

DANIEL'S STORY



February 19, 1916 - April 3, 2001



Introduction

April 4, 2001

My father began dictating his memoirs in August 2000. This is a copy of the transcript of these memoirs. In honour of his memory I plan to write a biography of his life. My father had an amazing life, the fact that he survived until yesterday is in itself a miracle.

My father's goal in Canada was to ensure that none of his children or grandchildren would ever have to share the fears, dangers or insecurity that he had to face in his life in Europe both as a person and as a Jew; that they should be happy and successful. This would be his joy.

He succeeded.

Bill Wiener

Session 1

This is the story of the life of Daniel Wiener told in his own words during the summer and fall of the year 2000.

My full name right now officially is Daniel Wiener, born the 30th of May 1916. Actually I was born David Barwiner on the 19th February 1916. The discrepancy is because I wanted to change something. I will explain later. My maternal grandmother was living in Pinczow (Pinchow) Poland. My grandfather was a Russian Jew who was born and who was living in Moscow. His parents had a business, manufacturing suitcases, wooden trunks for the Russian Army. At the time that their marriage was arranged, because of my great grandfather's work for the Russian army my grandfather received some land in Warsaw, Poland and there my grandfather married my grandmother, arranged through a matchmaker. Together they had five children, two boys and three girls. Actually it was 3 boys and 3 girls but one of the boys died. My mother was the youngest. After their marriage my grandfather set up a business in Warsaw, a small inn with a stable that my grandmother operated. This would I think would have been around 1885-1888. My grandfather joined the Russian army while my grandmother was pregnant with my mother.

The name of my mother was Yohevet, the name of my grandmother was Gitla, my grandfather was Schmul. The name of my grandfather was Dymnik, Schmul Dymnik.

My mother was supposed to be a very good artist. She was doing lots of paintings. I remember being told that she had painted a picture of the first streetcar used in Warsaw. This first streetcar was pulled by horses. This painting was accepted by the Government of Warsaw. My mother was born in 1900 at least that's what my grandmother told me. One day an officer arrived from the Austrian army and that was the first time in the local history that a Jewish girl fell in love with an army officer, and married out of love. As it happened he was a Jew too. My grandmother didn't like it. She was the youngest daughter. How could the youngest child be married before the oldest one? This was not part of the accepted Jewish tradition. They ran away, got married and they ended up living in Kielce, Poland. I think they got married in 1915 because I was born in 1916. His last name was Barwiner. I think that either his father or grandfather was given the title of Baron in Austria. That is where the Bar in Barwiner was supposed to have come from.

Now when I was born in 1916, my father was in the war in the Austrian army, fighting the Russians. My grandfather had gone to the Russian army when my grandmother was pregnant with my mother in around 1900. He was in the army for twenty-four or twenty-five

years and was gone the whole time since the pregnancy. When he came back from the army, he had never seen my mother. My mother was no longer alive. Only I was alive. My grandfather had taken about 3 years to walk to his Division, in China where the Russians were fighting against the Japanese.

Now I was born in Kielce, Poland and it happened when my father was in the war. Nobody from my mother's family was there and my mother passed away when I was born. Somehow, somehow, I don't know why and I was never able to find out why, the Catholic Church took me in. The name of the Church was in English 'Holy Cross'. In Polish it was Siety Kzyz.(Shventy Krysh) It was located on the corner of Staro Warszawska and Staro Zagnanska. Here I was together with another 4 or 5 orphaned boys about the same age, in the church raised by a Priest. My father's family including his parents lived in Kielce, although I didn't find this out until many years later. (about 1980) I don't know why they didn't look after me or at least see that I went to a Jewish orphanage. It was some kind of an orphanage. In Polish it is 'Salesjanow' (Pronounced Salais Yanuf). There were two priests taking care of us. One was a priest who did like me very much. I remember every night before we went to sleep, we were kneeling by the bed and making the prayers. (sounds like) "Oiytsahe cina he duchashyntego amen.", I still remember the prayers even now. (Even on Daniel's deathbed!) Every morning it was the same, we got up we had to pray. Before we got breakfast, we had to pray. The breakfast was potato soup and black pumpernickel bread. Black pumpernickel bread was cheap, white rye bread was expensive. White Rye bread we didn't know anything about.

Now I remember at lunchtime we were eating the soup. We never got meat. Only at Christmas time when some people were inviting us and taking us out of there. I remember I went to another place not far from the church and they gave me meatloaf to eat. I didn't know meatloaf. I didn't even know that it was meat. I thought that it was some sort of pumpernickel bread. I tried to butter it. I can still remember the taste of that meatloaf, how good it tasted.

I remember the priests were teaching us how the Jews killed Christ. We were told that we shouldn't do anything with the Jews. I was going out to the street and calling to the Jews, "You dirty Jew! (Parszywy Zyd) You killed our God!" I would say that in Polish. I was so mad at the Jews, one time I remember I got a little knife with a wooden handle, a red handle, a very little knife. A Jewish boy was going by on the street and I knifed him in the back because he was a Jew. I was about four years old at the time. Later on in my life he became my best friend. His name was Moshe Mlinarczik. (He was killed in the ghetto.)

I was treated very well in the orphanage. Something else, I was treated better than everyone else. I was the favourite. I don't know why. The priest when he went to people who

were dying, to give the last rites he always took me because after the priest finished we got a candy or a piece of cake or something, from the household we were visiting.

Now when we were walking with the priest, I was always in the front in a white shirt with a gold cross on the front and a gold cross on the back. I was four and a half years old at the time. I was holding the lantern with the incense for Christ and a small statue of Christ inside, and another boy in the same dress was behind the priest, ringing the bell and with the priest between us.

I was swinging the incense and people were coming and they were taking off their hats, they were kneeling down. They kissed my hand, the priest's hand, the other boy's hand. What I remember about living in the church was the prayers and the food. I don't remember much about the earlier years, I was too young, just the last few months. We were raising pigs and our job was to feed the pigs. I remember giving out the food we didn't eat to the pigs I remember going to the people who were sick because at that time we got the best time in our lives because that is where we got the best food in our lives there. And I remember the meatloaf.

And suddenly my grandfather - which I never knew – who just arrived from the War, arrived. It took him twenty-five years to return from China. He was in China in the Russian war.

They were still using a buggy and horse and if they left Sunday morning from Warsaw, they would have arrived on Friday night in Kielce. It took them a whole week to go by horse and buggy. Today it would only take a few hours by car.

And they went to the Catholic Church to ask to have me back but they couldn't do anything. The church wouldn't give me up.

When he arrived from this war he couldn't get me out legally from the church so the whole family moved to Kielce from Warsaw. My grandmother, my two uncles that I was later calling my brothers and my two aunts which I later called sisters and my grandmother which I called mother later. But I didn't know them a different way. They moved two blocks from the church; on the same street called Staro Zagnanska, number 27.

You may ask why my maternal grandmother didn't take me after I was born. It took weeks before she heard of the death of her daughter and of my birth and this was because of the slowness of the mail. By the time she found out that I was at the Church and by the time she could communicate by mail, they were not prepared to let me go.

At the time my grandmother was a young women of around forty. My mother was about fourteen years old when she married. There was nobody to write the letters as my father was in the Austrian army and my grandfather was in the Russian army.

Anyway, what I remember, my grandfather, I didn't know who he was at the time, put me in a sack, like a sack of potatoes, put it over his back and I was inside, he stole me out in the night from the church. He kidnapped me. He took me in a sack and went with me to a place where the Jews were living.

And I know he's a Jew because he got the beard and I was yelling, "Why you want to kill me? Why you need my blood? Please don't kill me, I am a good boy." The priests were teaching us that the Jews were taking blood. I was kicking him through the sack but he was very strong.

My took me in the sack to a little synagogue, not far from 27 Staro Zagnanska, only a couple of blocks from the Church and I was hidden in the synagogue. I was very afraid, I was yelling and I was kicking and when he took me out of the sack there I saw some Jews and I thought they were going to kill me. They were with beards so I know they are Jews and what I know is that the Jews are killing Christian children. I was very, very afraid. I was kneeling and praying and begging them not to kill me.

Most of them didn't know how to talk Polish, my grandfather didn't know how to talk Polish and he was only talking Russian. I could only speak Polish. Some did understand Polish, and they tell me "don't worry, be quiet". They tried to give me food but I was too scared to eat.

They were hiding me in the synagogue. It was actually a woodworking factory making wood flooring; the owner of the factory name was Libfeld. Two of his sons came here in Toronto to live after the War. One of them, Ted, just passed away not long ago, in the year 2000.

Now on the weekdays that was a woodworking shop and on Sabbath, on Saturday, they cleaned it up and made a place for worship. And that's where I was circumcised. I was between four and a half and five years old. I understood nothing of what they were doing. I thought I was being killed. I passed out when I was circumcised.

When I wake up my grandmother, she started yelling to my sisters, "He is alive!" in Polish "He is alive, He is Alive!" I was alive. They saved me. I stayed in that woodworking factory a little while and later they took me to my grandmother's house.

At my grandmother's house, I got two aunts that I as I mentioned later called sisters, but at the time I didn't know who they are. They were nice girls, beautiful looking girls. And there for the first time I was getting a bath. I never had a bath before that I can remember in the Church. It was not in a bathtub as we think of a bathtub, It was something round, made of wood, and they were bathing me there and taking care of my circumcision.

My grandmother and her children who I called brothers and sisters all spoke polish because they were brought up in Warsaw.

I remember 'till now the first time in my life I was eating a pear. I remember the taste still. From that time I did like to be there because I got good food. I got white bread. I got bread with butter. I got meat and chicken, and other things.

All this time they were hiding me. I couldn't go out. They hid me for a little while. I don't know how long. After a little while they let me out from the door on the street where they would watch me. I remember playing with another boy and another girl.

I could see the church. Still I was trying in my mind to think of how to run away back to the church I didn't because I was scared to try, and because I got good food here. Once when I was maybe five or six they took me to school. I remember on the way I saw the priest - my priest - the priest which I liked very much and the one that liked me very much, with two other boys, in the street coming from a ceremony.

I went to him hoping that he would take me back and I picked up his hand and I kissed him and he pushed me away and told me "You dirty Jew, go away." He didn't want anything to do with me. And at that time I was cured. I was healed of my desire to run away. I never tried to run away again.

When did I first realize that I was a Jew? I don't know when. I never thought about it, if I was a Jew. I still kept a hat that came from the Catholic Church. Here I am a Jew and I was wearing a hat with a cross. Even when I was already six or seven years old I still got the hat. The hat was my God. I wouldn't give away the hat for anybody. The hat was very old with a red cross on it. That was what I was wearing. The Jewish boys, they were teasing me. They would say "The Priest is coming" or something like that. I even went to a Jewish School wearing my hat with the cross.

My grandmother I was calling 'mother', my aunts - 'sisters'. One was Bronia, the other one was Eva. My brothers were Schlomo and one was Alter. Not one of them was married at the time. They married later. My older sister married when I was around 8 years old, the other one married when I was 9 or 10 years old and one uncle Shlomo, when I was about 12 years old. Alter never got married.

I liked my grandmother very much. When I went to school I always gave her a kiss and after school she always gave me a kiss. My sisters took me always out to a coffeehouse for ice cream. I was treated like a king. Everyone liked me because I was the son of their sister.

My grandfather was very religious, he was praying the whole day and he didn't know what he was praying because he was praying in Hebrew and he couldn't understand Hebrew.

He was tall, he was never sick in his life that I remember. He had all his teeth. And every Passover he put on leeches, blood sucking leeches, on either side of his head to get blood out. I don't know why. Now I can understand, maybe he had high blood pressure or something. He only put them on at around Passover time. The leeches would fill up with blood, hang down and then when full of blood, fall off. He did this every year, I remember, until the end.

In wintertime, he put on a plaster, a mustard plaster, on his back a big one at Chanukah time. And I asked him about this, he told me that this was to prevent colds. When he was in China the witch doctor took out the worms (nerves) of his teeth. So he has all of his teeth. He never got a toothache.

He was getting up in the morning at 6:00 a.m. and he had $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce or $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce of spirit which is alcohol, Not 96 proof but 180 proof. It was almost pure alcohol. It's dynamite. That what he was drinking and he went to the synagogue and before praying went to get the steam bath in wintertime. And from there, to where they had cut the ice in the river and they went to the water. Later they went to pray and from there they came home about 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. and he would have breakfast.

For breakfast he got a loaf of bread, about one kilogram, he didn't use butter because he felt it wasn't kosher. He didn't believe that butter could be kosher. And coffee. He never got real coffee always he got coffee made from grain. He got his huge cup or pot, about 1 liter of coffee with sugar and bread and sometimes he was using the fat from a goose. He never used butter. And after breakfast he went back to the schul (synagogue) to pray. He didn't have lunch. He was only eating breakfast and supper. And that's what his life was like that I remember until the end. When he was killed in 1942 I was 26 years old. I believe that he was in his sixties or early seventies.

In Kielce, my grandmother had a grocery store and a bar that was selling whiskey and beer, within the front part of the house. They were making a very good living. Now I remember when I was playing with children, at the place I was living there were only Gentile children, as neighbours, not Jews. And I was playing with them.

When I was six years old, they took me to public school. The schoolhouse was exactly four blocks away. There was no paved or stone road just mud on the road. At the school we were working on two shifts from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. and from 2:00 p.m. until 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. Sometimes, I was going on the night to the school and I was carrying the lantern with the candle inside. We had no electricity.

There I went only to the first class. The school had only two classes A and B. The first thing in the morning was praying. Later was a priest was teaching Catholic religion for one-hour.

All the schools were the same. It was public school with a Catholic priest. This school had only two classes, each shift.

I remember the teachers slapped us on the face. I don't know why. They were beating us with a ruler too. They were checking the ears to see if they were clean and the nails. We didn't get water there to wash ourselves everyday. There was only water outside and it was cold or frozen. So some of the kids got lice. I didn't get lice but if the teacher found that you had lice he would beat you up terribly.

So after a year they didn't want me to go there because I was one Jew in a Gentile school. There was another school about twenty blocks away and I went there. It was a public school and my uncle took me there. I went there the first day and came home with blood in my ears, blood in my mouth. Not just me, everyone was beaten by the teachers. After three or four days like that, they decided I should go to a Jewish school.

But there was only a Jewish school for girls, none for boys. Somehow I went to that school and I was with girls and really that was heaven for me. All the girls did like me and took me to and back from the school. That was the second grade. By the third grade they opened up a public Jewish school for boys. So, I went to the third grade at the Jewish school for boys.

Like boys we were playing there and fighting. I had Jewish friends and the boy I knifed when I was a Gentile, he was my best friend. He was in the same class in the third grade. After third grade, this school liquidated and it became a private school. It was no more Jewish school, it was either public school or religious orthodox, which in Yiddish is called Haider.

Anyway there was a gymnasium (Jewish high school). For the high school you had to have four grades to go and I only had three. So my brother went to the principal to ask what he can do for me. It was summertime and he told him you've got three months vacation so they took a tutor and they prepared me to go to the first class high school. For three months, the tutor was teaching me every day.

To pass the exams you've got be examined not only by Jewish teachers but also by Gentile teachers from another school. I passed and I went to the first class gymnasium. In the high school I got only Jewish boys there, not Gentiles. By that time, I knew I was a Jew.

One time I was playing near the main square with my friend Isaac (Adolf) Rem. There was a cast statue of the Virgin Mary. It was dark and we climbed the statue. While on it we accidentally turned the head. The head was a separate piece. We ran home. We were afraid. If the poles found out that Jews had been on their statue and had damaged it, there could have been a terrible pogrom. It would have been very bad. We were even too afraid to tell our parents. The next morning the Poles wake up and see that the head has moved. They think that it is a miracle.

People are coming from all over Poland to see this statue and to leave flowers there. When I came back to Poland in 1987 the statue was still there and they were still leaving flowers.

In my second year of gymnasium, which was grade five or grade six I joined a Jewish organization. I was 11 years old. It was, a scout organization, a Zionist organization. It later became a more left wing Socialist Zionist organization. I was a Jew and a scout. This organization is called "Hashomer Hatzair" (The Young Guards)

We learned like boy scouts exactly like here. I was playing the trumpet. We went to the woods. We took boats. We camped out. Camp was about six weeks in the summertime in tents. We prepared ourselves the whole year for camp.

Not one of us was rich. The Jewish Gymnasium was private. It was not paid for by the government. It was paid for by the students. Because I was an orphan I paid 50% of the tuition. It was very expensive. We got two teachers. We called them professors. We got high respect for our teachers.

In grade four I was ten years old. I went there until like grade six. At grade six I went to a small finishing school. I finished high school eighth class. The sixth grade it was called 'matura', it was the small graduation, eight class it was the big one. Today it would be like high school and grade twelve. To finish grade twelve was very high in Poland. The gentile school was going only to seven. Public seven is like fourth class high school. And I went only to the sixth class high school, which is exactly like the tenth grade here.

From there I applied for engineering school. For engineering school you had to have the eighth class. You have to finish up the high school. I didn't go to eighth. I went to a technical engineering school in Warsaw.

In Warsaw's engineering school they were charging about 500 zlotys a month, but because I was a good student and because I was an orphan they charged me only 100 zlotys a month.

Now what is 100 zlotys at that time? At that time I was earning 130 Zlotys per month. At that time my grandmother was not so rich because all my sisters married and she gave them dowry. My brother married and he got a dowry.

At that time in Poland we got President Pilsudski. He was not bad for the Jews. He was nothing special other than he died and another took over and the situation for the Jews was bad.

When the Jews went to the University in Warsaw they couldn't sit on the chairs they had to stay on the ground. And not everyone was admitted. That school where I went was called, 'Vabilbel', a private Jewish school. The school still in existence. It is not Jewish now.

There were two very rich Jews who opened up a school for Jewish boys and girls and they were charging 400 zlotys a month but because I was an orphan they accepted me and they gave me a job. I could work in a bicycle factory. And I was going everyday there and everyday going to school.

In this school they were teaching everything. Not only theory, but practical things. We learned about motors, gas and electric, steam engines, plumbing and sewers. Every mechanical thing we learned. There was no such a thing at this school like mechanical or electrical engineer. You were just an engineer. You got to know everything.

For three months they sent me to a special place to apprentice for air conditioning. As an apprentice they sent me to a place for steam engines. They sent me to a place to learn how to build pumps for water. So every one of us had to know everything.

At three months we got to make exams. The exam in metalworking was essentially as follows. We each took two pieces of cold rolled flat steel. We had to make a square hole in one piece of steel about 3cm square. The second piece of steel had to be cut in such a way that it would fit so tightly into the square hole of the first piece, that no light could shine through. That was for mechanics. I passed as a mechanic.

Now the exam for carpenters was that you got to grind one piece of wood and another piece of wood and put the two pieces together side by side and to hold one piece and the other piece wouldn't fall down. It was so tight there was no air space between the two pieces of wood. And they taught us about drawing houses. The exams about drafting was two days and it was very hard. Not like here.

Anyway I was three years in the school. I was sixteen when I went in and nineteen when I finished. When I was working and going to school I was making one hundred and twenty-six zlotys a month. Of the one hundred and twenty-six zlotys a month I paid one hundred zlotys to school for education, I paid five zlotys for room. It was a room without heating and there were no appliances to cook there. You got only a little cast iron stove there for heating and I bought some wood to keep my room warm. The wood was two or three cents so I was only using it for cooking something. For the rest of the month I was living on the balance of the money.

For breakfast I was having a half pound of bread, it was five cents. I paid another two cents for a piece of butter. My breakfast was no more than ten cents. My dinner was lunchtime. At dinner I went to special place where they make dinner. It cost me fifty cents. That was a soup and two pieces of bread. Sometimes the soup had meat. At the night I bought some bagels for five cents. Sometimes I didn't have the five cents so I went to bed hungry.

At the school we had the ladies society where they come at 11:00 a.m. to the school to make the tea for the students. They were making tea and bringing glasses but the sugar everyone should bring themselves. So sometimes I drank the tea, sometimes not. Sometimes I went days without food. I was hungry. My grandmother sometime sent me parcels. I didn't want it because at that time I was enough adult to know that I didn't want to take money from them. My sisters are married and one uncle is without a job. One got the bar (tavern), which is not too good because the Poles were anti-Semitic and they put on guards outside the stores who told everybody "Don't go in. Don't buy from a Jew."

Someway, somehow I got through; I met some girls and made a social life there. I met one time a girl and she was a banker's daughter and she was in love with me. I didn't care too much about her because I was eighteen and she was twenty-two. All my friends said why not take money from her. I didn't. I didn't take one cent. I wasn't interested in this kind of money.

In 1931 or 1932 there was a delegation that came to our school. A Polish commission which needed engineers and I was accepted. I was accepted to work in a Polish factory where there were about 50 000 people working. The factory was Polish French English American Corporation. They were making ammunition and different kinds of guns, mostly for war.

I was there in the tool room. I was making some drawings and checking the measurements of the arms. I was receiving a big wage at that time. The factory was in Radom between Warsaw and Kielce. It was one hundred km south of Warsaw and Kielce was a further eighty-five km south. I was working there and I was one Jew and the other Jew was the president of the company. He was a French Jew and his father was a religious Jew. So they built a synagogue for the religious Jew within the factory. The factory was about twenty-five km square. It was called the "Heart of the Polish Industry." (Copot)

I was making three hundred and sixty zlotys a month. And there I was living and I bought myself a motorcycle. And a motorcycle was a big deal. They didn't know in the factory that I was a Jew because I've got blue eyes and blondish hair and I was talking excellent Polish. . And they were terrible about the Jewish president and his wife. They would say, "Why we need him? Why we don't have a Polish president?" They talk so much about Jews it made me sick.

Anyway when I was in Kielce before I went to school in Warsaw I met a girl which I did like very much and I wanted to visit this girl so I quit the job and went to Kielce. I also quit because I couldn't stand the anti-Semitism. That was in 1935. I wanted to be with this girl and with my family too. I stayed with my family for two or three months.

My family told me I did a big mistake. I quit the job because of the girl. I didn't like the girl. I loved the girl. I was fourteen or fifteen years old when we fell in love both of us and at that time. I was 19 years old now and I was still in love with her..

In the meantime, I opened up a bicycle shop to fix bicycles. I started fixing bicycles, ice skates and skis. No one knew anything about skis but I was learning about skis in school. At that time the carpenters were taking wood and they were grinding it lengthwise and they were putting it in hot water and bending it. At the time I went to a carpenter in Kielce and I told him to do the same. I was making anything from metal.

And the first year, somehow I was making money. I was grinding skates, making skis and fixing bicycles in the summertime and nobody knew how to fix ski bindings. The first year I was fixing them, the second year I was producing them. I was making other things as well.

Poland after the first war was dead, there was no industry. The whole industry in Poland, we started it, our school started it. My generation started it. We started making bicycles; we started making anything from metals. Mostly some Jewish people are making religious things, like for Christmas from metal. My generation was producing it in the millions.

A friend of mine started making radios. He's got five thousand people working after two years making radios. We didn't have tube radios in Poland but I went to school, and there we learned how to make our own radios, crystal radios. We put on a steel back and some plating on the bottom and that was my antenna. Our generation built the Polish industry.

In 1935 I married. The parents of my girl were religious, not only religious but her father was on the top of the rabbi. Can you imagine? He wore a hat, a round one with a fur trim (Schrimmel) and he was called Messier (Shlomo Meshiah). Like a messiah, like Christ is for the Christians. People came to ask questions and get advice. He had five daughters and one son.

My girl was the second from the youngest. She was in love with me. She wouldn't tell the parents and when she would meet with me nobody would know. Anyway the parents found out and they tell her stop seeing me or she was out of the family. She told me that and I told my grandmother.

My grandmother was not so religious, not a fanatic. So, I told my grandmother I like this girl, what should I do? She told me, you have to marry her. So in 1935 I married this girl Mania. That's a Polish name. Her second name was Apel. I married her and not one of the sisters or parents came to the wedding.

I got the wedding in my sister's house. My sister was rich too she had a big house. So I rented an apartment and in 1936 a year later, I was 20 years old I got a child, a son, Henich. He was born the May 30 in 1936. The second son, Moniac, was born in 1937 on December 15.

In 1937 I was very rich. I got a factory making bicycles. I started a place at the time for electro-plating. You know plating at that time was not like here. You've got to make your own chemicals. You've got to have the know-how. So I got the one plating plant in Kielce plating chrome and nickel and silver.

You know in Poland everything is nice and beautiful not like here. It's got to be made really nice. So I got another plating in Sosnowiec (Pronounced Sosnovitz) which is on the border of Germany, and at that plating plant I sent my brother (uncle) who was married and because of the boycott he had to give up the store. So I teach him how to plate and I sent him out to Sosnowiec to be the manager.

During the first year of our marriage we had no contact with my wife's family. In the 2nd year when our child was born we developed contact with her mother, then sisters, until they all knew me. My father-in-law eventually came but would only have tea with us. He brought his own tea glass. After two years they all liked me very much and we all became good friends.

In the meantime my wife's brother was getting older and he doesn't have a job and so I sent him to (France???) a friend's factory where they were teaching how to weld and manufacture welding equipment. He was in Jewish dress, all black and I took him to Warsaw and I changed his clothing and I sent him to these friend's school for two months to learn how to weld. And at that time you didn't get a bottle of oxygen and acetylene to do the welding, you had to make your own. You have to get big coals from white stones, calcium carbide, put on so much water, out comes acetylene gas. Then you collect it and you weld. So he was the first one in Kielce who was doing welding. So he was welding for me.

And the youngest sister she didn't got a job. I took her to the office and she was working for me. The other brother was working too. Now, the oldest sister of my wife, she married and her husband was without a job, he lost the money from the dowry, so I gave him a job. His name was Shmuel Louze Opatowski. So, I got working for me my wife's family and my family.

Because of this, my wife's mother was getting better to me. She was visiting us. She was the grandmother of the two sons and she fell in love with me, as a mother would love her own son. My father-in-law, he wants that I go with him to the schul (synagogue) so I went with him, once or twice. The rabbi from the city found out about me and liked me too.

In those days somebody went there if they got a dispute. A couple was debating if they should get a divorce. So they asked me what I think about that. I decided they should be separated for a few months. The rabbi liked the way I did that and after a few months they went back together. This was my father in law. So, slowly, they start letting me in.

In 1938, I was really good off. So I was in a position to have a cottage in the village. To send out my children and wife, I got a car and nobody had a car. The first car was Renault. When I went to school in Warsaw I bought a car, when I got my license in school in 1934, 1935 was it? I got a Model T Ford. I paid \$90.00 for it. To start the car, you needed two horses to pull it.

So one wintertime, when I was going to school in Warsaw, I got friends there and everyone chipped in. Everyone chipped in to buy that car. We drained the water in the rad, we put in a torch to warm up the oil and after that we took two horses and ran around the block two, three times and the car started. When the car started we put on back the water and I could then sometime put eight or nine people in the car. There were wooden wheels. If it was going up the hill, you had to go in reverse, not in forward. In 1938 I had a real car, a used Renault, a nice car, I was driving it.

In 1939, I got an Anglia from Ford. It was produced in England, a nice little car. Before that car, I got a Tatra from Czechoslovakia. But the nicest car I got was the Anglia. It was confiscated by the Germans, actually by the Poles. It was the first set of Ford cars produced in England. I paid \$500 or \$600 for it.

In 1938, we know about Hitler and we were talking about a war. At that time, Germany and Poland were good friends. Germany took a piece of Czechoslovakia. Poland took a piece of Czechoslovakia. Poland took a piece called 'Saolja', and lots of Poles went there right away because the Czech currency was devalued. It was very cheap and they were buying lots of things there.

I went there and I was looking what kind of business I could do there. Poland occupied so they have to have the pictures of the Polish president and pictures of the Polish Prime Minister and so I went back home and started producing cast pictures in metal, bronze or chrome plated zinc and I made a fortune, lots of money.

After that, at the end of 1938, Germany was aggressive and Poland was thinking it could be at war and we were trying to prepare ourselves for war. And we were only scared for gas. We knew they used gas in the First World War so Poland started producing gas masks. At about eighty-five zlotys apiece and nobody could afford that with a family of six or eight, so I was thinking what to do to make a mask.

So I designed a mask, a little mask with a special carbon filter and we were selling it for four or five zlotys. I went to the government in Warsaw and I was telling them this is what I designed and this was tested. I want to produce them. They tell me to go to the hall there to wait and they'll make a decision.

Suddenly comes out a high-ranking officer. He was a converted Jew so he was permitted to be one. He says "You know what? We need this mask but you cannot produce this because you are a Jew. Get yourself a Gentile partner and start producing."

