to do it and I been doing it, which he -- he had a need for that and he -- in other words, it wasn't a waste of time.

Q: Right.

A: But not all day long sometimes, but yeah, I did work also, I worked. But not in a sense of teaching me further, his items which I could do for him -- for the -- for the time to work --

Q: Right.

A: -- to do --

Q: Right.

A: -- some practical -- I did work [indecipherable] work, you know, the sewing work.

Q: The sewing -- the sewing, but it was --

A: Sewing.

Q: -- a piece -- a piece of something.

A: Yeah, something, easy stuff which I kept doing, I didn't go further.

Q: Right, right.

A: Kept doing the same thing because that was the part I could do it, and that's what I could use it for --

Q: Right.

A: -- I could use. Not the [indecipherable] advanced things, you know?

Q: Right. But they had advanced tailors there, right?

A: Oh, they had several, just -- I watched a little bit here and there, but I really didn't do it a lot --

Q: Right.

A: -- until I -- when I wa -- finish in two years, I start out and I saw how mu -- how little I learned, when I start looking for a job.

Q: Right.

A: I -- I just realized I didn't learn enou -- a lo-lot, but I didn't complain. [indecipherable] very little work here or there.

Q: How much were you making?

A: Very little in the man's tailoring, that's what it is, the man's tailoring wasn't paid because -- especially young people, and I didn't know the trade yet. But the -- but a little later on after finish it three years and things like that, it's a -- a -- I had an ad -- I saw the ad in a -- for ladies' tailor --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- and now that time ladies start wearing blazers like men's jackets.

Q: Right.

A: And they were looking for men with the experience of men's tailoring in the ladies' trade.

And I got pe -- paid -- bet -- better paid.

Q: Right.

A: So I went to the [indecipherable] to the ladies' tailors.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Went into the ladies' tailors and I did better, and I was happier because is -- I worked

[indecipherable] feel I -- I fe -- I felt I earned my -- the -- the money --

Q: Your [indecipherable]. Right.

A: -- which I made [indecipherable]

Q: We have to stop the tape and change it. I'm sorry to interrupt.

A: That's okay.

End of Tape One

Beginning Tape Two

Q: Henry, we didn't name your sister. What is your sister's name?

A: Cela.

Q: Cela.

A: Cela, C - l - a -- l - e - a.

Q: Cela? Right.

A: C - e - l - a.

Q: L - a. And she was the middle sister.

A: Yeah.

Q: And how much older than you was she, do you think?

A: I don't know exactly, about --

Q: Three years, four years, or something --

A: I -- I can't tell you. She was in the middle. She was between my brother, who was about 10 years older --

Q: Than yourself, right.

A: She was in the middle.

Q: Now I understand that you were actually a twin, but that your brother didn't s -- was it a -- was it a brother?

A: It was a brother, but I just know f-f -- what my father or my mother used to tell me, but probably that my -- my twin brother [indecipherable] didn't survive for a long time, he just died at birth, or died after birth, I -- this I don't know.

Q: Right, right.

A: But soon after birth or something like that.

Q: Right. Was -- were you involved in any political groups as you were growing up, or youth groups?

A: Yeah.

Q: And what were -- what were they?

A: I was involved later on when we came to Łódź.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: That was the Labor Zionist m-movement, the youth group of the Labor Zionist. In other words, the [indecipherable]

Q: How would you characterize that group, for people who don't know? Labor Zionist, in terms of the political spectrum, were they on the left, were they on the right, were they in the middle?

A: Well, it was in the middle. Ca -- it's in the middle. It was sort of f -- more in a [indecipherable] Socialist Labor Zionist, you know, there were different -- different groups in the Zionist -- in the Zionist area. There were extreme right and extreme left, but this -- but not the zion -- in the Zionist also, the same thing. All -- this was sort of more si -- like Labor Socialist.

Q: Uh-huh. And were you interested at that point in going to Israel as a Zionist?

A: Well, that was --

Q: Or Palestine?

A: -- a youth -- a youth, a very youth, and I think, as I can remember, we very little could assess the -- do -- what to do and wa -- how to go. It was just -- the school was [indecipherable] there, and we were alone like a youth organization.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: We didn't --

Q: So it wasn't very politically oriented?

A: -- we -- we did not pay much attention to the political side.

Q: Right.

A: It was a youth -- was a youth organization, that's all, you [indecipherable] or you spend time singing and dancing and things like that.

Q: Were you dating as a teenager? You were going out, or not?

A: N -- n -- we just -- we were young. There were girls [indecipherable] some of them, but I wasn't -- was young kid still, you know?

Q: Right.

A: And then I was involved with, when I start working, I went really sort of more involved with work, with the -- with earning something --

Q: Right.

A: -- because we need at home, and I didn't go too much to the youth activities.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So that was very -- when I start working for the ladies' tailor --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- that time I made my money. It's better than the men's, and I worked for a man who just opened that place, and to my -- he'll -- m-my lis -- I looked at them and I saw them -- I saw him that he was not -- he was not the mechanic or the expert, for a -- he want to have a shop -- a business, a shop, you know, but he wasn't really a mechanic. And -- and then start working for him, and these jackets he made, the me -- ladies' jackets, he had problems with. He couldn't fit, he couldn't see -- so he -- he -- he sort of made me work through the fitting room, which was sort of [indecipherable] working out, and to take a look when he fits and see what's wrong with his -- what his problem -- where the problem is, and later I could fix it. Was -- what he -- he couldn't

take care of that. He couldn't -- he was not in -- trained, or he wasn't working with that -- with the ladies' jackets. So the --

Q: But you also weren't trained.

A: What?

Q: You also weren't trained, but you knew some --

A: Yeah, but -- but I -- but I sort of picked up the -- the -- the sort of technique a little bit better, even though I was just been listening to people talking in the -- what the [indecipherable] talking in the man [indecipherable] I was always listening, and I --

A: Right, right.

A: -- picked up what they been talking.

Q: Right.

A: But I -- so I could sort of do it, try it myself, you see, and I helped [indecipherable] of holding onto that type of -- that type of work.

Q: Right.

A: We worked it for a couple years, and he was -- I could see he is not -- and he didn't do it financially good. He financially is -- he -- he was in debts, because he -- he went very g -- he thought it's gonna -- he opened a very nice place, a nice salon, and [indecipherable] will get customers, but that wasn't the answer, the answer was he had to go be a -- be a mechanic and do something and then you have the [indecipherable] and the -- but he was located a good location, so people -- he had a sign in, and advertise, in other words. And one time a lady came and she had a page from a magazine, a coat. A -- a of -- style of -- a style -- a coat was in the magazine and she picked out a page, and she brought, she wants this coat. And came in after she walked out and she [indecipherable] he said, I don't know, what can I d -- she wants this coat and I don't

know what to do with that. So he shows to me, what do you say? Well, say well, we'll -- we'll -- I'll try -- I'll try to do it. And I took that piece of fabric, I don't know myself without -- I just -- what I thought it's right, I don't know if I did the right thing, and this wasn't right, but I -- it wasn't the right approach, but the right thing what I thought is how to make that --

Q: Right.

A: -- p-pattern, a drawing on that, [indecipherable] to cut. It was a complicated coat with different -- not invo -- not the separate sleeves, it's so -- it was a very complicated co-coat. And I took the fabric, put it on the cutting table and start marking on the cloth whatever -- according to measurements. And I cut it, and sort of put it together, whatever. And she came for a fitting, she tried on this coat, she says, oh, your coat is just like -- like she wants it, she had -- she -- how could you do -- how did you do it? I says, I don't myself how that -- th-that's what I started, that's -- I don't know, it came from inside to my -- from my -- I don't -- I didn't, I'm sorry, but I didn't see anybody cutting this way, it's the wrong way, a wrong approach, but it --

Q: It worked.

A: -- it came out right.

Q: Right.

A: I don't know. So --

Q: So did he start giving you more work because you were successful?

A: Well, he didn't have so much -- so many customers --

Q: I see.

A: -- so many. But he was happy that this was -- he could -- he could satisfy the customer.

Q: Right.

A: And the customer [indecipherable] was, she would -- she would go somewhere else, but she [indecipherable]. Well, that was short -- about a year before the war, this was close to the war.

Q: It was close to the war.

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. Tell me Henry, di -- were you very aware of what was going on in Germany, starting in '33? You were 16 at the time.

A: Yeah, yeah, we were aware.

Q: You were aware?

A: Yeah.

Q: Were you concerned?

A: Oh yeah, we were concerned, but we never talk about the [indecipherable], I mean, the developments. We never thought it's going to start a war over there. We knew that the German -- the -- the situation in Germany, Jewish situation, because the -- the Nazis expelled all Jewish non-citizens, those who came from Poland.

Q: Poland, right.

A: And had no s -- German citizenship, they expelled ex -- to Poland in I th -- I remember then that the -- our community, Jewish community tried to help these people who came out from there, and they set up a sort of a camp, and I remember we collect some, you know, money or something to s -- support this camp, or whatever. I remember this very well, the people [indecipherable] camp, they stayed -- stay in the -- in the camp, they had nowhere to go, they were expelled from Germany. This how when we were [indecipherable] it was already [indecipherable] already -- already a -- a grown man, and I know what's going on, and we sort of paid attention to what's going on in --

Q: Mm-hm. Did things get bad --

A: -- in concern, but we never thought of in --

Q: Of what?

A: -- that they gonna invade Poland.

Q: You didn't. Were things getting bad in Poland, also?

A: It was getting wor --

Q: Was it getting more anti-Semitic?

A: I think the influence spread to Poland, the Polish anti-Semites, and a lot of incidents, a lot of anti-je -- anti-Semitic demonstrations and Jewish also, anti-Jewish slogans and things like that.

They were more alive than before.

Q: Than before.

A: Than before, in the -- the --

Q: And did you see that in Łódź?

A: Yeah, seen it in Łódź, a real lot, cause -- although in Łódź we had [indecipherable] we had one-third of the population was German, German people who lived there from years back.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Hundreds of years. And we had Polish and Jewish, about three equal parts. And Polish anti-Semites were real active, became active with -- with boycotts, with slogans and all kind of thing. They boycott th-the Jewish business --

Q: They did?

A: -- the stores, yeah.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: The same as they did in Germany. Don't buy from Jews, you know, was this -- which, in a way they sa -- s-sort of -- was legal to --

Q: Right.

A: -- it -- like we -- they -- it was legal, they -- they could -- and there were also physical, actually, incidents which -- beating --

Q: Anything that happened to you?

A: What?

Q: Anything that happened to you at --

A: Not that time, no.

Q: Not that time.

A: I wasn't beaten or something like that --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- in -- before. And then we slowly --

Q: Do you remember the beginning of the war in September '39?

A: Sure, sure, I remember.

Q: And were you --

A: But i-it wasn't -- it -- it sort of -- sort of unexpected, yeah --

Q: Unexpected?

A: I mean, it -- the -- it -- the diplomatic activities which were going on in Berlin, London and things like that, weren't -- no one -- I mean, th -- we didn't know what -- what they been talking, was -- there were all this communication [indecipherable] that is now -- we have now the television, the newspapers. We -- we clearly didn't know the little bit [indecipherable]. We knew that the -- Hitler -- Hitler's -- that we knew the at -- Nazis -- Nazi activities in -- in -- in

Germany, how they [indecipherable] already implicated the -- the Nurembergs laws and things like that, we knew about that, and -- but nothing we could do.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: You couldn't do anything. And concerned of course, but we couldn't do a thing, and just waiting, and -- but they didn't talk about so much close of war -- that they -- the [indecipherable] is so close. All other things happen meantime, you know, the anschluss, Austria [indecipherable] a lot of things were going on.

Q: And you still didn't think it was going to happen to Poland?

A: Poland we did not -- not -- we didn't hear so much what's going -- what -- that the he -- his aims for Poland. We knew that he -- the -- the Hitler complain was a -- like the Volksdeutsche are not treated well, that sort of propaganda. And now we had the Volksdeutsche, German who lives in Poland, they were not treating -- treated well, and things like that, mistreated, or something. Ah -- what the -- it's just th -- not -- not the a-act of war. And closed to the world [indecipherable] had the idea because the Polish start to get ready, the Polish army. We saw the activities of the Polish army. And so [indecipherable] little tanks in the street, they were really sort of getting -- getting the aware, you know, what's -- maybe they knew more than we did --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- and had -- what's going on, what the demand -- what the Hitler demand is, or the Hitler demanded, and he like -- like, part of Poland, he claimed this is German territory --

Q: Right.

A: -- and Danzig -- Danzig is a frei stadt, and then he says it's a German st-sta -- city. You know, you saw that there is a lot of complaints to Poland, and -- but never -- never thought that they were so close, til --

Q: Til it happened.

A: -- til it happened.

Q: Mm-hm. Well, you left Łódź in November of 1939, is that right?

A: Yeah --

Q: After the start of the war?

A: -- [indecipherable] well, the war started -- when the war started, we had a -- is -- the bombing was right away the first day. In Łódź was bombed the first day.

Q: It was?

A: Yes. Not the center city, but the objects military -- military objects were bombed right away, right on the same morning. The panic was already getting -- but the army was sort of -- Polish army was set up at the border -- at the borders and things like -- you know, the propaganda was so the -- that the Germans wouldn't last long, they -- they didn't have -- they don't have food, they -- they starving, they starving and they -- they -- they don't -- they cannot -- they're not ready for war, the population that they talk and they -- among the people, they -- and --

Q: So the assumption was that the Germans would fall, they would not --

A: They're not going to fight, --

Q: They're not going to fight.

A: Because they're not able to fight --

Q: Right.

A: -- what they were, they -- they were in trouble with their economy and short of food, so how are they gonna -- if you're going to war, you gotta have -- you feed an army, and certainly they have no -- you can't feed an army. Well, you know, these lies were fed, I don't know, for a purpose --

Q: Right.

A: -- for what purposes, from Germany, that they're poor, they haven't -- but they have a little -- they have every -- they had everything, and we saw when they marched in, didn't see any poor army, saw a rich army with all the equipment, with all the modern thing, you know, it's not the s --

Q: Did that scare you?

A: Oh yes.

Q: The war?

A: Oh sure, yes, panic was when they [indecipherable] through, just two days later right away, there was rumors that they marching into Polish -- they report to the front, and they're going further, they going into inland Poland, they marching. Polish army was really beaten.

Q: [indecipherable]

A: They couldn't -- couldn't defend borders, couldn't defend. They were bombed, and they -- and a few days later they was really getting close, they -- to the ma -- [indecipherable] they said they have to leave. The radio, Polish radio gave [indecipherable] that the [indecipherable] is that the Germans are close to Łódź, the armies are close -- closing into Łódź. And there was a big panic. In the middle of the night sort of, they start moving -- people start mo -- mov -- running out from the city.

Q: And -- and going east.

A: Going ea -- going east.

Q: [indecipherable]

A: People said, where you going? Well, the radio said we go to wa -- sub -- the army is going defend wars -- Warsaw. In other words, Warsaw is going to be the point where the Germans

would stop, in other words, the whole army are going to Warsaw to defend Warsaw. Was o -- we -- everybody was dri-driving towards Warsaw. And we all, on foot, we left the same night.

Q: So that's when you left?

A: What? No, no, that -- just left, because of the in-incoming armies, I left with just myself, you know, with nothing but we -- people left with their families --

Q: Right.

A: -- and some people with themself, the man at least, the man for -- some of them whole families. And there were people who -- you know, wall to wall people on their way out. And we lived just on the street where you -- it's going out from Łódź to wa -- towards Warsaw.

Q: Right.

A: Whole street were full, from sidewalk to side -- from one [indecipherable] to the other, so thick, everybody ou -- went out. And I went standing in stree -- couldn't stand still, you see, everybody's running. So we were aga -- getting whatever it is to put on, and they says, go, cause everybody's going, the men especially.

Q: And where was your brother? Where was Max?

A: My brother was already by then married and he lived in a different area.

Q: So you didn't know what was going --

A: I didn't know --

Q: No.

A: -- I didn't get in touch with him.

Q: Did you want your mother to go?

A: Huh?

Q: Did you want --

A: My mother want me to go.

Q: Wanted you to go, do -- did you want her to come? Or you didn't think that way --

A: My mother and sister, no.

Q: No.

A: They don't -- I figured well, women were -- the men were really panic -- you know, they couldn't, you know, take them with -- so we went out, and --

Q: And you're 22 years old now.

A: What?

Q: In 1939 you're 22 years old.

A: Yes.

Q: So you've been working for a number of years.

A: Yeah.

Q: You go alone.

A: Yeah.

Q: And where are you going? You're just following everybody?

A: Just follow the crowd.

Q: You don't know?

A: No. We're going to Warsaw. You know, we me -- it's a long way --

Q: Right.

A: -- from Łódź to Warsaw. It is a long way. And as we left town, we left Łódź, the outskirts, it start to [indecipherable] you know, a little morning [indecipherable] sun came out, you know, a little bit lighter, the --

Q: Yes.

A: -- daylight came. The daylight -- the Germans' planes flew over the mass people and spray them with -- so we all spread out into the ditches and to wherever it is and th-they wouldn't let it go, and it was all day long they were flying over our heads and sprayed with bullets.

Q: So a lot of people died?

A: Oh yeah. I don't -- not near me, but people died, yeah, because the -- so it was the evening, we figured we'll go in the evening, at night we could not go further.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: We went to the next town and this -- this town was bombed already and full of fire, we couldn't get through.

Q: And what town was that?

A: Brzezín. It's the next town from po -- a small town. We had the -- couldn't get through, we tried to go all around this town to go past this town. We managed to get past this town and go further a few miles at night and then the next day the planes start again overheads. And some fellow, fr-fr -- he met some on the ground from some -- either it was parachutes came, Germans dropped -- if they dropped the paratroopers or something like that, they opened fire from the ground, not on the planes. And so we figured that the German army already in front of us, you know, cause I mean, we were -- so, there was no way to go further and we can't get up [indecipherable]. So we leave towards the [indecipherable], most of the people went back to Łódź.

Q: Really?

A: You couldn't go.

Q: And you?

A: I went also back to it.

Q: You went back?

A: Yeah.

Q: So that was in September of '39, right after --

A: Yeah, oh sure, in September, right in the beginning, yeah [indecipherable]

Q: So you went back home.

A: -- back home. We waited [indecipherable] until the day [indecipherable] couple days, I think, they were the first shelling -- got [indecipherable] shells over the city, and you know, like a sign, or I don't know what kind of sign this was, and then they marched in.

Q: And what was that like?

A: The German [indecipherable]

Q: Yeah.

A: A -- a strong army, unbeatable army.

Q: So they were frightening?

A: Oh yeah. They frightened and well, this was the army for the people didn't -- they didn't stop, they kept going.

Q: So you didn't stay there?

A: Well, not us, the others ca -- the others stayed.

Q: [indecipherable] right.

A: The other -- behind them, they had the others, those who occupied, but Łódź -- Łódź had one [indecipherable] German population and they were sort of called folks -- Volksdeutsche.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And to them it was a big, big su -- big success that they -- they -- they had a big -- the city was renamed Litzmannstadt, the German -- German hero from wars -- first World War, and it was included into the Reich, Łódź.

Q: Right.

A: And then the trouble started [indecipherable] that time, they are really going in houses and grabbing people to work. I -- I went to my place where I worked, but a couple -- once okay, twice I couldn't go farther. You know, at that time I said, I'm not going. Every time I went to work, the nat -- [indecipherable] Nazis came to Łódź. First of all they had their own. And secondly there wasn't any [indecipherable] was a German city, and like all Nazis were full of either Nazi -- all kind of formations civi -- civilians and go -- uniform. Whenever I walked to the street, and tried to go to work, I was beaten [indecipherable] direct to work, they're being -- taking over offices and things [indecipherable] they want to clean up, so they grab people, Jewish people to work, and they kept us for the whole day. We worked, we worked. So I got -- I can't -- it does no use to go to work, cause you -- you don't go anything, you know, you just get yourself in trouble. So I didn't go to work.