So I went back to Kielce and I went to the city hall and I went to the main engineer in the city hall and I said I want you for a partner. His last name was Mikulik. He was also responsible for dealing with gas warfare for the province of Kielce. He was also in charge of civil sector safety and war preparation. So we opened up a business and we start producing the masks. Money was coming in suitcases

I remember when the war started, two days before the war, the president of the Jewish Gymnasium he went to me and cried, "Please, I haven't got the mask for my wife, please sell me one." I didn't got one. I took out mine and gave it to him. He was really crying.

And I remember when we went to my partner's house and we put the suitcase of money on the bed. He was married with children and had a mother-in-law from Czechoslovakia. I didn't forget her words what she tells us. "You boys, you are boys, you don't know what is war. You are so happy on making that money. That money's worth nothing." I never forgot.

At that time we were not afraid. I was too young. My grandmother was afraid. I was twenty-two years old and my partner was twenty-six. We were too young. We couldn't understand it. We had big plans what we were going to do with the money.

When the war started the Polish army confiscated my car. My motorcycle was not confiscated because my partner from the city hall gave me a letter that said I need it for the defense of the city and I have to have the motorcycle, and that I wasn't to be mobilized by the army.

Then the Germans start to bomb Kielce. It was the 2nd of September 1939. The war started on the first of September and right away we got bombs in Kielce. The Polish army was not prepared. I remember a Polish soldier who went to the church, the top of the church, with his rifle, a single shot rifle. The Polish army was not organized. They were really sold out by the top people, many who were spies for the Germans.

One of my factories was bombed. The other was confiscated. Later in the war, once Kielce was occupied by the Germans. The bicycles I was making were confiscated...and in the other place they put in somebody who looks after the business...a trustee...a German. And what happens is he is taking the money and anything he wants he should take. This took place with many companies, but all the Jewish businesses.

The third day of the war I took my wife and my older son Henich who at that time was 3, on my motorcycle. I couldn't take both sons and my wife and my son and I, we ran away to a

village, Bozentin, about 45 km from Kielce. When the bombing stopped I was going to return to get the other child, once I left my wife and eldest child at this village. I had left the other child with a nanny. We had someone to take care of the children. She was a young Jewish woman who was our opere.

But when we went away I couldn't come back. The Germans were after us and we are going east, east, east and we got no chance to go back to Kielce. And the war was going on and I was travelling at the time with Kielce police after us with my wife and child and we were travelling in the night.

Most people were fleeing east both civil and in uniform. The army was fleeing to the east and the rest were chasing behind. The Germans were attacking from the west.

We couldn't travel in the daytime. We went without lights and in the forest on the motorcycle. My feet were on the ground all the time because we couldn't go fast. Also we had no gas, so I was using alcohol and olive oil. That was very expensive. It was in some stores. Oil was gone so I was using olive oil in my tank. In the wartime you could see very fancy cars, motorcycles on the road abandoned, without gas. What's a vehicle without gas?

So we ran away from city to city, village to village. We ran so far until we came to Lublin. It was a big city; there was a big army position in Lublin. They took me to the army and they drafted me with my wife and the motorcycle. I don't know why. They gave me an army police uniform. And we went with the army and we went to another city called Piaske, not far from Lublin. There was a big bridge before Piaske and the German planes were going over the bridge to bomb the bridge.

So our officer tells us hide under the bridge, for cover. Now I was young, but I was thinking what a stupid idea. Now I have my motorcycle and I think I will run away from the army. The German bombs and the Germans were flying very low and they were shooting with machine guns so one bullet hit me in the leg, nothing serious, just a surface flesh wound. But all the people were killed hiding under the bridge. That was Pieske.

After that my wife, my son and I went to another city not far from Chelm and that was already Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year and we went to a house, the whole city was abandoned, there was no one there. There was no German, no Poles. I went to a garage and no one was there and later that afternoon I cleaned up my carburetor because every few miles you had to clean up the carburetor and suddenly a bomb hit and the roof was sucked off. The bomb hit next to the building but the noise of the bomb took off the roof.

So anyway I took my wife and we go to a house and we couldn't find anybody in that city. Only we find a Jewish home because the table was already set for dinner, it was plates,

Chala, white bread and wine and we were very thirsty, but there was no cork on the wine bottle so it was half wine and half flies but we were so thirsty we were drinking it. We were sleeping there.

So we decided to go to Chelm. Chelm is a very famous city in Jewish history and I went to Chelm and there is a Polish army, Polish police, everything there is still under Polish control. German planes are going over the city. The city got arms, and a good air defence. They were shooting down a few German airplanes so they were scared to go to the city. So we got a room there. I still had my motorcycle at that time.

We had been running ten days. That was about September 3rd to September 10th, so I was in the city for about a week and no German were coming in because the city has good guns. So suddenly, the end of September...I don't know remember exactly...the Polish army disappeared. The arms disappeared. Everything went away. Some went south. Some went to the Russians and Chelm was without nobody. No defence, no Poles, no Russians. We woke up and they were gone.

Suddenly the Poles start to rob the Jewish stores. They broke into stores. They are taking out things. They were robbing, looting everything and they start killing the Jews. Beating up the Jews.

At that time on the radio, we hear the Russians and the Germans make the pact to be friends. Russia invaded Poland about Sept. 10. I wasn't aware of it until I heard this radio broadcast. At that time the Russians were already 80 km east of Chelm and the Germans were in Lublin. The next day the Russians arrived in Helm. When Poles starting breaking into stores and robbing stores and beating up the Jews and some other things, they ask the Russians to come faster to help. So I remember when the Russian army arrived in Helm.less more left...socialist. The religious Jews were terribly against communism. The communists were against Zionism.

I wouldn't believe my eyes before. One tank was pulling another tank. The Russians were in uniform without belts. They've got a string around. The rifles were on strings, not on leather, I didn't believe it. But they got big tanks, big trucks and one truck pulling another truck. These vehicles were always breaking down.. They arrived in the thousands. They were a rag tag poorly equipped army.

I remember the religious Jews and they were kissing the dirt of the tanks wheel tracks and they were praying thanks that they arrive, because hadn't they d arrive, they were scared of a pogrom and all the Jews would have been killed. So that was the end of September 1939.

The Russian got the pact with Germany to divide Poland so Germany took over in Chelm. And the Russians, at that time, were very good to the Jews. They wrote letters on the wall saying, "Jews, you should know the Germans are coming in and any one Jew who wants to go with us is welcome." So some Jews went over to the border, the Bog (pronounced Book) River, where the Russians were.

Suddenly Polish police from Kielce arrived. Not all arrived, some had been killed. They arrived in Chelm and they knew me. We're discussing what to do? Maybe we should go south. Maybe we should go to Romania. No. We'll go over to the Russians. We will wait for the war to be finished. So we went over the Bog River, over to the Russian side. Right away the Russians say, "Where you coming from? Who are you?" They know right away we are the police and they arrested us. They assumed I was also a police. We went to jail. That was in October.

My wife, you know what they did? They took my wife and son to a Jewish home. They arrested me but she could go away. And I was about three or four days in the prison with everyone and we didn't know anything and when they find out that I'm a Jew maybe an official. There was a Jewish officer and he asked, "Are you a Jew?" and I told him yes. And he told me, "What you want to do?" I told him I want to work. So he told me I'll give you a job.

In the meantime, they sent me my wife and child and they took away my motorcycle. They pay me for my motorcycle. So I got a job to make a living. They tell me I have to come to the police every day to check in. So I check in everyday and we bought some bed, some food to eat and we registered to go to Russia.

I was registered to go to a city called Dumbas. Dumbas in Russia is known for its heavy industry and coal. I got to make an exam. I make the exams and they accepted me from lots of other people. In the meantime they made a pact with Germany. Now all the people which were living on the German occupied side they have to go back to the German occupied side and the people born on the Russian occupied side had to go back to the Russian occupied side. So they took my wife my son and me back to the German side. There was a population exchange. That was in November.

There were posters in Jewish (Yiddish), Polish and Russian warning the Jews not to go back to the German side. They warned the Jews that the Germans will kill you. I and other Jews ignored the warnings of the posters because we believed that this was simply Russian Propaganda. My wife and I were also worried about the welfare of our youngest son, Moniek.

We went over to the German side. The Russians didn't know who was in the Police and who was in the army. I was ready to go up with the army, like POW, they call us POW.

And we went by passenger train to another city and my wife and my child too. We went to Krubiashu on the German side. There they give us a place to sleep because we had a train to take us to the POW prison. I could talk German excellent but I was scared to talk because I was afraid they would think I was a spy. So, I was only asking, "Where we are going? " They tell us we are going to a POW camp, so I think that's okay.

So it was in a Saturday and they were holding us and I don't know how much time. All I know it was 11th of November. We were travelling and we were coming into a city Rejowiec (pronounced Reovitch). The train's destination written on the train was Lublin.

There was a big hill where the train stopped. What happened was we were told to get outside the train and line up. Apparently some Poles had killed four Germans in the city. November 11 was Poland's Independence Day, which was the day Poland had been liberated from occupation during World War 1 (Armistice day) And because of this four Germans they took the whole train and they took one in every ten of us to be killed. Every tenth person has to be undressed and I was one of the ten. My wife was outside, in front of me, holding on to my child.

I didn't know at the time that I was going to be killed and they didn't kill us with a machine gun but with a handgun to the head. Every 10th man was falling like that and I don't know why it was happening. My wife starts crying.

That was about 1:00 in the morning, my little boy was crying and I was in the nude and a German officer then put a little jacket on me and he pushed me down the hill because the railroad station was on the hill. He pushed me down the hill and my wife was with me and I took my child and we were rolling down the hill.

It was raining, drizzling and it was cold and I had only a jacket and I was holding my little boy and right away there was a search light after us and a machine gun started firing. What happens? We were rolling so fast we rolled into a river and we stopped and I didn't know where I was. I didn't know the village or city, and it's night and you can't see nothing and I had not one cent in my pocket. No pocket. No shoes. Nothing. The station was outside the village.

Anyway, we were thinking where we should go? And we were going along where the railroad track was. From farther away I can see a light in a house. A little house. It was a farmhouse. We knocked on the door and there was a child crying and they were not sleeping. It was a farmer and we said that we need some help. I didn't tell them that I had run away from the train. I told them that I am a POW and I escaped from the train. I didn't tell them that I was going to be shot. The man was Polish but not a Pole. He was a German.

He put some straw on the floor, he give me a pair of trousers, some old trousers and some wooden shoes. He gave me wooden shoes and he gave us something to eat and in the morning he gave us some breakfast . Then the police arrived, the German police arrived. “What are you doing here? they asked. I escaped, I am a POW, going on the train to the camp and because my wife and son were with me I escaped.”

They arrested me and my wife and we are in jail. She is in different jail. I don't know what happens to her. She doesn't know what happens to me. We are in jail maybe two weeks. After a week we got together because they're going to transfer us to POW camp. Because we were only two people, they were taking us from one jail to another one and where they would have more people. We were walking and walking. That was in November.

We went from another place to another place and there were about fifty people of us. I don't know how they survived. They had to walk from town to town as a group and in each town more prisoners were added. The conditions were harsh. On the way, we went through a town where the Germans were around the church. The church was full of Poles. I think that it was a Sunday. They set a fire to the building and anyone who tried to escape they were shooting. This was one of the things that I saw. There were lots of other things like this that I saw on the way. Finally we got to the train. Just before this, I didn't know where we were. We were travelling. I know the train stopped in Lublin. I know because I had been there and recognized it, from there we went up north; we went to northern Prussia, by train.

That was in the Baltic and it was a POW camp. The first thing, my wife was separated. She was not with me. I don't know why they did that. They could kill her or something, but they didn't. They sent her to a place and they took us to the river. That was in December.

It was before Christmas and they put us in the water up to the chest for the whole night with out hands up. The whole night. Fifty people standing in ice cold water. After that they took us out in the clothes that we were wearing and we were shaking. They took us to a fire station. There were no windows, and the wind was blowing and they let us to sleep on the floor.

The next day we marched into the POW camp. I didn't know where my wife is. I didn't know what would happen to her. What can you do? So, we are in the camp and in barracks, there are more of us and they give us uniforms. Old clothing. Funny thing, nobody did get sick. Nobody who had been in the water got sick. And that was Christmas time.

At this time I couldn't think about what I was seeing or experiencing. I couldn't worry about my wife or my children. I could only think about surviving, about getting food, nothing else.

Now in the camp, I was chopping wood, next to and for a kitchen. The wood was cut, just splitting, all day splitting . Sometimes soldiers, Germans, were coming out and some giving us bread. Some behaved like people. Some behaved like animals. Some Germans just hit us and spit on us.

One time, around Christmas, before or after, I don't remember, one German officer came out and looking at me and goes away. The second time he comes again, and looks at me how I'm chopping the wood. He looks at me from this side and looks at me from that side and then goes away.

The third day he calls me to his office and says "What is your name?" So I told him "My name is Daniel bar Winer, which is what I went by in Poland." As he says, "You are so familiar. You are not Dymnik?" And I jumped, that was my grandfather's name. And he said, "You are recognizing me?" I told him no. He said, "I was Daleszic (He now used the German name of Wagmann)." I now remembered I was playing with him when I was a little boy, but I forgot about him. When I was at my grandparent's home after I had been kidnapped from the Church, he used to play with me. He was good company, playing together but I forgot about him. He was a Pole who had been born in Germany at the time of the First World War.

Anyway, I'm still chopping wood. He calls me back in and he tells me what is happening with my wife. He finds her. The Germans could have killed her but he puts her in a safe place. They give her some food and some other things and they are supposed to send her back to Kielce. Another time he gave me some clothes- a brand new suit and a train pass with I.D. some German money and he takes me to my wife and puts us on the train to escape. He did a good favour for me.

About a week later, after my escape, everyone was released from the POW camp. He had risked his life for me. This took place after Christmas 1939. It was already January 1940.

Session 2 - Daniel Weiner

The lieutenant who helped us was called Daleszic. He later changed his name to Wagmann. With the suit, money and train tickets and permit to travel by train we took the train back to Kielce. We arrived on a Sunday I remember.

In Kielce the railway station was on the main street. I know Kielce. I was born in Kielce. I have friends there. So I know where I was living on the main street and so I went to my apartment building and I saw some people, mostly Gentiles living there.

I didn't see one Jew on the street. What happened is that as soon as the Germans arrived they ordered that Jews cannot live on any of the main streets.,. They also at that time passed the law requiring Jews to wear a white armband with the Star of David on it.

While I was on the street going to the house where I was living, I saw a group by a coffeehouse. It was the biggest coffeehouse in Kielce and it was called Smolinski. It had five or six large, floor to ceiling windows facing the street. It was a very fancy coffeehouse.

Many people were standing outside and clapping so before I reached my apartment, which was about two houses further down. I went to look at what was happening. I saw women, naked except some still have their brassieres on, cleaning the windows with their underwear.

There was the Rabbi's wife from Kielce. There was a professor - who was teaching at the high school - and about six women, high-class women who were prominent members of the Jewish Community of Kielce. The Germans, who were in military uniforms, were inside the café had forced them to undress and clean the windows with their underwear, but quickly. They had clubs in their hands and they were threatening the women with these sticks. The people outside were Poles (There were no Jews there,) They were laughing and clapping at the misery of these women. I was with my wife and son and as we had just arrived we were not aware of the requirements for Jews not to live or walk on a Main Street nor about the requirements of having to wear an arm band. As a result we were not bothered by the crowd.

So after that, I didn't wait too long. I went to my house. My apartment was no more mine, because a Pole lived there. He said to me, "What you want here?" I told him I was living here and this is my furniture. "No." he said, "That was yours, now it is mine." He wouldn't let us in. He closed the door.

I didn't know what to do so I went to my sister (Aunt) Bronia (Brucha, in Jewish) Lis and there I found out what was happening in Kielce. I also found my younger son Moniek here with Bronia. We were crying and crying when we saw him and to see that he was all right. My sister told me that when the order came that the Jews had to leave their homes on the main street, the

Poles came to take over their homes. The Jews had no right to even remove their furniture, only their possessions like bedding and clothing. The Jews had only so much time to leave and those that hadn't left in time they would throw the people out from the apartment on the main street. Some they threw out the 2nd and 3rd floor windows, they injured and killed them. My sister who was living in the second house in from a main street on a side street (Planty) was not affected by this order. Her husband with his brother owned the building and they gave me a small apartment, two rooms in the attic and they organized some furniture for me. My sister had taken out our personal belongings and bedding from our home and had it for us.

The next day, my second day in Kielce, I went to my business and in charge was a "troy handler (which means trustee)", a Polish German who was running the place, and I told him, I am the owner and he says "Nice to meet you. Good that you're here. I've got lots of bills for you to pay." The bills they wanted me to pay. The income they took. I was not even permitted a wage and I didn't have any money. The rest of the day I visited with my family, my Grandmother, my Grandfather, and my brothers and sisters (aunts and uncles). It was very emotional, crying and kissing.

The next day, the third day back, the German police, the Gestapo went to my sister to find out where I am. They were looking for me as I was an escapee from the POW camp. (At this time they still hadn't released the POW's) So right away I cannot stay. I got one stinking day with my wife and two children and right away I have to escape. I left my wife and kids with Bronia. So now the Gestapo are looking, the police are looking and the Jewish police are looking to catch me.

When I was living in Kielce, mostly I had Gentile friends. Ninety-five per cent, mostly businessmen and people in my trade. These were the people I came in contact with in my work and very few of them were Jewish. I went to one guy, and he told me, "Don't worry you can sleep in my place." He had a machine shop, which I had done business with. He was a single guy and he lived in the same building as his machine shop.

I was there a few days and, so I said, "Look I don't want to be here to eat your food, I want to work. So I start working there and sleeping there and the police were looking for me. They couldn't find me.

In the meantime, that guy (I was working for) was also in the Polish underground. He told me he that officially he was producing spoons and some other items for the German army. So he asked me if I want to produce that and I told him yes. We had to get two parts for the spoon.

Steel was very expensive so we took pieces and welded them together and that was a good idea and we made thousands of steel spoons for the German army. Actually the Polish government was paying for that but it was for Germany. Later we started producing nails.

Sometime later I find out more of what's happening in Kielce when I was not there. When the Germans arrived the 4th of September they took hostages and one hostage they took was my sister's husband's Brother, Bronia's brother-in-law, Meyer Lis. The other was the Rabbi from the city who's wife I had seen cleaning the café's windows with her underwear, the third one was a couple of priests, a lot of top people. Now if a German should get killed those people would be hanged. They would after some days return the hostages and take new ones. It was up to the government to supply them with these hostages and they had to be prominent or important.

Anyway, what happens is somebody was hurt from the Germans so one hostage they killed. They hanged him in the City Square from the gallows. Later they hanged about 20 people in the same place for other reasons. And after they were hanged they didn't want to dispose of the bodies because they wanted people should watch how they are hanging. This took place while I was gone.

In September to December there were many events taking place to hurt and humiliate the Jews. For instance they gathered a bunch of religious Jews, and the Germans would roughly cut off their beards together with their skin from the Jews. Jews between the ages of 14 – 65 had to report for work, forced slave labour. That was what I heard, I didn't see it. In January, what I saw was about 20 people hanged, in the main square, some Jews, some Poles. Why? Something happened I don't know what. At this time my family was wearing the white armband but I was not.

Anyway I was making a wage and I was working there and feeding my family. Sometimes I was meeting my family at my grandmother's house. We couldn't walk on the street after 6:00 p.m. Only from 6:00 a.m. in the morning, till 6:00 p.m. in the night, otherwise it was curfew.

The Germans set up a committee from the Jews and those Jews have to be responsible for all the Jews. They took a few Jews, very well known Jews and they set up a committee. They called it 'Judenrat' a Jewish advisory group.

In the Judenrat was Dr. Moses Pelz. He was a Jew from Austria. He didn't speak Polish well but he was a good doctor, and he was a good Jew. He was not religious, he didn't go to the synagogue but he was still a Jew. He spoke German well and he had been an officer in Austrian or German army during WW1. Although he was not religious he was still highly respected within the Jewish community.

What happens, is this Dr. Pelz and the governor of Poland, Franck was his friend. They were sitting at the same bench in University in Berlin and they both became doctors,. Because of this Dr. Pelz knows that the governor can do something for him. So he went to Krakow a few times to see his friend and see what things he can do to better the situation for the Jews.

Now there was an order that I mentioned that all the male Jews between fourteen and sixty have to go to work. What was the work? The work was to clean outhouses and to pull wagons instead of horses. Mostly the dirty non-productive work. They worked long hours and without pay.

Now the Jews were living together and everybody is registered. The Jewish committee was registering the Jews, for the Germans, and you have to have an identity card called a Kennkarte with a picture and the word Juden written on the front, and Jews have to have an armband. It was a white piece of cloth with a blue star and you couldn't go out without it or you would be shot. In Kielce at that time I think there was twenty-eight thousand Jews. In all Kielce there is a population of about seventy-five thousand. One-third were Jews.

I was working and hiding and from time to time my brother (uncle) or sister or wife would tell me what was going on. They killed that guy. They throw out this guy in the rain from the third floor. (They were still throwing out Jews when it was discovered that they had a nice apartment or an apartment was needed.) They gave him two minutes time to move and in two minutes he wasn't out they throw him. He was injured and because he was injured they killed him. These were people which I knew.

At that time bread, food was very expensive. Bread went from the equivalent of fifty cents to fifty dollars. So there was a black market. Food was rationed. You could buy 50 grams a day, per person. One piece of bread per person a day. Everybody was selling his or her own shoes, anything, to buy food. Now that was 1940. It was a bad year.

In 1941 – Easter - the Jewish Passover we were told we had to make a ghetto. The Germans got the idea to make the ghetto. So they took a part of Kielce where there were living maybe ten thousand people both Jews and Gentiles, and the Gentiles had to get out. The Jews from all of Kielce had to move in – in one week.

So my wife and my kids moved in to a place in the Kielce ghetto not far from my grandmother. My grandmother didn't have to move because she was living in a part of the ghetto. Hundreds and hundreds of people the Germans killed on the way to the Ghetto because they were not moving so fast. People were running and crying. It started during Passover. The people didn't know what to do. Then they put on a fence around. The Polish police and German, and Ukrainian

were outside the ghetto so that no one should go out the ghetto. We now had about 28,000 people living in an area where 10,000 had lived before.

Now there was no food inside so people were trying to smuggle. Some Poles were charging \$50 to \$70 for bread that was traded through the fence. The Jews inside were trying to buy something to eat so that there was smuggling. Smuggling in wheat, potatoes – all kinds of food.

Then the Germans closed all the mills so the Poles couldn't make flour from the grain. If someone was making flour they were shot. At that time when I was working we were grinding wheat by hand to grind flour. So I was starting to make machines to grind flour by hand. I got one for myself and for the ghetto. I was still living with my friend but I was smuggling myself in and out of the ghetto, at least at that time. Later I had a permit to enter and leave the ghetto. I was still not wearing an armband. I looked like a Gentile and people left me alone. My friend had arranged forged identification papers showing that I was a Pole. I was working in the underground with my friend. I was making a living and getting paid for that. So I was making this grinder and I was smuggling it into the ghetto. I made a few hundred of them and they sold for about three hundred dollars. And the people they were buying them because the farmers couldn't sell flour, they could only sell the grain.

People in the ghetto were dying. People were begging for a piece of bread. Every day on the street you could see people with swollen bodies because they had no food.

Later on and it was getting colder and we didn't have any electricity. I was smuggling in acetylene lamps that were using calcium carbide. We were building carbon arc lamps. So I was making those lamps and I was selling them and I have all the money in my hands. I had a good life. I had enough bread to feed my family. We had bread and some times a piece of butter. That was luxury - not only for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles.

Now in the metal factory where we were making spoons for the Germans we were also making for the Polish underground hand grenades and bombs. The Germans only know this as a metal shop. That's what they know. They didn't know anything about hand grenades.

When I was there at the metal shop I meet the top man from the underground and right away that was called 'Home Army', they call it A.K. (Armja Krajowa) The Polish army underground. That was an anti-Semitic underground. They were against Jews. This group had some people which were bandits and other types of criminals so the German were after them. This was not an idealistic underground, but mostly escapees from the German prisons who hid in the forests. Some were real partisans like my friend. I wasn't in the underground at that time I was just working there from 1941 to 1942.

At that time it was very bad in the ghetto. In the ghetto for instance, Jews didn't get something to eat and they were weak. They were living in houses which were made from wood. Other Jews who needed some wood to heat the house took the other Jews houses apart to burn. The Jews were living in shacks. They were outside without anything. Nobody was caring for the other one. Everyone was caring for himself. Children were begging for bread.

Anyway, I was getting some fish and other things for my friends. Mostly my friends didn't like fish, those that did, didn't like the head from fish. For us my wife and my grandmother took the heads and made soup. So I worked and smuggled food to the ghetto.

A friend of mine from the underground was working for the Germans in their offices. Some of my friends were lawyers and mostly educated people. They told me when there would be a raid from the Germans on this people in the ghetto. These raids were used to capture men for execution on the occasion of some event, like for instance Hitler's birthday. When I had such a warning I would stay away from the Ghetto.

The Germans wanted contributions. For instance, the Jews got to give so much gold in one week. So the Jews were taking off their rings, anything they could to make contributions to the Germans. Another time The Germans confiscate fur coats, radios everything. You couldn't have any electric appliances, no bicycles and no motorcycles. They took away all our possessions.

In 1942, the 20th of August was my 7th anniversary for my wedding so I got some ham, some champagne or vodka - champagne I think - and I went to the ghetto where my wife was living and I invited another couples to celebrate my anniversary. The windows were closed.

We didn't have light. What I did is smuggled in the light and connected it. The German didn't know. The Germans cut off power and disconnected the neutral wire to the poles. The hot wire was still there but without the neutral I couldn't have any light. So what I did, I took the neutral from the ground and I got in my house hydro in my room where I was living and I got a heating coil. So we got heating and nobody knows anything. It was a secret.

Anyway, we celebrated till about 10:00 in the night and then we went to bed. About 1:00 a.m. a knock came on my window. It was somebody from the underground who told me, "You have to come right away. We have a big job for you to do."

At that time I was working for the underground. I couldn't say no. So I went. It was a clear night and it was quiet. They took me into the shop where I was working and they said, "We have special job for you. We want you to be on the fifth floor on that building and watch what will happen. If something goes wrong, you have 24 bullets, don't hesitate to shoot." This building

overlooked the Ghetto and it was near the Church where I grew up. The owner of the Building was Schmelke Lox, and the building was empty.

That was the first time I was on duty, as I was not a member of the Underground. I had never been given duty before. On the fifth floor of this building you can see the entire ghetto. I didn't know what would happen. They didn't know what would happen. About 5:00 a.m. the Polish police arrive. Later came the German police, the Shtupo, the Gestappo and Ukrainians in black uniforms.

They rounded up the whole ghetto. I didn't know what was happening. It was dark and it wasn't going to be light until about 7:00 a.m. They started yelling inside and shooting and yelling. It was the evacuation of the ghetto. That was the 21st of August 1942.

I saw with my own eyes how my wife with my two children, my eldest carrying a kettle, I don't know why the kettle, were taken by the Germans to a space like a field where people were playing football sometimes.(Umshlagplatz – concentration space in German, it was close to the railway tracks) This was not far from the place where I was on duty.

I saw how they were killing people there. I saw through my own eyes how they took kids – babies - one was throwing them in the air and the other one was shooting them like a target. I saw how they took kids about two, three and four years old and how they knocked their heads against the wall to kill them.

That day they killed three thousand. Now when I remind myself about that I am getting really sick. And what I did, I put gun away I made an armband and I went to the gate and I told them, "I am a Jew. I want to go in." They kicked me, they called me a swine, "You Polish pig." They don't believe me when I told them that I was Jewish because I was blond haired and blue eyed. They wouldn't let me come in. They kicked me out.

So I went to another gate because I wanted to go with my family and they also wouldn't let me in. At the third gate the guards said, "You Polish pig. You want to go in? Come on in." And he took the nightstick and he knocked me on the head and my head was bloody. And I was running to see where my wife was. The Germans were everywhere and nobody was able to go between the areas of the ghetto. My wife and kids were in the first area and I was in the third area.

They didn't evacuate all of them in one day. In the beginning there was about twenty-five thousand Jews. By the end of the ghetto there was about thirty-two thousand Jews as Jews arrived from small towns. My family was taken away in the first transport. Anyway, by the second day I couldn't get into the transport. The third day was the same story. Over these three days another six thousand Jews were killed.

On the first day I was picked up by the German and Jewish police and they took me to a street with other Jews together with some others (Street name Nowy Swiat) without explanation . The Germans had a big hole in the ground and they were bringing in the dead Jews. I was there to bury them. There were four of us in the hole and four Jews outside. We got to put the bodies down like sardines so more will go in.

All the Jews they've got to be undressed. There were another few Jews who undressed the bodies and the Germans were yelling "Faster! Faster!" They would shoot you if you didn't work so fast. I saw them kill Jews who they thought were not undressing the corpses fast enough. I was numb to all this, I was just acting like a robot. I was totally desensitized. We were all totally desensitized. After seeing one person murdered, two you can still have feelings. After seeing people being killed over and over again you become totally desensitized, without feeling, just mechanical. Two Jews were there with pliers taking out gold teeth from the mouths of the dead bodies. And everyone was going very fast. The Germans were yelling and kicking. It was unbelievable what was going on there. They made a hole for six thousand people. Some of the people buried were still breathing and moving.

There were 3 Actions. An action was when they had a roundup of part of the population. This consisted of evacuating people from their homes to where they were concentrated for deportation and the marching of these people to the trains and loading the trains. In order to get the population to cooperate the Actions consisted of violence and killing in order to create panic and fear. An action took place on each of the 3 days Aug. 21, 22, 23. In the end, on the 24th of August there was left over only approximately twelve hundred Jews. Prior to the completion of the Actions I was one of the people that they took to the synagogue to sleep there. Everyone else had left by train including my wife, my two kids. And I was left there. Who were the twelve hundred Jews left over? There were doctors with their wives and children, there were Jewish policemen with their wives and their kids. There was the Jewish committee who were the administrators who were working for the German army. I was one of the people that didn't fit that profile there. I was there by accident. I was the last person taken here to this segregated group. On August 24, there was a "segregation". The Germans needed only 800 people to be left over and there was now left over 1200 people, so the Germans did a further selection.

During this segregation, I met a lady that I knew, she was a midwife and she has got a little girl with her. Her married name was Bluestein. Her husband was not with her. I believe that he had been arrested earlier in Russia. She was working for the Committee.

I was watching the segregation. There was a German officer with a stick. The Jews were lined up. As they approached him he would ask questions. Where are you working? Most of the

police went to the right with their wives and kids, some went to the left, the same with the police, some didn't make it to the right and the same with the administrator. I was at the end of the line. We could tell that the people on the left, those that weren't valuable to the Germans, the women and children, the ones without important jobs and those that they didn't like were being sent to the left. We knew that those on the left were going to go to the trains. I wanted to go on the train because I thought I would then go to the same place with my wife and children. We believed that these trains were being sent east to Russian occupied territories. We had no idea of concentration camps or death camps. So I told this woman, "You tell them I'm your husband. Because then they will send me out, and I want to go out too." When they ask me where are you working? I said I don't work anywhere. This is my wife and this is my kid. They sent her to the left line which went to the transport and me to the right. They made me stay, so that's why I didn't go."

After the segregation, they took us, the remaining 800 from the synagogue. During the march, there were two Jewish police officers. One was originally from Vienna, his name was Schindler, and the other was a Polish Jew. One was killed right away, because the people were not lined up nicely. Schindler was the head of the Jewish police. The other was killed a few minutes later. They took us to a little ghetto just two streets wide. This little ghetto was part of the original ghetto located between two sections of the main ghetto. When they created the ghetto some of the streets within the ghetto were still used as passageways between the main parts of the city, with fences on each side of the street. So this area was already fenced in. As it happened this small ghetto included my grandparents house which is where I stayed. The Ghetto is empty, there is nobody there, no life. They took us to clean up the ghetto because people left without taking anything.

The Jews were organized in work groups. Buildings, such as schools in the ghetto were taken over to be used as warehouses. Warehouses in the ghetto were set up with facilities for washing, ironing and repairing clothes. Some men were sent out to the ghetto to obtain all remaining possessions to bring to these warehouses for sorting. In the warehouses the women were sorting, cleaning, repairing, ironing and folding the clothes. The men were getting the furniture and appliances and cleaning, repairing and sorting them. All these goods were shipped to Germany. Businessmen from Germany would arrive and buy the goods. We worked under the supervision of German men and women, some in uniform and others not. Sometimes Poles would sneak into the Ghetto and try to steal some goods before we could bring them to the warehouses. When they were caught they were shot or beaten to death on site.

In the houses there were lots of things. Because there were so many Jews in the Ghetto, there were lots of things there.

Anyway, I wanted to find out where my family was but in the meantime I was inside the little ghetto and it wasn't easy to get out. There was lots of police around. I was living in the little ghetto. Initially I had no job assignment After a few weeks, they took me to work. I told them I could fix bicycles, so they took me to fix bicycles.

While I was not assigned a job I managed to escape from the little ghetto about 2-3 days later. This was dangerous as not only were there many police but the Germans were publicly offering to the Poles in the city a reward of 1 kg. of sugar to anybody who caught an escaped Jew. Some Jews who had escaped before me had been turned in by Poles and returned to the Ghetto by Germans where they were hanged as a warning to other Jews. I escaped through the fence when no one was looking. There I got in touch with the underground . I just went out, I escaped, and that time I told myself I have to find out what happened to the people which were sent out by train. I needed to know where my family was sent. I spoke to one friend I knew from the underground and he knew a German who he could speak to. He spoke to this German and the German was willing to find out but he wanted \$200 US to do so.

I went back to the ghetto. I had no other place to stay. I couldn't stay on the outside, as it was dangerous to all of us. I snuck back into the ghetto.

Back in the ghetto I spoke to a friend who also wants to know what happened to the train. There were more people who also wanted to know so he organized the money. So I got the money , escaped again outside the ghetto and met with my friend who passed the money on to the German. It was easy for me to leave and re-enter the ghetto as I still had my old permit that showed that I worked for the German authorities. With this permit the Jewish police guarding the exits would allow me to leave. Once out I would remove my armband. On the third day the German got back the news to my friend who relayed it to me. "You should know, no one is alive. All the people went straight to the gas chamber." The people on the train went to Treblinka which was not far from Warsaw. We had all assumed, including the underground that the trains had gone east.

We didn't believe him. It was unbelievable. We dismissed it. A few weeks later, three little boys, between the ages of 11-13 escaped from there, from Treblinka. They escaped because they were loading clothes into trains, in Treblinka, for Germany and they went to the train where the clothing was being transported and hid among the clothing. Once out of Treblinka they jumped out and they went back to Kielce and went back to the little ghetto.

They smuggled back into the ghetto. It was easy, there were not many people watching us then. The three little boys, they told us how the Jews were killed, how everybody went to the gas chamber and how we shouldn't think anyone one was left alive.

There was a small headquarters for the Jews in Kielce. When a German Jew called Spiegel from Vienna, who was now head of the Jewish Police in the Ghetto heard these stories he called the Gestapo. He called the Gestapo because he had three boys which were making up stories, propaganda, about what happened to the people. The Gestapo hanged the boys. They were only children. The Jews, who were not working, had to go out and witness the hanging. I witnessed the hanging.

Every day I heard other similar stories about other communities as well, from the Poles and from that time I went to work for the underground. I say I now work idealistically. Not any more for the money. I wanted to help the boys and the girls in the little ghetto. We should get out. We should fight because our families are dead and we aren't going to live either. I had no purpose to living, my only reason to live was to try and get back at the Germans and to help to hurt and kill as many of them as I could. I was angry and I still am at the members of the Polish underground. When they had called me away from the Ghetto on Aug. 20, I found out that they were aware of the upcoming Actions. If they wanted to, they could have given me some sort of warning or could have asked me to try and get my family out, but they didn't. When confronted they said that they couldn't tell me at the time but they wouldn't tell me why they couldn't tell me.

Before the liquidation of the ghetto I worked for the underground, not as a member but strictly for money, money that I could use to help my family with. Although I now hated the members of the underground for what I believed was their anti-Semitism, and because they allowed my family to be taken away from me even though they could have helped me help them to escape, I still wanted to be part of the underground.

So I started working this way, and I organized a few Jews in the ghetto. There were a few other young men and the group of us started to organize our own underground within the ghetto. I told the Jews working with the Germans that they should try to steal or even buy the guns and ammunitions. Some stole some guns, ammunition, even a machine gun (my friend now living in New York, Horovitz). So we got small group organized for an uprising. I and another Jew, last name Lefkovitz, were the leaders of this small Jewish underground. Lefkovitz survived the war. His daughter still lives in Ottawa.

So I go to the manager of the Polish underground A.K. Armia Krajowa (pronounced Kroyowa) (Home Army) in Kielce, the commander, who had been a lawyer, and I tell him, "We are Jews and we want to fight, and we want your help." And he tells me, "You know in the woods you have those that are in our underground which are against Jews and these are not educated

people, but people like escaped convicts, which will kill you. So you have to watch yourself against them.” In other words there were members of the underground that were so anti-Semitic, they would still kill Jews even if the Jews themselves were in the underground. So he gave us advice. It was November 1942 when he told us about a little village in a forest not far from Kielce in an area called Gory Siento Kzisksie which means Holy Mountans with a Cross. He told us that this would be a good place to set up camp. We set up camp there end of November 1942.

Now I am going to tell about an incident that took place in the little ghetto end of September or beginning of October 1942. There was a man in the small ghetto who was from Lodz but who had been evacuated to the Kielce Ghetto before the liquidations. I think that he was working for the Jewish Committee and he had a son about 13 years old. His wife was not in the small ghetto. The Germans caught him smuggling a piece of bread to the Ghetto. There were about six German officers and they put the father and the son on the gallows. They told the father, “You hang your son or your son will hang you.”

I remember the day clearly; it was a warm sunny day. I was there. They called a few other Jews to watch this. I remember the name of the guy. It was Schwartzbaum. The father was begging his son “You are young. Maybe a miracle will happen and you will be living. Please hang me.” And the father put the noose on himself. It was October 1942. The Germans were rolling up their shirtsleeves and they were eating sandwiches and they watched as the son was hanging his father. The boy had to take away the chair and the boy had to watch his father die. The son was twelve or thirteen and he was with nobody. So the son was crying and I went to him, and I said, “You know what, don’t cry. I am underground.” and I took him out with me. He was with me in the underground. They left his father hanging for a day.

Now it is the end of November and the five of us have decided to escape in order to hide and to see what it was like to live out in the woods. At this time the Germans were not taking roll call except for those people going out to the main ghetto to work. We go to a forest not far from Kielce - I forget the name. There is four or five other people and the little boy and we dig a hole in the ground for shelter. We have nothing there and it’s cold. We have no food, nothing to cover up. We put some branches on top of the hole.

One night it was very cold, dark and we have to go to buy some food. So three of our group went out to the Polish village about five km from the place. Two went there to buy some food, the third was the lookout. Right away the Polish police caught the two of them. The third partisan was watching them and he came back to report that the other two had been caught.

The Polish police usually stayed all day and night in their station with barbed wire around because they were scared of the partisans. They got searchlights outside and they were sleeping in

the police station because they were scared. Now we were afraid that our two comrades were getting so much of a beating that they would tell the police where we are hiding in the forest. The police station was too fortified for us to try and get the other two out.

So we got to go. But where should we go? Back to the ghetto? If we do, the Germans will arrest us because the Polish Police will tell them about us. So now that little boy, he's got an idea. He says we should kidnap the mayor of the village or his wife and kids and go to the police and ask them to give our people back.

That night we went to go to the mayor's home. We went to a farm in the village to get his horse and buggy and we forced the farmer to go with us to the mayor's home. He was not there but his wife was. So, we kidnapped the wife and the two children. I still remember how the kids were crying. I felt badly for the kids but I also didn't believe that we ourselves would actually leave this situation alive either.

And we went to the police with the buggy and horse and right away we got searchlights pointed on us. So we told them, "You want to shoot, shoot!" We were behind the kids and behind the mayor's wife and we start negotiating and they let go one guy. The other one was already killed.

So we let the mayor's wife and kids go and we took the farmer and the horse with the buggy near to the forest. We let the farmer go with his horse and buggy and we run fast to our place but we had to leave. That first camp was no good so we went back to the ghetto.

We smuggled back into the small Ghetto. Not too many German police were watching. On another occasion, which took place when I was doing an operation with the Polish underground, I and four other members of the underground had gone in the night to a Polish warehouse, which like all things were under German control. I was the only Jew. This warehouse was being used to store food, mostly flour and was being guarded by a single Ukrainian. The Germans used many Ukrainians and Lithuanians as guards. Many Ukrainian and Lithuanians worked for the Germans and were trusted by them to do their work. The Ukrainians wore black uniforms and carried guns. One of team shot the guard. He was killed. We raided the warehouse and filled the wagon that we had brought with as much flour and food that we could. The wagon was pulled by a single horse. We drove through Kielce and threw the bags of flour on to the street for the people to find. While I smuggled back to the ghetto a German in uniform spotted me and chased me. I jumped over the fence and the German police were after me. I ran to a Jewish policeman's house. He was sleeping with his wife and I threw him out from his bed and I went in to it. His name was Weinrib. I was scared and told her, "You better shut up because I will kill you." She was to pretend that I was her husband and her husband could wander outside because

he got dressed in his police outfit, which for a Jewish policeman was his hat. I stayed there until it quieted down. That happened. Lots of things happened...small things...but very important. It was winter of 1942.

It was now end of November or beginning of December 1942 and winter was coming and I am going back and forwards from inside to outside the ghetto, smuggling goods back and forth, and we were trying to organize a Jewish underground. I was organizing this Jewish underground together with the guy by the name of Lefkovitz. We first got twenty people then thirty and then about one hundred. So we organized a camp. We have to go far away to another place, far from Kielce to a place which I mentioned is called Gory Siento Kziskie which means 'holy mountains with a cross'. There in the holy mountains there was a prison. I went there and we set up a very good camp with electric lights, with a generator operating by hand and we got some guns and some ammunition. To obtain money the Jews working in the small Ghetto organizing and repairing the clothes taken from the Big Ghetto would, when they had a chance, steal this clothing by putting on extra layers of clothing. We would smuggle this clothing out of the small ghetto and sell them to Poles for cash or trade them for other things such as food, guns, and ammunition.

I was going back and forwards trying to buy ammunition, trying to buy guns, it's not so easy. It wasn't easy to buy from the Poles. We were stealing and buying. The farmers that were raising livestock were not permitted to sell any, only to the Germans. The Germans would put tags on the ears of the animals, like earrings, that were registered. We went to a farmer, we wanted to buy he was willing to sell but he couldn't sell us a pig because the tags in the ear of the pig. What we did, we cut off the head, and we left the head for the farmer with the tag and we took the rest of the pig with us. This way when the Germans came the farmer could then show the Germans that the partisans stole the animal and left the head. Later the farmers got smart and realized that they could kill and sell their own animal's meat in the market and just tell the Germans that the partisans did it.

The Germans were scared of the partisans. They stayed away from the forests because they would get ambushed there. The Germans were generally not killed because every time a German was killed, a hundred civilians would be hanged. A typical ambush would involve stopping a small transport, stealing everything, stripping the Germans of their uniforms and sending them walking back in their underwear. Who was a partisan? There were Russian groups, socialist groups, polish right wing (A.K.) and some other smaller groups. Anyway we organized a little camp and we got it very nicely set up. We were about a 100. I got out there the little boy (Shwartzbaum), another two people who asked to live there out of the little ghetto The Germans

didn't know about our activities. When a Jew was missing they assumed that he had run away. What did the Germans do about the runaways? What happens is the Germans give the poles one kilo of sugar for every Jew they find or hear about. That's what they did. They advertised that any Pole that would denounce a Jew that was not in the ghetto would get a kilo of sugar.

One time I was walking with the little boy, Shwartbaum, who hanged his father in the streets of Kielce. He was now about 14 years old. We were dressed as civilian Poles and without the Jewish armbands. While we were walking he spotted and recognized the Polish policeman who arrested his father and brought his father to the Germans. He was dressed at the time in civilian clothes. We followed him until he entered a gate to a courtyard of a home. We were both armed with handguns. The boy who was about fourteen at the time, shot and killed him with one single bullet.

At that time I didn't care for my life. I didn't want to live. I only wanted to kill as many Germans as I could.

At the camp it was okay. We couldn't remove 100 people from the Ghetto as the Germans would notice that they were gone. We didn't have enough supplies to feed, house or clothe 100 people, especially during winter. So while the conditions in the small ghetto were bearable only a few of us, about six of us, the same few, would go out of the camp

On occasion one of the Jewish underground was discovered by a Jewish policeman crossing the fence back into the ghetto and he was arrested. Usually the policeman would take some of the goods, like sausage or other food, being smuggled in and then the person would be let go. In this case the person crossing over, his name was Tichler, the older of two brothers. He was caught, and when they asked him for some food he didn't have any so he was searched and a gun was found. The Jewish police were going to bring Tichler to the Germans. At this time the commander of the Jewish police was involved and his name was Spiegel, the same Spiegel that was mentioned before. I was called and intervened on behalf of Tichler. Spiegel wanted to turn in Tichler because "I don't want to give my head for you (Tichler)" I convinced Spiegel that it wouldn't matter because eventually we would all be killed, even him. He let Tichler go.

One episode in the Ghetto, about March or April 1943 the Gestapo arrived. It was terrible. They took the representative of the Jews of the small ghetto - his name was Levy, and who had been appointed by the Germans. They took him and his whole extended family, including children, in-laws, etc. to the Jewish cemetery and they shot them. On another incident about a month later they arrived and they took all the doctors, with their wives and children, which were left from the original ghetto and they put them in a truck and drove them to the Jewish cemetery. They took forty-two people to the cemetery and they shot them, just for

nothing...just like that. Why you might ask, were the doctors at this point still alive and in the small ghetto? During the liquidation of the large ghetto the doctors were forced by the Germans to go to the Jewish Hospital, and Old Age Home and the orphanage in the ghetto and to murder the people there by injecting them with benzene.

A meeting for the 100 members of the Jewish underground is scheduled for May 1, 1943, May Day which was our socialist Labour day. In order to distract the Jewish police we had set up a plan to inform the Germans that there was a large escape planned for that night. At this time Spiegel felt sympathetic to the underground as I believe that he could benefit from it. He was not a good person. His partner Strawczynsky, (pronounced, Straftchinczky), a Polish Jew was more sympathetic. They told the Germans that they believed the Polish partisans were organizing an escape of all the Jews in the ghetto that night. That night the Germans have the Polish and the Jewish police watching the small ghetto's perimeter and we have our "socialistic" meeting. In this meeting we sing socialistic songs and May Day songs, like the French "Marciend" and Russian proletariat songs. We even have smuggled in some Polish partisans from the Socialist Partisans Group. In this meeting it is discussed how the Russians are beating the Germans and how the war will end, how we should go into hiding and that we will be liberated. We knew that the Germans had liquidated the small ghettos in other cities, when their usefulness came to an end, such as in Radom, Lublin, Krakow, etc. We knew that it was only a matter of time before our ghetto too would be liquidated and we knew that it would take place at the end of May. We had planned for our 100 or so members to escape from the small ghetto before the end of May. Although I knew that the camp had been organized with the help of the A.K. I did not inform this to the group as the A.K. was right wing and anti-Semitic and this was a Socialistic meeting of Jews who wanted nothing to do with the A.K. They knew that the A.K. were killing Jews. The meeting took place in the house where my good friend, and a former Cantor of the Beth Tzedek, Joe Cooper, lived before the War.

Before we could organize our escape it seems that Speigel had a change of heart and decided to inform the Gestapo of our plan to escape. The Gestapo came in together with the Polish Police and Ukrainians and they surrounded the small Ghetto. They came in and separated the Jews in the Ghetto into three groups and took each group into a different work camp. One group was taken to a wood-working factory within Kielce, outside the ghetto. Another group went to another city Skarzysko (pronounced Skarjisko), about 50 km from Kielce to a factory there. I went with another group to another factory that was making gunpowder about 150 km away, Pionko, pronounced Pionki. At the same time that they organized these three groups they

took the remaining children from their parents. These remaining children were the children of the Jewish policemen. At this time the Jewish policemen were organized into the three groups as well and were relieved of their police duties and rights. They were now like everyone else. The children were put into a house and then later that day they were taken to the Jewish cemetery where they were murdered. The next day we heard about it. Today there is a memorial there in the Jewish cemetery for these Jewish Children.

Speigel ended up in Aucshwitz as a Jewish inmate, where he was recognized by other Jewish inmates from Kielce, at least one of them murdered him. My friend Stanley Golvin, who now lives in Toronto, was a Jewish inmate at Auchwitz at this time.

So what happens? The commandant from the police who was watching us –His name was Globicz (Globich) he was dressed in an Ukrainian high officer uniform (but later , after the War, I found out that he was actually a Pole). The Ukrainians, they were bad people. He was one who was working in the underground, I didn't know that and my underground told them to keep a watch on me. So we went to the factory there, I didn't know he was watching me and I didn't know he was in the underground. I know I got the job to work outside the factory in a water plant, to make pure water for the factory.

There was a big lake and by the lake was a house, which a Pole, who was a superintendent for the pumping station, was living in, and he was watching the pumps. I later found out that that Pole was also a member of the underground. (A.K) I was coming out there to work. Always I got a Ukrainian policeman to escort me, taking me out and taking me in. I couldn't go outside by myself. What I did in the factory, it was making gunpowder and I was doing welding in the pumps with oxygen and acetylene in bottles.

I was taking the two bottles outside the factory, on a two-wheel wagon and I was doing the welding, that was the first week. The second week I find out I don't have anything in one bottle. I have a bottle full of gunpowder. So this means somebody in the factory was in the underground and it could be the Poles or the Jews, I didn't know, and they are preparing the bottles for me to get them outside. There was another Pole there, associated with the Pumping Station superintendent. He would take the bottle of gunpowder across the lake and he always had a spare empty bottle to exchange with me and for welding they had a spare bottle. He had a boat, a big boat. So we put on the gunpowder on the boat and it went away to the lake to a very big forest on the other side.

I didn't know anything about that. I know later where I'm coming inside to get acetylene I was getting out the powder and the powder went every day to the underground and everyday I

was getting out a bottle of powder. I was using the spare bottle for welding which was enough for 2-3 weeks.. The German didn't know about that because there was always a bottle being returned.

In the meantime at the work camp, which was called Pienkne, which was a working camp and not a concentration camp, you were working there for eight hours a day. Some people were working there very hard. Mostly women were working there. Many women were burned to death, you know because of the explosions. The factory was made up of many small buildings. Between each of the buildings were berms the size of small mountains, so when one building would catch fire or explode it should not catch the other one. Every day there were fires there.

The factory was one hundred square km. There was a double fence around the perimeter of the factory, guarded by Ukrainians. We were self-sufficient. We produced our own electric power; we had our own phones, etc. Power and heat for warmth, and process was all from steam. It was too dangerous to have open flame. On one end of the compound we had three buildings that produced steam from coal and there was another building for producing electricity. The dormitories were on one end of the factory. So anyway, I was working and from time to time the Pole with the boat would take me over to the other side of the lake to the partisans which were there. They got me to help them make some bombs, some other things like grenades, Molotov cocktails that used gunpowder. That was on the west side of the river, in polish it's called 'Wisla'. In English, Vijula. It was A big river which divides east and west Poland. This took place from May 1943 until Sept or Oct.1944.

Don't forget there were lots of hangings in the working camp. Lots of women, lots of men, lots of Jews, lots of gentiles were hanged, there was not a day without hanging or killing even at a working camp. People were hanged for minor infractions, for smuggling, for not marching straight, for anything. It kept the people in line and always in fear. (Note: The poles commuted to the factory each day and got paid for their work, the Jews were slaves. The Jews, dormitories were burned out buildings not useable as factories). In 1944, the Russians arrived to Vijula and the Germans were retreating.

On the east side of the river there were the Russians. On the west side was the German army. After the German army, we were the Partisans – twelve hundred organized partisan group - a big group AK. To the east was S.S. watching the German army not to run away but to fight. That was sometime in August or September.

At that time the partisans called me and I was outside with the powder and everything and they took me over to the partisan group and then I left the work camp for good. A month later, the work camp was liquidated. They took all the people to Auschwitz.

It was then that I found out who it was in the underground that was looking out for me. It was the commandant of the Ukrainian police force, Globicz. I still didn't know him. I never met him and I didn't even know about him until after the war. Now the underground, that was in a forest in one of the biggest forests in Poland. The Germans were scared to go in there. We were using lots of tricks to get ammunition and other things from the Germans. As an example I would on one occasion dress in a German uniform and go to a German Police Station, where security was so tight that they had German police guarding the station from the outside. I went there because I knew the building from before the war, and I went straight to the warehouse, saluted "Heil Hitler" to everybody and was able to load my pockets up with a load of special type of bullets that were used in hand held machine guns just as if I was a German Policeman. I went out and the police did not suspect anything. In the underground, we got enough food because they organized enough meat, other things and it was a nice camp.

One time when we were in the woods we heard what sounded like cries of help. It was in Hebrew the "Shmai Yisrael", a prayer one says before one is about to die. We went out to see what was happening and there on the road was an open carriage being pulled by horses. There were 3 women on the carriage and a driver and there were 4 Ukrainians in black uniforms which the Ukrainians wore. They were beating the women. I went with about six other men and we confronted the Ukrainians and shot two bullets into the air. The Ukrainians ran away and we let them. I spoke briefly to one of the girls. She was a pretty teenage girl. I asked her where they were coming from and she told me Chenstehau and that they were on there way to Chmelniek and she told me that her name was Barwiner. It was the same name as mine but I didn't have any more time to talk to her. We had to leave. Today I think that it is possible that she might have been a half sister.

Suddenly, there was an uprising in Warsaw, in September in 1944. Our camp was two hundred and fifty kms from Warsaw. We got radios so we know. We listened to the BBC in England. We were always connected to the BBC. The BBC broadcast in all languages including Polish.

At this time the Russians were standing on the other side of Warsaw by the river. At that time the Germans were retreating. The AK thought that the Russians will come over the river and liberate Warsaw. But the Russians stopped at the river, and we received an order to go and help the uprising. That was suicide! It is my theory that the Russians stopped because they didn't want the AK to get the credit for the liberation of Poland.

The Poles, I remember the name Lieutenant Skavronik, he received the order to go help the uprising in Warsaw. We had to go. An order is an order. And we went out to help with the uprising.

In order to go to Warsaw we had to go northwest through the German forces. The whole night was like daylight because of the bombs, the artillery, the searchlights. The Germans got airplanes; they got tanks and what do we have? A few guns...how can you go through? Almost everybody was killed, close to two thousand. Maybe 200 went through. I was lucky. Lucky? We don't have food. We don't have water. We don't have clothing. You are walking. You cannot walk on the main highway. You have to walk on the side of the road for one hundred and eighty km. Everybody was praying that the Germans should come and take us to prison camp.

Now when I was in the underground at that camp, I had duty outside the forest, in September. I had duty to watch that no Germans would come. I was sitting on the top of a tree stump and I was thinking. Why are we (the Jews) fighting? Everybody is against the Jews. Maybe they are right? Maybe the Jews should be killed? Maybe we should be liquidated? Maybe I have no right to exist. Maybe they are right in what they are doing.

I remember the day I am thinking like that because what happened a few days before. One of my friends in the underground took me to a church, on a Sunday. Not far from the camp there was a little town and we went to the church. The priest after he made the sermon said, "I know some of you are hiding Jews. You should know, Jews killed Christ and anybody who is hiding the Jews will go to hell through so many fires and you will stay where waterfalls will fall on you. And not only those of you who are hiding the Jews, but those who knows who is hiding a Jew will have the same treatment." Afterwards my friend, who did not seem to be an anti-Semite, said to me " You can see who you are dealing with."

Anyway, getting back to the trip to Warsaw and the uprising. We were begging that the Germans come and take us. We didn't have shoes. We couldn't walk and we had no food for two or three days. The Germans arrived and took us. They set up a camp for everyone from the uprising. They set up a camp for all the Poles, which, were fighting and not fighting in that camp, and they took us they took us to the camp. They assumed we were all Poles. They didn't know I'm a Jew. There were no more Jews left.

Anyway the camp was called 'Pruszkow'(Prushkuv). When I arrived at this camp there were old men, young men, boys, girls, women, children. Food was not supplied. It was one hundred to one hundred and fifty thousand people.

Every day there was going a transport to Auschwitz. In the train they put on between fifteen to twenty thousand people. Each car, they were cattle cars, would hold between 120 –150

people. After a few days I am the lucky one to go to Auschwitz. I didn't care at that time about my life because I know I am dead.