Q: Okay. We have -- excuse me, Henry, we have to change the tape.

End of Tape Two

Beginning Tape Three

Q: All right, so the Germans come in.

A: Yeah.

Q: And they're so --

A: Occupied.

Q: -- cause -- occupied.

A: Occupied.

Q: Right.

A: Renamed that city Litzmannstadt.

Q: And doesn't a ghetto start pretty quickly?

A: Well, they have been talking, so right away -- talking about the ghetto, talki -- talking about. I mean it -- it -- I think it take -- took a little -- some times, and I wasn't that long over there. The -
- as -- I couldn't go to work.

Q: Right.

A: I couldn't do any -- I couldn't go to work because I was beaten up few times in go to work, so I s -- gave up to go to work, because -- my friend -- I have a -- I had a friend in the neighborhood, Tanchim, my friend.

Q: Tanuchim?

A: Tanchim, yes. And he wa -- he made it to Warsaw when -- where -- with -- with the crowd that time.

Q: That first time?

A: I-In the first time, but when Warsaw was holding on for two weeks and then they had to give up, so he came back to Łódź. He lived in our neighborhood and we talking -- we met -- you

know, we been going on and talk. The meanwhile we listen to the sort of kind of rumors, the news. Not the rumors, but the news was that German -- that England and France, they are helping Poland -- gonna help Poland.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: They gon -- they declared war [indecipherable] Germany there, because they were involved with the previous agreement of friends -- friendship or something --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- and they had to come to help Poland. And then we became in a little bit hopeful, became that this war isn't going to last long. But I -- I myself, you know, remember that Great Britain was a big power.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The -- the -- they -- the world big power, world power, and France is a big power, they too will -- will attack them from the other side, from the -- the German will have to pull back or something, or otherwise they'll be in -- in trouble.

Q: So that's what you felt?

A: That's what I thought.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: That's -- that's what I thought. Little we knew how -- how weak they were and how little they could do.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: But we didn't know that they really not capable, I thought they were really strong. And we thought this cannot last long the war, cause with the help of England and o -- and France, they will not go further. Where we were occupation took place, they occupied all Poland, and

[indecipherable] is sort of coming with the idea we should go east because the war, she says a lot of people went to the east [indecipherable] Russia, took half of part of Poland, and so you figured for the time being, til they -- til they have to pull out -- back, we will stay in -- and my mother there agreed with me, she says, go. Of course, you know, it's -- it's -- there's no other way, there's no -- there's no solution here now. Pretty soon the [indecipherable] be such a help that pretty soon the -- the situation will change, since France and England got the -- stepped into the war. So we got -- I didn't take lot equipment, whatever you could put on, two pair of pants, and things like th -- th-the underwears, we -- everything you could put on, you don't take luggage or something.

Q: Right, right.

A: And Tanchim and myself, we took --

Q: Was it -- I-let me ask you something. Was that a difficult --

A: What?

Q: Was that difficult to do, to leave your mother and your sister?

A: Is what?

Q: Was it difficult, that day?

A: Was it difficult? It was a little -- it -- I think it was a sort of general kind of -- a lot of people were doing the same, so you -- you don't question it too much, and you figured this -- it's a temporary thing, or something like that. Because I couldn't go to work --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- you couldn't help them, and they didn't work, because of the -- so, whatever it is, my sister and my mother stayed home. And I took off with Tanchim. I made the trip to go to the -- to the -- to Malkinia. Malkinia was the last stop to the Russian border.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: At the Russian border --

Q: Right.

A: -- that was the only part of dry land where the -- the other parts of the border had the boke -- that river, and to go to the river is more difficult, so people took the easy way, is go to the dry land, to the ri -- there's a no man's land, they said -- I mean, I didn't -- we didn't know then what's -- what's going on over there, because we went to -- we couldn't go direct, we had to go to Warsaw.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And take another train. We couldn't ride the train --

Q: So first you went to --

A: -- Jews couldn't ride the train, we had already then, by then, the -- the yellow lata, the lel -- yellow patch. You di --

Q: You did already?

A: Oh, we did already wear -- that was right away fr -- right from the first day, we had to wear the yellow p -- the yellow patch, yellow lata, and [indecipherable] we took off the latas, the --

Q: You took them off?

A: Took them off, because Jews were not allowed to ride on the train and we couldn't get tickets, so could recognize us Jewish, so Tanchim's girlfriend, a girl was so different, she put on the scarf, and the thing what -- ah. She went over in the -- bought -- bought two tickets for us, and we got a train to Warsaw. So the train was at night, th-the right -- you know, it was good because it was dark. Whenever the cont -- the German control came up on -- in the car, there were a lot of people, we sort of pushed ourselves into the -- in the toilets while they were checking passports,

pa -- checking the I.D.'s or something, the German patrols, we were in the -- in the toilets, a-and then we came out. Anyhow, he made it --

Q: Did your I.D.'s have a J in it? Did they know that -- they knew you were Jewish from your I.D.?

A: They knew, they -- yes.

Q: There was a --

A: Jude -- J -- Jude.

Q: Jude, there was, yeah.

A: Then we got to Warsaw. I had a distant cousin and we stayed overnight over there. And Warsaw was a different -- it wasn't the Third Reich, it was the Polish government, the Polish police and things like that, and people were not that -- sort of under the impression -- under the same -- it wasn't the same kind of government, it -- it -- temporary. They sort of -- there were a lot of bla -- black marketing and people -- people were running around, and my cousin -- s -- I stayed with my cousin overnight one day -- overnight. The next day we took the train to Malkinia, cause there was a direct train. And that was a lot of -- there were a lot of Jewish people in the train because everybody was going to the border, to the Ru-Russian border.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And the -- at the -- at the end of the Malkinia, the train stopped and we -- everybody -- they said, everybody out, because that's the last stop. So, we can't stay on the train. So everybody has to leave and you couldn't leave because there was rows of S.S., both sides, and you cou -- they wouldn't let you go no place til the train pulls out, and they li-lined up everybody, all these people in -- in -- in a line -- in lines, and marched away. And took us into a -- half a mile maybe, to this in -- their place -- their place, I don't know, a place, some place. It was a courtyard, big

yard -- big courtyard and they put us in -- into this courtyard and S.S. guy -- S -- S.S. guys around us, you know, marching back and forth round the people and they all gave us orders. First they said -- put up our hands in the air. We started in the morning, we stay there all day long. We didn't know ma -- S.S. what's going on, what this -- kind of game this is. Towards the evening, about -- I guess what [indecipherable] about four o'clock in the evening, in -- towards the evening, I didn't even know when they start taking in people into the -- they're all around w-were barracks, small barracks in the courtyard. And when I di -- all people who mar -- is -- were taken, so now our time is to go into this separate room that -- that lead us -- they let us come to the end - - toward the end of this place, there's a bar -- a barrack, a wooden barrack and we going into this -- to go into this place. I don't know -- I didn't know what -- what's for, everybody in. As we got into this barrack, the hall -- the first hall is s -- low tables like that, a lot of tables, low like this, about 10 people at each table, hours we have to stand around, and here comes the S.S. man with the worker here, the man, he says, give up everything what you have, all the valuables and money. Put this on the table. He says, those who wouldn't, and you have hidden someplace, we'll find it. You'll get shot. You'll be shot. And that's all. Well, there were some people there, there were some people not [indecipherable] but most people, they put out everything, watches, what -- everything, jewelry, yeah, whatever. I didn't have mut -- money, I had one 50 zlotys my mother gave me, says, you need it, have something, it's not much of money. So I had sewed it in -- in a -- in a place in the coat --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- which, I mean, if you look good, if you try to, you maybe -- but it's a little paper money, and they're not going to y -- after they cleaned up the tables, whatever they have, and now you're going to check to con -- we'll see if you didn't hide it, we gon -- to search you.

Q: Right.

A: There was another table, and -- a big one, and an S.S. man to each table. He says come over, and I -- I didn't move so fast, he had a cane with a round handle. He took his cane with the -- pulled me with the --

Q: The hook?

A: -- the neck -- no, the candle he put -- the cane put as my -- around my neck and pulled me over to his -- to hi -- closer, that I wasn't close enough, to search me. And he [indecipherable] says, open your coat. I open my coat, I had a good coat on, you know, I made it for myself.

Q: Right.

A: And I had a good shirt on, and another pair of pants, and another -- I been dressed up okay [indecipherable]. So he tried to -- he says to me, where did you hide the money? I says, I have no money. A watch? No, I don't wear watches. So he didn't think long, he looked at me, and he took that cane and he gave me over -- hit me over twice, over my head, and blood started, came down my face, and I was [indecipherable] and I stand s-stiff, and I don't move. I -- he says, now you gonna give me the money, or gonna gi -- you gonna get the other -- you gonna get again the same thing. I said, I don't have money. He says to me, [indecipherable] you was tailor, where did you hide the money? You know, I did not tell him I'm a tailor, but he says, you were a tailor, you know, you -- where did you hide the money? I says, I didn't hide it, I don't have it. He gave me another hit and go. And as -- and he gave me -- and had to go out. On the way out everybody was -- those who were checked were lined up to go out. At the way out on this -- there was a sole of - - sort of a walk, and the both sides were S.S. people with sticks, or pipes, or whatever -- whatever you had in the hand, and you have to go through and they hit you. So I didn't have nothing, I put my hands over my head, you know, you just protect -- I had already hit my -- over

the head, so I put -- protect my head and I s -- kept running and they been hitting both sides.

Finally we got out. He let us go out, we came in into the no man's land, the no man's land between the Soviets and the German. There were so many people, masses of people, women and children. And the Russian guard wouldn't let through.

Q: Wouldn't let anybody through?

A: No. One [indecipherable] us through and then people with kids come and beg, and n-nothing helps, nobody went through, nobody can do, oh, wa -- they say we have to ask -- we have to formally ask for permission and we have to return then, if you get the permission, then you -- if you get a permit, we'll let you through. So days -- there were 14 days on that cold winter November days, and snow and rain. So the only thing we had, some peddlers have bread to sell, so there was some bread and [indecipherable]. That's all we could get. And day by day we talked to [indecipherable]. On the 14th day we saw some, you know, [indecipherable] in the morning. It was a nice morning and the -- wasn't snowing and raining. We saw in the distance that some people s -- go through, and they sort of disappear, they go into the woods. On the other side were wooded areas where the Russian guards were there. So I said, maybe that is the good way. So we thought this is probably smugglers, which they know and -- where to -- where there is a better passage.

Q: Right.

A: So we did follow them, we went through the border, and nothing, nobody check. I mean, no guards or nothing, you know, cause they knew whether it -- it was bribe somebody or something, I don't know, the smugglers maybe they have a way of bribing guards or whatever. We didn't see any guards and we went toward the [indecipherable] and --

Q: Did you know where you were going? Did you -- I mean, did you have a destination? You weren't sure?

A: No.

Q: You just wanted to get to the Russian side.

A: Yeah. Well, the next town we know is Bialystok.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The big town. But this was a small town we came over to, Bora, and in a few kilmatersa -- ki -- kilometers like that, there was a s-station, the train station, we took tr -- we took the train and we came to Bialystok, which wasn't far.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Bialystok was a town wall -- wall to wall refugees, people from the other side, every [indecipherable] full of people.

Q: Really?

A: Full. You couldn't go into a house if you -- if you wanted to go ask for a cu -- for a drink of -- cup of water, or a glass of water, they wouldn't let you in the house. They put -- they put -- they got water out to you, a glass of water, they gave you a glass of water and that's it. Or a cup of water. This -- you know, they were afraid to let somebody in the house. They didn't know who it is, and we looked poor, something like that.

Q: Right.

A: They looked -- we looked, you know, bloody and -- and I-I mean there's muddy, and -- muddy and bloody and so everything [indecipherable]. So we walked around and we met some people on the street, you know [indecipherable] some people we knew from Łódź, or -- nobody had these -- a solution of what to do. They were registering -- the government registered people

to go to coal mines to work. If you wor -- they say, if you register, we can, in a week or so, or two weeks, you might get the -- you go to work. Well, I really didn't want to go to the coal mines [indecipherable] then we didn't go too far, and now soon we gonna go back home, so we had -- don't want to go so far up in the [indecipherable] in the coal mines. And so there was no place, so we got -- the evening -- towards the evening, there was no place where to go to sleep. So I went a shul.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And we slept in the shul, on a bench. And the next day we go again out in the street, [indecipherable] again the people, they come in the evening -- we come in the evening to [indecipherable] where we slept, some like that, some other people came and they s -- they took our place. [indecipherable] it's not mine, you know, I couldn't, you know, how -- how could you -- so I had to walk out, we walked out in the streets, we start walking the street. We didn't have - - we have no place where to go. So we figured, well maybe we should take a tra -- the trains were running, should take a train to the next small town, somewheres, whatever it is, another -- another 50 - 70 miles, maybe it's better there, there aren't that many people over there. Here, everybody sticks to one place. So we got to the station, to the train station, we get -- they wait -- waiting in line for tickets, and the man, a Jewish man [indecipherable] is behind us and he looks at us, says where you going? I said, we're going next town. What's the matter, he says, you got relatives there? So why you -- what kind of che -- what you do? I said, we're tailors. We all of u -- we all of us were tailors, three of us. [indecipherable] me and Tanchim, we met a guy, one guy, another friend of ours on the border, we took him along, so we're three of us. Oh, tailors, he says, I'm going to a town where my daughter lives and I'm sure it's a better town than here, it's a little further, and you'll be better off. Y-You're tailors, I'm sure you'll get work over there,

you'll get settled down, things like that. Well, it's okay, we'll go with -- we go with you. No, he says, we'll go with you. Why yi -- how co -- we don't have where to sleep, so -- where to go, where to stay, with whom. So he says, for two guys, my daughter has a little sofa -- a sofa in the li -- I'll give you the sofa, and you'll [indecipherable] the third one, we'll find another place, so the two of you -- well, it's a big -- a good deal, two of us [indecipherable]. So we all agreed. We went with him and we landed in the town of Baranovich, and as he promised, we got to his daughter at night, and -- and he told her that he brought two -- two guests, you gotta give them where to sleep. So he give us the sofa and two of us slept the sofa and then my third one, Tanchim had -- he went to a -- to the shul, the next -- was around the corner a shul, and he says, well, plenty room in the shul says, if you want to [indecipherable] til we'll get -- til you find a place. So we had the -- where to stay. In the morning we start out looking for work. You know, you stay, we want to work, and do -- make it to -- live on something, you [indecipherable] you need some money. You know, looked around, we walked around the city, and my one fire -- one friend of mine found work, from the three of us, found a job, he was a ladies' tailor, he found a good job -- a good job, a job [indecipherable]. We -- I think I walked out another wa -- we walked in the street there together, a guy walked over to -- behind us, he was a -- and then he came over, he says, I'm a rabbi, what are you? You look -- you refugees? Yes. You -- what is it you -- what are you doing for a living? Well, we're tailors. Oh, I need a coat, he says, I'm going away, and -- he's going -- he's a Russian [indecipherable] from a little town. So [indecipherable] says, I don't have a machine, I don't have -- oh, he says, my mother has a house. You stay in the house, and then you could do -- make it and she [indecipherable] a house, has a machine and everything. First of all, it was a good idea, the house. She got a house [indecipherable] got in the house because it was bitter cold, and we just turned around the streets and we were frozen ca --

and now, even though we didn't -- it was very cold, and na -- just the feet are wet because of snow. So we got and warm upped ourself a little bit. She sort of was really still [indecipherable] his house was a little -- a little, small house, and it was warm, you know, little cats on the -- on the chair, little cat was warming on the oven. It was such a peaceful house, and the -- this lady, old lady is putting in firewood and taking [indecipherable]. So I says, it's -- it's -- it's such a good place, you know, you could stretch out the legs and things like that. And I start working on the coat, without no knowledge what to do with it, but I start working, and I stretched the work it should take a little longer. I'd never made a coat, but I made it. My friend helped, and working [indecipherable] we made his coat.

Q: Your second coat?

A: What?

Q: Your second coat?

A: No, for he -- for this ra --

Q: For him.

A: For him.

Q: It's the second time you made a coat.

A: Well, that's the first time I made a coat. I never, never made the coat, you know, from scratch, you know, with a pattern with the -- with this cutting, you know. I made my own, so I had a c -- my brother was, you know, he knew how to make the pattern, so he cut.

Q: Right.

A: But I didn't know until I sort of remember little bit just what they been talking. So I went out the street and we just finished the coat just out in the street, you know, out in the street. We -- so we always met in the -- there was a cafeteria, a big cafeteria, and all those refugees came in the

ca -- to the cafeteria. With a glass of tea, they could stay all day long. This is cold days, you can't -- you have no place where to go. So --

Q: We're going to have to stop you, cause we need to stop the tape. So you're --

End of Tape Three

Beginning Tape Four

Q: We left -- before the last tape you were saying you went into a cafeteria and people could sit all day --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- and drink a cup of tea or a glass of tea actually, right?

A: Y-Y-Yeah, a glass of tea.

Q: And -- right. Did you do that?

A: Yeah. I been sitting there with tea. It's the only place we could go, we had no other friends. We met a lot of people which we -- I mean not because I knew them before.

Q: Right.

A: We met people, talked, sit and talk. And we had just like sharing information. I heard about the sending packages to -- to po -- to ghetto, wi -- and my friend Tanchim, we went out on the market and we -- and we -- and we co -- buy -- buy food. We made a package, we send back to ghetto. We figured we just -- you know, we really weren't sure th -- if they will get it.

Q: Yeah.

A: But let's do it. S-Suppose maybe they get it, because people said the -- the -- the mail is being delivered, or something. And we [indecipherable]

Q: How did you know where they were living?

A: What?

Q: How did you kn --

A: In the ghetto?

Q: Yes. Were they --

A: To my house I -- I used to live.

Q: Th -- in the same place?

A: Same place.

Q: The ghetto was in that area?

A: The ghetto was in the area, yeah.

Q: I see.

A: Yeah.

Q: And -- and you knew that?

A: Yeah. The ghetto was -- now, we were in the ghetto befo -- before. Th -- in other words, it's a Jewish area, and we lived there in that house before, so I figure I'd send it to the same address.

Sure enough, after the war when my brother survived, he says they got this package --

Q: They did.

A: -- and it was food, which they said they -- was as -- that time I wasn't sure if they will receive the package.

Q: Right.

A: But my brother told me that the package was received [indecipherable] I send the other one, but it -- the other one i -- they didn't.

Q: They didn't.

A: So, but it wa-was later on, I guess they changed -- that must have changed the rules or whatever. So in the beginning, the packages were delivered, or mail were delivered to the -- to the ghetto.

Q: Right. So you never heard back, however?

A: They never wrote back?

Q: There was mail -- there was not mail coming towards you?

A: No.

Q: From your mother and your sister --

A: No.

Q: -- and your brother. So you didn't know what was going --

A: I didn't know. I didn't know what --

Q: Are you hearing rumors about what's going on?

A: What?

Q: Are you hearing rumors about what's going on --

A: What's going on --

Q: -- in -- in german --

A: -- in the ghetto?

Q: Yeah.

A: Not -- not the real news, just the ghetto, you know, this I could understand -- I could figure out that it's terrible, it's no good, this ghetto is -- they put so many people to ghetto.

Q: Mm-hm. It's got to be terrible.

A: It's not a not -- it was over -- it's about over 200,000 people --

Q: Yes.

A: -- Jewish people in -- into the ghetto, in the -- so -- but I felt good because I could help them a little bit.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And I wasn't sure if they got it, but something told me that maybe they -- they'll get it, that --

Q: And what was it -- what was it like in Baranovich with the Russians there?

A: The Russians there -- well, it was sort of peaceful. The people who lived there before, they were -- they le -- lived comfortably, and they might have to change, they maybe take -- confiscated big property, but --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- most of the people -- most of people have prepared. They had money put away, and they had merchandise --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- food. So they lived comfortably. And the --

Q: So it wasn't so harsh under the Russians?

A: No, no, you were -- you were treated okay. A lot of Russian dignitaries came into the si -- town, and set up the administration in which they -- they brought people, their own people to administrate the city. And had local also people [indecipherable] local people who been close to the -- involved in the Communist movement, they got jobs, but not too much. They -- the -- the top people were all from Russia.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: They all -- they came all from -- from Russia. Party people, and milish -- mili -- militia [indecipherable] all the -- all the --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- judges and everything, everything came from Russia.

Q: And as a Jewish person, there mu -- there must have been a lot of refugees there.

A: No, the Jews were treating all right -- treated all right.

Q: They were treated okay?

A: Yeah. That time there was -- there were, okay there was a good -- was a lot of Jewish wor -- people in the administration and the militia and they -- they were treated fi -- they were treated okay. There were no -- that time there were no mistreating i -- mistreated --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- [indecipherable] they did already clearing people, you know, a lot of people which they thought they're enemies, you know, like if they were involved -- if you work for the police, gov - - Polish government, those people, they t -- tried to arrest to send them away.

Q: They did?

A: Yeah.

Q: But they weren't sending Jews away? They weren't doing anything to --

A: Well, ma -- no matter what.

Q: Right, no matter what, right.

A: If you -- no matter what, Jews or not Jews, if you were involved --

Q: In the government.

A: -- if you have a job in the government, or -- or it -- and w -- connected to the Polish government --

Q: Right.

A: -- or something [indecipherable] private enterprise is different, but if you are in a government position, up -- so they -- they send you --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- they send the people to Siberia.

Q: But you're okay at this point. You and your two fr --

A: Well, okay, I was okay, but I didn't have -- I had -- I just thinking about my mother and sister home. I wasn't easy --

Q: Easy, right.

A: -- it wasn't -- I couldn't be peaceful. Had my -- my -- my thoughts, my -- were of -- from -- from my -- from home.

Q: Did you think you wanted to go back? Did you think about that?

A: Well, that's -- that's what I thought, to go back, because soon they were came -- there were so many people, and the government could not help themselves, you know, how to control these mass of people.

Q: Mm.

A: Refugees. So they start to have -- make him citizenship. Alre -- a passport. If you get a passport -- you know, every citizen over there got a passport.

Q: Right, right.

A: If you get a passport, you're citizen, and therefore you -- you -- you can go to work, or you can -- you can be treated -- I mean, treated as a citizen, you don't have to -- people live without -- oh, they have to co -- have -- they had to have control of everybody, but there was loose people, they're not registered no place, they don't have --

Q: They don't [indecipherable]

A: -- they -- they don't -- they don't know who is here, who is there, so they declared the citiz -- if they wa -- if they -- to next -- to the summer -- well, after six months or something -- three months, they ask all the people, the refugees to come and get a s -- a pass -- a citizenship. Well, we got to the office, everyone was called in individually to this offi -- to the office, and declared what you goin -- what you expect to be, you know, you gonna get a citizen, you gonna become

citizen, and you can go to work, you can work or we will get you work, we'll -- you wanted the government's protection. And so a lot of people came with -- by themselves, without wife, they left the wife and kids over in -- back home. Mothers [indecipherable] mother, you see. So when they came out from the sa -- ask them what they ask you questions, you said th -- the guy is, I ask him, I said -- they ask me to -- to become citizen, so if you -- and gave me the -- the rules, if you're citizens -- if you're a citizen -- in other words, you can't go back to Poland, you cannot bring your family, a lot of restrictions. Now, there was one thing, you can't go back and you can't bring your family. So a lot of the people didn't accept that and they came out and they says, well I wouldn't leave my wife and kids home, and I will say hey, I don't want to stay here. So a-- at the end, if you don't accept the citizenship, you got to give them in -- a place where you want to go, sort of like a nice [indecipherable] want to go to America, you want to go to -- to -- well, maybe we want to see -- they put it on, but it doesn't matter --

Q: It doesn't matter?

A: They put it on on the paper.

Q: Right.

A: But they -- but these people wh-who didn't want to take citizenship, I -- my friends, the two friends, took the citizenship.

Q: You didn't.

A: I didn't.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And first of all I didn't because I had been thinking home and I want to go back home. And I was trying to go back home and the borders, they were really tight. It was hard to get through. So I came back and I -- I mean t -- I went to the border [indecipherable] and I couldn't get through.

So I came back and -- and when I asked for citizenship, I didn't take the ci -- I didn't take the citizenship. And after some times -- after a few weeks, a week or so, they too -- they round up all the people that didn't take citizenship, they put them in the trains -- in the freight trains is -- to go to send them away.

Q: And where? Which direction? To si --

A: Out into Siberia or something --

Q: Siberia, I see.

A: Or out, I figure it is Siberia, there's --

Q: Right.

A: -- everything that goes east is Siberia.

Q: Is Siberia.

A: Is Siberia. To the -- to the bear -- white bears [indecipherable] called the white bears, and they -- so I didn't sleep at all in my [indecipherable] I didn't sleep all yeah, that night.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So -- and they took everybody and they put them on a train, I figured, so if they didn't take me now, and I have no passport, we were again -- again a -- again ena -- illegal or something.

Q: Right.

A: So I avoid to go out, as I don't wanted to be arrested. If you have -- if you check -- if you -- they check you and they -- you have no passport, and -- so after the transports went away -- went east, they -- all the trains and in two days later, they s -- gave a chance, a second chance, those who didn't get the passport who missed the train, in other words, you can get now the citizenship, the passports. Well, then I had no choice and I took the pas -- took a passport, and became a citizen. So, whatever.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Whatever it is.

Q: So now you're a Russian citizen?

A: A Russian citizen. And well, we'll see what's going on and everybody's not -- I'm not the only one, there's a lot of people, there are a lot of people were -- were -- I had no choice.

Q: Right.

A: It's not my choice, but the --

Q: Right. So is this 1940, do you think? A year -- it's --

A: That was 1940, yes.

Q: Yeah.

A: 1940.

Q: So did they get wa --

A: And I wor -- and I went and got citizenship and I went to work, and they set up shops [indecipherable] so to say.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Tailor shops [indecipherable] pieces. So I went to work as -- I walk in, th-that's all, you got to work.

Q: Right.

A: If you're a citizen, if you -- if you don't work, you were subject to -- to be scrutinized, and -- and ask -- be arrested and ask you where do you live, who -- where do -- how do you live, where do you wa -- are you l-live from black market or something, you di --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- they don't -- they check the black market people. Then -- so they --

Q: So now, are you still working in that house?

A: No, no --

Q: No, now you're work --

A: -- no, no.

Q: -- now you're working in an actual business?

A: Now I went -- I went to work to a government -- a government shop. They set up a gov -- this shu -- one of the shuls, I did.

Q: Shoes?

A: A shul, yeah.

Q: Oh, in the shul.

A: Shuls, they -- they opened the shop, a big -- and put machinery -- and put machineries and put a lot of people, few hundred people in that factory, it's a factory.

Q: But you've never done shoes before.

A: What?

Q: This was shoes?

A: I-It was a shul before the war.

Q: A shul before the war, I see.

A: Before the war, and the building was a nice, good building. They need the [indecipherable] to use the building.

Q: Right.

A: So they took the shul.

Q: And what kind of ta -- what kind of shop was it?

A: Oh, ladies and man, everything. You know, they took a lot of people in, local people, local me -- ma -- people who had their own -- they had their own tailoring business, but figured they don't want to be in private -- be private, they want to be employed by the government --

Q: Right.

A: -- this -- in a place, in a factory, so they wouldn't bothered, otherwise they -- they got it where they lived from, what do you have -- what is your income, what is -- you know, that is -- problems. If you're not working, is a problem.

Q: Right. So did they pay you decently?

A: They paid -- they paid just -- just barely enough to live in. Is -- is a -- wasn't really a lot, but just to make -- to, you know, to --

Q: Right.

A: -- to make it to -- just to live through, you know, for food and things like that.

Q: And where are you living now? Are you still living in that --

A: I still lived in the same --

Q: That same place.

A: Same place.

Q: With your friend?

A: [indecipherable] with my -- no, my friend is getting quite another job where he -- at another place, but I stayed there --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- in the same place, and we worked in the factory, yeah.

Q: And that was okay.

A: Well, for the time being nobody knew what's going happen --

Q: What's going on.

A: -- later, what -- for the time being we go step -- you know, step by step, y --

Q: Right.

A: If you want was to be a citizen, it was -- they couldn't control the mass of people. Everyone was running around, and they watched people for black market -- black market. The black market, the -- the market was really something. They watched everybody, whoever walked around in the -- in the market, they -- these are the guys who they arrested, or who --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- they wouldn't let them -- they -- they went --

Q: Did you ever buy black market goods?

A: Yeah, I bought black market good --

Q: You did.

A: -- but I never did black market thing --

Q: Right. Which is different.

A: -- [indecipherable] but I don't want to go. It's didn't pay to -- to jeopardize my -- you know, they put you to jail, you're arrested.

Q: But they didn't arrest you if you bought from them, they only arrested you if you were selling?

A: If you sell, that it.

Q: I see.

A: If you bought things, no.

Q: So what kind of things did you buy?

A: I really didn't have anything -- I didn't want to buy anything, it was -- you know, food sometimes you --

Q: Food.

A: -- food.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Food, you know, the peasant brought a lot of food, and they were allowed to sell legally.

Q: Right.

A: Yeah, the peasants had the right to bring their food to sell.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And you had also the right to sell if you were established [indecipherable] or you can come to market and --

Q: And sell, right.

A: -- and [indecipherable] they wouldn't stop you.

Q: But being there was very difficult for you because you're away from your family, you don't know what's happening.

A: I didn't know, we had no contact, had no contact then.

Q: Are you getting rumors?

A: What?

Q: Are you getting rumors?

A: Rumors? Not reliable.

Q: Not reliable enough.

A: No, not reliable.

Q: Are there newspapers?

A: What?

Q: Are there newspapers?

A: Newspapers are government newspapers and they did not --

Q: They don't tell you.

A: They did not write any -- it's like here, all kind of news.

Q: Yeah.

A: It's what the local -- the government news.

Q: Right.

A: You know, the there -- their achievements and things like that, or something like that, there's nothing -- nothing to read anyway.

Q: So rumors you don't know. You don't know what's going on.

A: We didn't get any rumors also because there was no contact.

Q: Right.

A: On the oth -- with the other side.

Q: Now, when the refugees are coming in, some of them are coming in much later than you, right? They're coming in after you. So did it end --

A: Well, that time -- that time they didn't, nobody came in, I didn't --

Q: They didn't come in.

A: No. I mean, a-after the citizenship were taken --

Q: That was it.

A: -- they were -- never came in. Anyway, th-the Russian -- the Soviets, if they didn't want them to come, they wouldn't co -- you wouldn't come. That's a -- people -- people start to move to Vilna.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Vilna was rumors that you can -- they have embassies.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: They -- some of -- for some reason, the Soviets left open embassies in -- in Lithuania. No other place except Moscow had the embassies.

Q: Had that, I know.

A: All of a sudden, the -- the Lithuanian opened -- the Lithuanian opened their capital, the embassies from all different countries. And a lot of people smuggled to Vilna, and when we -- we tried that -- you know, tried to think of going to Vilna, we -- we -- me and my friends -- so the Soviets have tightened the borders.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And nobody could get through. Another friend of mine from Łódź was arrested and he was in jail in Baranovich. His mother came and she tried to help him, couldn't help, she couldn't help him, he was -- of course, they closed the borders so nobody, nobody --

Q: Right.

A: -- nobody could do it. Soon there -- soon the -- that thing is, we [indecipherable] -- you know, and we worked, I worked in the factory [indecipherable] til the war broke out.

Q: So it's pretty much --

A: '41.

Q: -- was -- yes, it -- in June of '41.

A: In June fort --

Q: But again, this is not something you expect, right?

A: What, the war?

Q: War.

A: Unexpected.

Q: Again unexpected.

A: I -- totally unexpected. Before, I wa -- Germany and there was a situation the -- with the [indecipherable] or things like that, and tense -- tense situation. But this here I -- was completely unexpected invasion. [indecipherable]. And my friends were just on vacation and -- and we were in a country -- a countryside near a lake, we saw scatterns of fly -- of plane -- planes are flying through, we didn't know. So the Russian guy -- there were some Russian people, oh, th-those are ours. Th-Those are ours.

Q: Right.

A: Little they knew that the German, the Air Force already bombed the railroads and things like th -- some other -- not where we were, that was the little countryside.

Q: Right, right.

A: But th-they start bombing right away, and it just -- at 12 o'clock at noon the war, the -- the invasion -- the German invasion started four o'clock in the morning, and at about 12 noon there were the first time we found out there's a war, cause there was on the radio a speech -- Molotov, the foreign secretary -- yeah, foreign minister, had a speech that the German forces attacked unexpectedly us, [indecipherable] that was the first time they said there's be a war. And we start running home. We came to the -- to the nearest st -- the railroad station, there were so many people taking -- go -- running back, running back to their place at home, from the country. So we went back to Baranovich, finally. And we dug shelters and the bombing was daily and -- and the -- the news, the Soviet news was very false news that the -- we counterattack --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- you know, we -- you know, we beating back the Germans here and there, which was a lie.

But --

Q: So they did the same thing the Polish government did before.

A: [indecipherable]. But the -- but the propaganda is to keep the people -- I don't know, what -- what is it, it's misleading the people, because we didn't think of evacuating, a-and we could have evacuate ourselves the day before. But then it was --

Q: Did you believe it?

A: Huh?

Q: Did you believe what the Russians were saying? That they would beat them back? What did you think?

A: I bel-believe, because I believed it [indecipherable] that the -- there was a statement -- statements you know, from the highest people there, that we are strong and we beat back and we me -- you know, [indecipherable] you know, you take it something is tr -- yeah, you know, you take it as they say.

Q: Right.

A: But they were lies, they wouldn't really -- it was just the opposite. So, it was really when we start to, in towards the evening, you saw a little bit change in the people were sort of running around too much like -- like undecided what to do, like in running to the station, to the railroad station. And my tal -- friend Tanchim is running to the railroad station, he says, I'm going. And I was going out in the streets to find out some other people, what to do. Are they going really to the evacuate? Are they going to the railroad station to get a train to go back east? So we met some people, refugees coming from the border. They say what do you -- what are you sitting here? We are being chased by the Germans here. German forces are chasing us. And you're

sitting here just calmly like that? Then we start running to the -- it was too late already, because we run to the railroad station, this -- there wa -- the -- the trains were bombed already, the railroads were bombed, the rails were bombed. And we couldn't go. We start going on foot. Again, they attacked us with the flying planes, he didn't -- we couldn't go any further, we couldn't evacuate, couldn't leave. So, we had to go back, within days -- within days they were -- they were back.

Q: They were back.

A: They were -- they were --

Q: They were in -- they were --

A: -- [indecipherable] yeah, they were occupied. [indecipherable] what the army came. We saw the armies coming through. Huge armies, strong. And the first day we didn't see, but right away they came at us, along with the -- they start looking, and you know, looking -- looking for Jews.

Q: Right.

A: Jewish people, where the Jewish people? You know, they found out right away. They came to our house, soldiers, and they looking for -- they are searching for arms, they said, we gonna look for arms. Whatever they found, little valuable things, they took it.

Q: They took it. We have to stop the tape.

End of Tape Four

Beginning Tape Five

Q: Okay. On the last tape you began to talk about the German occupation when they first -- when they first came in, and what that was like for you.

A: You're talking about in -- in Baranovich --

Q: Yes.

A: -- the sa -- the Soviet --

Q: After --

A: -- the German Soviet war.

Q: Right, right, 1941

A: 1941.

Q: Right.

A: That's what I -- we had a vacation. When I -- from our --

Q: Yes.

A: -- the factory we worked was closed, we went on vacation. And on the vacation we just saw the planes and things like that. We didn't know until about two o'clock -- 12 o'clock when we came home, we heard the speech officially, when they announced that Germany attacked, and then we rushed home. We rushed home, back to Baranovich. Trains were loaded already, people were running from all over, from the countryside to the ci -- to the town. Baranovich was the nearest town, which we lived, so we went back. Coming back was really -- the town -- the situation of early war time. [indecipherable] were bombing, and ai-air attacks and things like that. You have the dir -- we dug a shelter in the backyard. We went to the shelters when the fliers came. And we listened to the radio -- to the radio, official radio. They had it placed all over in the places, in the public places where we could hear the news. So they really sa -- misinformed

us, you know, the agency, the Soviet agency, they had said that they are be -- beating back the enemy, and that will -- it's -- wasn't true, it was -- they were right here, next door, and then probably we wouldn't -- didn't rush to evacuate, to go -- to run away. It does -- til it was too late. The bomb -- the trains were bombed, and we -- they -- they couldn't go, and walking, we walked until these planes, they shoot us -- shoot on us and -- and so we had to go back. And going back is -- you have to settle -- we stayed in a place, in a -- a home, because the war -- at a friend's uncle's house, which he lived there, in -- at his house. So he had a room, a lot of room, so one room he gave us, because he figured they wouldn't let him have the whole house anyhow. So one room we -- our -- our guys, the [indecipherable] there, stayed there in that room, and til we'll settle, we know what's going on for the -- they had the -- meanwhile, the SS and the Judenrat, there was already Judenrat ap-appointed, and the Juden Altesten, the Juden ep -- president, it -- it was called the Juden Altesten.

Q: So that was pretty fast.

A: What?

Q: That was pretty fast.

A: Fa -- right away.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It -- it was -- was right away ap-appointed and that's it. You don't know wa -- and he -- the -- they were talking about a ghetto, and what -- while they talk [indecipherable] were talking. Meanwhile they asked for -- they put the -- the say -- co-collecting valuables from the Jews. So they gave us -- gave orders to deliver, let's say, five pounds of gold -- I mean, I don't know five pounds or two pounds, silver, everyth -- or metal, money, you know, currency. They want dollars, they want pounds, all foreign currencies. And -- and this had to be delivered in --

meanwhile, they start already asking for workers -- workers. So the Judenrat was appointed [indecipherable] they needed workers for some project, we didn't know what. So we were not the ci-citizen, you know, I mean, it's not a citizen from Baranovich, you know, we -- we were refugees, so we were the first ones to go. So we went to this work, and then we start working, our three guys, and -- the three friends of ours went to work, and this was at the Air Force, German Air Force had a base, and they did rebuild -- not rebuild, but extend the airport. And it was the Polish -- old Polish airport, but the -- since the Air Force is -- is big, that they need more s -- more runways and more things like that. So they took 300 people from us, from -- from Jewish -- from the ghetto, which was not the ghetto yet, but [indecipherable] Jewish people already had to supply workers before the ghetto started. And they had 300 non-Jewish people working. So there was about 600 people working at this airfield to rebuild -- to extend the airfor -- rebuild the airfor -- the air force -- the airfield. And I worked a terrible job, I had a terrible job in the -- to re -- unload the cement, loose cement in a barn when they -- they put the trains in a -- they lo -- they tr -- the trains went into a -- gathered into a barn, a big barn and they had loose cement on the -- on the platforms, and it has to be removed from the -- from the train because that train has to go again. It's just loose, this --

Q: How did you do it?

A: It was so terrible work, you know, with this -- I -- I felt that I wouldn't last long really, at this work, it's so hard.

Q: Did you do it with a shovel?