I went to the train and the cattle car. It was small, about 120 people; we didn't get the chance to move we got only the chance to stand. In that car there were kids, mothers, fathers, old and young and they were standing like that and the train was going. These were Polish people and if there were Jews, the Germans thought that they were Poles.

Who was guarding us? Ukrainians on the top of the car with machine guns and outside by the sides of the cars. In the night always a few people in the car would die. So the dead we put to the side so we got a little more room. Forget about sleeping. Standing was all that there was room for. We didn't have water - nothing. It was the end of September.

It took us four days and five nights. It was a slow train. The Ukrainians, the boys in the black uniforms, went in and they were raping the girls, eight and ten year old girls under the eyes of their mothers and the fathers. And there was no shame. They were raping the girls and sometimes they opened the door and throwing them out and shutting it. If a mother or father tried to defend their daughter they would be shot and thrown out the door. That is what the Ukrainians did. I'm not talking one night. I'm talking every night. Old women, young women, kids, there was no difference.

This was about the beginning of October 1944. We arrived in Auschwitz. Through the holes in the walls you could see the gate "Arbeits macht das Leben Seise. (Work makes for a sweet life) (Ed. Note: Wording on main gate is "Arbeit Macht Frei" which means Work Makes you Free. It is not know whether this is an error or if there was another sign.) They (the Kapos) open up all the car doors at the same time and they and the SS begin yelling, "Out! Out! Out! Women on the left side, men on the right side, kids in the front."

They lined us up three across. There were SS men and Kapos - prisoners with privileges to be a policeman. They were using whips - whipping kids and everybody. Move fast. And the Ukrainians...the Germans took back all their guns and whips and after they got the guns back, made them join us at the end of the line. Those people working for the Germans are now in line with us.

Suddenly somebody calls out to me, "You are Juden (a Jew)."

A Jewish capo recognized me. I didn't know him. Right away the SS man says, "Who is a Jew get out of the line!" I couldn't say anything. He recognized me. He will take off my trousers when I say I'm not a Jew (and could then see that I was circumcised). And another four of us we went out of the line. Everyone else all the transport, including the Ukrainians, the children – everybody went straight to the gas chambers. They were gassed the same day. I found this out later on.

They took us five Jews to a shed and to undress. I know we are going to get a shower and I know the shower is gas. There with us, not in our group, was a Greek Orthodox Priest, waiting by himself. Right before my eyes I am looking at him and his black hair was getting white, as I'm watching. Years later I asked a few doctors who say this cannot be done but I saw it with my own eyes. His hair goes white because he knows he is going to the gas chamber.

Anyway, they take us five and they shaved all the hair from our bodies and we went to a real shower and after the shower they gave us uniforms. I got a black uniform. I got a black jacket and black trousers with red stripes on the trousers and a red cross on the back and a red cross on the front.

I went to a place and they took my name, everything. I didn't know why they need the names because nobody will find me. They put on a tattoo with a piece of wood about the size of a pencil, my Number is B-73. (See Figure-1)



Figure-1

B-73

My arm became immediately very swollen and then they sent me to a barrack. (Interesting note, after the war I noticed that all the other survivors from Auschwitz had there tattoos put on by needle and there tattoos are on the outside of their arms. Mine is on the inside of my forearm.)

It was a big barrack; it was called the Tzagonia (gypsy) barrack. All the gypsies were there. On the barrack you have three levels of bunks. On each level you have wood for a bed nothing else, no straw, no mattress, no blankets. You've got six people on each one, three on one side and three on the other side to lie like sardines, head of one to the feet of the other. I was lying there. I didn't talk or anything.

In the night there was a roll call for the gypsies. Suddenly the gypsies start yelling. They start yelling and they take all the gypsies to the gas chambers. All the gypsies were crying and yelling. Over a thousand from our barrack alone. Kids, women - all went to the gas chamber. An hour later appel, (roll call) it's dinnertime with soup in a pail. It's two o'clock in the morning, or one o'clock in the morning and everybody has got to go down there to get soup. I didn't have anything like a cup there so I took my soup in my hat. Then a few minutes later it was back to bed. This was the first day.

In the morning, six o'clock, appel, everyone goes to the washroom. The washroom was only a hole, as soon as you went there, you don't get a chance to release yourself, right away they are knocking you with the whips, right away back to our appel (roll call}. We are marching to the general place where everybody goes. Music is playing and we're marching about fifty thousand of us in this big place. We are standing in lines with the Kapo in front of us. They were counting and one is writing.

Now somebody is coming in a motorcycle with a side car. It's the general, the commandant, of Auschwitz, his name was 'Schwartz' (Black). He comes in; everybody is staying straight and music stops. There is a general roll call and each "camp" would make a report to the Lager Feuer, camp leader who would be an inmate, as to how many people they had less this morning and how many people that they had ready to work. The Lager Feuer would report this to Schwartz. Now each division or camp would go to a different place. (Auchwitz was made up of a bunch of camps, each camp would have their own barracks. By knowing how many people died each day they would know where to place the new arrivals)

Meanwhile, something happened to the motorcycle. The starter on the motorcycle couldn't start, and they are yelling, "Who is a motorcycle mechanic?" Out of fifty thousand people I'm sure there was a few of them but none of them volunteered because these people probably realized that if they couldn't fix the problem within a few minutes they would be killed.

I wasn't aware of this risk so I said, "I'm a motorcycle mechanic." Accidently it was a BMW motorcycle, and I am familiar with BMWs. I saw the wire from the battery was disconnected and I got to strip the insulation off the wires. I have no knife so with my teeth I take off the insulation. I put the wire back on to the terminal and you know it was starting. He asked

me, "Where are you working?" I told him I don't know I just arrived. Right away he called the Lager Feurer, who called the Lager Eldestehr (the person who looks after a few barracks) who called the Stuben or Zimmer Eldestehr (the barrack leader) to find out where I work. The Lager Feurer finds out and then reports to Schwartz where I was working. Later on I find out that I was supposed to have worked in the crematorium

So after that they are going back to the barracks to get breakfast. The gypsies went away, so they left some things there so I got a tin to get my soup. At breakfast time there was coffee only it was cold dirty water. After breakfast, we line up to go to work. I now find out that my job will be at the crematorium. I am waiting and they are calling me, my number, no name, only number B-73(B73): Go to the main office. Everybody knows I'm going to the main office which means that I am going to be killed. They took me to the office and near the office there was a barrack where tailors and shoemakers were working. Bakleidunkhammer (Dress up Dept) I was taken there by a German inmate. They took away my black uniform and they gave me a standard pajama style uniform which they fitted me for. It looked nice. It came with a hat and pajama style jacket and coat and they gave me a beautiful silk shirt from Czechoslovakia and underwear and brand new shoes also from Czechoslovakia. I didn't know what was happening. In comes an SS man with a little truck and tells me to get in. He took me to another concentration camp near Auschwitz, a camp that belongs to Auschwitz. It was a satellite camp in Soznoviec. He was a very nice man. He talked to me. He didn't hit me. He even gave me cigarette. It was a small camp of about 12 barracks. He takes me to the SS department just outside the camp and tells them I am to remain there at the disposition of Colonel Schwartz.

Colonel Schwartz was the guy who had the motorcycle that would not start. It seems that he is one of the most senior SS people assigned to Auschwitz, if not the top person. Colonel Schwartz is a superior to all these other SS officers. They might only be lieutenant. He is a much higher rank. They don't know who I am. Maybe I am somebody important, at least important to the Colonel? None of these SS people were going to take a chance to harm me. They took me into a barrack, into a special room there. There, was only one other man inside and they give me dinner, a real dinner like that the SS eats, and they brought in a single bunk bed, with a straw mattress and pillow, and a blanket for me to sleep on. I had no idea why I was being given such special treatment. The other man who was there was 16 years old and he was the son of a general who was fighting the Russians in the Eastern Front. His mother was killed because she was Jewish and because his father married a Jewish woman, they sent him to the front. But every month, he would get permission, he was coming in to the camp and he was visiting his son. He was bringing in something for the son and I was getting some too. The son shared with me.

I didn't go to work. I was looking through the window what is going on outside. It was unbelievable. It was muddy and the people were forced to be there, lie there, to do exercises there and even beat each other up. In the evening we were all permitted to go outside and talk to each other. I met some people from Kielce there. Outside you got people from all over Europe, Jews, non-Jews, Gypsies, political German prisoners and other Germans such as homosexuals. The eldeter, the Lager Feuer, who is the top inmate of the camp, was a tall man and nice looking man. He was one time the mayor of Berlin. He was arrested 1933 and he was in the camp for so many years.

What the camp did for him, they make him the top. The German inmates were usually given the more senior positions and better work details.

I have already a cloth triangle sewn onto the breast of my uniform which was in red with the point down, that means political. I am a political prisoner. Jews have blue ones. The homosexuals got the green ones.

In this camp we got the Germans, we got the Italians, we got the Spanish, we got the Russians, the Ukrainians and we got Jews...even Jews from my city which I didn't know.

And they were working in the factory making bullets, shells, cannon barrels and other things and it was very hard work. They were going out in the morning, coming back at night and they got only one soup and they have to do meaningless exercises and there was mud. It was November and it was terrible.

I was in a good position. I got food from my friend who was the 16-year-old boy. I don't know it was luck or something. Everyday you are thinking what is behind the wall? There was a long barrack and we were in only a part of the barrack.

The lieutenant who was looking after the whole camp asked me, "What can you do?" I told him, "I am a mechanic. I can do everything." He asked, "Can you make rings?" "Yes" I said, "I can fix rings."

I never did this in my life. Anyway, he opens up the door to the other part, the bigger part, of the barrack there and he takes me in. Inside this room there is gold bars, US money, uncut, in rolls. \$500, \$100, rolls and rolls of them. I don't know how many millions of dollars worth. There was clothing, suits, shirts, shoes. Piles of them. He takes out a bar of gold and we return to our little room and he tells me to, "Make me a ring." I told him what I needed and he brings in a bench, a vice, a drill machine and files and anything that I asked for. It took me about four or five days. I was drilling and filing. I started making rings for the SS people - small rings with a heart for ladies. Anyway, my life was good but I want to get behind the barrack wall. So I open it up, by making a key using the tools which were brought in for me and there is millions of

dollars U.S. in rolls - never cut. Big rolls francs too, I don't know if they were real or counterfeit, but I am pretty sure most of it was counterfeit. There was also money, cut and packed. There are other things there like gold and shirts and lots of things. Slowly I start to steal and in the evening I went to another barrack to an acquaintance from my city and I would give him a shirt. These inmates worked in the factories during the day together with Poles who were not inmates. This shirt could be used to trade with the Pole for food. So slowly, I start stealing shirts and gold to give to the other inmates for which they could trade for food. I would only give to those inmates who either I recognized or who I felt comfortable with.

I had become friendly with the Lager Feuer, the former mayor of Berlin. He didn't work and neither did I, except he could move about freely within the camp. He knew about what I had done with the Colonel's motorcycle and knew that I was a mechanic. One day while we were talking he mentioned to me that there was a beer machine in the SS Barracks that he thought could be converted to a still to make whiskey. The machine was not in use. It was a wood cabinet with a copper coil of tubing in it. One end of the tube went to a beer barrel and the other to a tap. By putting in CO2 into the beer barrel they could pressurize the beer to flow through the coil, which was covered in ice, and out of the tap. The beer would be cooled in the coil. This whole mechanism was brought to my room. What I did was take a steel kettle and brazed it to the tubing. We would heat the kettle with coal and the distilled alcohol would go through the coils, which we would surround with ice or cold water and it would be condensed into alcohol. First we needed something to put into the kettle in order to ferment. The "mayor" knew how to make whiskey. Not only this but he had a book as to how to do it. We needed sugar. We would put sugar into the kettle with some yeast and water and let the sugar ferment for about 24 hours. The Lager Feuer "mayor" would organize sugar from the SS kitchen. We made whiskey. One day around Christmas 1944 we had made some whiskey and the "mayor" and some Kapos, got drunk. There was a surprise inspection and roll call that night. The Lager Feuer and the Kapos were drunk. They were brought into the SS office and interrogated as to where they got the alcohol and they turned me in. I was called into the office. I thought I was finished. The senior officer asked me if I was making whiskey. I admitted that I was. He said in German " You son of a bitch! You can make whiskey and you didn't tell us. You have to make it for us" So I start making whiskey for the SS. Now I was doing it officially. You need more sugar so he told me you know, "Go to the city and go to the POW camp for English and maybe you can buy there some sugar." They gave me an escort, who didn't stay too close to me. They opened up the room beside mine, in the barrack and they gave me as many US dollars as I wanted, clothing, shoes, whatever I needed. This time though I wasn't stealing the stuff.

I went to the English POW camp by bicycle. The German's weren't killing the English POW's and they were allowed to receive packages through the Red Cross. I couldn't buy sugar at the English POW camp but I remember the cigarettes I was buying there. I still remember the brand "Weekend". So I was buying cigarettes and paying five hundred and a thousand dollars a pack, I didn't care. I also bought sardines there. Later because I could not buy sugar, they sent me to the factories where the Poles were also working to see if I could buy some sugar from them. I had shirts to sell to try and get sugar. I would give them clothes and the next day they would bring in sugar and leave it in an agreed upon place, as it was contraband. Some of the clothing I would give instead to other inmates at the factories. It was a chance to help other friends and Jews.

From this time the conditions at the camp improved and the cruelty to the inmates decreased.

At this time I was given much freedom to come and go during the daytime. Even though I went around with an escort there were plenty of opportunities for me to escape. The problem was where to go. The living conditions for me were pretty good. I ate the same food as the SS, even better because I could trade with the Poles for food like sausage, which the SS didn't even have. If I escaped where would I go, what would I eat. The poles, who I didn't trust, were turning in escapees for their "sugar" rewards and these escapees would be brought back to the camp and hanged for everyone to see as an example. Every single person who had escaped from this camp had been caught.

Before the time that I built the still, sometime Oct, Nov 1944, once one Russian inmate did something wrong and they hanged twenty Russians. POWs who were inmates at the camp. This Colonel Schwartz arrived for the hanging. For the hanging they made a gallows, a long one, to hold twenty people. The hanging took place on a Sunday when no one was working. All the inmates had to attend. The hanging took place during appel (roll call) He asked for me to be taken out of the camp. His chauffeur came to escort me out so that I shouldn't witness the hanging. I saw Schwartz as he was coming into the camp and I was going out. He didn't acknowledge me or talk to me. That was the last time I saw him in my life.

I remember they hung the twenty Russians, young boys, no older than their early twenties and they hang them on one long bar. The Germans didn't want them to die right away. They hung them so that they could touch with the toes to the ground. The Germans didn't dirty themselves with the hanging. They would get other inmates to do the work. When I returned to the camp after a few hours some of them were still alive. They were hanging there for about a week. I knew

one of the Russians called Misha, a young boy. I had befriended him. This was neither the first nor the last hanging that I witnessed but this was the largest I had seen.

Session 3 – Daniel Wiener

Personally I was free, I could go away any time. They let me go. Now the problem is where to escape? What to do? Some people escaped from there and they brought them back and they hanged them as an example to the others. There was no escape because no one will take you in or hide you. So I didn't run away. The most important thing is to have some food and shelter, which I got there. Things were good until the 17th of December 1944. On that day, the Russian army was coming up and the Germans began to evacuate Auschwitz. Because our camp belonged to Auschwitz we got evacuated too.

It happened in the night at about 1:00 in the morning. The whole camp was out and marching. They had some wagons and the prisoners were pulling the wagons. The SS men were sitting on the wagons and we were walking and pulling the wagons. It was a cold death march. Now if somebody moved out from the line, to relieve himself or something, he was shot right away.

On the road we were on, we were heading west. On the same road, other groups from the other camps had gone before us and we could see hundreds of people lying dead by the side of the road. The whole road was lined with dead people. In the nights we didn't have anything to eat, and we've got to pull the wagons. It was very hard.

In the night we were sleeping by farmers outside, or outside in the fields in the snow, no blankets to cover ourselves, just the clothes on our back, shirt, thin jacket, thin overcoat, pants, shoes, (most had wooden shoes, I had leather boots), triangle shaped hat, no gloves. We didn't have no food or water. What we did so we were stealing raw potatoes from the farmers fields when we were sleeping there, frozen potatoes. Lots of people ran away, lots of them were caught and killed. I didn't think of running away. I didn't know that we were on a death march. Every day I thought that tomorrow that we will be at a station. My only thoughts were "to eat".

We were going west to Austria and the march took us about two weeks. Even now when I am here, talking about it I am getting agitated. Every day and every mile there were less and less people. The march was killing and the Germans were killing. The SS men were killing everybody. It was terrible. There was no escape. You could try to escape but you would be shot, and if you were successful to escape, then where and to who would you go?

We arrived in a city in Czechoslovakia, now it is Slovakia. It was in the south, called Bratislav. We were taken to a place in the night where they were killing animals, a slaughterhouse

and there we were resting inside. On the line in the slaughterhouse there were hanging people on the meat hooks, dead. I don't know if they were alive when they hung them. I didn't see too many, maybe about 50, who were hanging there. We received some flour and one of us was a baker and he started baking and we received some bread. That was the first time we were eating bread in a long, long time.

In the morning we were told to march again. Some of the SS men are riding bicycles. Some of the SS men are older and we got to pull them on the wagons. As we are walking down the street in this town in Czechoslovakia the people was throwing to us boiled potatoes in paper bags. Thanks to them some of us survived, because of those potatoes we ate. The people were also yelling at the Germans, "Where are you taking them? You lost the war!" The Germans started shooting the Czechs and killed some of them.

We continued to march to a train station, I can't remember the station, where we were put on cattle cars. They put about 120-150 people in each car. I was in one of the cars and we were packed in very tight. The cars start moving and we still hadn't receive any food or water since the day before, when we got the potatoes from the Czechoslovakians.

Every hour there was more space because we moved the dead and piled them at the side of the car. I remember the dreams I was having from the hunger because when you are hungry you dream. I was hallucinating I was in Hell. There was bread but I was not allowed to eat. No one will let me eat. It was hell.

After 2 days the train stopped. In our car there were only 20 people still alive of the 150. I was one of them.

When we finally stopped it was at a little town called Mathausen. Now there were only maybe 200 or 300 still alive. We start marching to the camp Mathausen. The town is called Mathausen and the camp is called Mathausen. It was only about 5 km, but up the hill. As we marched up the hill the Germans were shooting the slow ones. When we got to the camp there were only 60 or 70 of us left alive. From a (train) transport of thousands and thousands there is only 60 or 70 left.

There was a big gate at the entrance to Mathausen and on each sides of the gate were hanging two Russian soldiers. They were hanging by one leg upside down. When we went to the camp inside they took us to delousing place, a quarantine area for one week. They took away our clothing, we were in the nude. In the night we would get a soup. After one week we went from there to the shower room. In the shower room we thought we were going to get gas but we didn't. I didn't care anymore. What we got was a very hot shower for a about 3 or five minutes in very hot water, painfully hot. Then they took us outside in the nude.

It was February and some of us died out there. Then from there they registered us, our name, the address from where we are coming, our prisoner numbers, everything, all in the nude and then after half a day they sent us to the quarantine barrack and there we received some soup, which was the first food we got. All the time we were in the nude. After the soup they told us now we can go to go to sleep. The barrack had two rooms, and we were in one room, and we were there about 60 people, left from the transport, all in the nude. They teach us how sleep one behind the other one. One person's head has to go on somebody's feet, like sardines. You can not get up or go to the washroom, because if you want to get down you have to wake other people up and there's no room to walk between the people. We were sleeping on the floor. So some people are relieving themselves exactly where they are sleeping. In the morning the kapos would beat the people who did this. The kapos were inmates that were already there. The kapos had a separate part of the same room. They had more space. The kapos were given special privileges by the Germans, which was to look after the other prisoners in their barrack, for which they could take advantage. There were about 4 or 5 kapos in a room, and they were usually political or criminal prisoners.

Then there was appel, roll call. You have to go outside in the nude. In the night after roll call, there was a soup, which was our only food for the whole day. The soup was made from potato peels left over from the potatoes for SS and water, nothing else, no salt, no pepper, nothing. That was already February and we are looking out to the sun, beautiful nice sun. We were in the mountains, in the Alps. It's so beautiful and I'm thinking, everything is so beautiful, and I have to be here, I have to die. After a week, they give us trousers, wooden shoes and shirt so we could go to work. We were then moved from the quarantine barrack to different barracks.

What was the work? Where I had to work was in a quarry. They put a wooden cage on my back and another inmate put stones in it. Then you had to walk up 360 steps. Now the first day I didn't go. I managed to hide. The second day they catch me and I have to go. I find out anybody who goes the 360 steps the Germans are throwing you off the top and you are killed. So when I went up, I went up about 120 steps, maybe half way and I'm thinking, "I am going to get killed so why should I go to the top?" So about half way up I throw myself down from the other side of the mountain. I was rolling down and I escaped from the concentration camp. There were few guards there.

Now I was thinking what should I do? Where should I go? I was in Austria and I had no place to go. So I decided to smuggle myself back to the camp. In the night I make a hole in the fence underneath the electric wire, I knew that it was an electric fence, and like a mouse and I smuggle myself back to the concentration camp.

Now I went to the quarantine barrack, because I know where the shtuppeledester (oldest from the barrack – he is the one who looks after the barrack, like a superintendent) it is and I know where he has a makeshift cabinet where he was hiding some food, some bread. This was like a little woodpile just by a separate entrance. So I smuggled myself in and I went to the food, and eating the food. After I finished eating I took a look inside the quarantine room. As I looked around I saw there was no more men, just women in the nude and it was impossible to see if they are women or men. They were so thin. The breast was only hanging skin like a piece of string, and they had no buttocks, you could see their anuses. While I was there I heard the woman kapo beating up the inmates, and I heard them screaming, I knew that it was time for me to get out of there.

Now I went to the general camp. In the general camp there were many barracks and I went to one barrack there. There was a problem because I couldn't officially be there. I couldn't go out for the roll call so I was always hidden inside. When the roll call was taken, all the occupants for that barrack had to come out for roll call whether they were alive, sick or dead. The kapos brought out the dead bodies with the live so that the Germans could make the count. All the dead have to be outside too. There was food only for those people outside for roll call got food. Because I was hiding inside, and wasn't officially there, I got no food. About the kapos, everyday there were a few more dead. Now everybody is supposed to get 1 ounce of bread, so if there were some dead people they could take their rations. So when the Kapo – the guards wanted more bread for themselves they go to kill more people so that they could have their bread. How did they kill those people? They take a prisoner and make them lie down on the floor and they put a stick like a broom handle against his throat and then the kapo would see-saw on the stick with both feet, and the stick on his throat and stand there until suffocated, dead. It usually didn't take more than three swings back and forth. The kapos usually preyed on the weak or someone he didn't like. The kapos were better fed than the other inmates and the victims were too weak to resist. The rest of us, we got used to these sights. All we could think of was food. Sometimes the kapos would take their victims to the bathroom and drown them in water. There would be a drum of water and a kapo would place a victim in, head first for about a minute, and then leave him in the washroom, until the teucht-commandos (death commandos) would clean him up. First they would be taken to roll call. The teucht-commandos were inmates who were responsible for cleaning up the grounds of garbage. They would put the garbage on wagons, which would be pulled by them, and take it away. Dead bodies were just another form of garbage. Mostly the kapos and the Shtuben-eldester (cabin senior/superintendent) they were the killers. They were inmates who were in the concentration camps for a long time, mostly Germans. This I saw with my own eyes. Another

method which I did not see, but I heard about, was when inmates were too sick to report to work they would be taken to the “sick room”. In the sick room two prisoners would be placed back to back and their arms interlocked. Someone would then make an injection to their hearts, which would kill them. Even when one of the two survived he would be locked in place by the dead prisoner, until he died. I didn’t see this, but I was told this by the Kapos, perhaps to discourage us from going to the sick room. In that camp you had prisoners of every type of nation, French, English, German and Russian, everything.

In that camp every day they hung two Russian soldiers outside the main gates of Mathausen. Just like the two I saw when I arrived. When these two were dead they hung another two. I didn’t know why at the time. Later in 1987 I went to Europe and I visit the camp Mathausen and that there I find out why they are hanging the Russians, in their uniforms. I will tell you about that later.

Going back, to where I said, I was hiding in the barracks, now I have to be hidden in the barrack under the bunks, or under some clothing so no kapo or anybody like the Stubeneldester should find me, because I didn’t belong there. Now suddenly they needed from that same barrack about 20 or 50 people to go away to another camp. The other camp was called Guzan and it was not far from Mathausen. The inmates at Mathausen had heard that you could only survive a short time in Guzan, perhaps only two weeks or a month so they didn’t want to go. The inmates did not want to go but they were forced to go. The kapo made his selection. I didn’t know about Guzan’s reputation, but I received a piece of bread from an inmate who gave me his nightly rations in exchange that I should go in his place and he would take my place. I felt that this would be good for me because I would now be legal since I would take over his number. The numbers were on our jackets and we exchanged jackets. He would now be the hidden one. In the morning we went away to the new camp, about 30-50 from our barrack but a total of about 500 inmates from the camp.

The German SS people escorted us to the camp that was about 5 km away, which we walked to. Camp Guzen was located in the Alps and it was a really big camp. As soon as we arrived, there were about 50 men in my section who arrived and most of them were in good health because they had only recently been captured, we were sent to line up. We were mostly non-Jews. There was mostly Germans, perhaps political, some Russians, French Italian, Spaniards, English people of every nation. You had to talk using sign language.

We are standing in line when 20 beautiful blond German girls in the age of 18-22 arrived. They were tall and nicely dressed and they were carrying whips. They took charge of us, told us to

spread out so that with our arms out we were not touching each other and then they told us to undress. At first, we didn't want to undress in front of the girls, we were embarrassed, so they whipped one man over the head and blood was coming out and so we all undressed. Now the girls are going down the lines of men and they are making marks, red marks like a cross with a red crayon on certain people. Not everybody got the red mark. I didn't receive one. What they were looking for, they were looking for nice good skins. My skin was not nice as I had lots of sores, unlike the newer arrivals.

Of the approx. 500 men, they took out about 50 men to a barrack not far away and we hear how they were yelling. It was unbelievable. What they were doing. Now they didn't shoot the men because if you shoot someone the skin gets black and its no good. So they were cutting the throats of these men while they were alive, just like one would slaughter a chicken and letting the blood drain so the skin is not discoloured. They were taking the skin off the men to make lampshades and gloves. I didn't know this at the time. I find this out later. After the war there was a special exhibitions where people could see these things. They took the rest of us to a barrack that was called 13 or 14. The camp was very big, there were many barracks on lots of streets, and there were thousands and thousands of people there. In the morning, I was told I am going to work in a factory. Incidentally, this factory where they took me to work was in a tunnel in the mountain. The tunnels were very big, very high and very bright with marble walls, unbelievably beautiful, and they were going many kilometers in the mountain. These tunnels, the ones that I saw went deep into the mountain. These tunnels were more like caverns and reminded me of a cathedral I saw after the war in Spain, the one where Marco was buried. These caverns were about 15' high, about 50' wide, one continuous tunnel, with some branches.

We were taken to a factory that made munitions and arms. This factory was the factory that I worked in before the war in Radom, the one with the Jewish president. They had moved all the equipment here within the mountain.

Coincidentally, when I was working before the war in a factory in Poland there was a man who was now an inmate and he recognized me. He was there a longer time and he was on the top of some brigade and he took me in there and I was working with him for two or three days until they took me away and gave me another job. During those 3 days I was checking the precision of rifle barrels for defects.

The hydro they was using there was 380 volts, 3 phase. It was high voltage and because we had no conductor pipe we used wooden boxes. Everything was done in a temporary manner. Now in the factory I got to know one guy who was on the top of another department. He was a Russian pilot and an officer in the Russian army. We were working together to sabotage the

Germans. I would go to his department and short out the electricity and he went to my department and he would make a mess of the machines. So this way I sabotaged him and he sabotaged me. I didn't want to sabotage my own department because that way it would be easy to be found out. This was going on and slowly we became very friendly. After work we would go back to the barracks and we would get there a small piece of bread and like always, at night a soup and in the morning a black coffee.

One time we are in the factory and by this time it is April and the Germans know they are losing the war. We didn't know what is going on outside in the world. We knew nothing. But in the air you can feel it, the nervousness of the Germans.