A: With a shovel, but the -- the dust went -- that -- that cement was full in the air --

Q: Right.

A: Well, we worked, we had no -- this was -- this is the work. So --

Q: And who chose you? Was it the Judenrat who chose you, or the Germans who cho -- how [indecipherable]

A: Actually, Judenrat wants workers. They -- and since we s-sort of were refugees, we the first ones to go because the others had families and thanks to that we have no families, so I -- I didn't mind. I mean, we went to work. So what is there -- we can't be -- we can't avoid that, we going to have to -- sooner or later we figured we'll have to go -- we'll do something. Anyhow, we couldn't say no. As we worked -- as I worked ever d -- at this job [indecipherable] time, I really got sick from that. So at -- one morning the foreman, you know, we had this guy, Jewish guy was the foreman from 300 people. In the morning he divided people different -- different play -- jobs. There were electricians, there were carpenters, you know. So one day he ask for a tailor, who is a tailor. So I raise my hands, where are tailors, better to work than that. So I said -- then I start working as a tailor and as soon they open -- they gave me a room and a machine, and [indecipherable] set up a tailor room where I could work. Was a different cha -- a big change. I felt, you know, now I could rec -- could -- could hold on til -- I don't know. We worked there and it was in the beginning not bad. I mean, as slave work, we didn't get paid. He told us, you are slave workers. You can't get -- you get -- don't get paid. The others, Friday got -- they got paid. The o -- the o --

Q: The airfield people?

A: What?

Q: What -- what other people?

A: The other -- the o -- non-Jewish people.

Q: Ah, okay.

A: Non-Jewish people --

Q: Got paid.

A: -- there was 300, they got paid. And we, we [indecipherable] the workers, but not paid. So -- and I s-set up and it was better than cement work. I had all the guy -- all these officers came in for work -- kind of work, pants, sometimes they had uniforms, and sometimes civilian clothes, I don't know. There were so many changes. They wore in the beginning civilian clothes and then they had a uniform. So anyway, there was always work to do. And I also do so -- did some work for the Air Force people itself, you know, the military, because when they came they saw sh -- they [indecipherable] a ta -- a tailor, they want him -- e-everybody had an -- they needed. And I all of a sudden [indecipherable] later, a German officer who -- I said, without his permission I cannot do out w-work. They got it. He gave them permission. They gave -- they -- I should work -- I worked for y -- al-all other officers in the Air Force. In the Air Force -- course the Air Force building was right near -- nearby, and a lot of officers. In the beg --

Q: So you're living there?

A: What?

Q: You're living there, near the airfield?

A: We didn't live there.

Q: No? Where were you living? In the same --

A: We were -- we were -- before we start to get -- I still lived this --

Q: Right.

A: -- friend's house.

Q: You still were there?

A: Yeah, we're there, but slowly we moved to the ghetto.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: What I still -- we still went to work in the morning and we came back, you know, with the -- we had the I.D. card and when they put together this ghetto, there was a -- a gar -- a guard in -- in the front of the gate, and you gotta show -- and you showed him the -- to go to work and then they come to work, ya -- they -- or they searched you if you have a package, they searched, and to -- so I went on with that, I worked, and we helped ourselves a little bit because we have people coming in, different people, different kind of people, nobody checked me what I do, or what [indecipherable] I do. I did some side work. So I made -- you know, to go through [indecipherable] to -- to make something to go -- you know, people s -- usually everybody gave something. You know, no matter -- the officers, they -- to -- the guy around me -- had one guy who was a ta -- a tall guy, a big strong guy, he was -- he was so mean, and when he came in to have work done and he always brought something. Bread, butter, and things like that, and he was in charge [indecipherable]. So -- so rem -- he [indecipherable] in a way that you could -- he could have a -- you know, stay in [indecipherable]. He didn't bother us. I worked, nobody came in to check me, what I wad -- what I work, but I wa -- they were -- just want the acceptance if they came -- outside people, if they came in, they want to have them h-have the um -- our -- pi -- pi -- our officers should give them permission. They got it.

Q: Are they killing Jews at this point, do you know?

A: At the what? At the --

Q: In the area.

A: In the area?

Q: Yeah. Do you know anything?

A: When you first -- you saw the ghetto, well, people went out to work, and this was one guy who -- a tailor who had his own shop, and it ha -- got in a -- when he -- they want him to give up

the shop. He had a tailor -- his store, with the business. They want him to give up the business because he is a -- so he formally gave up the business to a worker of his. I-In other words, it should have a -- a -- put a -- it's under his name is the facto -- what is the business, but he took the -- he di -- he took the profit, the money or whatever it is they made. And that was finally wa - - who -- whose told the -- I mean, the authorities, they s -- they says what he does, he was arrested and he was hanged, publicly on the pla -- on the -- before the ghetto was closed, he -- they asked everybody -- the people to go and see it. You know, that's to scare the people up, you know, like the -- not to do anything on their own -- on the -- on the -- what they wanted is [indecipherable]. Well, anyhow, these things occurred and they also here and there, when they need workers or they need people, they've been taken away, they never -- we never saw them back. So that was until the ghetto was in a -- a -- still a set up and they had a one meter -- they gave us one meter per person. One meter space in a -- in a -- you have a room like that, and you can put eight, 10 people. So eight every -- one meter per person.

Q: One meter?

A: One meter. So they -- they measured -- you know, that was, you know, it -- handled it perfectly, I mean, they adore us. And we set up the ghetto pretty good, the doctors -- the doctors set up a sort of hospital inside to handle the sick people, and everything was working, organized. So I don't know if they liked that, probably didn't like that organized kind of a -- a ghetto, pretty sure. Anyhow, one day they came to ask for -- for 12 doctors. The SS gave always orders what they want. You know, one time they want gold, wanted silver, and -- and one day I was out of work and I was grabbed as a hostage -- as a hostage for a -- because they demand some amount of -- of money or something like that, it took a long time to get together, to get the -- collect the money from people. So they took a --

Q: So you were a hot -- the Germans took you as a hostage?

A: Yeah. Even though I been w -- I had the -- a -- even though I had a -- a I.D. to -- I worked in a --

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: -- a German place, it -- it di-didn't ag -- they didn't care about that, who -- everybody's on their own, they have a different law, the SS has different laws. So they again took us into a place where -- enc-enclosed place, about -- I don't know, couple of hundred people, hostages, and they threatened they will kill us if they are not delivered. And the whole day long we been with our hands up and the machi -- the machine guns all around, and watching these -- the few hu -- the people who were not the hostages. And towards the evening, ar -- they took out nine people and they s -- and they did, they said they gonna shot them, execute them to show them that they mean business, the Judenrat, they should give -- they didn't deliver enou -- along -- soon enough the -- the ransom. So they killed 10 people -- nine people. So -- so then the Judenrat tried to give -- de-deliver the -- deliver the ransom and we were freed in -- towards the evening. That's one thing. So every day it was some other kind of -- sort of action again.

Q: What -- what -- what was happening to you? Were you getting depressed, were you getting angry?

A: Depressed.

Q: Do you -- do you -- do you remember what it was feeling like?

A: I don't remember, we just followed the others, and --

Q: So you were just going to keep going.

A: Keep going. Keep going as long as -- as we could physically. Mentally, just kind of -- it was [indecipherable] thing, you know. So you [indecipherable] of -- the ambiti -- you know, ambition

of doing -- of getting out or something like that, and there's no way out. No way out. And every day something else, they took people. And I worked over there, I worked as a -- in the shop, so the best thing was at work, so they didn't -- he couldn't -- you know, at -- at work we weren't bothered with the -- the SS didn't bothered with SS, we, as workers we had a lot of people, everybody worked at his job was -- was a kind of relief --

Q: Right.

A: -- because when we got back to the city, you locked up in the ghetto, you just like a -- oh, a closed -- closed world, you know, you -- you -- th-then it depressed when you come home, when you come to the ghetto. But s -- it -- it -- th-the [indecipherable] we were thinking of escape, but we had no arms, we had nowhere, nothing to escape. You sort of need some arms. Well --

Q: So who -- who are you talking with? Or is -- is there a -- is there a --

A: The ghetto people -- people in ghetto, maybe our -- my -- my friends and myself, we were talking about -- about escaping. But there was tho -- we ha -- we really didn't know the area, we didn't know enough. So we waited, we had prepared ourself to escape and something, but we did not move until we'll get either some bigger group or something like that. Meanwhile, pe -- we heard a lot of people being killed. Besides that, every time there's another incident, another reason. We had this -- where we worked we had a one officer who was a supply officer, was this Smith and he was -- he's lo -- a nice -- you know, nice guy, nice guy. He was doing -- so the foreman was from Warsaw and he had -- he says he had made trip to -- to Poland. So we ask him, just a joke, you know, can I go with you? He says yes. He took him to Warsaw to his family, he saw his family in -- in -- in Warsaw and he's -- when he came back he says, oh, Warsaw is -- is [indecipherable] there's no threat of being killed, you know, like here, we have every day. So he was working hard to go back to Warsaw. He was always dreaming --

Q: To get to Warsaw.

A: -- to go to -- back to Warsaw because it's so bad here, every day people being killed. And anyhow, he -- he didn't succeeded, you know, cause it was -- waited too long, this Smith wa -- the Smith was gone and another -- he -- he contacted even -- made a deal with another guy, a German chauffeur who drove and he collected some friends from Warsaw, those who want to go to Warsaw. He -- he brought such a beautiful picture of Warsaw, the black market is so busy, what -- he saw the good things, I don't know. I-It was a bad -- but the Warsaw ghetto wasn't bet -- much better, but he saw the good. Maybe his family was involved in business or something like that. And so when he collected the all people, those who want to go in Warsaw, he collect too the money, and the -- the chauffeur, which is the guy I don't know how ba -- how goo -- how well he knew him, when he took him in the morning -- in the morning he picked him up, he picked up all the passengers and he drove right to the SS. So --

Q: They killed him.

A: They killed him, sure, right away. So, about the doctors, he took it -- they ask for 12 doctors, and if a doctor which I have been seeing, he told me he was a cu -- throat and -- and ear specialist. And so I knew him because I've seen him a few times, and I met him some other time. He came home running -- he came home with a satchel from a patient and his wife told him to -- th -- they were here looking for you because they need 12 doctors, and they need for some camp which -- I don't know, it's just the -- you know, excuse, I would ge -- to make them feel good, that they're going to help sick people. And he is -- was running to help sick people. There's some [indecipherable] sick people in the camp, which he -- they need 12 doctors. And he missed the -- the -- this group, I mean, other words, they were looking for him and they went without. But he came home and his wife told him, he didn't leave his satchel, he went right away to the Judenrat

to repe -- report that the -- they were [indecipherable] and there was an SS man or something who still -- he still got -- include him in a group, and they led him away and they killed him right at -- right in the s -- not -- you know, into the SS quarter -- headquarters. So this was the daily -- daily things what happened, and we thought of escaping. We -- some people tried to escape, I don't know if they made it. They also didn't have any arms. The time went by, we worked all winter, and then -- then they were really -- they were coming to us that sort of we heard about the massacres in other towns. Was the people we worked with, sometimes some par -- some people - - some peasants came to work and they told us certain towns there were some massacres [indecipherable] out, you know, like next town [indecipherable] neighboring towns. So we really thought of escapings, you know, but we waiting for -- for y -- we had no organized groups to escape. So the -- they -- they was -- they came when the -- in the spring. It was the -- I don't remember the dates. What I remember it was kind of Purim and people -- people are -- people were really celebrating, you know, as quietly, a Purim holiday [indecipherable]. The -- the ghetto was sort of the we -- the people went out to work and I start to go to work with -- they took us to one like, place where they collected all the people, the working people, all the columns. And a lot of people worked outside the ghetto, and they put all these people [indecipherable] waiting for this -- for what, I don't know. We waited til the ha -- our president, our Judenrat president appeared and he says that the German authorities want some 200 people for different -- for different work in railroad something. It was really lies, but to make it -- it -- it's prepa -- a preparation for something else, but -- so they took 200 people, other words, let us go to work. We were --those who had to go to work, had to go to work and took some people out of work, and at -- at work we found out that -- I don't know, they took [indecipherable] I don't know where to, no -- nobody knew where to, but they took them away. They -- they -- yeah, they took

out the s -- they went into the ghetto the same time and they took some children and elderly people the same day, in the morning before they went out, we assembled, we got -- we were out there -- out again, the SS called upon the -- our president, the Jewish president, the -- to his of -- to the office, and they demand three thou -- 4,000 people. Our ghetto had 12,000. Our ghetto --

Q: Had 12,000 Jews.

A: -- had 12,000 Jewish people.

Q: And they wanted 4,000.

A: And there -- they want f -- 4,000.

Q: We have to stop the tape, I'm sorry.

End of Tape Five

Beginning Tape Six

Q: You were talking about there were 10,000 Jews in the ghetto, or --

A: 12.

Q: Or 12,000, and --

A: 12,000.

Q: -- they were looking for 4,000. So they were going to kill 4,000?

A: When they were ready -- the SS, I'm talking --

Q: Yes.

A: -- was demanding, they called up Mr. Isikson, he was the ch -- the head of -- the president of the Judenrat, while we in the -- in that area together out of the ghetto.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And they want the amount of people -- some amount of people, they called Isikson and demand he should deliver the kids, the elderly, and to make up 4,000 -- they wanted 4,000 people. They want 4,000 people. And Isikson was [indecipherable] and he -- he says, you ask me for gold, money, I give you. But ma -- people and their kids, you have to come and get yourself.

Q: Because he knew what they were gonna do.

A: Yeah. So at that time they figured they have to do it, you know, and they gonna do it by themselves. So the ghetto was already [indecipherable] the SS, and things like that. They took out people -- we were at the -- assembled outside in the place on the -- outside the ghetto, the working people.

Q: Right.

A: So our -- our -- our chef -- the head, took out his pe -- a lot of people, German and officers who had the people working for them came and took their people out of work. So those who

worked for the German [indecipherable] organizations, German [indecipherable] could go to work.

Q: So they were protected in some way.

A: They were.

Q: Yeah.

A: So we go to work, we didn't know if -- what is going to happen now. They -- they were protected, so there's -- they wanted to keep the workers still working, while they take -- and they want to take the kids and the elderly, a-and to get 4,000 in the first place, for them. So is -- Isikson refused, s-so they let them go home, and we, sort of after we heard what's going on, we stayed in the place, we didn't go ho -- go to work -- go to -- home after work --

Q: You stayed there.

A: -- the same day. We didn't go home. And we did hide in our -- and rarely you find a place to hide, until we'll -- the things what we heard what's going on [indecipherable] in the ghetto. So -- and towards the evening, we sort of were told to go to get ready to go home, to go to the ghetto. So we were about 73 people, those who remained hiding inside, they didn't want -- want to go [indecipherable] and we didn't go before, but now they want to wait, they said they -- they have to go to the ghetto, you had to go home. And here we still heard the news from -- and we heard the guns -- machine guns, that they're still killing people. So there was question, you know, was like going to a ghetto, you going right into -- to the open -- to this slaughter. So the people were afraid to go, but they had to -- they had to sort of make sure to -- to stay. If they could stay, they would say if they could stay here in the -- in the place of work another night, would be good. So one lady came into my tailoring room with a gold watch and she put the watch down and said -- she told me, go in and talk to the -- our head. Rudel is the head of the -- our officers, if -- to bribe

him, he should let us stay one night more. If they a -- the slaughter will go by. So I said -- looked at her, I said, you -- you know, you crazy, because I -- this man never came into me, I [indecipherable] he doesn't know me, cause the others -- officers work -- came in for work, he never came in to work -- for work. And so is -- but til -- she left the watch, she walked out, you do it. I says, that's the only way out -- she said, whether I could -- could do it, and think to do it. And I was sitting in [indecipherable] says, she is crazy. I mean, he never -- he never came -- he never know me -- he never came to me, and I can-cannot go bribing somebody like that, you know, it's -- it's ridiculous. Well, waiting, waiting, waiting, and there's no other solution, so the pe -- so people says, well, what can you -- what would you do? What can you do? Well, I said, I'll -- have no choice and I have to go, whatever is -- if -- if I wouldn't do that, you say, oh, if you would have gone, you have -- do -- did something, it -- it would have -- it would have been something. Now, we are really without any he -- without any help. So I took this watch and I walked over, this is one barrack where the officers lived, and I have that [indecipherable] everything over there in one bag. I walked over and I -- I la -- never was in this office, never went -- I knew more or less where the doors -- it's right the first door. So I knocked the door, and he says, enter [indecipherable]. So I walked in and I s -- was -- had to stand on the rear door, I didn't move. I just walked in, I didn't move, because his -- this room, the decorations around give you a sc -- give you such a scare, all this Hackenkreuz is -- banners hanging and the [indecipherable], the Hitler and Goerings and everything all around. Is -- is just like Goering or something, or some other officer in his office in -- in a -- in the back of the room, and in a -- in a de -- on the desk. And I says -- so -- so he says, well, well, was -- what do I want -- what do you want? Say, I want to talk to you. So he -- he sits in a [indecipherable] so come here. I walk over and I didn't ask anything, I took out the watch and put on the table. He says -- I says, look, this is

what we have, what one of the ladies have and she doesn't need it, because if we go home the ghetto we gonna be killed anyhow, you might use it, s -- give it -- send it to you. One of your family, I don't know whether he was married or not, never knew. He says to me in a quiet way, he says take it back, I don't want it, I don't need it. [indecipherable] and I le -- I look at him and I was -- I don't see the same person. He -- he asks me to sit down, and you know what -- what happen. And I sit down, I says, take the watch. Forget it, he says, take it back, and nothing going to happen to you. It's over. In other words, this load is over. And nothing is going to happen to you, nothing is going to happen. I said, well I still hear the guns. He says, I -- I have or -- I have information, he says. So I walk out and -- with this news, and I told the guys waiting for me, and I told them that we could go home and nothing is going to happen, it's over. Meanwhile, we still heard the guns, we still heard the machine guns go. And time goes shorter and we -- we have to go soon, at six o'clock we going home. So they said to me, look, we going to go a column with people, with 70 people. They don't know who we are or what ev -- what kind of [indecipherable] we have. See -- do something, tal-talk to him, see if maybe he'll send somebody to explain to the guards, you know. Well, I said, maybe they're right, but since I saw that he is -- didn't -- he -- he not, you know, the same guy is over there. So I went over and I -- again, I says that the people are afraid to go because they don't know where they will -- if they know what we are, who we are or something like that. And I said, if you would have [indecipherable] I mean, I thought -- as I thought -- if you would go with us to lu -- I mean, to the gate and te -- explain who we are. So he was thinking a few minutes. Okay, I'll go. So he got into his car and he drove ahead and we marched with 12 guards, of Air Force guards to the ghetto. And it was not complete over, but it was over. At that moment, when we came to the gates, we saw Mr. Isikson was led out by SS. Two guys took him and his assistant to their car and put them away -- took him away, for good.

So that's why, he did -- he didn't obey the orders. He didn't give them the 4,000 people. He made [indecipherable] -- so that's what it is. I mean, they -- they ne -- appointed another guy for Judenrat, for -- they appointed another guy.

Q: You -- you said that --

A: I been -- we been waiting in -- in front of the ghet -- gate, to be -- to --

Q: To go back in.

A: -- to go back in.

Q: And saw --

A: But they weren't that finished, they didn't clean up -- they didn't -- til they put a -- bore out the juden -- the -- Mr. Isikson, and then they opened the gates and -- to get -- to let in us, our people. My pe -- my group of people.

Q: Right. How did you know what Isikson had said, that he refused? Is that --

A: When I came in the ghetto --

Q: People told you?

A: -- the guy who was the Judenrat man, told us.

Q: That that's why he was taken.

A: [indecipherable] a part of the Judenrat, not the -- nobody was a -- but he pol -- told us -- he told us he was -- around the ghetto he was a member of the Judenrat and he was supposed to be -
- to accompany the SS when they lo -- loaded the people on trucks, out to the -- to the shooting place. But before, when I left him since -- first time, when I went out his door, another officer which used to come into me with a lot of work [indecipherable] well, no f -- more kind of -- he obviously used to talk, have a d -- you know, he -- he used to come in more often, and he [indecipherable] with me. And he says -- he told me where I work -- where I been working, you

know, like a front yard [indecipherable] 150 yards, and he start -- he's talking to me in working, that this morning, he says, they took us, all the officers, not only us, but officers in the whole town who have workers -- officer who work here, and the -- for the germ -- German officers, they took him -- they took them to show the slaughter [indecipherable]. They -- they -- the way they -- what they -- what they do, they want to show off how they kill the people, and he says -- Mr. Lindow, Mr. Lindow says unthinkable, unbelievable, he says. What they did, it's unbelievable, unthinkable. How'd they do it? He probably didn't want to go too long with -- walk along outside with me, but this few steps he did it, he told me what happened. In other words they all -- and he -- and he [indecipherable] was along with them. And that probably gave him a shock, and he changed. He changed to a degree that was such the completely different. He was really -- he was really -- he didn't know what to do. He was -- you know, I couldn't recognize him. You know, he walked around, he didn't say a word, he didn't say to u -- to u -- to the others. S-So that was -- his story was -- didn't end yet because soon after, we -- groups -- we had a resistance group in the ghetto, and we escaped. And with some arms left, we had a nice bunker. I build a bunker which is we had some arms, the resistance had some arms, and we sort of prepared for resistance. And since they took us out from the ghetto [indecipherable] resistance wasn't working.

Q: Couldn't happen.

A: It couldn't happen. But when we came back, some of my arms, my bunker wasn't dis -- wasn't discovered. I mean, they found a lot of bunkers and they dis -- confiscated a lot of arms, which we prepared for the resistance.

Q: Where did you get arms? Where did you get weapons from?

A: Well, we had y -- you know, y -- our people worked to collect the arms from the Russian military. When they gave up, they left in the woods and the fields, so they had to collect these, so the people from the ghetto worked this -- with this comp -- with this group to bring the arms, so they smuggled in these arms, from rifles to grenades, you know, as much as they could. So I had the -- my -- my -- my friend Tanchim was -- was the head from my group, we had five in a group prepared. And our -- we -- since we had a rifle and grenades in our -- in our bunker, and our bunker was not found. So, in other words, we planned an escape and it's the only arms we had, the others were confiscated. And we prepared an escape. We didn't know which way, whether through the ghetto, cut the g -- cut the barbed wires, or from the place we work, from the airfield -- airfield. It took us time to get this -- smuggle the arm -- we decided to escape from the airport, and so our people were the electricians. Our people who were from our resistance group, they worked -- they were electricians and they worked out in the airfield, further out, and over there at the airfield we walked around free. We didn't -- even though we had patches and things like that, nobody bothered us.

Q: But they were -- the electricians were farther away than you were.

A: What?

Q: The -- the electricians were farther away than you were?

A: No, no, they were --

Q: They were in the same f -- airfield?

A: The same airfield, but they were in -- into the airfield that they are almost like further out in the [indecipherable] they worked th -- the electrician --

Q: Right.

A: -- [indecipherable] installations, so they worked out further, so we -- they explained that there's some bushes we could stay there all day long, go to work and from work, the little -- this -- you know, single people could go there to the point where we ha -- go together and in the evening, we'll escape with the whole group.

Q: Now can -- can I ask you something?

A: Huh?

Q: Were -- were there -- a number of resistance groups in the ghetto?

A: There were what?

Q: Were there a number of resistance groups in the ghetto, not just yours, there were other ones?

A: There were the other two, yeah.

Q: There were two more?

A: Two

Q: Two more?

A: There were, in general, two resistance groups, separate, you know, but they -- different plans, we had different plans. But at this point the ghetto was already divided again, smaller and [indecipherable] and there -- and there was a lot of people --

Q: Right.

A: You know [indecipherable] cause the resistance lost a lot of people, even those -- our own people. So the other escape was planned for my group, plans with our arms [indecipherable] in our basement [indecipherable] but still it was on the other side, the ghetto was cut off shorter. You know, they -- there were less people, they cut -- they cut the ghetto shorter.

Q: Right.

A: So even though there were -- our arms were in the other side, behind barbed wire, but we managed to go through [indecipherable] guys -- the guys went over at night [indecipherable] get into -- brought into the new ghetto, our arms --

Q: So they went over the fence?

A: Cut the wires.

Q: They cut the wires?

A: Cut the wires, and we watched the guards. The guards were going back and forth.

Q: Right.

A: And we want to get these arm back to the place where worked at the airport -- at the airfield. From there we planned to escape. As we --

Q: Can I ask you something?

A: Yeah.

Q: This sounds different from --

A: What?

Q: This -- this kind of behavior, for you --

A: Yeah?

Q: -- being in the resistance, seems different than what you did before.

A: Different?

Q: So what -- what made you join the resistance?

A: What made join the resistance is simply because you cannot go to the slaughter like sheep.

Q: So you wanted to do something.

A: Wanted [inaudible], and of course there was no, assurance, you know. Sure, it's a lost battle, but you want to have a resistance, as much as we could do.

Q: Right.

A: As much as we could do. And we [indecipherable] arms, their arms are better, but we knew it's not the same -- it's not the same as -- it's not a even struggle. But we got to do something. But later on, when it turned out that we were left with a few arms only, and the -- and most of the resistant people were killed in -- in the ghetto, so [indecipherable] there were left, we were 24 people together, we made the escape.

Q: And when was the escape, do you know?

A: When the escape?

Q: About.

A: About, it was October, something like that.

Q: Was it cold, snowy, or --

A: Oh, cold, really [indecipherable] was sep -- August, it is the end of September, octo -- something like that. Preparation, you know, it was kind of -- til we moved back the arms to the -- you know, we got -- you have to esca -- the escape has to be -- if you're not armed you cannot escape. I mean, you can escape --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- but to make sure, it's better -- it's assurance, if you have something, it feels -- you feel stronger. I know it --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- I know when [indecipherable] and we had the hand grenades for the rest of the people, so we hand out just the one hand grenade, makes you so strong that you feel -- you walk differently, you have, you know, a little more courage, you -- so you -- at least you have some ar -- some -- some resistance. And we [indecipherable] we made it, we made the escape. Later on we sh -- we

got out the arms outside to the airfield over there and we -- the arms were hidden in the bushes and then we made the escape. We made the group together, little by little --

Q: This is 24 pe --

A: -- single -- single people.

Q: -- uh-huh.

A: Single few people just [indecipherable] not going one group, but just we knew that we're in the group together, little by little and we -- we grouped together at [indecipherable] you know, it's [indecipherable] now. You know it's a little -- in September -- is it -- was it October, or that's -- or something like that, something like -- it was -- the summer was over. And -- and days are -- and people -- what the guys who worked there, and they came later, told us what -- when we were escaped and then the foreman is counting us, that -- and he reported to -- to the Rudel that 24 people missing. He says they escaped. So -- so he -- s -- that's what they told us, that Rudel said, in -- in German, yeah, when they'll -- Wenn sie rieten Kennen losen die Laufen. That's the -- when -- when they can save themselves, let them -- let them run. So he was the -- he became a different man and he chose later, if you want to finish his story, his story didn't end yet, cause when we entered -- when we came to the parti -- partisan -- we met partisans, Russian partisans, they sort of were very anti-Semitic, but they [indecipherable] you -- you have to -- you have no arms, you know, you're not armed. We had our -- the rifles were -- he said, is not -- not enough. You cannot fight, he says, with this, you gotta get arms. So you gotta send out here -- do something, you know, he was really pushing us to -- to some point that you couldn't say no, was -- so he says, you gotta send out people to get arms, or to do some sabotage work. You couldn't do it if the fe -- you're not armed you can't anything, but anyhow, we -- the -- our leaders did send out --

Q: Can -- can you hold that thought, because we have to make a change of the tape.

A: Okay.

Q: So the arms, we'll start there.

End of Tape Six

Beginning Tape Seven

Q: Henry, let me ask you something. This group that you are talking about, where they're saying to you you have to go and get arms in order to be able to be in this group, cause you -- you didn't come out with enough -- is that the first group you were with?

A: That was the first group. There was another --

Q: Wi -- how did you know where to go? You leave the ghetto --

A: That's -- that -- it's interesting, you know, and it's true, you know, you're a -- good question, because we didn't know, we weren't -- we never -- we didn't grow up over there, we were mostly more from -- most of the group probably people from -- from Poland --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- on the other side, but some people promise they know the law, they know the area, but it didn't work -- it didn't -- I don't know if they told the truth. They just probably want to go to ca -
- take part in the escape and they promised they know. Is -- you know, that happened a lot of things which are not expected, you know.

Q: Right.

A: But we have inside pe -- we had now a group people, intelligent and people that -- we had sa -
- little map -- they had some o -- little map, they -- they could [indecipherable]. Well, this guy Muszinski, he was a Polish -- from Poland, also, from Czestochowa, and he -- he was electrician, good elect -- and he was also very intelligent. He sort of l -- looked at the map, little map and he

could -- could see how to get out, and he was y -- a little work here, he could see the -- there was a railroad, small rail tracks like they been carrying woods from the woods -- from the woods, all wood from the woods [indecipherable] get to this tracks, will be on the right track, in other, will go through -- the track goes through the woods. He figured out this here. So that was the -- that was the real intelligent judgment in the -- in this case.

Q: But how do you then find a resistance group, the partisans outside?

A: Well --

Q: Was it an accident that you came upon it?

A: Accidentally.

Q: Accid --

A: Knew -- we knew where -- we knew as we -- we -- we grew closer, we -- as we came closer to the, you know, wooded areas, peasants gi -- you know, the peasants yi -- more or less gave us directions wi -- where the -- which other side -- see, the other side the river. See, if you go the other side the river, you find them.

Q: You'll find them.

A: And it's true. It was -- it was the river Sharra, and if you go the other side the river, we found them.

Q: Now what are you wearing?

A: What?

Q: What are you wearing? It's cold by then, right? It's almost winter.

A: [indecipherable] got -- I remember what -- what I have. We didn't have very warm clothes.

Q: You didn't?

A: I don't remember sh -- well, I don't remember extremely what -- if we have a [indecipherable] it was a problem, you know, at the moment you didn't think about it. You know --

Q: Was it cold?

A: What?

Q: Was it cold?

A: It wasn't cold yet, no, it wasn't cold yet. It was very chi-chilly sometimes at night, but it wasn't cold yet. It wasn't --

Q: And everybody who leaves are men, young boys --

A: Is what?

Q: Men.

A: Men and wom -- and a few women, too.

Q: Men -- there are a few women who --

A: Yeah, yes, yes. [indecipherable] wives from -- from here and there -- and -- and --

Q: No children?

A: No, no children.

Q: But about 24 people?

A: 24 people in this group. And we had only with two rifles. You know, one ri -- was in my bunker, and the other one was someone else's.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: A Russian girls. And, you know, some hand grenades, because the girls brought hand grenades. Where they worked, they smuggled hand grenades easier than --

Q: I see, right.

A: -- yeah, for the girls to smuggle ah -- into the ghetto. And --

Q: So you find it --

A: -- it was something like we have something to do, you know, we had some resistance with a -- whatever we could. It not militarily succeed -- a success, we cannot be stronger than they are, they are -- they are very -- their arms are -- the -- our arms are no match for their arms. But at least to -- to be resistant, to -- to fight back, no matter what -- how much you can do was not important, you just can fight back.

Q: That was what was important.

A: That was important.

Q: So you folks, the 24 of you --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- get to this first group. So who is this group, do you even know who they are? These are Russians?

A: People --

Q: These are ru -- yeah.

A: -- oh, to the ma -- oh that's another thing, we don't know the other -- we don't know the people.

Q: You don't know them.

A: No --

Q: No.

A: -- we didn't know, you know, we had no contact with them. We had no connection, we had no connection and we had no contact before we left. We figured, well we'll -- we'll -- we'll find someone --

Q: Right.

A: -- with a -- well, that -- when we found them, they were not good to us, they're not friendly, they were anti-Semitic.

Q: They were anti-Semitic?

A: Yeah.

Q: And they knew you were Jewish, of course?

A: What?

Q: They knew you were Jewish?

A: Oh sure, they knew we came together. There was one Ukraine guy who was -- he was sort of the head of -- not the head, but he was the s -- spoke to us in a manner like, in other words, why did you come here? You gave the gold to -- to the Germans. In other -- you gave the -- you gave th -- you gave the gold to the Germans, and you came here, in other words, empty handed. You came here --

Q: Empty ha --

A: -- you came here what, to save your life, he said. Well -- and -- but, he says, well you have to show that you really want to fight the -- back. Fight the [indecipherable]. You have no arms, so you have to go and get arms, and you get whatever you can sabotage, whatever you can do. So ma -- well, our guys went to start to do something, to think about something. So we send out four different -- four different groups to show -- to go, as they say -- as they have demanded, they have demanded to go out to get arms, or to do sabotage. So one guy from our group -- from -- who worked at the electricians, he said he'll go back to the transformers, he'll destroy the transformers in the airport. It's a big sabotage [indecipherable] and all the -- to -- young kids, they said they worked with -- for a ye -- they worked for police, they worked, you know, from

the ghetto they went out to work to the police, railroad police, those who carried the prisoners and thing, or my people are [indecipherable] to the camps, or those prison -- those have a police force, they have a police force and they worked for them. So they -- so they go and see if they could get some arms over there. And the third one -- the third group is just to get int -- the information to go near the railroad, to see the -- bring the information, the movement, what kind of -- what kind of movement it is, what cargo, military or some that. So there were fo -- and then there's another group which just simply -- I don't know whether you figure to go get some arms. And those four -- four guys, you know, they went out, they didn't have arms with them. They weren't armed, but they went to look for arms, which was really --

Q: So these are guys going alone?

A: Huh?

Q: These are guys going alone or in their small groups?

A: In their s -- no, alone, they --

Q: They're alone?

A: -- some of them are alone, some of them with small group.

Q: [indecipherable]. And are you going at all?

A: No, I --

Q: No.

A: -- not go --

Q: You're staying.

A: -- they were going. I [indecipherable] I didn't go there. But I was [indecipherable] you know, to the other one.

Q: Right.

A: So the others has way -- they have -- they have some sort of place where they could find it, maybe they had in the mind somewheres to go where they could find some arms. And those four guys, those four guys were killed right away, out -- when they stepped -- you know, the first -- the first -- they -- the German patrol right away killed them as soon they went out on the other side, the outside of the camps, you know, they -- you know, an hour later, something like that. These four gu -- and the other guy, they went wi -- to -- went to blow up the transformers, they went -- came -- went back to the pu -- in other words, the place where we were and he was spotted -- he was mix -- miggling -- mixing with jig -- the guy still which working there, he was play like one of them, and then stay overnight and do his job. While he was hanging around there, a Polish guy knew his -- that he escaped in the partisans [indecipherable] worked with the Jewish guys and they were talking about he -- that Moishe Polak is -- is in the partisans. And then he sees him here. He sur -- he informed the SS. And they -- they came and picked him up and brought him for interrogation and one SS officer was sitting next [indecipherable] his table, and nic -- is sort of asking questions. And he had a hand grenade with for -- from our group, the guy, he pulled out the hand grenade. So the officer saw the hand grenade, he went out the room. And he wants to blow himself up --

Q: Right.

A: -- with the hand grenade, but the hand grenade didn't go off. So he opened the window, and just -- he jumped out and killed himself jumping out the window.

Q: Mm. So right away it's a tragedy, right?

A: Yeah. Boys cry [indecipherable] cry. All the others have also su -- they all succeeded, but the four guys who were killed the first were people who worked in our place.

Q: Yeah.

A: And they, when they were killed, they had their documents on them, the -- the -- their I.D.'s. So they knew where they worked. So went back and they had this, the SS went back to the work -- to the place where they worked, and tried to find -- to find out how come they don't know -- they didn't know that they escaped. Said, when did they escape? So the -- they -- they went to the far [indecipherable] it's an office where they keep their registers and the files from all the workers. And they were looking for the files for these guys, and they couldn't find them. So they ask these clerks, is there missing files? Well, he -- he said that Rudel, man was here, he took out the files, say you don't know, you know, for what reason they too -- took out. He took out and destroyed them, like we never existed.

Q: Existed.

A: So that was -- he didn't call -- when we escaped he didn't alarm the SS, that's one thing. He didn't go to chase us [indecipherable] us -- he was it -- and so, in other words, and then he figured that he'll take out the -- the files, nobody will look in -- will -- nobody will know that we escaped. So meanwhile the SS arrested Rudel and as they -- later on the guys came, they came after us, some of them managed to escape, the last -- the last -- the last -- from our -- from [indecipherable] we were -- told us about that, how he was arrested and court-martialed. So I felt I -- I felt that he [indecipherable] was talking to him that he -- he went through a tremendous change, being that he was a devoted Nazi and could not -- he would not expect that kind of scene which is -- you know, it could break down a lot of people, but he broke down even though he's a -- he was a devoted Nazi.

Q: Right.

A: It broke him down. And you know how much -- how strong they are what it is and you know, but you never know is a [indecipherable] a man is just a human being

[indecipherable] could break down anybody. So that's what the ir -- we heard of these guys who came later, what he -- what happened to him, and he -- and he was court-martialed and presumably -- I don't know what -- which way, or -- it's hard to find them. I then -- go to find --

Q: How do you spell his name, do you know?

A: What?

Q: How do you spell his name?

A: I don't exactly know, but I l --

Q: Is it R-u-d-e-l? Or --

A: R-u -- R-u-d -- R-u-d-e-l

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And the -- this -- we had still a struggle and -- and the others over the -- cause this group was very anti-Semitic, with -- the ones that were -- gave us orders to go. We had such a -- really, we lost so many people right away, the first fr -- right in the first step, lost two -- two of the good people. Two of this and the three [indecipherable]. And -- and the main thing is what -- is where they were not instructed how t-to do it, how to go. They were strange, you know, and they -- out from the woods, they know -- they didn't know if you can go by a daytime or at night. You know, some of them go dangerous places, you don't go in broad daylight, you -- you wait until -- til it's getting dark, or complete night. They were not giving instructions at all, they just send them out to be killed or something like that.

Q: So what happened in that group? Did you stay there, or did you folks leave?

A: Fa -- we didn't stay long with them, because they were really very -- like whole group were really -- like how could I say, they -- they told us -- they ma -- called them ex-convicts. I mean, you know, like --

Q: Ex-convicts? Did they seem like criminal --

A: Yeah [indecipherable] Russian -- them Russian -- the Russians, they open the jails you know, the [indecipherable] they were vicious guys, killers. They could kill [indecipherable] even, very easy, and --

Q: How did they treat the women who were in the group?

A: What?

Q: How did they treat the women?

A: How they treat the women?

Q: The women -- you are -- the women who came with your group.

A: No, they didn't bother our women, but they had their own.

Q: They had their own women.

A: Yeah, they had their own women. Every [indecipherable] is a different -- different way of -- but, they were horrible. They were horrible and their behavior wasn't good, and their treatment. They really let [indecipherable] we could not stay there longer, but was -- they were robbing us, and they robbed our arms, and the shoes, some good shoes they took off. People came from the ghetto still when the ghetto was there and they had something, some valuables, s-something, they robbed them.

Q: They took it.

A: Yeah.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Yeah, they weren't afraid. They always took shoes off, they [indecipherable] watches [indecipherable] the handgun and som -- so they took away. You see, the handgun is only for officers. You don't have to --

Q: Handguns are only for officers?