What the Germans did next was to take all of us from the camp, maybe 10 000, and they took us to the tunnel and they took blocks and they blocked up the entranceway. We are inside and we start to choke because there is no air. Suddenly, as we found out later they got orders not to kill us this way, so they opened up the opening and let us out. So they let us out, perhaps some of the prisoners died there, but I was one of those that went out alive. They started to kill us any way they can. In one method they took a lot of people and cram them on a boat, and they would move this boat into the middle of the Danube and then dynamite it. Tens of thousands died this way. There were not too many Jews here. These were mostly European nationals. This took place over a period of a few days. There was no work during this time. Anyway, everybody was getting weaker and weaker. About 5 days before liberation, about the end of April, the beginning of May, the Red Cross arrived from Switzerland and they were giving everybody a package of food and I went there too. Watching on the side were the Germans. When you got the food, first you signed that you received it then we went further down the line and you got to give it over to the Germans. This took place in the eyes of the Red Cross.

At this time I was still alive and walking. By the third of May I couldn't walk, I was too weak so they pushed me outside to be in the roll call. They put me outside with the dead ones. Now something happened and they took me back inside. They didn't kill me because the Americans were already near. Some of the Germans already left and some of the kapos and the shtubbeneldesters which were killing the people were scared too so they ran away.

I was still lying in the bed and I could hear how the Germans still shooting with machine guns at the barracks. Even the barrack which I was in was hit with bullets but I was not hurt. These Germans shooting were not the regular soldiers, but the Hitler Yougen (HitlerYouths), as I was later told.

I was too weak to move. On the day of the liberation was the 6th of May 1945. I could understand everything. I saw everything but I couldn't move. So this Russian Lieutenant with

another friend of mine, last name Pearl, who was from my city of Kielce, they took me on their arms and they were taking me to the place where all the dead people are lying. I heard everything. I saw everything but I couldn't even move my eyes and I couldn't talk. I couldn't tell them I'm still alive. Then they put me with the dead ones and I passed out.

What happened next is a Polish doctor, an inmate, went through and he saw me moving or something and he pulled me out of there and put me under a shower. I wake up under a shower and then he took me under his arms to the "sick room". It was not a hospital but the Germans were calling it hospital. There were just some beds without anything on, to lie there.

It was already after the liberation. The liberation was the 6th of May and now it was now the 7th of May and the doctor told me "You know, maybe you'll be alive. I have a pill. I am going to die but maybe the pill will help you. What kind of pill it was, that I don't know. Maybe aspirin or something. So he gave me the pill with no water or nothing. The doctor he laid down next to me and I woke up in an hour or two and he was dead and I was alive.

Now because of the liberation, the American was bringing in food. First of all the Americans they didn't know what is the concentration camp. Why are these people there? They are thinking that maybe this is a prison camp for criminals and murderers; so right away they surrounded the camp with American soldiers as guards so that nobody could escape. Later they find out that those are inmates, not only are they inmates but from different countries and they start bringing in food.

What was the food? The food was German food. They told the Germans to bake bread. So the Germans were baking black bread, pumpernickel bread. The Germans had their own law that prohibited the sale of bread that was fresher than 24 hours, it had to be at least 24 hours stale to be sold, but the Americans they were giving us the fresh bread and pea soup with lots of lard, fat. Perhaps the Americans were thinking that this was good I was not strong enough to go to the pot and grab some food. But other people they went there and they start eating. Thanks to that, that I was too weak, I am alive now; because most people died. About 50% of the survivors died, this is not my opinion, this is a statistic. (Note: similar incident happened earlier with the British in Bergen Belsen. Most people died there as well. Coincidence?). Most people from the concentration camp died after liberation because they were feeding us pea soup with lard and fresh bread. We were not used to that food. Our stomachs couldn't handle that.

Most of the German SS had already abandoned or escaped from the concentration camp, but there were still many there. They would hide or disguise themselves as prisoners or workers. As mentioned before, some of the inmates were German nationals, perhaps criminals, perhaps political prisoners. They were treated better than the other inmates and had more food. As a result

they were not as weak or emaciated. Some of the other European nationals were also in better shape, as they were recent arrivals to the camp. As a result when any of them found an SS man they were strong enough to kill him and they did. Lots were killed but most of them ran away.

They were warehoused in the camp and now they were open. In these warehouse they got sugar and canned food so anybody who was strong enough could go and pick up anything what he wanted. I was in the nude and one warehouse was open and had uniforms for the desert like the ones used by the men under General Rommel who was fighting in Africa. These uniforms were light coloured. So I took a uniform like that, actually somebody brought a uniform like that to me and that's what I took.

Now I couldn't walk on my feet but I was walking on all fours, crawling, and not only I was doing that, hundreds of others too were too weak to walk upright as well. I was lucky, I was getting some sugar and I was eating some German biscuits.

Now when somebody want to escape the camp, the American was killing them. No one was allowed to leave. Many people were not inmates of the camp but were forced labourers working for the Germans in the farms and factories near and around the camp. These people were also rounded up by the Americans and brought within the camp because they didn't want them outside. They might take revenge on the Germans, and kill them, as many of them had been treated badly and killed during the war.(Austrians, to these people they were the same. Also, Germans were also here on the farms and factories). They were outside and they brought everything to the camp. Lots of, European nationals, such as Polish people and lots of French people which did not belong to the camp, were brought in. (No English).

So anyway, I meet another three people in the same situation as I am, just able to crawl, but our minds were still working and we were thinking about what can we do here. The Americans , were not letting us out, they don't let us go home, they are keeping us in this camp we don't know for how long and for what. We don't know if whether they want to kill us. Maybe the Americans want to kill us or perhaps it was by accident they give us the food that kills us. They don't let us out. They don't let us go home they keep us in the camp. So how to escape?

So we got a plan, we made up a plan as to how to escape. In the camp still hundreds of people were dying everyday so everyday the Germans were coming in from outside under the American escort, with trucks, and they are taking all the dead people away with either trucks or with wagons pulled by horses, in order to bury them. We were able to stand and walk a little now So we decide because we are uniforms the four of us we went to one of the wagons and we held on to the side of the wagon and walked out of the camp slowly holding onto the wagon. The Americans let us out because they thought we were Germans because we are in the German

uniforms, and the Germans who were taking out the dead people on the wagons didn't care about what we were doing.

When we got out of the camp, we decided to head towards the border of the Russian controlled territory. Guzan was not far about 5 km. from this border. From there we thought in this way we would go home to Poland. Now in our group was three Jews one was a gentile. Zucker from Radom, Warshafsky from Lodz. (After returning to Poland I never saw them again.). We could hardly walk, we were mostly crawling. We couldn't walk on the road. It took us a whole day to get the few km. to the Russian border. On the borders we got Americans on one side and the Russians on the other, but there were no Russians there. One of us was talking little bit English and told the Americans, 'We are from the other side of Austria and we are going home. Let us go.' They thought that we were German soldiers, so they let us go.

Now on the other side of the border we didn't see any Russians. We were crawling by the road looking for a farmer from which we were hoping to beg some food. We couldn't find a farm, it was getting dark, we were tired, we were sitting on the side of the road. This was about the 12th or 14th of May.. Now along the road is coming a horse and buggy on the road and on the buggy was a German who was driving the buggy and four Russians soldiers and they ask us who we are and where we are going. We told them, "We are Jews and we were in concentration camp and we want to go home. But we don't have food and we don't know how to do, what to do."

The Russian officer told the farmer to get another farmer. In half an hour there's another farmer there with a horse and buggy and the Russian officer was telling this other farmer to take us to his home and give us some food and in the morning to bring us back to the police station in a particular town. The German or in this case Austrians, they were fearful of the Russians, because of what the Germans had done to the Russians, so they listened to them. The farmer took us to his house and he give us some potatoes, something to eat, and he was scaring us and he was telling us to go back to the American side because the Russians will send you to Siberia and they will kill you. We know though that the camp is no good.

When the second farmer took us and gave us food but it was no good for us. Any food we ate we could not keep in our stomachs. We were not used to it. We all had diaharea. So in the morning, the farmer took us to the city about 20 kilometers away and took us to the police as ordered by the Russian. We speak some Russian and Polish, we could communicate a little bit.

So we told the Russians there that we are coming from a concentration camp and we want to go home, we are from Kielce, but we need some help, we need some food,. Now the officer that we met the previous evening on the buggy arrives. He greets us, Good morning, how are you feeling? We are still on our fours. The officer tells us you cannot go home, you have to get medical

attention. Now in this little town was no hospital so he called for the doctor, and the doctor arrives, an Austrian doctor. He tells the doctor like this in Russian. There was another person who translated into German “We’ve got four people here and if one of them dies 10 doctors will be killed.”

So they took us separately to houses, as there was no hospital. They took each of us to a separate house. I remember they took me, there was a nurse and they put me on a table and they washed me and a doctor then arrived and then they gave me a blood transfusion. I only knew at the time that you needed another person to get a transfusion, but here the Russians had blood in bags from the United States. And while I was on the table they were giving me a little bread and cream of wheat, every hour. A little bit later I went to bed.

The Russian officer was coming every day to check on each of us. He would ask each of us how we are. After 5 or 6 days of being in that house I and the others were feeling much better because we were getting rice, other foods and generally treated very well. The doctor is coming twice a day and each of us had a nurse or a lady staying with us.

After a week, they took us all to one house with an Austrian lady to look after us. We could now stand on our legs but we couldn’t walk very far. We were still too weak. In that house this lady was cooking for us under supervision of the doctor. Slowly we were able to eat more solid regular food. We are eating small amounts 4 or 5 times a day and then we could walk a little bit.

So the Russian, I don’t know his name, I have no idea who he was, he took us to the city to a store and we got clothes. shirts, pants and underwear. It was a German warehouse. We got not only what we was wearing but something to change into and a suitcase. We got anything that we needed. Everybody got a suitcase and anything what we needed. We got bicycles. We are treated like we are in heaven. Anything we needed we got. and with all the Russians we are like friends. We were going with them, riding the bicycles and going to farmers and getting from them anything that they had that we wanted, we are eating apples. We are eating anything what we want.

It is end of June now and we have to go to see if maybe we can find some relatives. So we decided to travel back to our respective cities. One of us was from Radom, one was from Lodz. I was from Kielce. One was a gentile and I don’t know where he is from. So we went to the officer and we said, “Look, we want to go home. We are from Poland.” So he tells us in Russian, “You idiots! Where you are going? The Poles will kill you, you know they are killing the Jews, don’t go there! Stay here! I will give you a job, you can stay here and make money and you can live here.” We decided, “I’m sorry but we want to go home.”

So I don't know who he was but he was an angel. I never knew his name. I know his first name Sasha, something like that. Not only was he friendly, all the Russians we encountered were friendly, they were unbelievable.

So anyway the officer tells us he will give us a pass to go by train, travel permits, and he arranged our own private railway car. He arranged that we would travel first to Vienna, and from Vienna we would stop over and change to another train to go to Poland. We have no money but we received money from him. In retrospect, I think that he might have been Jewish.

Each of us have a suitcase with full changes of clothing, we have travel documents to take us to our respective cities. On the way we have to change trains because a bridge was broken. So we have to walk over the bridge to a train station just on the other side and go to another train. There on the other train, my friend, one of them recognized an SS man who was in our concentration camp and this SS officer had killed my friend's brother one day before the liberation. The train is still in the station. He was dressed in civilian clothes, he was with his wife or his girlfriend and soon as he saw and recognized him, and I know who he was too, my friend starts yelling, and we all start kicking him.

So right away they stop the train from going and they take the four of us down from the train. They took the SS man and his wife down and that SS man got maybe 20 suitcases, big suitcases, trunks, they took all the suitcases, they took everything from his down. We were in a little town halfway between Vienna and Linz because the officers were Russian and the Russians occupied this part of Austria. So these Russian officers belonged to the Train police and they took the luggage of the SS man and his companion and told us now we have to take him over to the city to the real police. We had to leave our suitcases but they tell us everything will be there. The reason the train police wanted us to walk them over to the police station was that the road to the police station was along the Danube River and the train police thought that we would kill them and they would have the suitcases. We didn't realize this at the time. So the one whose brother was killed kicked the SS man occasionally. We were too weak to beat him, never mind kill him. Later we found out that there was a Russian soldier who was armed and sent to follow us to the Police Station and to ensure that the SS man did not escape.

We went to police station, which was between 2-4 kilometers away. By this time it was getting dark. They put the SS man and his companion into jail. So they tell us we will give you accommodation to sleep and food and in the morning you will make report. So we went together with other Russian soldiers, we were eating what they were eating and sleeping where they were sleeping and in the morning we got showers. The Russians treated us very nicely.

In the morning, they took us to the police officer to make a statement. So I said the truth. I said that I didn't know him. I know he is SS man and that he killed but I don't know the names of those whom he killed. The brother said, "You killed my brother, you killed so and so and so and so, he knew names. The third one made a statement similar to mine and the fourth one didn't make a statement. So anyway, they called his wife—she is not a wife but girlfriend and that man, the SS man was not a German, he was a Romanian national. Anyway the Russians start talking to the girlfriend in Russian and she answers in Russian. Because she can speak Russian they accuse her of being a spy. So they arrested and jailed both of them. I don't know what happened to him or her. The Russian officer, outside the station says to us, "Durnai" "You are idiots!" You should tell something worse." We didn't give enough in that report to have him killed right away. So they took us back to the train station, and we got our suitcases and we got our own entire railroad car and we went to Vienna.

We went to Vienna and we decided to be in Vienna for a couple of days to see Vienna. Vienna was bombarded and there were lots of ruins. The mayor of Vienna was an inmate in a concentration camp. In Mathausen. He was a socialist before and that was why he was in the concentration camp. Now he was back as mayor of Vienna.

When we arrived there and when we were in the German uniforms and right away they know these are not real German uniforms and that we are from a concentration camp, and the people there, they treated us like we are kings. There was a big meeting in this square, like a demonstration so that there was maybe 50,000 Austrians there. Young people from the school were there and the mayor was on the platform and he took us on the platform and he introduced us to the crowd and he was so good. Afterwards he gave us apartments in Vienna to live there, of SS men that had escaped. Each one of us got an apartment so that we wouldn't leave Vienna.

At the demonstration, I asked one question of the mayor, I forget his name, he was mayor for a long time. It was only one month after liberation and those 50,000 people who are here, who are with the red shirts and with the red flags, the communist flags. Last month they were German Youth, Hitler Youth and now right away they are communist? In one month they can change? How can they convert so fast from Hitlerism to communism so quickly. He said, "Don't believe anything. That is politics."

So we were like in heaven. We got apartment we got food and they give us entertainment, we were taken out to coffee houses. People were inviting us out and everybody wants to be our friends. We were like celebrities as we were from the first group of Concentration camp survivors to enter Vienna. The mayor was friendly with us and he and members of the police encouraged us to stay but still we want to go home. Maybe we will still find somebody. We were in Vienna about

two weeks. This will be the end of June 1945. In the meantime while we are in Vienna we want to see how the Jews are living there and if any survived the war. We want to find out if there is a Jewish committee there. We find out that there is a Jewish committee and we found out that some Jews were hidden by Austrians. We find out not too many. Now the Jews in Vienna want their houses back from the Austrians but have to fight for it because the Austrians claim they had bought them from the Germans. So, we find out it's not so rosy like it looks. That there was still hatred against the Jews. It was not so easy for the Jews to get back their homes, their furniture or their bank accounts.

Jews are coming from Hungary and coming to Vienna and they are coming to the committee for some help and for some food and other things. And where they are going, they are going to Palestine. Now I find out there, there is a Jewish brigade who was fighting together with the English against the Germans, under the command of the British Army. They are in Vienna and they are transporting Jews illegally to Palestine.

The transport was very difficult. Now they got to go from Budapest to Vienna, from Vienna to Linz or Salzburg and from Salzburg to Innsbrooke and to go through the American zone was dangerous because if they find a Jew or another nationality, they would take them to a DP camp. These transports had to go through the American Zones that occupied Linz , Salsburg, Innsbrooke. They didn't want different nationalities on the streets as they were afraid that they would take revenge on the Germans. So they got to be very careful to take them to Salzburg and from Salzburg to Innsbrooke and from there to Italy. And in Italy was the Palestinian Jewish army the Briha, and there they were free to move about. At this time Italy was not controlled either by the Americans or Russians. But until they reached Italy they had to be hidden and smuggled in.

Some Jews, who had fled to Russia during the War, had already returned to their homes in the various cities in Poland only to find that possessions were taken and their homes occupied by Poles. Some Poles were killing them.

So some Jews want to escape to Palestine. The same was happening in Hungary as was happening in Poland. People like 15 or 20 people were arriving from Poland, were arriving from Hungary and they want to go to Palestine. Because they were arriving in Vienna, already there was the Hagana helping the Committee there and they would take care of them. Whatever they needed, whether food, clothing, or anything else, they were helping them. And while I am there, just by accident, one of The Hagana men asked me: You are coming across the border so maybe you know how to transport some people over the border? So I was always a Zionist and I lost my family and so I was just living to help. One transport arrived from Poland, and the people in that transport are telling us not to go to Poland and not to go to Kielce because it

is terrible there. So anyway, I decided to work with the Hagana. I decided to take transports of people. My companions didn't want to help, except for the gentile guy. He wanted to, but the two Jews didn't want to.

Now we went back to the officer, to the city where the Russian Border officer had gotten us nurses and helped us recuperate. I went to him and I explained that we want to get Jews across the American Zone to Italy. I asked him to help us cross into the American zone towards Linz. Now I came with a suitcase full of cheap watches. Got a full suitcase of watches. And watches for the Russians was like diamonds, cheap watches, so when I was giving a watch to the officer and giving to the police, everybody received a watch, you could have everything you want. I was bribing with watches. Not only did I get my transports crossed over to the American Zone, but also the Russians would prepare papers stating that these Jews were concentration camp survivors from Italy and they were to be repatriated.

On the other side of the border were other people, in the American zone waiting for the Jews and they took them over to Salzburg and from there to Innsbrooke and from there to Italy. Then they were free. And I started to work, unintentionally, for the Hagana. and I remember I was transporting a few transports...30 people one time, 18 people one time, no big ones...and I got always watches and they like the watches.

Anyway the last transport which I took were Polish Jews. After that I decided with my Gentile friend to go back to Poland as I wanted to see if there were any other survivors from my family. I went to Hagana and I gave them back the remaining watches and I gave back my apartment to the police, who had given it to me to use, and I said thank you very much to them. I appreciated what they have done but I have to go and find something of my family. So the Hagana told me, 'Look, if something happen to you, take these identification papers with you. These papers were in Hebrew and identified me as a member of the Haganna or at least someone friendly with them.' And in Warsaw if something happens to you, go to such and such place, and go to so and so and maybe they can help you.

So I went through the border to Poland with my Gentile friend. My other two companions had already returned to Poland. I had the right to return as I was a Polish national. Not only that, but they gave me I think 20 or was it 200 zlotys at the border in order to help us start out. The Russians gave us a travel permit to get to Poland and at the Polish border the Poles gave us a Welcome Back to Poland, which included the money as well as a train pass to take us anywhere in Poland. Travel in Poland was difficult because the trains were not always going. And from the border my gentile friend and I first went to Sosnowiec, where I left one of my suitcases with friends that I knew from before, that had survived the War. We accidentally ran into each other on

the street. I left the suitcase, as I wanted to travel light. We then travelled to Chenstchwa (pronounced Chenstohau)and from there I went to Kielce and on the way to Kielce my friend disappeared. I don't know where, I don't know his last name; I don't know what he was. I think now that maybe he was a capo and he wanted to be friendly with a Jew so he wouldn't be killed by the Russians. My other two friends, the one from Lodz and Radom, I met them later, one in Warsaw and one much later in Toronto.

I arrive in Kielce in a Saturday night. The railway car was not going regularly, it was not so easy to get a train and I'm arriving Saturday night in Kielce in beginning of July. But where to go in the night? You cannot go in the night because the Russians made a curfew, so I have permission to walk to the Red Cross. So I walk there and I left my suitcase there and I went to sleep and there was so many lice there, unbelievable in the bed. And in the morning I'm getting up, my suitcase is gone. I'm left over with nothing. Fortunately, I still have my suitcase in Sosnowiec with some clothes and with my important papers.

So anyway, that morning was Sunday morning, and I know where my best friends are living, I don't know where the Jews are living. There were No Jews. So I find out whether my best friends are still living in the same place. So I am going to my friend, Kaffar. We were good friends before the war and by my friend I got some things like bedding, sheets, comforter and he took me in. He had been a bicycle racer and he was working for me. He made a good wage and he was racing bicycles for me. We made special bicycles for racing and was racing for me before the war. During the war he was a member of the AK.

We were so happy to see each other, so we start kissing and hugging each other and right away his wife went and got ham and vodka and another vodka and another vodka and another ham and we spent the whole day drinking and kissing each other and telling stories. Later I took a shower or perhaps a bath there, as I had lice. He gave me one of his shirts and underwear and I changed and in the night I am sleeping in his bed and with my comforter and my pillow that he had given me and it was the first time in a bed that I was feeling so good, so nice.

In the night I couldn't sleep from excitement. Not even after so much whiskey that we had drank. We drank 2 bottles and I still couldn't sleep. About 1:00 in the morning, you know in Poland, there is not a hall to go to the various rooms, you have to go from one room through another, no hall. So I was in the last room and before me was his bedroom, where he was sleeping and later was the kitchen so I hear some people are coming in and they start talking in Polish about liberating the jail, because in jail there were some people the Russian took it because they were anti-Russian. They were talking about how to liberate the jail.

Then suddenly someone opens the door to my room and ask my friend who is this? Although I wasn't sleeping I had my eyes closed and pretended to be asleep, and my friend answers, 'This is my Jew.' They said "We can finish him up." And he told them "No, I will finish up myself, as if to mean to kill him." (Looking back it is possible that he just said that in order to protect me, but I don't know.) They are then talking there as to how to kill the Jews.

What happened, arriving back to Kielce , there were about 120 Jews in Kielce that arrived from Russia, from hiding, from concentration camps. From 28,000 Jews there is maybe 120 Jews left that have returned to Kielce and they are living in one house, like in a kibbutz. And these Poles are talking as to how to kill these Jews. I didn't even know that there were Jews living there.

Now I am thinking and my mind is going round how to escape. I am on the second floor and I cannot jump down as there is no window in this room. I cannot go out the door because they are there. What should I do? I was lucky, you know. They were drinking, drinking, drinking and they fell asleep and slowly I was going out through the room, like I'm going to the washroom and I went down the stairs and I went out and it was already 4:00 or 5:00 in the morning. At 5:00 in the morning the superintendent from the houses was already out cleaning the streets, cleaning them by broom. I asked if there are some Jews anywhere and she told me that on such and such street there are Jews. It is not far, I knew the street, it was called Plante, and I went there. There I found the Kibbutz with about 120 Jews.

I recognized a few of them, which were from Kielce, I recognized the President and Vice-President of the Kibbutz . There was a kitchen for all of them—there was already the JOINT, (still in existence), that is a Jewish organization from the United States, helping Jews all over the world, and they were already there and they were supplying them with money, with food, with clothing. This organization is an umbrella organization, over everybody, helping all the Jews all over the world. Anyway there I find out about the JONT and I got some clothes there, a shirt there and I was talking to the President who was a friend of mine. He's still alive (As of 2001), he's still here in Toronto. He was Vice-President—Percy Goodman,—he's still here.

Anyway I was talking to him and talking to the president and I tell them what I heard, that they are going to make a pogrom. They are going to kill all the Jews. You should know about this. They told me, 'Dave, We are not scared of the Poles now. We have guns, and the police is near by to us and we have the Russians and we are not scared.' So I say, "Look, I can only tell you what I heard." (On July 4, 1946 a pogrom did take place here; 44 Jews were killed and many more were injured.)

Anyway from there I went through Kielce for 2 days and I could find no body there of my family so then I went to Warsaw and I went to the place where the Hagana told me where to go

should I need some help and there they tell me what to do and how to get a passport. They tell me that I have to go to a place in Krakow to do so, and they give me a password. On the way I stop over in Kielce, no pogrom had yet taken place but I still was not going to sleep there, and there I meet my wife, my future wife, in Kielce that day.

I told her, Look I'm going to Sosnowiec and she happened to be from there. Then we go to Krakow and we get a passport. Right away, she was good looking and I needed company. I liked her. She was in the kibbutz to visit somebody; she was not living in the kibbutz, just staying over. So I meet her, I tell her I'm going to Sosnowiec and I told her you could go with me. But I don't want to sleep there at the Kibbutz because I'm scared, and come with me. In Sosnowiec she has got a brother, she has got a sister-in-law and she has a sister and that's where she's living.

Now what happened is that her brother, Bernard married a Gentile girl before war and the Gentile girl was hiding him and her sister in the attic. My wife she was in a German work camp in Czechoslovakia. Because her maiden name was Jegier, which is a German name they must have thought that she was of German descent, they took her to a working camp instead of a concentration or death camp. Anyways, when I'm in Sosnowiec I tell her I'm going to go to the West, I cannot remain here in Poland, I have to leave. When I was in Warsaw, the Hagana told me you shouldn't go to Austria, because when the Americans pullout, the Russians will come in. So you want better to be under the Americans, not under the Russians, so don't go back to Austria.

So when I told my future wife that she should go with me west to Germany she said that she would, but that she was an old fashioned girl and that she wouldn't go with me unless we were married. Now I am already 3 years without a wife, so we decided to get married. To get married you need a rabbi and we didn't have a rabbi—so how to get a rabbi. So we didn't have a rabbi, but my future sister in law Cecilia had a couple of friends there. One, his name was Wolfberg was a very educated man. The other man first name Urchu was dating Cecilia. At that time she did not know that her husband, Herman Ritter was still alive. The other friend was Willy Windwehr. Wolfberg eventually moved to New York and Willy went to Philadelphia. Before the war Wolfberg was a writer for the Jewish newspapers and he was a scholar. So I being a Cohen, which is like a Jewish Priest, put my fingers apart on both hands and then touching my thumbs and index fingers together, made up a blessing and pronounced Mr. Wolfberg as a Rabbi. So I am making him for a rabbi. And he married us. Later on he was in New York and he was teaching philosophy to doctors in the University in New York. And in New York he kept his ordination of Rabbi, as a matter of fact the Americans in New York gave him a military chaplain's outfit as a Rabbi.. We were married within two weeks of meeting. The marriage took place in her house, her brother's house. They had gotten it back after the war. It was large, about 10 rooms; it was the

same building that her brother had been hidden in. We are married and I told my wife 'and now we can go'.

Incidentally, I did go to my friend who was holding on to my 2nd suitcase. Not only was he gone, but everything in his apartment including my suitcase was gone.

We have to go to the west, so how to escape? I went to the contact that the Haganna had given me in Krakow. There I had made up passports for everyone going with us. I made up a passport for my wife that she was born in Metz, France. She is French and I am her husband and we're repatriating back to Metz. The Russians are too smart, they wouldn't let us go. The Poles are too smart too. So the best thing is to escape illegally.

How to escape illegally? I find out right away the rabbi and his wife he's got a nephew who is an officer who was a big officer in the Russian army and he wants to escape too, as well as another Russian officer. There was another officer in the Polish army and he wants to escape too. All three of them want to defect. Right away we have about 10 people, 10 Jews, all wanting to escape Poland. Ten of us and a Torah. The "Rabbi" was a scholar and he found out where there were some Torahs and we went and got one to take with.

We come up with a plan. We can get a Russian truck by stealing or buying it or somehow get it. There are a steady flow of Russian transports through Poland to Vienna because they are moving into Vienna because the Americans are leaving and the Russians are preparing to take it over. We found out that on such and such day they are making a transport of 100 trucks, a convoy. So I got somebody who knows a Russian officer and I ask him if he wants to make some money? I give him the idea, to arrange a truck, with a plan to hide near the border and when the convoy goes by to slip into the middle of it. Anyways he arranged a Russian truck with a Major and a driver.

A Russian major took the money and may have given the driver some of the money and we went to the border and we are hiding in the side in the forest and the convoy of Russian trucks starts passing by us. We counted 50 trucks and then our truck went in to the line. Now on the border they wouldn't check 100 Russian trucks so they let us go through. What happens to the last truck, I don't know. If the convoy was supposed to have exactly 100 trucks then there would not have been 100 but 101.

And we went through the border of Poland into Czechoslovakia. Now we are in Czechoslovakia. Now according to the map one road goes south to Vienna and another goes north to Prague and we wanted to go north to Prague. From Prague we could go to Germany and the American side, and from Germany we could find our way to Italy and then to Palestine, our destination. So we took the road in the centre lane, which exited to the road going to Prague, whereas the truck ahead of us went to the left, we went to the right. But the other trucks didn't

know about that and they followed us. So after a few miles we got to stop and tell them to go back . We had 50 trucks following us. It was funny.