A: Yeah, yeah, only for officers. That's the excuse.

Q: I see.

A: [indecipherable] explain, why did you -- why did you take -- you know. Oh that -- that -- this -- a handgun is only for officers here.

Q: So tell me, did your group have a leader of some kind?

A: Yeah, the -- we have a leader what -- he couldn't do much. [indecipherable] have a leaders, you have two leaders, you have a co -- a few guys which are sort of in the leadership sure. Well, they were still in the -- in the ghetto, there were leaders, so they -- some of them were still leaders in the group.

Q: So who made the decision to leave? All of you together, or --

A: To leave to go out?

Q: To go -- no, to go to another group, you [indecipherable] this first --

A: Oh, to go another group later on?

Q: Yeah.

A: Well, course it was impossible to stay there.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So you had to find a -- we found out that there -- another group is coming to this area, and -- and it's -- it is an entire different area. They came from -- from a Slonim area -- area that's -- it's another region where the pe -- the German had big, big raids there. A division with mi -- the army diverted to clean -- to -- to clean out their -- their trades -- their groups. They were a big unit, you know, a big movement --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- of different groups, lot of groups. So they moved towards us, they were going to go further e -- further east. So some of the groups also split up. There was a -- a Jewish group, what with a Russian com -- commander, so we figured well maybe it's a good -- so we got the idea to go. We have to leave anyhow, this area is -- couldn't stay longer.

Q: Right.

A: And so we -- we managed to merge with them. And --

Q: Is this the one near Slonim, south of --

A: Well --

Q: Or is not -- not yet?

A: Is what?

Q: The one near Slonim? Is this --

A: Through Slonim, yeah the guys -- the guys from Slonim, and they came to our area, and of course they were in --

Q: Ah, they came to your area, uh-huh.

A: Yeah, they came to our area, cause they had the big raids. And y --

Q: And was this Orlovsky's group, or is that another one?

A: What?

Q: Is this Orlovsky, or is this another group?

A: No, this ano -- not yet --

Q: Another group.

A: -- not yet.

Q: Okay.

A: It is not Orlovsky yet. This is a group, a -- a group which splinter also, they -- they were a big brigades and they broke up in the smaller groups because they been running from -- they been going east, so they couldn't go in one big brigade, there were a few hundred people. So they broke up these small groups, and in this one was a Jewish group and we -- we -- some of them got together, and we merged with them.

Q: And who was the leader of that group? Was there a leader?

A: They had a leader, they have a -- they had a Russian leader.

Q: A Russian leader?

A: Yeah. They had a Russian leader, and they figured that was better. And we told the Russian leader, you know, where we were there, that the -- these guys before, they -- they killing the -- many people come from ghetto, they been killed there -- a lot of people have been killed.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And he says why don't you meet with this [indecipherable] we told him that you -- you commanding us, why don't you meet with these guys, the Gorkinsens and tell them why the -- and ask them why did they kill people when they come from the ghetto? So he met with this commander there, Tsygankov and he says, why do you kill th -- all Jewish people, they come from the ghetto. So he says, don't worry, if I'll kill a hundred -- a hundred Jews, and one of -- and one would have been a spy, I would be f -- I would be justified. That's a -- that's the answer --

Q: So that's [indecipherable], right, right.

A: -- I'll be justified, you know, that --

Q: Right.

A: -- that -- that is really a -- you know, a situation [indecipherable] complain if you have no -- nobody to complain.

Q: Right, right.

A: Yeah, they give you such answers, so much reason now [indecipherable] he brings you a -- a -
- a good reason, kill a spy. But it's not a spy and not the -- not the spy, they just wants to kill the
Jews --

Q: Jews

A: -- the Jewish -- yeah.

Q: And this second group was better, this gu -- this --

A: The one we merged?

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Well, inside was better, but y -- we stayed there until [indecipherable] almost til the end of the
year, end of --

Q: '42?

A: '43.

Q: End of '43?

A: Yeah. We stay with them, and -- but there was a big raid, a raid, the raid was -- they attacked
us in the winter. I don't know which was [indecipherable] the year or that was the end of the year
-- end of the '43.

Q: Were you there with yo -- were you with them for about a year?

A: No, no.

Q: No.

A: It was a -- we merged with them for a couple months later.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Couple months later there was a -- a -- you see, the -- the marshes freeze in the winter and so they had the -- the lake froze, so the German gro -- the militia what they had -- they had also Belarussian militia in there, they teamed up with the German SS, and they raided our camp, which it was easy to -- to come over because the -- the lake was frozen in the winter, and attacked us. We didn't have any casualties, but we just escaped, just -- just -- and the trouble started then with this -- you couldn't -- and things changed, this -- this Russian commander sort of was good, so long, til is -- he took in some Russian escapees from camp, or whom -- who were [indecipherable] Russian guys, and they didn't like the way they -- they said the Jews are lazy bum -- you know, the Jews are really -- so the [indecipherable] so he -- he sort of agitated, you know, to be -- you know, h-he wasn't anti-Semitic before, but he -- what they -- what they gave him lessons or something, I don't know. And he changed, he changed, he wasn't the -- he listened to them, the -- get rid of the Jews, get rid of the Jews, get a -- since then he decided -- he sort of took a group of Jews, small group and try to get [indecipherable] he don't want to. So [indecipherable] them, he took a -- went east. So he l -- he left us -- he left the group from -- this Baranovich group, probably [indecipherable] th-they separated -- they separate us again, cause, you know, it's over. The raids broke the whole thing --

Q: Right.

A: And the -- the -- th-the -- he was changed, was became also anti-Semitic, yeah, because they - they told him, they te -- they gave him a lesson.

Q: Uh-huh. And he learned it.

A: They gave him a lesson, and again --

Q: We have to stop the tape.

A: Yeah?

Q: Yeah.

End of Tape Seven

Beginning Tape Eight

Q: Okay, we left off and you said you were left alone, that this -- this guy just left you by yourselves again, right? Or you decided to leave? The second group. The second -- the second resistance group you were in.

A: The second, when we merged with the other group?

Q: Yes, but then -- then you split from them, right? Cause this guy, th-the guy who seemed not to be anti-Semitic became anti-Semitic.

A: Oh, the -- Pugachov. That -- it was something that -- we went back -- we still had a Jewish group in existence, I mean, since they went back -- they went, they left people and they left the gr -- us, and were -- now, who does that? They have -- the g -- the group originally, which was a s -- was sort of dismantled because you had a raid and people were running in different directions, til they grouped together it took a long time, couple weeks because you spread out who knows where, because it was a big raid. Took a couple days until they burned the village, and took a few days and they were -- we were spreading out in the depths from the woods somewheres. We didn't know how fa -- long they stay, but they were -- tried to go back, but they were still stay -- the German forces were thi -- still in the village for a few days, you know, that's unheard of -- it was unheard of til then, how long they stayed, they want to clean up -- clean out this area. So -- but this commander of this group Pugachov is a Russian guy, and he start ta -- taking -- getting in more people like from the Russian prisoners -- Russian guys, prisoners, escaped prisoners. And -- and there were s -- they were anti-Semitic, and they sort of talked them in.

Q: Right, you had said that.

A: Yeah, I said --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: So to [indecipherable] against -- well, it turned out they eliminate Jewish people because they were the majority, and -- and they [indecipherable] the things to be there, they had the commander, he gave them everything. He was like a big -- big commander, do -- do nothing. So then there was a -- a call to go east, partisans should group east wa -- i-in deep -- deeper [indecipherable] because they could group together bigger units -- bigger partisan brigades, so they, because the German -- four German battalions were really active in -- in raids, and they figure if they th -- if they were grouped together, they still be stronger resistance and they would not be able to eliminate these group. So he delayed that call til -- delayed until finally after the raid, and these two fr -- fre -- couple friends, the Russian escapees talked them in and say, he got -- he gotta do something, in other words, so he left. Half of the group behind it -- he [indecipherable] from the old -- his old Jewish friends, the others, and the Russians, guys, and he took off east, he left us alone. We had eight -- four rifles -- four rifles, very little arms. In other words, we were a lot of pe -- we were 36 people, something. And we tried to stay and maintain whatever we could do, try to get some contact, we couldn't -- we couldn't find any contact with any other groups. So we're by ourselves. But the Gorkinsens, these were after us. They want to get rid of us in that area. They don't want us in this area because it's their -- their area, they say it's their territory.

Q: So the -- the partisans want to get rid of you.

A: Yeah, it's the Russian -- the Gorkinsens, yeah.

Q: Or the [indecipherable]

A: They want to get rid of us and they don't -- they no -- they don't want us at all in that area.

They says, the -- the Jew, they -- they sort of a-afraid for their securities, not sec -- we are n -- we

are ruining their hiding place -- their places [indecipherable] it's just ma -- excuses. They don't want us in their area.

Q: Henry, what was your role in the resistance? Now that you've been in for almost a year, I think, what were you doing?

A: What we were doing?

Q: No, you.

A: Me?

Q: Yeah, yeah.

A: Well then, just waiting for good days.

Q: Just waiting for good days?

A: Yeah, waiting for the -- because we are really -- have nothing to do now.

Q: No, no, no, before, when you were in these two [indecipherable] group.

A: Before, y -- there was no -- you know, just pa -- comepra -- pa-patrol and that's all, nothing much. Patrolling the area was it. Patrol --

Q: Uh-huh, and you're patrolling what? You're patrolling to make sure the Germans are not there, or what?

A: Patrolling is so s -- you know, we been -- as we were s -- before, a separate group, we been raided.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And we -- we had s -- we lost stuff -- we lost the camp. They raided camp and we had to leave to the other side. So now we have to do it more secure they -- around the camp. So we had to patrol around the areas with excess roads, watch the ol -- the oncoming [indecipherable] or raids or something. So sort of -- sort of tried to be more careful now, cause we l -- we l -- almost lost

two people, cause they were wounded in that raid, in the first raid. So that was my doing now with --

Q: So now --

A: I didn't have -- I didn't have -- I didn't have ver -- arms of my own.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Just the hand grenades, and therefore it's -- those who had arms were more sort of obvi -- really, they -- nobody wants to give up their -- their arms if they have.

Q: Right.

A: Nobody wants to give it up cause they're not sure if they will get back, like -- but --

Q: So what happens now, you're -- the group is alone again. Do you find a third group?

A: So we sitting alone, yes?

Q: Yes.

A: And which -- one guy is in command, this -- he must be at le -- there must be one in command otherwise --

Q: So who was he, what was his name?

A: What?

Q: What was his name?

A: What's his name?

Q: Mm. Do you remember?

A: I just remembered yesterday. Oh, it'll come to be, because --

Q: Okay, sure.

A: And -- Minek.

Q: What was it?

A: Minek.

Q: Blinnick?

A: Minek -- m -- m-i-n-e-k, Minek.

Q: Okay.

A: He was -- sort of had the group. Nice guy, and while it was cold, we were near the -- the river was frozen, we were camping near the -- near the Sharra river, so our road were -- the appro -- the -- the approach to our camp was through the river. It was frozen, so it was like a -- was like a good road, like a highway.

Q: Yes, right.

A: A frozen river was -- it was good --

Q: It's a good --

A: -- was a good road.

Q: Yeah, right.

A: We could go, we could -- even though we could go with -- with -- with the horses, with things like that, and it was --

Q: Really?

A: -- it was frozen good. So we camped there, but soon, in February, sort of, the river gave -- the river was floating -- floating. You know, February it start get warmer, so the warm weather melt the ice, the oncoming water is floating -- floating over -- is running over the --

Q: Campground --

A: What?

Q: -- where you were?

A: Is coming closer to our camp.

Q: I see.

A: Coming closer to our camp, we had to evacuate, go somewhere else. In the first place, it a fo - before that happened, we -- there were four others, they -- they -- we got from -- left for -- for us, for this group, the Gorkinsens want -- came to that [indecipherable] and they says lets -- you have to go for a certain operation. The arm -- you have to s -- give me -- send all armed men with us, all the -- so we send four guys, we have four -- four arms, four guys. And they -- when they came to the point where the -- they were introduced [indecipherable], this is the man in -- in command of this operation, he says he wants to look through the arms, everybody should check their arms. So he -- they let them check their arms, but they never gave back. They rob their arms in a nice way, in a nice way, in a tricky way. In a tricky way they robbed the arms, and the -- when they came home without arms, we say that -- that's the end of us. We have no choice now, we -- I don't know, we have to do something. Well, it was t -- it was tough without arms, we couldn't -- without arms you can't -- can't even get food, you know. So we waited. In meanwhile, the -- the -- the river was flowing and the camps a way -- and our camp was sort of getting more water and water, you see? Soon enough, we'll probably -- we'll have to be stuck or can't go further, or we'll go s-sinking here, because the water is coming in fast. So this commander, he send out two guys, two in different direction -- two in the one direction, and me and -- I went out with my friend Jonathan in one direction to look a way out. If you don't -- we always had the river for the road, but we have to find a way to go beside the river to get out of this area -- of this swamp -- of this swampy area or something. So I have -- I have been good at that, I always have -- went out scouting, and I went out with my friend Jonathan and well [indecipherable] a couple hours looking around the area, how to get to -- out -- to make a way out in a dry way, not -- not into the water, and to -- so when the two other guys went a little bit

on the different direction, they should look in that direction. And I came back to reported this, we have a good way out and that's all, we could simp -- not difficult to get out from here. Found still a dry way -- dry land to go out. The other two guys took a little longer time to come back.

Couldn't ra -- didn't [indecipherable] whether they got lost or something [indecipherable]. They got lost, they got a little wandering around a little bit. They couldn't find it. They came back -- they couldn't find anything out. They couldn't find a way out. [indecipherable]. As we sitting and goo -- discussing the reports of these ex -- the evacuation of ours -- camp, two Gorkinsens appeared.

Q: Who?

A: Gorkin -- the two guys from gor --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- and says -- and they said, who the two guys who -- who -- yeah, they reported they met once of the -- one guy that met one of the Gorkinsens. Okay, it wasn't so clear, but anyhow they said they met one guy. Okay, so these guys came and they said who are they. Who are they, they say. So these two guys raise their hands. So they says come along to our commander, he wants to co -- ke -- ask you some questions because he wa -- you -- you came over and he wants to know why [indecipherable]. Oh, we says, you know why, because I -- we wanted have a way out and we're looking a way out. Yeah, but to him -- you gotta explain to him, he wouldn't take -- come along. As they walked out, two minutes later, two shots. So we -- this [indecipherable] our commander said well, tomorrow morning we have to go. It's no -- it's no use to stay here, it's no good. So we figure, we lost two guys again, and no reason. Well, we di -- we sort of made up that -- that was the -- towards the evening, in the evening. That next morning we don't wait too long, early in the morning we get out [indecipherable]. And as we packed our stuff in the

morning to get out, two guys are here [indecipherable] again from them, two other guys and they make sure that we -- that we are moving out. They watched us going, so they went back to [indecipherable]. Going on, we had no place where to go, cause everything -- everywhere is dangerous. You know, sort of being pushed out to the edge, to the -- and we could not -- we find a place we stayed at -- we stayed a couple days in a place, we says it isn't temporary -- it isn't steady, but temporary, wait until we find the pet -- permanent place. But again they showed up, more than one, more than two, the whole group. And -- and we sort of -- so we had -- we left together, we had -- each one had two hand grenades. We had the hand grenades, Russian hand grenades. So you had them in the belts here, two hand grenades. So they figured we don't have arms, they finish -- they finish off us. They -- they want to finish -- there was -- they took arms and they are alone, without arms. Well, they came in, they looked around, see we still have hand grenades, I think they changed their mind. They just, oh, I want to see where you -- where you settle -- where you settled. You know, made themself in good friends. Good friends. And they left. They saw the -- saw the hand grenades, they didn't want to start a war. Anyhow, we went further, what you say, again [indecipherable] decide it's not the place to stay, because they will -- they'll be coming in here and there. If not today, they will come tomorrow again. So we moved further out.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: We moved out to a -- almost to the end of the partisan zone, you know, it's almost -- very close to the German patrols, okay? And over there we stayed a few -- couple days, and it ha -- still -- still I saw one or two of them coming -- coming nearby.

Q: What, of the -- of this -- from this other group?

A: To look a -- to look -- to se -- to find out where we -- where we s -- where we -- we camping. There was a real tra -- strange thing. At the same time, two our friends, those who were -- went out with j -- with the Pugachov, they broke up with them and they came back cause had t -- they have girlfriends here, in us. So they had two rifles, each one had two guns -- they have two guns. [indecipherable] we were happy to see them, cause with -- with two guns, at least we can defend ourselves, you know. It's -- and then we could get some food, also.

Q: So why did they come back? Because they had girlfriends in your group?

A: Yeah. That's th -- it wasn't very well organized where they left, but -- with Pugachov, so he was not commander any more, and they were sort of dispersed in different groups.

Q: I see.

A: I think they were not -- they didn't control where we is. They left and they came to us -- their girls. So we gonna have sitting this [indecipherable] situation if we get -- we has to be -- something has to be done, you know, we cannot just keep running --

Q: Right.

A: -- there's no place where to go. So these [indecipherable] bring their two guns, so they go out into a village, to look for some contact with the other partisan groups, and maybe they would get some help. They came -- when they came back they said they met some two guys, which are from the joka -- from the -- two guys -- they met in the village two guys and they listened carefully what they told them, and the two guys said, well it's a very serious matter that si -- but we didn't [indecipherable] we don't believe it [indecipherable] they would say, right away we'll solve the problem, said we'll try, we'll bring this new message to our commander and we'll see what he could do it, cause he is -- he is this -- he is a powerful man, he could do it. And it didn't take long, the next day in the morning we saw these two guys, these same guys came back to our

-- our camp, where we camped, and -- and they said, we told our boss and he was very upset, he heard what happened with -- he -- he know the Gorkinsens, he know this -- what they are, and he says from now on I'll -- he'll be taking care of that. He says he'll -- he'll protect it from now on, because you are under my control. Couldn't believe it what they saw. Sure enough, this was a powerful man, probably has the power to -- to give orders, the other --

Q: Right.

A: And he says he came, explained that the -- we'll take care, and we'll set up we'll disperse -- he'll take our people and put them in Russian groups, he says, according the Russian law or something -- the Soviet law, no Yiddish -- Jewish groups alone, I mean for itself is illegal otherwise. If you be in a -- in the -- in the groups [indecipherable] with Russians with protection -- with my protection, he says, he'll -- they'll -- they can't say anything. He start doing it. He was a man who could do it, he has the power -- he had the power.

Q: And what was his name?

A: What?

Q: What was his --

A: Orlovsky.

Q: It was Orlovsky.

A: Orlovsky was the very -- Orlovsky was a fighter --

Q: Mm.

A: -- in the [indecipherable]. It is shu -- I mean, I should have brung you my book from [indecipherable] where there was -- he teamed up with a -- but Orlovsky was just landed, he th -- he came -- he -- they parachu -- he parachuted with a group, a small group. And he met the Jewish partisans from Slonim which were [indecipherable] after a raid, and they also had a --

couldn't find together, they always were in -- split up. And this guy, they would -- that the -- Liker, his name was Nathan Liker, and he says -- he explained to him as Nathan Liker saved his life. This Orlovsky, when I met -- Nathan Liker was -- came from [indecipherable] and he met Orlovsky, and he found -- Nathan Liker found out from a -- from the other people -- the peasants, that the high commissioner is coming -- the high commissioner is coming to hunt pigs, wild pigs. So they -- that Nathan Liker was happy to see -- see what now Orlovsky save orlos -- so he came to Orlovsky for help if -- if they want to attack this expedition, the hunting is -- so Orlovsky was very happy and Orlovsky took his people, he came and so together -- they got together 15 people and attacked -- and ambushed the expedition. Of course there was success, but Orlovsky at the end almost -- he got -- had a -- a Russian -- they threw a Russian dynami -- dynamite pieces. The explosive.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: They had dozen explosives big as a brick, a small brick, and he -- you know, like our bricks in the shape of this, but a little smaller. This brick has, if you put the fuse in, you can throw and explode it. So he been throwing these bricks up at them, at the -- at the hunters. And of course he was successful, but the -- the last one he picked up, a bullet hit this brick and it exploded --

Q: Exploded.