So our truck went to Prague. In Prague there was already the Zionist organizations providing help, and I got some letters from the Haganna about me and I told them who I am and what I did and that we want to go to Munich. Now there is repatriation. French people are repatriating to France, English people back to England. Russian to Russia, there was a big camp. In that camp, was organized by Russians and Americans. So, I am French, and my wife and I are taken out to the French barracks. Neither me nor my wife could speak one word of French. The rest of our group went to the Jewish barracks for non-repatriation. The defectors gave over their weapons to the Americans.

So we are coming to the barrack there and that was the guy who was looking after the barrack there, he was superintendent. He was Hungarian, but we spoke to him in German.. ‘Oh we are French, here is my passport, I was born in Metz, and we ask when will be the transport?’ ‘Oh we don’t know, maybe transport goes in 3 or 4 days to Munich and then to Metz.’

And in the barrack, nobody is there, only that guy who is managing it and we are 2. In the camp there was lots of people—barracks for Poles, barracks for Jews, for different people. Anyway, the others don’t have enough food to eat. Because I am in the French barrack and we are only two of us we have lots of food. So the superintendent doesn’t mind giving me the surplus food for the barrack so I take it and give it to my friends and other Jews. One day suddenly, he is so happy and says in German, “Oh, I’m so happy. We’re going to have company, a lady is coming.” A French lady she is coming, what are we going to do now? This lady comes in, and I look at her and she looks Jewish. So I didn’t want to talk Jewish, the superintendent would know German, which is similar. I start talking Hebrew. I ask her in Hebrew whether she speaks Hebrew, and she answers. She knows Hebrew. The superintendent thinks that we are speaking French, and he was so happy that we got another Frenchman to keep us company. Anyway, we were there 3 or 4 days then they took us to our own railroad car, and because we were French, we were accompanied by a band playing music. We got to the railroad car and we went to Munich and then from there we were to go to Metz.

Session #4

I was already in the U.S. occupied territory. At that time my wife has a birth certificate that says she is born in Metz France. At that time I had connections with the Haganna in Krakow and I helped forge passports. In about Sept. or Oct. or perhaps even Nov. 1945, on the way to be transported to Metz we stopped in Munich and went to the Deutsche Museum where I've got connections with the people from Bricha. These are people from Israel that at one time were fighting together with England against Germany. The Bricha was the army organized during the War, made up of Jews from Palestine to fight together with the Allies and the Haganna was the underground set up to fight for an independent Jewish State within Palestine. Many members of the Hagannah were also volunteers within the Bricha. In 1945 Jews which were liberated from the concentration camps in the non-Russian controlled areas couldn't walk freely on the streets, they had to be in camps. Under the occupation of the United States and the occupation zone of the British, the occupation zone of France, Jews got to be in camps. They can't be outside. Not only the Jews, but also all the prisoners of the camps and the forced labourers that had worked in farms and factories outside the camps were put back into camps. This took place because I believe that many of the forced labourers were taking revenge against the Germans and the Americans feared that they would continue to do so. There were also Repatriation Camps, where people could go if they wished to return to their homeland.

So these D.P. (Displaced Persons) camps were often made up of former German military barracks so they were nice barracks. They set up men's barracks, women's barracks and separate barracks for families. These camps were nice. The camps were set up by nationality or background. The Poles went to a Polish DP camp, the Gypsies to a Gypsy camp, the Jews to Jewish Camps, etc. etc. In the camps the people were able to set up recreation and entertainment facilities as well as cultural activities. There were newspapers as well. Food was prepared in communal kitchens by the DP residents and supplied by UNRA. (United Nations Relief Agency?) More and more Jews were coming into areas of Germany occupied by the non-Russian Allies. (The British, Americans and French) from countries occupied by Russia such as Hungary, Romania, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Russia. The Americans then closed the border into western Germany. The Jews were leaving the Russian controlled areas because of anti-Semitism and because many of them wanted to go to Palestine. The DP camps were only in the non-Russian controlled areas. There people were encouraged to go home. Jews returning to their homes found their families gone, dead, their homes occupied by others and even after suffering the war there still was the anti-Semitism. The United States army didn't let Jews into the areas

controlled by the Western Powers, such as Germany, Austria and Italy. They didn't want any more displaced persons entering their controlled zones. You could only get in legally but legally no one had an official way to get in. Some were being smuggled in by the Haggana and other underground Zionist Organizations. The reason that the Jews would come into these areas even though they had to go into camps was that it was not possible to go directly from a Russian controlled area, was because those areas were Communist and it was too difficult to smuggle people out of the Communist controlled areas into Palestine.

Now when the Jews who were smuggled in were coming into Munich or other places, right away they were smuggled into a DP camp. In this way the U.S. army didn't know anything about the smuggling. There was no roll call in the camps so the Americans did not know that there were illegal DPs in these camps. The Americans might think that there were 1000 people in a camp and there might actually be 1500 or 2000. The Americans had no way of knowing. As mentioned before the supplies did not come from the Americans they came from UNRA so they couldn't even judge the number of people by the supplies being required or consumed. When the Western army or the border police caught somebody illegal crossing the border, they right away got six months jail. That was in 1945, after the liberation. In 1946, this ended, and the Jews could come in legally and Jews were free to leave the DP camps although many voluntarily stayed on as there was food and shelter in these camps and there was no place to go or work to be had outside the camps. The borders were opened only to the Jews, but this was unofficial. And at that time in 1946 there started to be anti-Semitic actions in Russia and other Communist countries in the Eastern Bloc. So those Jews which were alive after the war, were escaping those countries. The Jewish organizations such as the JOINT put pressure on the Western Allies to permit Jews to escape into their occupied territories.

When I arrived in Munich, it was October or November 1945. A Jewish Committee is like the Jewish Congress here. It's the representatives of the Jewish community in an area. I was in touch with some people from the Jewish Committee and they requested for me to go to a place, which is about 85 kilometers away from Munich so that I could help organize some of the Jews, which were living there. Some Jewish survivors in this section when they were liberated, they were not in camps. They were outside the camps living in barns or in the factories where they were working during the war. Some went to DP camps but most were afraid to go as just the name "camp" instilled fear in them. These people had nowhere to go so we have to give them some accommodation. I was trying to get some rooms and accommodation from the Germans. That was supposed to be my job as I was representing the Jewish Committee in Munich. I was the one who should represent those people to UNRA, which was the organization, which is helping to

feed the displaced persons. It was also specified that I should be connected to the American army and work with them and ask them for help if needed. I was in a position similar to being mayor of five villages but only in regards to the Jews. They were Turkheim, Mindelheim, Veresofen, Unteramingen and Oberamingen. I had a house there in Unteramingen.

The time was not easy as everything was just after the war. The Germans were scared at that time. They were scared of the Jews that they might take revenge and that's why the U.S. army wanted to keep the camps and keep the Jews in the camps so there would be no fights. My job was to find places for Jews to live. Through the American authorities I was given power to confiscate German property. I confiscated from the Germans a school and I put about eighty to ninety Jews to live there. I confiscated rooms in homes from Germans and we didn't pay them rent. Many of these Jews were working for the farmers before the liberation as slave labour. They had some accommodation but they didn't get paid for their work, so it was natural that now they should get some accommodation and some food as compensation for those times. The Germans were afraid so they supplied food and accommodation.

I was getting food and things from UNRA even though it wasn't a camp. These Jews were living in private accommodation and I told the UNRA that these people that they want to live here and they don't want to be in a camp. They understand and I received every month products, even though it was less than what would have been received if we had gone to a DP camp. We wanted to live outside the camp because most of us were idealistic. All we cared about how to get to Palestine because we know there was no place here for us. So, to do that we had to organize ourselves. The people which were liberated after the war were mostly young people between the ages of seventeen and twenty-five. Those people who went into the concentration camp or worked in the camp were then kids about ten or twelve years old. After the war, they didn't know how to read or write and now they were about 18 years old. Younger people had a better chance of survival.

I think I mentioned about the girls who come to me and they think they are sick. They are bleeding. They didn't know anything about having a period. In the camps they didn't get enough food and because of that they did not have their period. They didn't have a sister or a mother, not a father or aunt to help them. They got only us. By us I mean those survivors who were between 25 and 35 years old. We organized ourselves to be responsible for the people, for the young kids.

Now we are trying together with the Briha and the Haganna to see how to smuggle the people to Palestine, which is not so easy to do. Besides smuggling we have to get ammunition and guns smuggled to Palestine because in Palestine they don't have anything. So we organized how to smuggle, for instance we smuggled bullets in toothpaste. And you could send out parcels

from Germany to Palestine. But how to get these bullets? I was in contact with the army, with the military police, MP that was called MP or military police and some of them were Jews. I tell them who I am and what I am doing for Palestine and slowly I start to buy from them guns and ammunition. We smuggled the bullets in toothpaste. Others we put in tins of meat from the United States. We open the lids, we put bullets inside and we had a machine to reseal the lids.. They were sealed cans that said it was government inspected and was US meat so no one looked inside them.

Now some kids they went to school. Mostly everybody got to go to school. If they went to school they received from me their rations. I received all the food and things and I was giving them out every week some chocolates and some cigarettes. Now some boys who were eighteen years old received ten cigarettes a day, seventy a week. That was lots of money because the dollar was at that time 550 marks. So when they sold a package of cigarettes for 200 marks it was only twenty-five cents but they didn't know about that. They only know they got lots of money and they can buy other things but mostly they were buying sex. It was a hard time to convince them not to do this. Most of the boys were nice. They were learning in the school math, hygiene and about geography and biology. We didn't do anything about politics. Because the teachers were German so we couldn't tell them to teach these things. The teachers were paid by bartering products that we had such as coffee and cigarettes. (The following took place right after the war in the Jewish DP camps as mentioned earlier.) Some of these people were not Jewish, many were Poles that were used as slave labour in the Forced Labour Camps. There were victims that were from many countries as well, such as France, Hungary, Romania, Yugoslavia. Until the Americans could arrange repatriation transports for these non Jewish DPs they stayed

Now at the end of 1945 – almost January 1946 – I had a German lady come to my house and she told me that there was a Nazi group and they have meetings and they are organizing to do something against the Jews. She told me where they held their meetings and I investigated and found out that what she said is true. I went to the American MPs myself, at that time I was well connected with them we worked together in helping take care of the Jewish D.P.s. One officer was Lieutenant Stern and the other was Sergeant Rolnik. Now I didn't speak English at the time but I have a Jewish girl, Luba, a survivor, who was speaking English, Hebrew, Yiddish and German and she was with me and she was my translator and she was explaining everything to them. At this time she was a friend of Henry Kornblum, who is someone I would later know in Toronto.

So I went there and I told them what is going on, and I told them where the meetings were taking place, which was in a small Inn in a village between Mildenheim and Verrishoffen.

They asked me to obtain as much intelligence for them as possible, such as if the mayor of the town was involved or if the police were colluding. I inquired and found out when the next meeting was taking place and I took the American MPs over there. There were about 150 MPs and American soldiers and we arrived at night. I was riding my motorcycle, my 250cc Triumph. As soon as we arrived shooting began. I'm not sure if the Nazis had watch outs or why it happened right away. As soon as the shooting began Lieutenant Stern, who was Jewish, advised me to leave right away. (Lieutenant Stern spoke some Yiddish, some German so we could communicate. His brother was a Union Leader in the needle trade in N.Y. – see future appendix) I fled right away. There was some shooting on both sides and the Americans arrested a large number of German people. Some Germans were killed. The Americans found enough anti-Jewish and anti-American literature to fill up about three trucks which the Americans did and they took it back to destroy. It seems that the Nazis were preparing a pogrom against the Jews.

After that life was going on as before. I continued doing my work and the shops and schools were functioning. We set up shops to manufacture goods that either didn't need machines or could use small machines that were readily available. We set up shops for two purposes. One was to keep people occupied and to teach them a trade and the second was because imported goods were very expensive and we could make many of the same goods very much cheaper. We created shops for shoe manufacturing. We would buy the uppers and we would make the soles and stitch them by hand or by sewing machine. Woodworking was another trade that needed little equipment, some hammers, chisels, saws, grinders, all hand operated. We would do anything we could do by hand, and for which we didn't need equipment. Later on we even made up refrigerator boxes from wood. We were producing carriages for babies because later on people were getting married and having kids they need them for their trip to Palestine, so we were doing that and we had nice shops and we had some people which are looking after that. That was at the end of 1945.

One night in January of 1946 I was going to bed and a boy was coming to my house and was crying. He tells me there is a pogrom in another village, Oberamengen. I was still living in Unteramengen. I took my motorcycle the one I bought for \$50 from the Jewish committee. I couldn't go straight to the village because the church bells were ringing at midnight and the streets were full of Germans, hundreds of them. Outside the church and outside the school across the road from the church, where some Jews were living, and they were yelling death to the Jews. I needed to go the police but I was afraid to go through the crowd, so I detoured around the entire village until I could get to where the American MPs were stationed which was in Verisshoffen.

The trip took me about 10 minutes. So I went to the MPs and I found a man I know, Sergeant Rolnik, and I tell him what is happening. The MPs were bored, it was a quiet Saturday or Sunday night and they were waiting for action. Right away they set off an alarm to get the MPs out.. The lieutenant went onto the back of my motorcycle and the MPs jumped into their jeeps and trucks and followed me to the scene. The Germans were knocking out the windows of the school. A lot of kids, survivors, were living there, but fortunately nobody was hurt. The Germans were yelling 'death to the Jews' and something like that. The Americans arrested a few of them. When we arrived some Jews and Germans began hitting each other. So they took names and questioned some Germans and some Jews who looked like they were responsible.

After this life again went back to normal, but the Jews knew how they stood with Germans. Only one year had passed since the liberation.

After the pogrom, in about April 1946 I received a letter from the CIC, an American organization like the CIA or FBI. It was not the military police but political. The letter said I had a court case because it was my fault that there was a pogrom. The CIC claimed that I was responsible for the Pogrom by my interference. They claimed that the Germans were under observation and they were hoping to get more information, and because of my meddling they were not able to catch everybody. Because I reported that there was a pogrom they said I was responsible. The German mayor of the city of Oberamengen also received a letter that said he was also responsible for the pogrom.

There was a court case that lasted six days. It was a military court. There were high-ranking military officers and I received a lawyer. My lawyer was a major. His name was Friedlander. I had a translator, Luba, who I mentioned before she wasn't allowed to be there. I didn't know what was going on. At the end of the day they told me that I was sentenced to a year in jail. The mayor for the Germans he also had to go to jail For a year as we were both held responsible for the pogrom.

I was arrested right away in court. There were journalists from all over the world because of the pogrom. This took place about May 1946. It is not even a year since the liberation and already the Germans make a pogrom. Instead of going to jail, they took me to the hospital. I got friends from the General Committee in Munich and from Hagana and they told me not to worry we will try everything to make everything okay.

When I was there 3 days, the governor from Mindleheim, the city where the court case took place came to me. He was the governor of the whole section, he was an American who spoke good German. He knew me from before as I used to visit him at the Governor's mansion. He called me by my first name, Dave, he said I can give you a passport to go to the United States

with your wife. He told me to run away. I said, look, I depend on the Jewish Committee and I have to discuss it with them. They told me if you run away they will assume you are guilty. They asked me not to. They said that they would appeal the sentence. So I didn't go. I suspect that the Governor didn't act on his own. In the meantime, journalists from all over the world were writing about this case. I know that it was in Polish Newspapers, French newspapers (a writer by the name of Zyd, like Jew.), and Greek newspapers. I know, because people would bring me copies of the newspapers. It was even in American newspapers.

Now because I didn't accept to run away, they sent me to Lansburg. That is the most secure prison in Germany. I was put on a floor, in with all the convicted German officers, those who were convicted and sentenced to death and I was together with them. They executed by gallows within the prison. In the next cell to me was a General Skorcheni. This German General liberated Mussolini after the U.S. had captured Mussolini they took him away to the mountains. Skorcheni organized a parachute team and rescued Mussolini. We couldn't see each other but he would knock on the wall in order to start up a conversation. We would talk and was friendly to me but he did not know that I was Jewish. So he told me stories about how if the war had lasted a few more weeks there would be no Jews left. There would be nobody left not only here but also in Palestine. The top sheik of the Muslims, the Mufti of Jerusalem, he was talking with him and with Hitler together they were talking about how they could take over Palestine and how they can kill the Jews in Palestine. He did not know that I was Jewish.

I was there a week or ten days and my friends were trying to know what happened with me. They went to the U.S. government and they told them where I am and I am sitting with these people who are sentenced to death so they took me out of there and gave me a private cell.

Now I was talking to the warden and I told him, here you have thirty-five to forty Jew. You don't need so many cells. You can put the Jews together. The Jews which are here are not bandits. They are here for six months to one year, and they are here for minor crimes such as for cross the border illegally or selling cigarettes. They are not violent or dangerous criminals. Most of them were young kids, teenagers. So he give us the place, a group of 3 big rooms, where Hitler was in prison, the same prison that he was in after World War One. He was in Lansburg prison in the same rooms where we were. There were three rooms. And we had the same prison guard who was looking after Hitler, looking after us. He was an old man.

There I got visits from the outside. Here we didn't have individual visits but visits together. Once a week we got visits and parcels and things. I told the warden that we are Jewish and we are kosher. So the people from outside, the Committee was bringing us kosher food so we

were very good off and we receive cigarettes and chocolates and the whole group was sleeping in one room.

When I was in prison in Lansberg I asked the warden could I teach the boys some trade like electricity. I got books there. One of them is a contractor here in Toronto, Walmand and another was Sendel. Every day, you got nothing to do so it was good for the warden too and it was good for us and something else when I was in Langsberg—I got in touch with a couple of the guards. They were German guards. The head of the prison was American but the guards were Germans. I was buying guns in the prison from these guards and when my wife was visiting I gave the guns to my wife she smuggled them out. These guns were given to the members of the kibbutz that I will mention.

With us was a boy who was sixteen or seventeen years old, his name Yakov (Jacob). He got five years for smuggling arms. He was in the Hagana and he was smuggling arms from Germany to Austria. So he's got 5 years. He was in an officer's uniform when they caught him. He had an appeal but it did not help him. He was already there for about half a year when I arrived.

He was a member of the Kibbutz which was like a camp in the middle of the city of Lansberg. It was within a refugee camp which contained about 15,000 people. The kibbutz was about 1200-1500 people. This camp was a former military camp and the people stayed in what was one time German barracks. From this kibbutz the Hagana organized to move people and transfer arms out to Palestine. So they were his friends, I didn't know them.

My wife was coming in to visit me. She had permission that gave her rights to visit me whenever she wants, even every day. She came in every day so everyone, all the officers, the Americans and the Germans got to know me and my wife. My wife was good with the guards. She would bring them coffee, sugar, chocolates. When you arrive in the prison as a visitor, you receive a pass and, when you are going out you give it back but my wife didn't need one anymore because they knew her. She could go in and out without such a visitor's pass.

Now we are trying to organize how we can get that boy out of the prison. It's a high security prison. So we decide on a plan. We will get in some woman's clothing. My wife smuggled the clothing in the same bag that she brought chocolates, coffee and cigarettes for the guards. She also took a visitor's pass when she entered. There is only one guard and he is old and we give him a little whiskey. He was resting in the corner or sleeping, but not paying attention to us. We changed the boy for a girl. He put on the clothing that my wife had brought in. He received my wife's visitor's pass which did not have names on them and he went outside and they were waiting for him with a horse and buggy. My wife went out as normal without a visitor's

pass because they recognized her because she could go in and out. The boy went out and he got in the buggy and horse didn't want to go. The members of the kibbutz that came with the horse and buggy ended up pushing the buggy. It was raining. It is funny to think back at the event but it wasn't funny then.

On a side note the German guard, that was guarding us became friendly with all of us. He would always get from us chocolates and coffee from us. He would tell us stories about Hitler and his companions that were jailed in the same room where we were sitting. The same room in which I would lecture the youths on electricity, Hitler would lecture his companions about his ideology. He would tell us about these lectures, about how to take over the government, the Jewish businesses. He would tell about how Hitler would receive truckloads of gifts from the United States, gifts of liquor, tobacco, food, etc. for him and his companions.

In the same day, accidentally the same day, General Skorcheni escaped. He was sentenced to death. How for him to escape is impossible. He was let out by the Americans. I know this because later I read it in the newspaper, many years later that the American authorities had released him, but at the time the Americans had claimed that he had escaped.

The Mufti of Jerusalem that Skorcheni had mentioned had talked with him and Hitler to kill all the Jews in Palestine was arrested in France. He was arrested in France and he was prisoner in a high security prison in France. The same day, General Skorcheni and the Mufti escaped. I found out later about that.

In the night during roll call it is discovered that both the boy and Skorcheni are missing. The warden right away calls me and tells me that I know Skorcheni escaped. I said that I didn't know. Then he says that I know that the boy escaped. They asked me how I did it. I said I don't know about Skorcheni or the boy escaping or how they did it. They called in the CIA I think to interrogate me. They interrogate me for a few hours but I tell them nothing.. They said to me that I was involved but that they couldn't prove it. Because of this, they send me away to a concentration camp. This was summer of 1946.

I didn't know that it exists, an American concentration camp. That was in Germany it was in Munchberg. Munchberg was in southern Bavaria and it was called the Bavarian Siberia. It's a long distance from Landsburg. It was a two days to drive. On the way we stopped and I slept in a jail. We went by jeep, with an American serviceman. We arrived at night, there was no light there, only a barrack. In front of the barrack there are servicemen, American, and there was a stove going with wood. It was wintertime, November 1946.

I arrived with some clothes, shirts, socks, shoes, and my legal documents and identification papers and some books to read. In the concentration camp they took all my possessions other than the clothes on my back, the clothes, the books, my id papers, they took to the oven, everything was burned. They didn't know who I was, why I was there or if I have to be there a month, a year or ten years and they sent me to a barrack. The barrack was cold, it was just cots and a blanket. First night I was freezing. Second night I was freezing. It was really a concentration camp just like the Germans. The people there were mostly SS people some still in their SS uniforms, which were sentenced to death. There were Poles who were robbers and looters sentenced to death, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, Russians and all sorts of nationalities there. They didn't seem to care that I was Jewish. If anything the Germans were scared of the Jews.

There was a Jewish doctor. His name was Shapiro and he's now in New York. There was a Rabbi from N.Y. in the concentration camp and there one American dentist from Chicago. In one side of the camp were men and on the other side of the camp were the women.

Now the servicemen, who were our guards, the American people that were watching us, these were people America took out of jail, put them in uniforms to take care of us. They were ex convicts. So imagine what kind of care they are taking of us? The food that was for the prisoners, they were selling it. We didn't get anything to eat. Only breakfast, two pieces of bread, some tasteless porridge for lunch some porridge a little dinner sometimes a piece of sausage and two pieces of bread, never enough. And half of the day sometimes the whole day we had to make exercise. Anything to wear us out. That was going on, and no visits; no letters could be received or sent. There were no buildings, only barracks and it was very cold. The camp was surrounded by wire, the same way exactly like the German concentration camps; even the guard towers were the same. Sometimes they would accompany us outside the camp to cut firewood. (I arrived there in the fall and I was there until January.)

I saw what is going on and I saw the women's section that was separated from us by a wire fence every night they were yelling there because the American service men/guards were raping them. Some women have only three months to be there, others nine months. But no one knew who was there or for how long. All the papers were gone. They burned them. No difference what the sentence was they were still there. It didn't matter if your sentence was up. No body even knew what it was. One day the generator stopped. The Americans were yelling us that they wanted to know if anybody could fix the generator. I volunteered and accidentally, I don't know how, but the generator started working. I didn't know anything about this type of generator. Because of this they put on top of the other inmates.

Anyway, I was in touch with a doctor Shapiro. He was friendly to me. And I got in touch with another doctor. He was not really a doctor but he was more trained than a nurse a Ukrainian. There was also the dentist from Chicago and we talked between ourselves as to what can we do. (This Jewish dentist had sold his practice and went to Europe, and went specially to track down this Romanian Clergy man (equivalent to the Cardinal) in order to have him disclosed and arrested as he was a top man within the Iron Guard and he was responsible for the death of many Jews. While in his pursuit of this Clergy and for witnesses, he got caught illegally crossing a border and was arrested. There is a book published with his story.) We have no way to complain to nobody. They're doing with us what they want. They are not regular soldiers. These soldiers are illiterate, cannot write and they cannot read, they are not educated and are backwards. They didn't know about toilets or about electricity. And they are out from where I don't know. We are sentenced to that. So, how to make an uprising?

We had no visitors. Visitors were coming, but they weren't allowed near the camp. We could see them in the distance. We decided to make a strike, to not eat the food. We didn't eat the food. We wanted somebody of higher authority to come and to see what was going on. The guards didn't care if we ate or if we starved. So we began to eat again. So we organized those people which were sentenced to death and we told them since you are sentenced to death anyway why don't we make an uprising?

So how to do it? Simple, when two servicemen are coming in to make exercise, they've got the guns, always got the guns. We decide that five of us will go on one and five on the other one and we take the guns. And that's what happened. We took away the guns. So we went there into the street, the yard by the barracks and we got the two guns. The soldiers on the towers, which were watching us, saw that we took the two soldiers like hostages and we tied their hands and we had the guns and they ran away. They left their arms and just ran away.

(Not too many people in the city in Munchberg knew of the concentration camp. My wife arrived in Munchberg came to visit me a few days after my arrival. She met a young Jewish doctor who managed to find out about the camp and took her in to his home and fed her and took her outside the fence. She threw chocolate to me but the guards confiscated it from me. One bar I managed to keep for myself. I was able to greet her only because the guards would not let the visitors close to the fence. The doctor told my wife that he would try to get me to a hospital but nothing ever became of it.)

We told everybody not to run away from the camp. We explained to them that you are Russian , you are Spanish and you have a right to be repatriated. Even if you are sentenced to

death, they have no right to kill you, that they have the rights according to the Geneva Convention and that each of them has the right to be repatriated. We explained that and they understood and nobody ran away.

Right away, within an hour, we got helicopters over our head, it seemed like 50 or more of them. The sky was dark with them. We got tanks around the whole camp and maybe it seemed like a few hundred tanks there, maybe the whole army is there. They must have thought that there was a big uprising. There were I would guess between 1000 – 1200 prisoners in the camp. And one comes in, an officer, to the gate and he takes out his belt and his gun and he puts them away. He asks us to open up. He wants to come in, so we let him go in. He was talking Polish. A Polish American Lieutenant.

He asked what happened and we told him. Dr. Shapiro, myself and the Ukrainian and a guy from Palestine (Yaacov) was delegated by the prisoners as their representatives. So we told him why we had the uprising – we just wanted some senior military people to come in to see what was taking place, that we don't have food, we don't have this, we don't have that and he didn't believe it. He called in the Colonel and they went to the kitchen there and to the storage areas and they find out how the whole group which are watching us, are stealing the food. He found out that some of us got three months, others six months months past our sentences, and that we should be out.

We had a Jew with us who was Jacob (Yaakov) and he was a diplomat, a Jew from Palestine. He speaks any language you want English French, Polish, Russian.. He was coming from Palestine to Germany then to France so that when there will be an Israel he should become a diplomat. He was with us too. Because he could speak excellent English, he explained what was going and afterwards everything was changed.

They arrested all the Americans that had been guarding us. Later on the Americans wanted there to be a court, and that I should be the judge. Anyway, I was the judge, together with two others, the Ukrainian and Dr. Shapiro. I guess because we were the prisoner's delegates. I didn't want to sentence some American, so I let everybody free. We didn't want anyone to have problems with us that we did something to the Americans. The Americans had liberated us, they had fought for us, they gave us food, and so even though there were a few bad ones, we decided to let everyone to be free. We didn't want to have bad feelings. The court was like a theatre, we were laughing, the Americans were laughing, and the new guards were laughing. We were telling jokes, and we were all friendly. These Americans were like normal people. They released those of us that were past their sentence. So anyway, we start getting good food. We received delegations from Spain, from Hungary, from France to repatriate their own people. They arrived on the 2nd

and 3rd days with trucks and they took with them about 70% of the prisoners. The Polish delegation invited to repatriate me but I chose to finish my prison term instead. I didn't want to go back to Poland. Later I found out that some of the repatriated prisoners that had gone back in the Polish trucks jumped out before getting there. They couldn't release me right away as I still had to finish the remainder of my sentence so they released me to the hospital for about a month, where I stayed. Later I was released. Through visiting soldiers and other people I heard that after I was released I went to visit Yaakov and I could see that the whole camp was changed, it was completely different. It was run like a prison, not like a German concentration camp.