A: -- in his face. This man was completely -- I mean, he -- he finished that his own way. His arm was gone, the other arm was half off and Nathan Liker saw this happen, he grabbed him to carry out from the fire zone. And Orlovsky begged him and say, drop me, because go back to the fight, I'm not going to make it anyhow, so you don't have to bother with me. And --

Q: We have to stop the tape there, I'm afraid. You have to tell the end of --

End of Tape Eight

Beginning Tape Nine

Q: Go ahead.

A: Okay then.

Q: So you were talking about this incident in World War II, when Orlovsky was -- had a horrible accident and this Jewish man, Nathan Liker was going -- taking him to save him?

A: He had -- yeah, he -- by throwing this grenade, this fire bomb --

Q: Right.

A: -- he was terribly wounded. One arm was completely off, the other just the hand up to here.

Q: It was off.

A: Off. His face burned, and we saw -- I saw him later, you know, when he had recovered already.

Q: Right.

A: Face was unrecognizable, he was a -- all burned and with kind of wounds, and his whole face was like -- and -- but the only thing is -- is -- his legs are good, his feet were good, the legs were good. He could run -- I could not catch up with him, you know, he's so fast and he -- and his mind was good. And his -- and he was really a -- still a fighter, still couldn't sit still, you know, to get people into action, to sh -- all kind of -- and he agreed to take some people from us, not only to -- to -- to -- to dissolve the Jewish -- Jewish group as a whole, and to set them up in different [indecipherable] in non-Jewish or [indecipherable]. And he did something and he took some people into his [indecipherable] because [indecipherable] and I got into his [indecipherable] in his group and he was really a remarkable person, very -- so smart and -- but could not sit still, he wants to fight, even though without arms, he had his [indecipherable] his friend, his Spanish -- a Spanish guy who dressed him or fed him, and whenever in pub -- never --

nobody see, he always, somewhere where nobody's around, he was fed and did other things, you know, but away from -- from other eye -- from other people.

Q: [indecipherable] Right.

A: And when he gave orders still, he was in command, he didn't want to give up the job, the post th -- of this group. And he was sort of respected in the area as a powerful man, he had his hi -- he has [indecipherable] Liker, what he wrote, is then colon -- a colonel or something in the army. I don't know what kind of rank it is. It isn't important what he was -- he was really so down to earth, sitting down with -- with the Jewish guy, sitting [indecipherable] he took him in in the evening, he had a fireplace, and telling stories and all kind of stories, his -- and -- and he -- he's telling also about the Liker, he says he saved his life, he -- Nathan Liker saved my life. And you know, he -- he does the -- I can't -- he says, I [indecipherable] do -- I'm doing this for Jewish people because see Jewish -- a Jewish guy saved my life, the Jewish people saved my life. And he was really good. He had restored order, all the Jewish troops who were around that area were never harassed or touched, cause he gave a order they'll be responsible if they do something.

And nobody since then --

Q: Did anything.

A: -- did anything to Jewish groups or something like that.

Q: And so when -- when did you get into that group, in '44?

A: From beginning of '44, yeah.

Q: So you were in the group for a year, or you --

A: Huh?

Q: Little more than a year, that same group?

A: No [indecipherable] over there we -- we unite with the -- we -- [indecipherable] the rust -- the Soviet army came in and -- and early fall -- early fall in the sept -- in the -- the area. The --

Q: In '40 f --

A: Th --

Q: -- in '44?

A: Yeah, we --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- we came out in '44, in the end of -- by the end of sep -- August -- September -- September, I think.

Q: So were you with Orlovsky until --

A: Til the --

Q: -- til the Russian army came?

A: Yes, because I -- at that time, du-during the time when I was there, I just took sick a li -- a little, typhus.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The typhus knocked me out, a little.

Q: I bet.

A: Yeah, and -- what?

Q: I bet, yes.

A: And -- and th-they -- they said that nobody believed that I cou -- that I'll make it, you know.

And it was really not for a -- for a long time I couldn't get -- I couldn't get recover -- get in recovery, you know. But --

Q: Eventually you did.

A: -- eventually I did and after when the armies -- when the Soviet armies came towards us, I went back to Baranovich.

Q: You did?

A: Yeah.

Q: What was that like when the Russian army came? Did you feel liberated?

A: Well, I didn't -- you know, to tell you the truth, the oncoming pe -- the army I didn't see it.

Q: You didn't see them?

A: No, because we -- I told you we gonna -- we didn't hear, we didn't see them. They passed us by without the -- without the -- it went so fast through --

Q: But you knew, once they went through that you were okay.

A: When they went through we -- we figured -- we knew they're cle -- nearby, they coming towards the -- they going into the -- but we figured we'll be -- we'll hear them or something.

Q: But you didn't.

A: But the vehicles went by, you know, not that far from the road, but they were so quiet, and the American -- American trucks, they were quiet, they not making that noise. And -- and we didn't hear them.

Q: So how did you know that it was okay to go back to Baranovich?

A: Oh, well, in a day or so when people came -- people came over and some of them are our people. So that was -- I went back to Baranovich.

Q: It must have been difficult though, no?

A: Yes, it was very difficult. First of all they -- they come back to ci -- their cities were all bombed and you know, and also burned down to the ground. The demolition of -- a -- retreated

armies destroyed everything, the German armies destroyed every house, everything, so -- one little house where we stayed was still there, but everything was not the same. And --

Q: Did you go back to Baranovich with some of the friends that you left with?

A: No.

Q: Or did you go back alone?

A: I went back alone. Was my friend -- my Tanchim friend, he was in that group, and this group -- he went straight th -- on the third day he wrote a letter -- he wrote a letter to me, when we -- he -- to Baranovich, and somehow it came. You know, he says -- he mentioned the names, but he figured [indecipherable] I mean [indecipherable] all of a sudden a postcard came, and -- from a front line, and he -- he says within three days they were all dressed and into the front line, the very front line.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah. I don't know why they were singled out to be sort of --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- they're [indecipherable] and then I hear from other groups should be taken [indecipherable]

Q: Did he survive?

A: What?

Q: Did he survive?

A: He?

Q: Your friend.

A: He was -- no, he's not, but he was -- he was wounded, and he was in a field hospital in Bialystok and we sort of went back -- were ready to go back to Poland -- to Łódź when the armies were -- we figured the armies go fast, so we start off ya -- ya -- I mean, ourself and -- and

my friend, the other one who is also from Łódź, we tried to move out towards Łódź. We got stuck in Białystok because the armies -- the Soviet armies didn't go further because there were this uprising in Warsaw, a Polish uprising. The Polish uprising took place and it was a political maneuver, political case, you know. The far right Polish -- Polish underground forces organized - - they organized the uprising, and they have tol -- tell -- told all the -- all the people it's a pure uprising. Really, they want to s -- they want to have -- get the power in Poland --

Q: Oh, okay.

A: -- before the Soviets --

Q: Right.

A: -- come. They could have a bargaining with them or something for independent country or not. I mean that -- maybe that's what the reason, they -- they start the uprising too, before the Soviet's army will enter, and the Soviets did not enter because they figured why -- I don't know, I mean, to me, it's wi -- they figured why should they give us conditions that th -- that the germ - - I mean, the German will take care, let them -- let them -- they will fight the Germans all the way. They didn't -- the Soviet's army didn't enter til -- til the s -- the uprising were crushed --

Q: Right [indecipherable] right.

A: -- completely. I'm sure that that -- this was the lot problem which everybody knew about it, the situation that time there when they moved towards -- and they went across the Vistula --

Q: Right.

A: -- the Polish river. They stayed at the Polish river and they didn't move. And we were behi -- the --

Q: You were in the ow --

A: -- waiting to go back to Łódź.

Q: I see.

A: We were there --

Q: So you were waiting?

A: We waited to go back to Łódź and here it takes -- took a long time because the uprising took the time.

Q: Right.

A: And they didn't go straight right through, because there were other fronts open. This front was not open. They were in the northern -- up northern the front went up further, up to the Baltic -- the Baltic front.

Q: So when did you get back to Łódź?

A: January -- I came back in January '45.

Q: January '45.

A: Hm? January '45.

Q: And do you stay in Łódź?

A: Yeah, I stay in Łódź til about close to '46. '40 --

Q: So, when you come back --

A: -- the end of '45.

Q: -- end of '45, so you stay about a year?

A: Yeah. Personally we rushed to Łódź because you hope to find somebody.

Q: And you didn't.

A: After awhile, you know, there was this committee, a committee --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- Polish -- the survivor's committee in Łódź and we put our names on the list, my name on the list and some -- you know, some people went on -- to the other side, to the -- to Germany when we got in [indecipherable] and put the lists up on their committees over there, and my brother who survived over there in Munich, saw me on the list and he came to Poland.

Q: Uh-huh. So that must have been a shock, I guess you didn't expect it.

A: I don't know. I knew -- I didn't know until --

Q: Right.

A: -- til he came, I don't know -- I didn't know that he is alive, I never -- nobody's gonna find anybody, in my house especially, I mean -- I -- my house [indecipherable]

Q: Right. Did anyone -- was anyone able to tell you what happened to your mother and your sister, or not?

A: Well, they sort of were deported earlier.

Q: They were?

A: [indecipherable] labor, earliest deported.

Q: So they were killed --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- pretty early.

A: So, you say -- you'll say dep -- they'll say deported so you kn -- you know [indecipherable] in the beginning people were sort of told they should ma -- they were deported to someplace -- the German told them so, they being deported somewhere to work, you know.

Q: Right, right.

A: So they call it deported, but [indecipherable] name.

Q: So this must have been a --

A: Innoc -- innocent name --

Q: -- a very difficult time, because on the one hand you're glad it's over and glad you're seeing your brother, but --

A: Yeah, well, it's ter -- it's very dif --

Q: -- it's -- it was -- it was difficult.

A: -- yeah, difficult, difficult to go [indecipherable] searching for people, for my family, survivors of the family. I found the -- the -- my mother's family -- my mother's brother with the family, survived in a village, not in our area, not in Łódź area, in the -- quite a long way in the kel -- Kielce area.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And he survived with the family, with [indecipherable] with kids, small kids.

Q: Really?

A: [indecipherable] how they survived. They heard -- they heard -- when [indecipherable] they looking for the hiding place, couldn't find a place where to hide, and they were -- they were called to report for -- for deportation. So they been -- they were looking for a hiding place, and peasants, nothing -- they didn't want to take them in, they were afraid, or something like that. So they went sitting in the fields, the rye and the wheat, along the wheat. And over there they been - - they been spending summer almost there in the -- in the fields. But then, on a Sunday they heard the voices, the people -- the peasants came to look about when it's ripe to harvest. So they si -- they heard them say that next week they'll be -- that was on a Sunday, that tomorrow they will come to start the -- to take up -- take off the harvest, so they had to run away before they -- so they went into a place, just looking for place, couldn't find it. There was a little wooded area, they dug a hole. They dug a hole and all of them went into the hole and they put a hiding cover

out on top. And they [indecipherable] of my uncle was a man, he had a -- made the upper parts of the shoes to a Polish guy, and -- and before the war, so he remembered that he lived not far from the -- in that area, so he knocked at the door, his door at night and he told them they hiding and he asked for food.

Q: Mm.

A: This guy, for about six or seven months, brought food every night to their hiding place.

Q: Wow. Did they remain in Poland, that family, or did they leave?

A: No, th-they left -- they left the [indecipherable] they all came -- they all went to ger -- Germany was -- DP camps --

Q: Right.

A: -- was the only good place where to, you know, stay, you don't have -- you know, because in Poland, when we came back to Łódź, there were no -- nobody take -- took care at people who came from camps --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- or from partisans or from war -- or ho-homeless pe -- when we came was [indecipherable] cause the German -- German population lived there, and they left. So we had apartments, we came early in January, it was different.

Q: Right.

A: But when the people from camps came, and it was towards spring, towards the end of the war, there were no --

Q: No place to stay.

A: -- no place where to stay, and they -- and there was no kitchen for them to feed them, or publ - - you know, public place where to sleep --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- or something. They were just like homeless people.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: They had no -- so they went back to Germany to DP camps where they -- at least they be -- they're being fed and they had help. Some sick people -- sick people get help and -- and they had clothes and so on. In Poland the government didn't give a -- a damn, you know, they didn't do anything to help these people, which unless someone had connection, which could go to -- if somebody has connection to go then, to have help --

Q: Right.

A: -- so they went some to the ho -- the people in camps, some of them went to hospitals. But other than that, to have a place where to go to sleep, a place to live --

Q: They didn't have it.

A: No. So ma --

Q: So you met your -- did you meet your future wife in Łódź?

A: I met her in -- not in Łódź, but a s -- different town. Yes, my wife was -- came from camp, or a different camp, to look for her family and she met my uncle, which they were sort of related. My wife's -- ma -- my wife's father was a cousin to this aunt who met -- married my uncle --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- so she stayed with them for the time being and when I went to see them, I met my wife over there. She just came from camp.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And being that she -- her name was Gerszonowicz and the other people were not related, but they also have the same name, and -- and they talked her into stay, so that we stay with her -- this

family, and my uncle came, and I came to look on my uncle, and I found out -- and I went to -- I wrote a letter to a Polish family which lived nearby my uncle in the village and sure enough I got an answer from my uncle, I was surprised that they survived, and I rushed to go to see them.

Q: Mm.

A: It was a long t -- and ta -- I mean, just a long way to go.

Q: Right.

A: Long trip and I came with the train where from there had to -- had to go with a small train or with a -- whatever [indecipherable] place, and I got off the train and I s -- met a Jewish girl. She looked at me -- in this little town, and she looked at me, said, I don't know you. I'm -- I'm from here, are you from this town? I said no. I came to look my uncle. She says, where are you going, where's your uncle? I says, he is in [indecipherable]. Oh, don't go there. There was a pogrom last night and they -- all Jewish people -- the survivors, Jewish people [indecipherable] ran away in different places. She said, I don't know where they -- where they are. Finally, took me a -- a day to go -- go different parts and different places to find my uncle and his family.

Q: And you found him?

A: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. When did you go to ber -- Bergen-Belsen?

A: Bergen-Belsen?

Q: Yeah.

A: At the end of '45.

Q: And why did you go there? You just not -- you couldn't stay in Poland?

A: In Poland -- in Poland was that time very bad. The pogroms were all over. Even though in Łódź there were some victims, pogroms.

Q: Really?

A: There's no future -- he could -- it's a Communist rule, you can't go -- you can't leave the country. If you stay there, even though you don't want to wor -- live in this -- in the country where it was chaos and you don't know whether the -- they say the por -- the Soviets wouldn't stay, it's okay, you know, they pro -- a lot of people promised good things. They said the Soviets will leave, it'll be back Poland. I -- I didn't believe it --

Q: Right.

A: -- and it was so, because they didn't leave. So, if the Soviets stay -- you know, they don't want to go, they want to stay there. So e-everybody who came, even they came from lo -- they start coming from the Soviet Union, people whose -- who stayed there through the war, they didn't want to stay in Poland because the Soviets are -- the Soviets are over there and you cannot -- you don't want to -- you know, it's a -- it's -- it's a state which, y-you run away from that. It's ironic, they came from Siberia, th -- and they escaped from the Siberia [indecipherable] and they -- now they say whoever it could made -- took off and got further into Germany -- into Germany where they had DP camps, at least in a place where th -- at least lay down and have foo -- enough food to eat not to be hungry again, you know, whatever food it was, but it was food to s -- to s -- to survive until each one found somebody else or something like that, from the camps or that family out in the different countries or something like that, and they --

Q: Why -- why did you choose to go to Bergen-Belsen rather than any other DP camp?

A: Accidentally.

Q: Accidentally, uh-huh.

A: Yeah, because we -- I, and -- we made the escape to the -- from Poland, and we landed and we came to Berlin. In Berlin that time they were talking they should -- we should leave Berlin,

the Jewish community, the Jewish institutions there, because they gonna be -- they gonna block off -- they gonna be --

Q: Blockade?

A: -- a blockade.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And the blockade, so it's gonna be -- we don't know it, they said the [indecipherable] had to be done, now how -- if you gonna be able to -- to fix -- the supply -- to supply the su --

Q: Right.

A: -- the help. So we went further -- we were across the border, across -- we [indecipherable] the border to -- and entered British zone. The British zone, no plans where to go, but we -- but the first town was Hanover, it's the city of Hanover, we came for help because we were -- were wandering around for a couple days, really hungry and -- and -- and tired. So the guy, this committee said look, you got -- you're here, we had -- we don't have the facilities, we don't have the place where to put you. Bergen-Belsen is not far from here.

Q: Right.

A: They'll have plenty of -- they have place where to put you, you can have a -- you rest up and then you can go where you want.

Q: Right.

A: So well, we went to rest up, but the -- somehow we stayed for the -- for years, because we had some friends over there to begin with and we waited, waited for emigration, for this and that --

Q: Right.

A: -- we waited long time.

Q: We have to stop the tape, unfortunately.

End of Tape Nine

Beginning Tape 10

Q: Henry, did you go to Bergen-Belsen with Fay, or did you go separately?

A: No.

Q: You didn't.

A: No, I --

Q: No.

A: -- went with my friends.

Q: And did sh --

A: [indecipherable] from which we survived with --

Q: Right, in --

A: -- in the partisan, and --

Q: And did she come later?

A: -- on the -- is -- I s -- she -- I went to her. No, I went to a cousin of hers -- I went to Munich when I was in the [indecipherable]

Q: Uh-huh, right.

A: And I went to see my fam -- I had this -- my uncle, what is also in the British zone. So I went to see my uncle --

Q: Right.

A: -- and then I went to see her, I mean the -- at the cousin's house. So we sort of -- we got a little closer and I start coming, and sort of --

Q: Dating.

A: -- holding on.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah, ho -- yeah, not -- not letting go.

Q: Right, right.

A: Anyhow --

Q: So you were married in Bergen-Belsen?

A: We were married in Bergen-Belsen, yeah.

Q: You were, wa --

A: Was late, it was late because we stayed in Bergen-Belsen --

Q: A long time.

A: -- a long time, til -- was waiting --

Q: You would --

A: -- first of all, I -- in the first place, we planned to go to Israel --

Q: Right.

A: -- to Palestine then, and then when the war -- I mean, it was -- when I got married --

Q: Yes.

A: -- things changed and I didn't want go into hardship again, you know. Bring a -- bring a bride here to -- to sleep in the tents or something like that, so I switched to the -- I applied for the emigration to America.

Q: America.

A: And it took a long time til they a-accepted -- accept the -- we -- we got the visas.

Q: Right.

A: It took a long time, I know. There was some --

Q: What was it like for three years in Bergen-Belsen?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: That's a long time. Was it terrible?

A: I did -- I didn't -- I didn't mean to stay long, you know, we meant to go to Aliyah Bet.

Q: Right.