And this dentist who was an American, he was there, he wanted to go to Romania because the bishop from Romania which belonged to the Iron Guard that killed so many people was living in Chicago and the dentist needed some witnesses to prove that he was a war criminal, a murderer. It took him a long time, I think it was in the 1980s or 1990s before they finally got him convicted and expelled from the US.

What to do with Jacob (Yaakov) the diplomat? We visited him a few times, he was speaking English so he was working in the office, in the Prison camp. He supplied the Americans who didn't have enough whiskey. They had no money to buy whiskey. So I supply him with parcels always with some whiskey. I was buying it. We could have it. We received parcels from England, parcels from United States. We received whiskey and wine and other things and we could buy it. The Germans and American didn't have it.

So one time in the night in my house in Unteramigen about 2:00 a.m. I have somebody knocking at the door. It was Jacob (Yaakov) who shows up in a new U.S. uniform, a sergeant uniform. What happened? He was in the office in the camp and there was a sergeant on duty. Jacob gave him whiskey and he fell asleep and Jacob took his uniform and put it on. He took the key for the jeep and ran away with the jeep. He went to Munich, he left the jeep in Munich and he took the train to my house in Unteramigen where I was. Right away we took the uniform. I gave him some of my clothing and the uniform we burned it in the oven. In the same hour, I took him on my motorcycle and took him to Austria. At that time there was no security between the border between Austria and that part of Germany. I don't know what ever happened to Jacob. I never heard of him again.

When I arrived back in May, 1947, I didn't want to be mayor anymore. I don't want to represent people. About 50% of the people there had already left. They got some other person to take my place and I took a job in Munich working for the Jewish Central Committee. I got the room to rent in Munich and in the weekend I am going home to my wife.

My job was to be a buyer for the Hagana, not only for the Hagana but for the Jewish Committee. The Jewish Committee was organizing goods for Israel, all sorts of things for the New Jewish State. Because I was speaking German, so we needed materials for the shops, woodworking and this shop and that shop and they give me an office. I got an office in Munich, I got some people there working for me and I was going around the factories and I was buying material such as tools, small machines and equipment, anything that was available.

At that time the dollar was high and the mark was low and you couldn't buy any food in the stores. You could buy screws, bolts, nuts, metal things for next to nothing...a welding torch for welding lets say was \$55.00 and I was buying it for 25 cents. I was buying other things like tools, different types of tools. Drills are expensive but I was buying them for cents. I was buying things for pennies on the dollar.

The other things like clothing and food were rationed and you couldn't buy them but the things that I bought were not rationed. This we got in the store so I went over and I could buy this store and I bought some for Israel, Palestine and I was buying for myself too. Bolts and nuts I could buy not by piece, but by the kilogram and it cost me 5 cents. Everybody was laughing at me because some people was buying dollars and I was speculating on screws and nuts, drills, etc. I believed that they would go up in price. Screws and nuts were small and didn't need much space.

Now because I was looking German and I spoke German well, they tell me I should work together with minister, Prime Minister of Bavaria. The PM of Bavaria, his name was Orbach, he was a Jew from a concentration camp and he was an engineer, a chemical engineer and he was living in Munich before the war and they took him to a concentration camp. Now he's liberated, his whole family is dead and he is made PM by the Americans. This was arranged by the American military. He was not elected. They appointed him. He was appointed because he was intelligent and because he spoke fluent German and English. He got the ministry and he got the staff of tens of thousands of people if not hundreds of thousands.

How I got in the picture? At that time Jews could get \$50.00 US in German money from the German government for anyone who was living in Germany in 1945, or anyone who was liberated in Germany in 1945 and were still living in Germany.. Most Jews arrived in Bavaria 1946, which was after that date. So I went to the place where I was mayor of the five villages and I know the German mayor. I told him that I need thirty or forty registrations for Jews showing that they were living in the villages in 1945. I give him some coffee, he give me some registrations. This way Jews that were given registrations could get the \$50.00. This way they got out the money, the \$50. We repeated this several times together with my wife. My wife would

give the Mayors the names and would ask for the certificates of registration. She would also look after the gifts.

I didn't make profit on these events. I didn't work for personal benefit. I wasn't working for money. I was idealistic. We got some Jews, not so many Jews survived from the concentration camps in Germany, most were those which arrived from Russia, they were fighting on the front against Germany and in Russia you remember after the war they killed the doctors, the writers, so some of the Jews, left their uniforms, and run away to Poland and then to Germany. In Germany you had the Jewish Agency and various Zionist organizations. It was secure for these organizations in Germany as they had protection from the Americans. The various Jewish organizations like Hashomer Hatzair, joined together into a group called the Yishuv. But these Jews had to be registered to live in Germany; you have to be registered so Orbach was helping to arrange the papers for me in the thousands. The mayor of the Germans they didn't care about making registrations, there was concentration camps, there were so many Jews, another 100, another 50 doesn't make a difference.

The other main thing that I was doing at that time I was confiscating farms. There were farms that were confiscated by the SS during the war and were now empty because these SS people were either killed or missing or they had escaped and were afraid to return. These farms were not being operated. I was talking to Orbach and he told me 'that there were many empty farms and that the machines are getting spoiled by not being used. So he had the ministry of agriculture give me the addresses of these vacant farms. We were only interested in the equipment. This doesn't mean I was taking the farm equipment. They got to go on sale, auction sale and they were selling to the highest bidder. We had a lot of marks as the dollar was worth 550 marks and so we were always the highest bidder. We bought some tractors and some other farming machines and everything went to railway car and everything was going to Italy and from there to Palestine. That was going on during 1947. And we were not only taking tractors, some trucks we cut the frames in half because otherwise we couldn't transport them. We had to put everything in crates because all these items were being smuggled and we didn't want it obvious as to what the contents were. We transported not only railway cars of equipment, but entire trains with goods 80 cars, 100 cars. And thanks to Dr. Orbach who gives us permission to transport otherwise, we couldn't do that and that is how I fit into the picture with him. I was very good friends with Dr. Orbach, we were very close but it was strictly a business relationship. We could depend and trust each other. For instance registrations, they were paying \$50 for a registration. These registrations we would actually sell to the Jews for \$15, some when to pay for the coffee, some for our expenses and most of the money we gave as kickback to Orbach's organizations. He

used this kickback money for furthering Jewish causes, not for his own personal gain. He would entertain delegates, etc. He was a very good person.

Now I wasn't working by myself. I was working with others, but mostly I did this by myself. We also bought arms from the Germans. The German's had the weapons confiscated at the end of the war but they had managed to hide some. I was good in German, and they thought I was German, and I was buying arms and machine guns and other things, which were transported out by rail. It was thanks to Dr. Orbach for getting us the permission to transport out by train. This is 1948 and I was working with the Hagana and I was working Munich and still going home on the weekends..

I got my sister-in-law, Cecilia, my wife's sister from Poland. She ran away and I gave her a job in Munich working in a warehouse for the Jewish committee, but she couldn't say she is my sister-in-law. In 1948, in May when Israel was recognized as a State, it was a different story. We start sending out people out to Israel legally. You don't have to smuggle now. Now it is legal so we don't need the Hagana because the official government of Israel took over everything and people were going officially to Israel. So now they send over delegates and a Consulate and our organizations are liquidated. Now officially the Government of Israel took over the buildings and organizations.

So, it's 1948. I stayed until the official organizations took over. I'm supposed to go to Israel because the end of 1948, I sent out to Israel everything that I organized, a full machine shop...everything for a machine shop. I took all my money and spent it on these things. I sent out a stove, my fridge that was made from wood, a freezer box, all my appliances, all my nuts and bolts I sent to a Kibbutz in Israel where I was going to go. (Yad Ehad?) I was going to live in a commune with my wife. I gave back my house to the German mayor (the burgenmeister) where I was living and I went to the camp where we are going to Israel. I was left only with a little hand suitcase and \$50.00 and my wife was with me. We went to the camp where we were going officially to Israel.

What happens my daughter gets sick. My daughter was less than one year old. She was born in January 1948. She got TB. Now there was an American doctor and he said she had tuberculosis. Now because I was working in Munich I did know lots of Germans and I knew of this particular doctor. One of the best was a childrens doctor and his name was Braun. I got an appointment with him and the doctor checked her and he made x-ray, he told me, she doesn't have TB. So, I went back to the camp and I told the people that she hasn't got it and we can go to Israel. They say, this is a German doctor he will kill you. The American doctor knows better. She will go to sanatorium.

Take her to sanatorium and she will get healthy.’ So, that time I didn’t have a car, no motorcycle, so I got some transportation from a friend and so I went to the sanatorium on a Saturday with my daughter and wife. This sanatorium was in Kempten in the mountains. There was no doctor there. I left my daughter and wife at the sanatorium and I went back to the camp till Monday. On Monday I went back and talked to the doctor and check her, so in the morning I talk to the doctor and all the clothing I have to take home because the sanatorium had to wear hospital clothes. And the doctor said, ‘how you know she got TB?’ ‘that’s what they said.’ And I told him I went to Dr. Braun and ‘after Dr. Braun you went to another doctor?’ This doctor now tells me that she doesn’t have TB but she could catch it if she stays here.

So I took her back, but I had to go and buy some clothing for her. I took her back but she was still coughing. So I took her back to Munich to Dr. Braun and I asked what to do. He told me one thing, you can go to Schwartvold (the Black Forest) because she’s got whooping cough. Only in the Black Forest will the cough go away because the air is different. So I went there and she is getting better. I went back to the doctor and the doctor told me one thing, you cannot go with her to Israel. You cannot go to a hot climate because if you want her to stay alive, don’t go to a hot climate.’

Now I am without money, without anything and I am in the transit camp where you have to go away. That was end of 1948. 1949 is coming and I have nowhere to be. I went to my wife’s cousin Blanca who was living in Munich and she didn’t let me in because they were scared of my daughter because they thought that she had TB. So I rented a room in Munich and I was living there. \$50.00 is not too much money. I got some money about \$500-\$600 in Switzerland, which I couldn’t get at. You couldn’t transfer money, so it was very bad, what can I do?

I find a partner, someone I had met in Auschwitz, he wants to go to Garmich Partin Kirchen , a resort in the mountains, the Alps. That was already 1949 and I got somebody there who has a car and I told him maybe we should go on some business. What kind of business we don’t know. He wants to go in whiskey business, I told him nothing about whiskey. So I went with him with my wife and my baby and he was single and we are going on small highway and we are going through a place called Oberamingau a little city and this city I see only Jews, every one with long hair and beards, many men with beards and I didn’t know where I am. I’m thinking I am in a Jewish city and I went to a restaurant there and had a drink and I ask someone what is going on. In this city they have a play every ten years. They are making a play about Christmas, and that’s why they are preparing themselves with the long hair and beards and other things. During the war Hitler was against Christianity so he didn’t let that play happen. As this is 1949 after the liberation they can prepare for the play in 1950 We continued on to Garmich Partin

Kirchen. The next day, I told my friend, maybe we can make a business in Oberimengau,. So we went back to Oberimengau looking for where the theatre is. The theatre is designed in such a way that the stage is on the outside and the people are sitting inside. It holds a few thousand people. And I told him, we have to design something so we can sell it, when so many people are coming in. So I had a design made for a women's kerchief for a women's head. I took some art from the theatre and gave it to an artist and an engraver. The artist did the motif and the engraver made the printing plates. So I went to somebody who is in this city, he knows everything, he's a writer and one was a painter and he designed the scarf and I did know where to go to have them produced. I had them made and I make 5000 of them. I paid seventy cents apiece and we sell for \$4 or \$5. (Equivalent in US dollars)

Mostly women are needing the scarf, it's a religious thing there. When I arrived there for the play, there were thousands of Americans coming there. There were lots of ill people coming here, mostly Americans, people were going like I'm going now with a cane or on crutches and they are putting this kerchief on them as if it would heal them. So this is like a shrine. This year (2000) it is the year that the play is put on again there.

At that time, we made a few thousand dollars. So I'm not involved with the Hagana anymore, not with committee, not with Orbach. I'm working for myself, with a partner. I went to Frankfurt with the money and we opened up a textile store. I know where to buy the material because I was buying before. So, we were buying it and selling it to salespeople, Italians, French, Gypsies, it was an open, legal, official wholesale store. I was thinking that I would be there a few years and some day when I have enough money I will have money enough to travel to US or Canada. I didn't know anything about Canada. Without money, I cannot do it.

Going back, now when I got my office in Munich, next to my office was another office. It was my professor from Kielce, from my high school. What happened was he ran away to Russia and from Russia, he got two kids, two daughters, and from Russia he came back to Germany and from Germany, he wanted to go to Israel. He was Cultural Officer and he was teaching university in Germany and my office was called Unemployment office. I got lots of people working there and we were friendly. What's happened is that his daughter finished high school in Germany and she went to Israel to study and she fell in love with a boy there a, German. The father of the German boy had been a high Nazi officer. She fell in love with the boy in Israel and when she came back from Israel she says to father that she is going to marry him. The father says you can do this over my dead body. So what happens is they both the boy and the girl committed suicide. Now he's supposed to go to U.S. with his daughter and wife. When he was on the boat they took him down from the boat because somebody told the U.S. authorities that he's a communist. They

took him out. He couldn't go. So he was in Germany and he passed away a few years ago. (1990s) His second daughter married an American, a Gentile. This time he didn't do nothing because he was scared.

Because I was in textiles and I was importing some other items from Italy, there were some people who would make money when they denounce somebody. So suddenly, the police call me, an American intelligence high-ranking officer. He takes me in and he asks me I want you to tell me the truth. I was scared that he would ask me about the time I was in Landsburg jail. Because at that time, when I was there, about five American officers committed suicide there at about the same time.

He was talking excellent German and I talk to him in German and asked what I do wrong? He asked me my name and I told him, and he said I wasn't telling the truth. He said you got another name. He did know everything about me from Poland, where I went to school, what I did, I was under surveillance for six months, they were checking me out for six months. He told me you went with a blonde girl to a hotel, that hotel in Frankfurt, and she was your wife's cousin, which is true. How did they know? For six months, we were looking what you are doing. That was in 1949. So what should I do? I cannot go to Israel. He said don't go nowhere, you are free. Some informer had accused me of being a communist spy.

The American said that we didn't find anything; we investigated you because they told me you are a communist spy. Some people are getting money for denouncing people but we find out you are not a communist spy, and that you have nothing to do with the Russians and that you are very good at making money, go and make money, because with money you can do everything. If you go to the United States if you have money you can do everything. So that was my experience, but the professor was stuck.

The business was going well. We were buying material made in Italy, textiles made from milk. Italy was making textiles from milk. The Germans are making it from beer. You know margarine was made from coal. When we got no gas, they were driving cars on wood. There was an oven in the back, the wood was drying, letting out gas that was going to the carburetor and we were using it.

So the business was going very well, we are getting material and more and more people are coming to buy the material. It's mostly gypsies who are buying the material. There were very rich gypsies in Frankfurt. They were hidden at the time of the war because at the war, they were killing them, like the Jews. But some were hidden. These gypsies had beautiful trailers. I was invited once to a trailer. They got beautiful things inside and they know how to sell them.

They bought from us the cheapest materials from us, which were made from Canadian wood, which is called 'cellulose', like from wood, like Egyptian cotton. And we got some from material from Belgium that very good. So they were buying cheap material and selling it as good material. They were selling it to tailors as wool.

You know one gypsy, one time says, "you made a mistake, you charged me for regular material and you sold me the good, wool stuff. You see, I'll show you how." He took out one of the threads from the material and he put on a match and he smell it and it's like wool. And I know I sold him the stuff that was not wool. So I tell him I'll give him one bolt of material at no charge if he tell me how he was doing that. That's the way they were selling to tailors the cheap imitation wool as real wool. He's got this resin, like a violinist uses, in his pocket and in his pocket he puts some under his fingernail and then he slides the thread through the resin under his finger and then when he burns the thread, it smells like real wool. We had lots of fun with the gypsies, they had lots of tricks. They were good salespeople.

In 1951, things were going well, we had a nice big store, we had a new partner and we got some help there working. My original partners name was Ostrowvietzky and our new partner was Iskovitz. I had split everything 50/50 with my old partner when I bought him out.

Our life was good. We had nice furniture, we got some friends, we went to nightclubs and theatres. I got a nurse (nanny) for my baby. I got a car and a chauffeur; I got a chauffeur for my wife. She was not driving and there was traffic there in Frankfurt, and she was using the chauffeur there. We had one child, her name is Sonia, and she was born in 1948. That was 1951. Everything was going fine.

(It was uncomfortable being in Germany, but we had no choice. I had applied to emigrate to other countries, but I was not accepted.)

Suddenly there is in the newspaper that Dr. Orbach is arrested. Because the American government gave over the administration of the country back to the Germans. Dr. Orbach was not elected, the Germans they called him the Jewish King without a crown. The Germans trumped up a story. And as soon as I saw that he was in the newspaper, I am thinking that now it is bad, If the Germans could arrest Orbach they they will come after me. I don't know if they would have actually gone after me, but I was scared. I told my wife we have to run away. So I left my business, to my partner, I got the receipt from him, that he owes me 15,000 marks, which was worth over \$5000 US, and he could pay me later. I went to a lawyer to make that agreement. (See Figure-2) I smuggled myself out of Germany to Austria. In Austria I am without papers. No passport, nothing. I did have money. We had about \$5000 US dollars. From Austria and Germany is not that far and I was scared. I find out later, it doesn't mean me but because I was with Dr.

Orbach I thought I was next. As soon as they arrested Dr. Orbach, my wife told me that she had a feeling that they're going to kill him. Two weeks later we read in the newspaper that he committed suicide. Anyway I am in Austria without papers so I go to a DP camp and I tell them that I just arrived from Poland. I pay them a few dollars to make me some papers and I got papers. We are now in the DP camp. Now what to do? Where to go? Should we go to Israel? The doctor had told us that it would be bad for my daughter and that she should only go to places not hot like Australia, but to be in the south side, not the north side. We can go to Brazil or Argentine or United States or Canada. I didn't know where Canada is. I heard about Canada. Anyway, there was advertising, they needed people for Canada to work in the forest. I registered myself to work in the forest. They didn't want to register me because I am Jewish. Now it's written there on the Canadian leaflets 'No coloured people should apply for this registration. I told them I am not coloured, I am white. They said you are Jewish, and you are covered under the coloured people and we cannot register you for Canada. This was said to me by the Canadian representative in 1951.

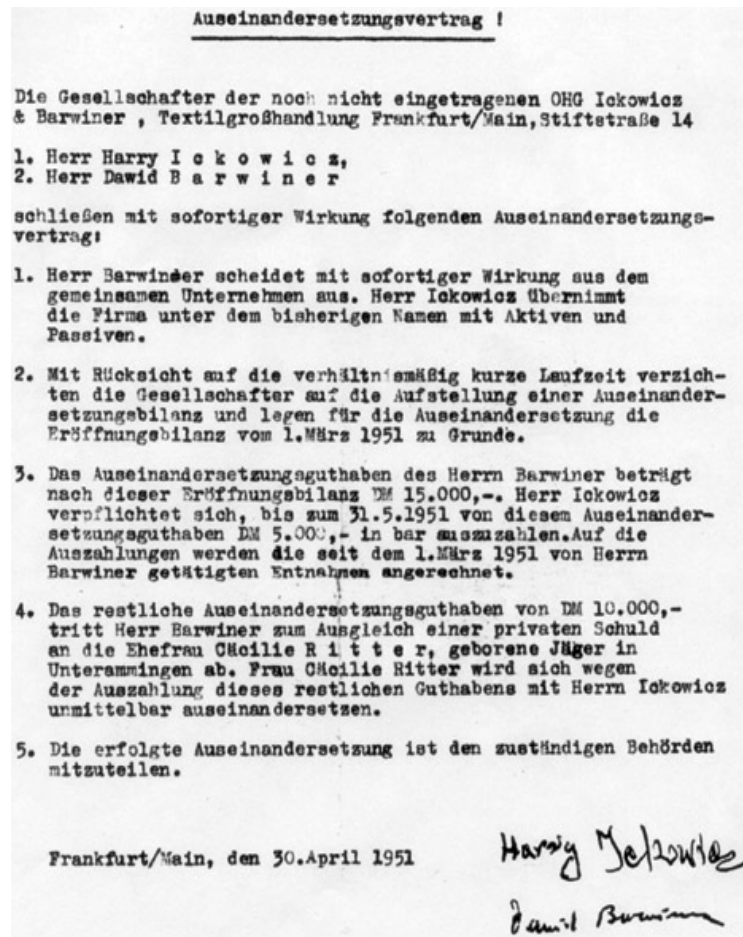


Figure-2

Contract

Anyway, I wanted to see the Canadian consul. They didn't want to let me in to see the consul. I was aggravated and I pushed away the desk where the secretary was and I went to see the consul. I know the consul speaks German. I speak German very well. I said 'I want to register and so he asks me what is wrong. So I ask him, "What am I, am I black or am I white?" and he says you are white. I asked him so why don't they want to register me, they are telling me that I'm black. He went with me to the registration office and told them to register me. And they registered me.


Now this doesn't mean I'm getting a visa. I registered for Canada and I registered to Argentine and I registered to go to Australia. For U.S. we couldn't register, because for the U.S. we needed a sponsor. To Argentina you can register only if you have so much money. So I registered there and they accepted me. Only they sent me a letter, they don't think I am Christian. When you are not Christian you go to priest and convert. I still got the letter here. So from Australia I didn't receive anything. Later after I accepted to go to Canada, I received a letter accepting me to Australia.

Now I got to go out with the CIC, that is the American political police, (predecessor to the CIA) and I have to tell how I arrived in Austria from where and what, so I got to tell them how I arrived. I find out from other people, which arrived from Poland, they were not accepted to Canada because they explained to the CIC they were working people. They were not accepted because Canada doesn't need working people. Working people they have enough. So when I hear this, they ask, 'what you do in Poland?' I tell them I had a business in Poland, which is true, and the Russian they are after me so I escape. And I got a passport and I was accepted.

Now I have to go to a doctor. I go to a doctor and bingo, my daughter gets sick. She got sick; she got an infection, one where you have to be quarantined, scarlet fever. She was in hospital for four weeks and I couldn't visit her, only I could see her through the window. She was crying there. After that time she was okay, we went back to the immigration.

In the meantime, the immigration got enough people to go to Canada. They don't need more people to work in the forest. So I ask the consul, 'what do you need?' 'Well we need auto mechanics.' Yes I'm an auto mechanic. But they needed proof. They needed papers. So I went to the Austrian government and they took my picture and I was making exams and I got the paper for auto mechanic. (See Figure-3) It took weeks. So now it is almost 1952. So I told the consul I have the papers. I have to go a doctor and check everybody and it takes weeks and months. We went to the Canadian consul with my papers and showed my papers, mechanic. He says that is no good; you have to go to another examination an American exam. So I went to an American examination, they took out the blueprint and because I went to school, I did know everything and

they ask me, 'what is this?' I told everything. They told me that I was lying. They said I am not a mechanic you are an engineer. I tell him, I am not engineer but technician. We went to the consul and they told him I am an technician and that I am excellent. The consul says, 'Listen, why you want to work like that?' I have a friend in Stelco in Hamilton and I will give you a letter and you'll make more money there.' Suddenly I got a letter from him to go to Hamilton. I didn't go there though as I didn't know where Hamilton is.


**KAMMER DER GEWERBLICHEN
WIRTSCHAFT FÜR
SALZBURG**

SEKTION GEWERBE
SALZBURG, WEINERSTR. 1 / TELEFON 6171

20. Juli 1951.

FALLBEZUG: AU
GEMEINDEZAHLE (IN DER ANTWORT UNBEDINGT ANZUGEBEN)

Dr. Ka. / M6.
IHRE NACHRICHT GEHT, DATUM:


BETRIFFT

**Z E U G N I S
C E R T I F I C A T E
C E R T I F I C A D O**

Die Kammer der gewerblichen Wirtschaft bestätigt, dass
The Chamber of Trades certifies that
La Cámara del Comercio certifica, que el

Herr **W I E N E R** Daniel
Mr. -----
Sr. D. -----

geboren am 30.5.1916. K R A K A U
born the ----- in -----
nacido el -----




auf Wunsch der IRO auf seine Kenntnisse als
was tested on IRO request regarding his knowledge and experience
fué examinado a petición de la IRO en sus conocimientos como

A u t o m e c h a n i k e r . . .
Automobil- m e c h a n i s i a n .
Mecanico de autos

Überprüft und als sehr gut GELERNT ~~INGENIEUR~~ eingestuft
and was rated as excellent SKILLED ~~ENGINEER~~
Y clasificado en la categoria de OFICIAL ~~INGENIERO~~

Diese Bescheinigung ist nur für Auswanderungszwecke gültig; gege
über österreichischen Behörden ist sie rechtlich unerheblich. .
The present certificate is valid for resettlement purpose and ma
not be used for obtaining employment within the Austrian economy
Esta verificado es valido solo para efetos de emigracion Y no
quede ser utilizado para obtener trabajo dentro de la economia
austriaca.

Der Sektionsobmann:
Chief of Section:
Jefe de Sección:

(Ing. Filler)



Der Geschäftsführer:
Manager:
Director:

(Dr. Kastner)

Figure-3

Auto Mechanic

Now the next question is, we haven't got a passport, the office is now closed and they asked if I could type and I said I could with two fingers. They said go downstairs, take passport blank and type your name, your wife's name, daughter's name and put on the picture. I got my passport, put on the stamp. I made my own passport. By this time I had changed my name and other information. Instead of David I used a polish name Daniel, and instead of my own birthday of Feb. 19, I had taken on the birthday of my first son Henich, May 30.

Now because I am not going through an organization, like Jewish organization, UNRA, you have to pay yourself for passage. Okay, I got the money, I have it in Switzerland and I couldn't get marks or shillings. I have dollars. They have to be paid in Austrian shillings. Anyway, I got somebody who helped me out and I got it paid. I had to pay to the Canadian government a security deposit that I wouldn't be a burden on the country and that we would be able to support ourselves. It was \$500 for the family, which they changed to French francs, which was many thousands of francs. This becomes later a story on its own.

Now we are going to Canada. It's another culture there. Two cultures. What happens we have no relatives? What happens if you got sick? What about money? You have to get on a plane. You have to have enough money. They don't want it to come back on Canada. You have to have \$500. Now I have \$500, we get it back, \$500 I couldn't put in the money, only you have to pay in francs-French francs and I got somebody who changed for francs and I got 10,000 francs and I take it in francs and I got the receipt. After 6 months or after a year, you will be in Canada, you will get the money back. (See Figure-4)

So we are going to go to Italy from Austria by train, passport, everything is legal. At this time when I made up the new passports I dropped the "Bar" on the front of our names and left only Wiener. I thought in this way they couldn't find us, I was still scared.

Anyway, I am going to Canada to Halifax. We left from Naples, Italy December 1951 on the ocean liner Argentina. We haven't got nobody. Nobody's waiting for us. The boat was a small boat. It was called the Argentine and the trip was pleasant until about 3 days before Halifax was not very good and the waves were so high and that was Christmastime, 1951. And everybody was sick and I was sick and I remember going down the staircase and finding myself in the air. From all the passengers only my daughter and another girl, she was three years old was not sick. My wife was sick and even many of the crew were sick.