A: And we had -- we sent someone -- first group, they went out to Belgium. To Belgium, to south France. From Belgium to the southern France, that's what our plan to go. They go [indecipherable] go the first group, 10 people we sent to -- we sent, I mean the group was divided into tens to go to the [indecipherable] they shouldn't go the back -- group it together to -- ille -- illegally, you know.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So they were caught, th-the first group, and it was held for a -- for a day or so, and sent back. So we got stuck. So they say it's now -- Belgium does not permit any kind of -- before they were sort of -- permitted people who came to look for families or something like that, but the excuse to come in, no more. So we got stuck in Bergen-Belsen, the waiting, waiting, I don't know for what. We're waiting for better -- waiting for better occasions or something. Then I -- and then I had friends over th -- I had a friend which we very close and he looked at my suit -- I made myself a suit before I left Łódź. Was in Łódź when I came back, the only thing -- you know, we had no pla -- for where to live, you know, we had to g -- we had to live. We had to buy on the black market, stuff. So someone's told me, you know, put the sign, a tailor in the front the building and see, and [indecipherable] people came, all customer -- customers, big one, small one, I made it -- we made -- you lived through. We made -- we bought food, we had everything. When I came Bergen-Belsen I says, well now, now we're not going to do any work any more until we settle in. But as we stayed there a little longer, my fr-friend who [indecipherable] liberated in Bergen-Belsen looked at me, liked my suit. Ah, he says, Henry, if you would make

me a suit like that, I would be the luckiest man. Because now is [indecipherable] because he had applied to go to America -- to America -- North America they want to come like that --

Q: Right

A: -- dressed like a -- they want to come like -- like a mensch.

Q: Right.

A: So I made one suit, oh, so the other guys, the other fr-friends see you make it for him you do it and -- for me -- you know. Ye -- what am I different than the other guys? I made another one.

Q: So you started making another one.

A: And the -- so it -- it came to a point when I st -- I had s -- offers and I couldn't -- we couldn't emigrate, we stayed s -- in a place. So, you know, I start getting customers there. They give me a -- they going to pay any price for the -- I should make them clothes, you know, people -- we had a lot of people who were doing blackmail in a big scale.

Q: You mean black market?

A: Huh?

Q: What did you say?

A: Blackmail -- black -- black ma -- black market --

Q: Black market, right.

A: Black marketing.

Q: Yeah, so some people made a lot of money.

A: And they made money.

Q: Yeah.

A: You know, cause they're big -- in a big scale. [indecipherable] coffee and things like that, it was a big commodity, coffee and chocolate. And they paid pri -- they paid a good price. Say, I'm

waiting anyhow, may as well. I start working, taking in work to order. And I employed two other guys to help me, to work with -- for me, and I paid th --

Q: Where did you get the sewing machines from?

A: What?

Q: Where did you get the sewing machines?

A: Sewing machine, they had the -- the ORT that shipped sewing machines to DP -- to DP people -- people.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah. And they put a lot of the schools [indecipherable] a lot of -- they put up school, or people who want to work, they gave a sewing machine. So worked in the people -- made ladies' coats for myself, I just started a style and make styles for the ladies because I worked for the ladies' house in the --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- before. So I knew a little bit about hat, th-the furs, fur collars, fox collars. So they have money and they could -- they bought the fox -- fox collars and we -- they want to be dressed like a -- like ladies in the -- you know.

Q: Right, right.

A: So, they kept me busy and I made money.

Q: So this was good. Did you -- did you know Rosensaft?

A: Yeah.

Q: You did know him.

A: Yes, and I'm -- and I know him a little good because he was, you know, our president now.

Q: Right.

A: But he was a po -- political [indecipherable] he -- he was a big politician.

Q: He was?

A: He w -- he sort of -- my friend was involved also at the -- another one of them, went -- he died on the [indecipherable] the friend who I [indecipherable] for Łódź, and he was on the committee, and Rosensaft was sort of -- it came to election, to th -- before the ele -- before the election, he knew that he is gonna lose. I mean, he -- because before there was election to the Zionist congress, and he lost, his -- his [indecipherable]. He went through it, the only delegate, he -- he planned for five dele -- for four delegates, he only made for one and he went to the Zionist [indecipherable]. Our -- he block one, two -- two -- two zi -- delegates. Anyhow, he was beaten, so in -- after that, people want the election in the Bergen-Belsen DP camp --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- they want to say -- they want an election. You know, why should we -- he -- he was the president again and again, not elected they said. Well, he's not elected, but he -- but this Rosensaft worked, put up a -- a fight, and a fight [indecipherable] he -- he went is -- he was sitting with people for hours to persuade them not to have the election, just to put the other committee in making him for president.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah. And he won.

Q: And he won.

A: Not he won for election, but he won from the other guys, they gave in. They said, well, h-he - - he -- he was sitting hours. My friend was a little politician, so he came and sit with him for hours, talked about the things in the world, but just sit with him to give -- I don't know, to get his

influence. He por -- he ch -- he was influenced by -- he agreed to the -- because normally, here -- the -- my plans were the election should go through and he probably would lose.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But he gave each one already a jo -- a position, he promised position in the [indecipherable]

Q: Right, right.

A: So it -- he sort of persuade the other guys not to go through the elections, to have already position. Things like that they -- they accepted. And then he kept on -- he kept his job til the last.

Q: Was he a good president?

A: He was a -- he was a good businessman.

Q: Uh-uh-huh, okay.

A: That was a -- he made a lot of money and -- but it has nothing -- it didn't hurt the -- he didn't hurt the --

Q: The camp.

A: -- the camp, and the people. No, he made -- he teamed up with the business people -- business people who put in black mar -- market mater -- coffee and things like that --

Q: Right.

A: -- they became partner. In other words, he -- he looked the other side.

Q: Right.

A: So that's for that, he --

Q: Was it terrible for you to be in Bergen-Belsen for three years after the war, or wasn't it so bad?

A: Ah, the beginning you get -- you know, it's -- y-you could go, you were free to go. So you didn't s -- you stayed, you lived there, it's was -- I didn't want to go into German -- to live in -- in the city. Some people --

Q: But you could -- you walked out -- I mean, you went out --

A: I could walk out, yes --

Q: Right.

A: -- walk out, you know. It's

Q: Staying there was okay.

A: It -- it wasn't that strict. You could walk out.

Q: Right.

A: In the beginning, it -- they tried to make it strict, and to lock up, but the --

Q: And what -- did you ha -- when you went into the stores and you went to Hanover?

A: Yeah, went Hanover --

Q: Yes. And what were the German --

A: -- Hambur -- and Hamburg, and --

Q: -- and how were your -- was your treatment? It wasn't like in Poland, it was okay?

A: Okay. I didn't care whether the Germans liked me or not --

Q: Right.

A: -- I mean, I knew -- I didn't expect from them friendship or something like that.

Q: Right.

A: But some of them -- I mean, I -- we didn't have a lot to do with Germans people -- with German people.

Q: Right.

A: You know, because if we went to Hanover, we went with a group from Bergen-Belsen. Even though we went to the theater, we went with our group, with a truckload of people or something like that.

Q: Right, right.

A: We had one guy who loved theaters and things like that. The others grouped together -- people -- it was -- you had to go --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- a li -- a little [indecipherable] it was -- sitting there. Well, we have cultural kind of activities a lot.

Q: Mm-hm, right.

A: There was the Yiddish amateur theater and [indecipherable] you know, activities, k -- all kind of --

Q: Right.

A: -- it [indecipherable] hang on, and you know, the Saturday especially was the -- the outgoing date --

Q: Right.

A: -- you know. So you -- you had some programs.

Q: Did -- did you go back to being sort of religious, or would you wa -- after the war, were you going to synagogue on Sabbath, or you were not doing anything any more?

A: My -- I was never religious involved --

Q: Right.

A: -- religious --

Q: You didn't like it.

A: I mean, it's not -- it's just like, I went to -- to the tailors, you know --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- the tailor people, they were not religious. So you worked with them, so you become a little bit [indecipherable] that. They're not anti-religious, but they're not religious --

Q: Religious, right.

A: -- they don't want to practice, or -- or the holidays maybe once a -- when my father was alive he want me to see in synagogue --

Q: Right, so you did.

A: -- so I went to synagogue to see him. But later on when I worked and I became a tailor, you had the organization which wasn't religious. You didn't had an -- participated in it.

Q: Right.

A: -- and -- so much. But after the war, I sort of -- I mean, not changed, but I just got a -- the -- the time when they -- the German invasion came and they burned -- first they burned the shuls, burned the books and then they saw the people. That is sort of [indecipherable] obligate or have a -- a -- a one to hold onto the shul, to that, it is what -- what Hitler wants to destroy [indecipherable] forever, that's what they said.

Q: Right, right.

A: And I -- I go to shul, I go to shul, but like, you know, not especially religiously, but the -- for a feeling, for a cultural and religious --

Q: Right.

A: -- and the -- the shul, the thing, the survival. A feel for a survival --

Q: Right.

A: -- of the shul, they -- it's so good to see that it survive, you know, because it was so bad to see when they burned them, when they burned the shuls, when they -- but i-it -- it's horrible, you know. Even though I wasn't religious, but the shul burning, it -- it -- it -- it, you know, you -- and the religious people were the first victims, you know, those with the ber -- beards and -- and payas, they cut this, you know, as you see in the pictures, with the bayonets, they cut the beards. Oh, that i-is -- is a sort of -- how it gives you a -- a feeling that you -- you got to memorize the mu -- memori -- remember them. You got to remember these people, they're the first victims --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- in the -- in the -- from Hitler -- from Hitler's war. And I -- and so I try -- I-I don't want to go to shul, because shul [indecipherable] but it's a belief so deep is another thing, you know, like -- but I go, and I go regular Saturday shul, I love the shul. They have people, got friends. It's y --

Q: Right.

A: -- you got friends, the rabbi's a good friend. I-It's okay in the -- my -- my party next week will be in the shul.

Q: Shul, right.

A: Yes --

Q: And you're gonna turn 90 on su --

A: -- what? You're gonna turn --

Q: Right?

A: -- you're gonna be celebrating my 90th birthday.

Q: 90th birthday, right.

A: Yeah. So the -- so is, you know, invited a lot of people, a lot of friends. All right, I don't --

Q: That's good.

A: -- ever have any birthday parties, I didn't want to, but this is a mark -- this is a -- a -- 90th to me is a unthinkable un -- un --

Q: Right.

A: -- un -- without -- unbelievable point you know, where to come to, came to a unbelievable stage --

Q: Right.

A: -- to -- to celebrate a 90th. We thought I'm not going to live long to begin with after that when we came out because, slow down morally, physically [indecipherable] beaten, but painful, painful -- s-suffered a lot -- long, long time. So [indecipherable] got married and got kids, you have three children, so it's a -- it -- it renews the -- all your life --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- it's a -- revives your life. It revives, children revives you life. I have very beautiful kids, lovely grandchildren.

Q: And you just made a wedding dress for your grandchild, didn't you?

A: Oh yeah, yes, made my granddaughter's wedding dress and is -- she was really proud.

Q: I bet.

A: At the wedding, at her speech, she loved -- there was a big crowd, you know, which she has a lot of friends, and she had a -- in her speech at the finish, she says, thank you to my Zayde -- she gave me the full title. My -- that time I was 89 -- my 89 year old Zayde, I thank for my d -- wedding dress.

Q: Right.

A: At that -- and everybody stood up. It was a -- a moment that pick me up so high. My granddaughter, unbelievable. The granddaughter, to see that, it's most unbelievable, unthinkable. Nothing in the dream, you couldn't dream of it, couldn't think about it.

Q: Right.

A: You have someone sometime in the family [indecipherable] it's -- it's the moments was [indecipherable] that's what we want to see.

Q: Well --

A: Wonderful kids, my grand -- my daughter, my son, my granddaughter and grandchildren [indecipherable]

Q: Right.

A: -- on both sides, so good, so good. I love -- I love to work for them. I love to do whatever it is, sew whatever they ask for. I do it with such love.

Q: Well, you lived a very complicated life.

A: To the end. I don't know, that's far as [indecipherable] celebrate, that's alright, that's -- that's okay with me. I never celebrated birthdays like that.

Q: Right.

A: You know, just put out a c -- a candle -- that candlelight.

Q: Right.

A: That's all we did. But --

Q: Well, I want to thank you. It's been more than a pleasure to be with you.

A: I thank you also, because I'm sure it's not easy, it's not easy job for you, [indecipherable] this --

Q: What you went through was much harder, Henry.

A: Well, but to -- you see, when I had no -- I had no mind to go through that, you know, because I been delaying, delaying. But when I went last time in the -- in Washington, that's where [indecipherable] are.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And Fay had -- my wife had some letters from the mother, that she [indecipherable] to camp, and we gave it in to -- to the museum. And where we were sitting she worked with a young lady, and I was sitting, Teresa start touching me, you know, with a few questions.

Q: Right.

A: Few -- few and -- an-and then she -- she said one thing, and I said [indecipherable] and then I went [indecipherable], so how did you go to Malkinia, see that all up -- opened me up --

Q: You [indecipherable], right.

A: -- you know, because that was the -- the first difficult job, difficult step, you know, the Malkinia -- the Malkinia trip was --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- terrible, terrible. Sh-She start pulling from me something again and again, til I [indecipherable] to say -- to -- to give my story, what -- what is -- thanks to her I will t --

Q: [indecipherable], yes.

A: -- never had -- I've never had the -- the power to do so, if she would not awaken me.

Q: Well, that's great.

A: What?

Q: That's great. It's --

A: With a wa -- with one -- with one point of my life, you know, one point which is er -- I could never forget --

Q: Right.

A: -- what [indecipherable] Malkinia just got -- she like -- she -- she's one of us, I tol -- she --

Q: Well, I thank you very much.

A: Well, I thank you.

Q: It's been a [indecipherable] experience. Thank you.

A: Okay, was good meeting you.

Q: Good meeting you, too.

A: Meeting you, all the people we met here.

End of Tape 10

Beginning Tape 11

Q: Who is in this shot? Who's that?

A: It's my mother. This my cousin and this is my Aunt Cilka.

Q: And all three perished?

A: Yeah.

Q: All three -- all three died.

A: This cousin of mine, this cousin, the girl, you know, they lived in a sm -- in a small town. And when the -- the start of deportation came, she -- the other uncle decide to hide someplace, and she, because the moth -- this -- she's not -- her mother -- this mother, this is the mother -- the mother's sister --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And when she married the fa -- her father again, and so she became her daughter, you know, but her father and the -- my -- talking [indecipherable] when they were taken to deportation, she didn't want to go in hiding, she want to go -- she sort of joined them. The other cousin went to be -- he go and look for hiding, she didn't want to, she want to go with her parents together.

Q: Right. Okay. And what's this picture, Henry?

A: Pardon? What is the picture?

Q: Yes, the whole picture.

A: This was in a summer camp, a youth organization.

Q: Is this the Labor Zionist group?

A: The Labor Zionist group. There are different -- I me -- is seet -- not a single group, but together this is the group -- summer camp shortly before the war.

Q: Okay, and who was that?

A: Huh?

Q: Who is that? Is that you?

A: Yeah, this is me.

Q: Yeah, it's you.

A: And there's Tanchim --

Q: So this is Henry, and who is this?

A: -- and there's Tanchim, my friend.

Q: Right, and this fellow?

A: This is my friend who is 92 now.

Q: Okay. And what's his name?

A: His name was I-Itzhak, but we called him Itzi.

Q: Itzi? Okay. And this picture, Henry?

A: I'm at the end of the -- this side, and in the center is a friend of mine, pre-war, pre-war.

Q: And this is [indecipherable]

A: [indecipherable] he survived in Soviet Union, but he died later, young, he had a tumor in his head, so -- but I saw him after the war, in Israel. I didn --

Q: And where is this? And where is the picture?

A: What? Where is the picture?

Q: Where was the picture taken?

A: In Łódź at one of the streets in Łódź, there were a -- this photographers who ma -- made a living taking pictures.

Q: Okay. And who is this group?

A: This group is from our youth organization. We just had a little stroll in the park after a n -- a Saturday afternoon, it was a nice day. And this is me, and the next is a girl which survived, she's in Milwaukee, and the other end is Tanchim, my friend.

Q: Here?

A: Yeah, and his girlfriend, she's -- she bought the tickets -- she bought the tickets in that time to -- to go east.

Q: Right. Did she survive?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: This my friend Travek, Travek [indecipherable] name, and this is Kurts, and this is [indecipherable], I wasn't that close, that friendly -- close friend with him, but the others were closer though.

Q: Okay. Who is this?

A: My -- my bride -- my wife, Fay. That's myself and this is my brother, came from -- he was in Italy that time, at -- befo -- when we wedding, so we came -- you know, we smuggle -- I had to smuggle -- he couldn't came out legally, he could a -- had to --

Q: He came illegally?

A: Illegally, because the borders are, you know, you had to go across the borders from -- from Italy to Germany then. And then the other end is Fay's cousin.

Q: Here?

A: Yeah.

Q: Uh-huh. And this?

A: This --

Q: Are you on this picture?

Q2: Yes.

Q: Okay. And who is this -- what's the -- you don't have to name everybody, but --

A: This is the guest -- a guest o -- at the wedding -- at the end and this -- the other end.

Q: Here's you?

A: Yeah, but from this end is Fay's cousin, and [indecipherable] husband wife, and that's Fay.

Q: This is Fay.

A: And that's my friend with her daughter, at Argentina to live now. The little baby is now a bit -
- she has her own kids now in -- in Argentina, Buenos Aires, and this is my friend ta -- Ele, the
one here with the mustache. No, no --

Q: Where?

A: This -- this --

Q: Here?

A: -- the -- yeah.

Q: Uh-huh, okay. And this is you?

A: And this is me. And this, I don't know -- this is my brother.

Q: That's your brother?

A: Yeah.

Q: Right.

A: He made a big trip from -- from Italy.

Q: And an illegal one, too.

A: He -- uh-huh.

Q: Okay, go ahead.

A: This picture was taken my backyard. My brother that time he was -- he used to live in Manhattan, he used to come to my house [indecipherable] and so on --

Q: That's your brother?

A: And that's my brother, yeah.

Q: Yeah.

A: No. He [indecipherable] the opposite.

Q: No? Is that you?

A: That's me.

Q: That's you.

A: That's me and that's the brother.

Q: Uh-huh, okay [indecipherable] that again.

A: At this age we sort of -- my brother.

Q: Right. That's the brother. That's the brother. Okay. Okay. Okay, go ahead.

A: Picture is my daught -- granddaughter's wedding and here is my friend, itz -- Itzi, sitting at this table and I'm sitting there, near, holding onto him with a glass, I think, with a glass in the hand, glass of -- a drink.

Q: And who made the suit?

A: Myself. I made for my granddaughter's wedding, that was the -- some kind of a -- a spiritual thing, you know. It's a -- a [indecipherable]

Q: Great. And this group?

A: This group is just visiting my daughter and her family. This my daughter in the center, this her husband Bob, and this is the granddaughter, Sarah, and this is Aaron, my grandson, and this is my wife, Fay. And that's myself here and I keep them all close, they always get visitors, they

all love to see them when they come and they do come, they do visit. Not only visit, but they stay a lot. We keep it close, we stayed --

Q: That's great. Okay, here?

A: My daughter Heidi, Bob, my son-in-law and Sarah, Aaron, their children.

Q: And here?

A: Here is my son, my daughter-in-law Hillary, and Emily, my -- my granddaughter, and Ross, my grandson, youngest grandson.

Q: Go ahead.

A: This is a Chanukah occasion, and my grandson Ross, who was in that picture before, and myself of a Chanukah [indecipherable]

Q: And who is this group?

A: Huh?

Q: Who is this group? Wh-Where is this picture taken?

A: It's my house -- I think so. I not recognize the picture.

Q: That's the whole family. And it's the whole family, right?

A: There's my wife, my son and myself, my daughter-in-law Hillary, and those are the two kids, their two kids and this is Heidi's two kids. Aaron -- Heidi and Aaron and Sarah.

Q: And her husband is --

A: Hm?

Q: Her husband took the picture. Her husband is hiding behind -- who took the picture?

A: Well --

Q: The fellow not on the picture, took the picture.

A: The picture must have been taken by Bob, must be Heidi's husband, but --

End of Tape 11

Conclusion of Interview