We arrived in Halifax just before Christmas 1951. When I was in Italy, I bought some whiskey there and so I got some whiskey and I gave some whiskey to some guy in Halifax and he helped me with my suitcase to the train. The train had a sleeping car with two berths. You could

lie down on the top and the bottom. I never saw a train like that before. And there was a restaurant and you could only buy sweet

A.J.D.C. EMIGRATION SERVICE - LETTER OF IDENTIFICATION					
From: Orig. AJDC Em. Office		Salzburg		File N°	Opening Date
To: End destination		Canada		File N°	Arrived
Via: AJDC Em. Office		Genova		File N°	Left
				File N°	Left
IDENTIFYING INFORMATION FOR EACH MEMBER OF THE FAMILY GROUP					
SURNAME	WIENER	WIENER	WIENER		
First Name	Daniel	Sussana	Sonia		
Maiden Name		Stecka			
Father's Name	Samuel W.	Chaim Stecka			
Mother's Name	Gitla Lis	Mirjam Jaeger			
Relation to Head	head	wife	daughter		
Birthplace	Krakow	Kielce	Wonnoschitz		
Birthdate	30.5.1915	30.12.1923	22.1.1948		
Nationality Present	stateless	same	same		
Former	Polish	Polish	Polish		
Occupation	mechanic	household			
DOCUMENTATION					
PASSPORT number	10771	10772			
type	IRO Certificate of Identity				
Date issued	10.9.1951	same			
Place issued	Salzburg	same			
Valid till					
TRANSIT VISA for	Italy				
Date issued	5.12.1951				
Place issued	Italian Mission				
Valid till	8 days				
TRANSIT VISA for					
Date issued					
Place issued					
Valid till					
END VISA for	Canada	same			
Date issued	25.10.1951				
Place issued	Canadian Government Immigration Mission, Salzburg				
Valid till	four months				
Other visas					
IRO ELIGIBILITY					
Registration N°					
Certified by					
RECOMMENDED SERVICES TO BE RENDERED			DEPOSIT INFORMATION		
Transportation to End Destination / Canada			Cash: AUS 10.000.- (Equiv in US \$)		
Remarks: Passage Order # 7657 issued by AJDC Vienna			Local currency		
Vissed under OS 8, sponsored by Canadian Jewish Congress			Guarantee:		
			Conditions		
			Name and Address of depositor: emigrant		
			Committee holding deposit: AJDC Salzburg		
EXPECTED RESIDENCE OVERSEAS			Signed by emigrant:		
			Promissory Note - Place: Salzburg Date: 30.		
			Call Forward Letter - Place: Date: 11.5		
TRANSPORTATION					
From	To	By (Date)	How arranged		
Salzburg	Brenner	6 December	Landesregierung		
Brenner	Genoa		paid client		
Genoa	Canada		arranged by AJDC Paris		
This letter authorizes AJDC Emigration Offices and Cooperating Committees listed below to provide necessary assistance to the indicated emigrant in accordance with the regulations and procedures of AJDC Emigration Service.					
Date: 6 December 1951					
Seal: A.J.D.C. Director					

Figure-4

Emigration Papers

pickles and white bread. There was nothing else. We called it cotton bread, my wife couldn't eat it, only me and my daughter were able to eat the white bread and pickles but not my wife. She was eating only ice.

It took two nights and two days to arrive in Montreal. When we arrived in Montreal, it was exactly Christmastime. Because it was Christmastime, my daughter received a doll in Halifax, and I'm coming down and I don't know where to go, no one is waiting at the railroad station. We leave everything at the station. The first thing we do is to go to find a restaurant to get something to eat. We are together with another couple from the train, in the same situation. They are hungry. They are a Greek couple and he knows a little French. So he is speaking French. We find a little restaurant near the train station. And we got something to eat and from there we ask where is the Jewish Committee. I know that if we can find the Jewish Committee, I can get some help so they tell us so and so and we took a taxi and we went there.

We didn't have too much money but we got some money and we went there. The Jewish Committee (JIAS) we went there to register. Here I am, I arrived here are my papers, I'm Jewish, please find me where to sleep. We were told to wait and in an hour arrive a lady and she was talking Yiddish, I didn't know too much Yiddish at that time, I was talking German and she understand me My wife was talking Yiddish and she could understand her and she takes us to an apartment it's in Montreal on Colonel Street, a red light district which at the time I didn't know.

It was winter, there was so much snow, and we didn't have boots. We went there and that was her apartment and you go out to the street up, second floor, two floors, metal stairs outside, it was dangerous, that was a stove, a wooden stove in the centre of the room and that was coal heating all the rooms, there was no other heating and we got a room by the oven which was danger really, really dangerous. We rented this room from her.. And that was a Friday and I took out a bottle of whiskey and the woman and husband were alcoholics. They were Jews but alcoholics and they got a daughter, nice girl.

And I got to pay \$30 for a month there rent and I am next week I was trying to find about some jobs. I got no friends or family there and where ever I went in 1952, no jobs. And that was the first week. It was Thursday we were already 4 or 5 days there. The lady from the house, landlady, asks my wife, 'come out shopping for Saturday, Sabbath' where you going shopping? You go shopping at grocery store, supermarket? No we are going to a market where they have chickens and they have to kill the chickens and I don't know how to do that and she said 'don't worry, I'll teach you.'

They went to the market, an outdoor market, and there was a truck with live chickens and a man was selling the chickens from the truck and my wife took 2 chickens. She paid, and the

landlady took 2 chickens, she paid and she went to the guy who was killing them, a Jewish guy, the Shochet who performs the ritual slaughtering and cleaning of animals and she went to a lady who was taking 10 cents for removing the feathers and the guy who killed the chickens said to my wife that the chickens are no kosher. Kosher, she thought, what is wrong? They are sick. To be kosher a chicken has to be healthy and slaughtered a certain way. He showed my wife that under the feathers the chickens have pimples. So she returned back to the place where she bought the chickens together with the landlady. She told the farmer the chicken are sick, he was laughing at my wife. My wife had the dead and plucked chicken and showed the farmer the pox. He wouldn't refund the money and he wouldn't exchange the chickens. My wife tells me that the farmer looked at her with a sneer as if she was a nothing, because she was a newcomer who couldn't speak the language, a new immigrant. So my wife asked the landlady where the butcher shop is and she directs my wife to a Jewish butcher shop. At the shop she asks for a health inspector and in the market, there was a building with a health inspector. The Jewish butcher takes my wife to the inspector and he explains on my wife's behalf about what took place. The inspector gave my wife a receipt for the two chickens and for the expenses of slaughtering and plucking the chicken. The landlady was waiting for her as she did not want to partake in what my wife was doing. The landlady was laughing at my wife and told her 'you are a greenhorn' (actually she said green-ass) She told my wife, now you lost the money and the chickens. The landlady brought her chickens home and she cooked them and ate them. She was eating them but my wife said if there is something wrong with the chickens I don't want to give them to my husband or my child.

So anyway, Tuesday she received a cheque for the chickens and for the slaughtering and cleaning and for the streetcar fare and for everything and she went back there to the Jewish butcher and she asked him 'what happened? I got the cheque.' What was the sickness? 'The chickens had chicken pox and they had to go to the farms and they burned 200,000 chickens.' Two farmers and they got the chickens and they know they have disease and that is, you can catch it and they still sold them to people, to newcomers because they felt that they could take advantage of them Four days in Canada, I am joking with my wife, Only four days in Canada and already you are responsible for the death of 200,000 chickens.

Anyway I paid for a month rent. I couldn't find a job in Montreal so I wanted to go to Calgary. I had read the newspapers and I knew that there was oil and gas there, I thought maybe I could do something there, maybe I could find a job. My wife didn't want to go. We decided to go to Toronto. My wife had heard that there were some people that we knew, that were living there. In Montreal we knew nobody.

I paid for a month rent, but we left after 10 days. In Toronto, I did the same things, I again went to the Jewish Committee called JIAS and they give me where to live for only one day, no cooking, nothing there. My wife was crying, because she imagined what Toronto would be compared to Katawiec in Poland. She thought that it would be a large cosmopolitan city. Toronto looked like a farming village to her. My daughter's memory of arriving in Toronto is "just mud". I was there on Beverley Street and on

McCaul Street there was a Rabbi's wife. The Rabbi passed away, so she rented me the front room of her home, no cooking, no eating so I got to eat in restaurants. In the meantime, I still got \$1800 from Switzerland, JIAS helped me to get the money so I got the money and I got money to eat with.

There was a synagogue on Henry Street, a Polish synagogue for Polish Jews. The superintendent, the Shamas, was a Jew and he did know my wife's parents and he rented me a room there and I paid him a month rent for the room and he was very good because if the synagogue find out that he is renting the room we will have to leave. So after about two weeks he got caught and we had to leave. The shamas had been a tenant in Poland of my wife's parents. At that time you couldn't just rent an apartment in Toronto, they didn't exist. So my wife found a room above a store in Kensington market.

So in the meantime, I rented a car after I was here for 3 days and drove all over the city, north south east west in order to orient myself and find out what is everything here and I applied for a drivers license. There was advertising for a job, a motorcycle repair mechanic, on Dundas Street near Elizabeth, Toronto Tires. It was a big store, a big shop, they got refrigeration, stoves, bikes, everything. I come over there and I ask for a job. I don't speak English. I ask for a job. The old man was Jewish, so we talk Yiddish. I tell him that I'm a motorcycle repairman, you need one? We are hiring. But I didn't get the job. I don't know why. Maybe he thought I didn't know enough.

In the meantime, three days later, there is still an ad in the paper, I am calling him and this time I am talking to him in German. He asked me, 'are you German?' I say yes. Okay come over, he didn't recognize me, and I got the job. He was Jewish, his name was Himmel. He's got a son, big store and he's got the place to make tires, to recap tires. So anyways I got the job for 85 cents an hour in 1952. I worked there for a few months. I arrived in Canada end of 1951 so that was 1952.

Session 5 – Daniel Wiener

He was selling the motorcycles but not too many people were buying the motorcycles. He had bicycles. He was selling refrigerators, stoves and, appliances and he's got a company where they were re-capping them. And I was working there for 85 cents an hour and that was Easter. Easter I don't eat bread so I got matzo, so he ask 'why you eat matzoth?' 'I am a Jew.' 'You are a Jew? What are you doing here?' 'I am working here, you hired me, you know...' He was Jewish. Anyway, there were a few people working, a foreman, a nice man. One time Himmel asked me a question, 'can you drive a truck?' I told him yes I could and he took me to exhibition. , it was not a truck, it was a tractor trailer with 18 wheels. In the truck there was about 18 gears, I never drove one in my life. So I start to use first gear, second and anyway I tried it out, I was using only 5 gears no more and I was on Yonge Street which I shouldn't go with a tractor trailer on that street and police stop me and escort me to the place. He told me I shouldn't drive more on Yonge Street. At that time I already got license because when I arrived here, as I mentioned I rented car to find out where is Toronto, directions, I find out Yonge St. is dividing west and east, I find out north of Eglinton there were still farms and when I arrived here with my wife and we went from the railway station to the Jewish Committee which is called JIAS, by taxi, for which I had the address, on University Avenue my wife asked 'when will we be in Toronto?' because Toronto was looking to us like a village. There was no high rise, there was no apartments, only houses and it was very hard to get accommodation. To get accommodation it was almost impossible, they were renting only rooms or flats (2nd floor of a house). Flats they were renting for 2 couples or 3 couples. And with a child, they didn't want to take it in. I received accidentally a room by a synagogue by the caretaker, it was called The Polish Schul, The Polish Synagogue because I am Polish. It was on McCaul St. First I got a room when I arrived by a Rabbi's wife, he passed away, and she rented the living room, no eating. We had to eat in a restaurant and my daughter was nearly 4 years old, it was a very hard life. Newcomers, which were coming here, they mostly had family, relatives. I didn't have any relatives and I was by myself and it was very hard to get accommodations. First question when I go to rent a room they would ask, 'Did your relatives throw you out so you want my place?' They didn't understand I didn't have relatives. I got the room in the synagogue for about 2 weeks. In the meantime, I was working in the shop and what happened, the synagogue find out the caretaker is renting a room. They tell him, you're renting a room, you have to go out from here. They want to fire him. So anyway I got to move out right away. I moved onto Baldwin St. in Kensington Market, to another bad house and I had same job. In the meantime, people who arrived here had relatives

and they bought houses. A house was about \$3500 - \$5,500 at that time. Jews were mostly living on Major Street...and in the overall College and Spadina area, over to Bathurst St. That was the Jewish section. Mostly new immigrants, every Sunday would meet on College Street between Bathurst and Spadina. That is if you wanted to meet someone from the immigrants you meet there. They would be walking there or hanging around in that neighborhood. And we were talking between ourselves and asking ourselves what to do and how to do, some have got no trade, some went to be tailors, some went to be dishwashers and the best idea we were talking is to buy chicken farms. To be a chicken farmer you didn't need a trade or to know too much. And some of them went to Hamilton or Peterborough and bought chicken farms there and they did very well, not only because they got chicken and eggs but because the value of farm later went up. When they were selling they got good money for that. I was still working on the job and I want to buy a house. The money which I got was the \$1800 US that I arrived with and that time US dollar was cheaper at that time than Canadian dollar. I was scared to go to the bank to change the money because we were always scared. We were scared that maybe we shouldn't have US money. Anyway, I used up \$300 during the time I was in Canada which at that time was April or May, to buy things that I needed like a bed, some things for the my daughter, Sonia. I had \$1500. I was looking for a house. And because I went north and east and west I know where Toronto will be. The best location will be north of St. Clair and I went there and I was looking for a house. I had a real estate agent and I bought a house, a duplex. Two apartments, so I was taking one and renting one. That was \$14,500, which was lots of money. The down payment is \$3500. I got only \$1500. The Jewish institution was lending money to newcomers without interest but you got to have 2 signatures, my wife found somebody who was her relative, (Stitsky of the Fabricland Stitskys) and another guy who knows her father in Kielce (Ladofsky from United Bakers) and they signed and so we got \$1000. So we got \$2500. So we need another thousand. I had one friend (Ignatz Stoppel), he offered to lend me \$500, he did. I got \$3000. The other friend (Philip Rechtsman) who offered me \$500, changed his mind. He didn't want to give me the money because he was scared, everybody was scared. Everybody was buying houses for \$5000, \$4000. I bought a house for \$14 500. So he was scared I would go bankrupt. So I was stuck with the house and I don't have \$500. Now before I went to Canada I left \$550 as a security deposit so I wouldn't be relying on support from the government of Canada. After a year, I could get the money back. As mentioned before in Europe I shouldn't pay in Canadian money, I got to change to Francs and that was changed in francs the \$550. That was many thousand francs at the time. They told me I should go to the bank, maybe the bank will lend \$500. I went to the TD bank, accidentally the manager is speaking a little bit German, I told him 'I bought a house, I have

\$3000, I need \$500' for 6 months or 8 months because it was the end of May, and later I could get back the money. I showed him the papers. So he saw there 10 000, he was thinking 10 000 dollars, not francs. (See Figure) He told me right away, no problem 'I'll give you the money'. Right away he gave me the money. I got a cheque from him for \$500. Then he asks me questions. 'You are buying a house, then you need furniture, Do you have furniture? I said No. I can give you money for furniture. Do you have a car? You have to drive a car' You can't go without a car. So I didn't want no more money and I didn't want to take advantage of his mistake. He was thinking it was dollars not francs. So I didn't say anything and I paid back the money with interest and until now this bank, Toronto Dominion bank is my bank, because accidentally later I met the president of the TD bank later on and we are doing a lot of business with the TD bank. So I got the house and it was a duplex and that time in May 1952, there was rent control in Toronto. You couldn't rent out the apartment, only for so and so much money. Because I bought it and nobody was living before there, I could rent it out and to get a telephone you got to wait 3, 4 months. It was a party line; you couldn't get a private line. I went to the bank manager, he told me, I want to rent it out, I need a telephone. What should I do? He called up somebody and next day I got a telephone. So I put an ad in the paper, I got somebody to translate to English and we had a line up with taxis. I rented the apartment for \$120.00 per month. That was, I took in a family with 3 children because other people wouldn't rent out to families with children. And 2 more children downstairs. And I went myself to live upstairs. In a room and kitchen and sunroom and in another little room I made a kitchen, I rent it out. So I got rent for upstairs, I got rent downstairs—the rent covered the expenses on the house and it covered the mortgage. Later on I change the duplex into a fourplex. I made four apartment, I myself I did the electrical work, the plumbing, the carpentry. At that time you couldn't buy ready finished doors. I made everything myself. I didn't know anything about carpentry, I didn't know too much about plumbing so I got books and I did everything by the books and we got 4 apartments. I was living downstairs. I got 2 rooms and a nice big kitchen. At the time, I got my daughter who was 4 years old. She was going to school. She told me the first time she arrived from school, "Daddy, they are talking, I can't understand what they are talking." She couldn't understand English, she was speaking excellent German. Three months later she couldn't talk in German, but she could speak excellent English. And thanks to her English, I learned it. Anyway I was still working at the job at the motorcycle place and it's 1952 and what happens is my wife got pregnant, we wanted to have another child. I was making \$38.00 per week. All the money I was making went to the bank, that which we got from rent was for expenses and food. Besides that, when I was working in the bicycle shop, somebody got into an accident with a motorcycle I bought the broken

motorcycle and a broken bicycle from the owner of the shop and I repaired them and instead of traveling by streetcar I rode the motorcycle. Because the streetcar only traveled to St. Clair I needed to change zones, so I needed 2 tickets, one to St. Clair and one to get me up Vaughn Rd. and I had to take a bus up farther, I was living on Atlas Ave.) This section of Atlas Ave. was a gentile section. I didn't know I had to live in a Jewish area as always I was living in Gentile sections and there was not one Jew on Atlas Ave. at that time going from Vaughn road to St. Clair. And I was with all the neighbours very good. We were like friends. When I bought a house there was no key in the house. No locks. There was a front, side and back entrance, no locks. In bought the house in 1952 with no keys and I sold it in 1960 without keys. Neighbours were coming into our house even when we are not home to get some sugar or milk. The whole street was like one large family, nobody closed anything. Nobody was scared of anybody stealing, everything was left outside. There was no such thing. We couldn't understand what that means, stealing. I was working in the bicycle shop and my wife got pregnant and that was September 1952 and she wanted bagels. So I was working Saturdays and all week. On Saturdays I was driving a small truck making deliveries. Before that, I asked for a raise, because I was one of the best workers and they needed me very badly. So the boss told me 'you know I will give you gladly a dollar, but I cannot do it because you have no license' (mechanic license) so I asked him what should I do about getting a license? You have to go to the city hall. They were joking with me, but I didn't realize it at the time. Before that, he had asked me for a chauffeur license. Well I had a chauffeur's license. So I took off half a day after lunch and I went to the city hall and I didn't know they were joking, because in order to get a mechanic's license you needed to be an apprentice for five years. So I went there and I asked I want a mechanic's license. They asked who are you? I told them 'okay I was a mechanic, I showed them the license which I had gotten in Austria, and I told them that I want a license.' They said, 'you have to make an exam' so I said, 'okay when should I come?' 'You have to pay a dollar.' So first I paid the dollar and they told me 'you know we can take you in right away' And they took me in right away. I was talking a little bit of English like I'm talking now and they put on the the plan of a car on the table which I did know excellently and they asked me questions and I would answer....this is the clutch, this is the magneto this is that, this is this, etc. etc.. Ten minutes, no more, I got the license, I got a paper. The exam was accepted. They wanted to send me a certificate which they said would be ready four weeks later. I told them I have to have it now for my boss in order for me to get a raise. They told me 'okay we will give you in the meantime the paper' So I took the paper and I went to the job, to my boss and my boss was looking at me and and then he was looking at the paper and he didn't believe it—he called the foreman, his name was Harry (Eric?), he says, 'You

son of a so and so, you've been working here 15 years you don't have a license, this guy just arrives and he gets a license. Anyway, because he offered me a dollar I was getting a dollar, which was a good wage at that time. Getting back to that Saturday, I was doing deliveries and my wife wants bagels and I went to a bakery in Kensington market where they are making the bagels. I stopped my truck on the corner, which you shouldn't do, it was delivery, the motor was still running and I went there to buy the 3 bagels or 5 bagels which takes only a few seconds and when I was coming out a car rammed into my truck. He didn't do any damage to the little truck, but his corner lens was broken and he starts yelling, 'why did you park at corner?' It's your fault; you shouldn't have parked in the corner. I told him I wasn't driving, the truck was standing, and I didn't back into you. There was a sign on the truck with the name of the company that it belonged to and he says, 'I know your boss. I'm going to your boss.' So I finished my delivery and when I went to take the truck back, the guy was waiting there already and the boss says, 'why did you park on the corner?' so I tell him the truth, 'I park on the corner for a few seconds to pick up some bagels.' He says then this is your fault. This is not my fault, I didn't run into him.' Anyway, the story was that the cost was \$10.00 to repair the lens and my boss suggested that we split it down the middle and he wanted me to pay \$5.00. I told him, 'you know when it's my fault I will pay the \$10.00 but when it's not my fault I want to pay nothing.' So he gave me an ultimatum, 'you are paying him the \$5.00 or you're fired.' So I told him, 'I won't pay the \$5.00' and I was fired and so I arrived home with my motorcycle, with the 3 bagels for my wife and without a job. I told her, 'I lost the job, I was fired.' It was not a problem to pay \$5.00, it was the principal.

So my wife said, 'look Monday, he's going to call you. Finish. He fired you don't go back.' She was right. Monday he was calling me, 'Please come back to work.' I said, 'I'm sorry I was fired, I'm not going back.' I made an application at the time to CPR(Canadian Pacific Railways). They needed electric engineers so I went there, I made an application. It took me 3 days to make the exams—intelligence exams, technical exams and other exams and I passed everything. When I passed everything, they asked me for my passport and they saw I was only a year in the country, not even a year and that I don't have citizenship and they said, 'sorry we cannot hire you. You are not a Canadian citizen.' And I didn't get the job even though I passed everything. Not only did I pass but I got my ticket stamped too. I was parking with my motorcycle illegally and they paid for the ticket. Five years later when I was in business, I got a letter from CPR that the job was still waiting for me.

So from that time I got a job with an electrical contractor which he hired me for a dollar, later he paid me after 2 to 3 weeks he paid me \$1.50 per hour. It was good money, high wage and the first job which I made for him, mostly what I was doing reading the blue prints because the other electricians that were working for him, not one of them could read the blue prints. He went from wiring houses, to wiring factories The first factory was at Castlefield and Caledonia and to go there I couldn't drive my motorcycle and I went by streetcar...you needed 2 tickets and then you had to walk there. I was a foreman. And there I was working with another guy, a Jewish guy who had recently arrived from Israel. I asked him what he was doing in Israel?. He told me he was a musician and I told him and here you are here an electrician? And he said yes, I know a little bit. He said, You know in the electric work, to put on a couple wires, and to do what it takes, this was not a big deal. I got friendly with him and he told me, 'I am working on something for music. My brother is a professor of Music at the University of Toronto and he's retired but still teaching and he has a studio at Bathurst and College Street.' What's he's doing, he's writing music with engravers., The engraving was a hard job to do and when somebody made a mistake in engraving, they couldn't fix it, they had to start over again from the beginning. He got engravers and it was very hard to find engravers. My friend who was from Israel, he was a good friend of mine later on he told me 'I have an idea how to write the music—get a big wall and to make the lines and put on a magnet in the back and to make the notes from steel.'

So we start making the notes by hand in sheet metal and I was painting them, making nice lines and putting on magnets on the back of the lines and So the lines of the scale were magnetized and these lines would hold the notes in place. The wall would be photographed and then the engravers could edit the photograph in order to make sheet music. The problem was that if someone turned off the power all the notes would fall down.

I didn't know about any other magnets than electromagnets. So later we find out there are is such a thing as permanent magnets and we find out how to buy permanent magnets and we took 4 by 8 plywood sheets and we painted them black and we made white lines because to make the production for the camera it was reversed and the notes were white and the lettering was white. Anyway he could now write music by placing these notes and letters on the line and if there were errors or changes it could be easily adjusted and this became a big business.

We took a picture of them and because the picture was much smaller than the wall the results came out very sharp and clear. It was a revolution in the music publication industry. Anyway, I was not a partner—I was only a friend helping and he was getting from England orders, orders from CBC, from the States and you know the music was, he was competitive in price, you know engraver by hand it was a long time, you didn't got engravers more, all the old engravers died out. So that was busy, he was doing very well. We were good friends, he got a daughter 2 years older than my daughter. His name was Meyer Padolak. His one brother was a musician and university professor and the other was an artist and he himself was very talented. He was a jack-of-all-trades, he could do everything It didn't matter if it was electrical, mechanical or musical. He was very friendly until something happened; we fell apart that was a different story. You could write a whole book on the story of the events surrounding that family, but as I mentioned that is another story. Anyway the electrical contractor wanted me to work 6 or 7 days a week and I made \$60.00 a week. That was good money. But to work 6 days a week, 10 hours a day...well I had a family too. And when I got my motorcycle I was doing some private jobs. For instance if somebody needs a switch, somebody needs a light, between doing these small private jobs and my regular job, I was making a beautiful living. My son was born, the 10th of July, 1953 and his name is Bill. I got two children now. My son was born, was the time that I change the duplex to a fourplex. I used up all my money to do this. I was driving the motorcycle and I sold the motorcycle and I bought a fridge because when Bill was born I was all out of money and we needed a fridge to keep food for my son. And because I didn't want to work 7 days a week I was out of a job but two or three days later I was hired by Regent Electric. Regent Electric was a big company making arc welders and battery chargers. The first day I went there I was hired to be an equipment tester. There was a big table with equipment and we got to test from the assembly line, battery chargers. One of the tests were to test the fast charge and slow charge settings. There was a test certificate that went with each piece of equipment that had to be initialed by the testing technician. First day on my new job I was testing I didn't believe my eyes. When I took the chargers to test them as to fast charge and slow charge the meter on the chargers showed correctly but on my test meter it was backwards. When I put on the fast charge it was slow charge, when I put on the slow charger it was fast. Something was wrong. So I told the foreman 'you know something is wrong, this should be a slow charge and this should be a fast charge.' So this means the either the testing equipment is no good or they are doing everything wrong. He said 'listen, you want your job? Please sign, otherwise you will be without your job.' I told him that I can't sign for things which I don't believe are correct' And he went to the boss. His boss they got a big factory on King and Spadina and that was time there were no electronics everything was electric.

And he called the boss, and I told the boss and I showed him my volt meter which I always got with me and I showed him that the low voltage was on the high charge and the higher voltage was on the low charge and he looks at me and he looks at the volt meter and he goes on the back of the testing equipment, he was engineer himself and he calls in the main engineer to come in with all the engineers, there were 4 engineers working there, and he told them 'look what is going on here' and what's happened all the battery chargers which they had sold, these were the industrial type of chargers that were sold to garages, were wired backwards. If somebody went to the garage for fast charge they got a slow charge, and they went for a slow charge, in other words a long charge, their battery was getting burned out.. He recalled so many battery chargers and he recalled from the warehouse all the chargers in stock and all we got to do is reverse the wires inside and to change the wires which are on the testing equipment. Later I was teaching somebody else to be a tester and I was doing prototypes. Prototypes of big welders? Like 500 amp, DC, AC with gas, with high frequencies. One time it was a prototype of a high frequency welder. It was our first and I know high frequency can do damage to other things like radios, telephones so I didn't want to connect it. I was the main engineer, they ask me, 'what you mean you don't want to connect it? You make a spark when you begin to weld, this spark can do nothing.' 'yes I tell them but it can interrupt other services.' What happens, we connected it, it was my first prototype, and all the streets around King Street were without telephone.

Later on I was learning how to use 110 volt until 550 volts, how to use the same motors, the same transformers—we got the 4 engineers there but they don't know too much about secondaries and other things. I teach them how to make the cores of magnetic coils, the laminations. They were scrapping lots of material because they would cut them out in the shape of an E and an I. I showed them that they could the same shape by cutting out a different pattern that nests and without wasting material. Because of this position, I was able to save some money and I started to look out for my own business. So in 1952 I rented a place on Queen Street and I started working about florescent lights. Why I was working in florescent lights was because when I was working as an electrician I was installing florescent lights. Fluorescent light fixtures were very heavy—2 lights, 4 foot was about 45 pounds. You needed 2 people to hang one. The ceilings were made of steel and wood. If you want to change the wiring it was very difficult to get access. In the meantime, all my friends were newcomers, some went into business, some were butchers, and some were other things. And I was trying to get into something too. And so I was thinking the florescent lighting was still a brand new thing, nobody knows too much about it and I don't know myself. In the mean time I went to a technical school on Harourd St. I took rules and regulations about electric work. Later I start going to University in the night. I went to

University for 5 years to be an engineer and get my diploma. I took other things, not just electric things. It took me about 5 years but I already got my business. In the meantime, I was doing some private electrical contracting work and I rented a place and I start doing some repairs of florescent lights. What I did at that time, hydro then was 25 cycle, the Hydro was supposed to change in another 2 years to 60 cycle. So I was buying already transformers for 60 cycle to put in on the current 25 cycles system as it had to be ready for the change. These were expensive two frequency ballasts that were ready for the changeover. so what I did took 2 transformers, which are called ballasts-- designed for 60 cycles and I would put them in series. This combination would work fine under 25-cycle power. When the changeover occurred one would only need to remove one of the 60 cycle ballasts, which I did. This combination of two units was much cheaper than buying a ballast good for both frequencies. For instance a simple two-lamp four-foot fixture at that time, in 1954, would sell for \$35.00. Today, in the year 2001, we sell that fixture for less than half of that. Not everyone could afford fluorescent lighting then, but some stores wanted to hae nice lighting and they bought them. Bear in mind that these lights were also heavy. That fixture was about 45 pounds. I was buying the fixture housings from a company in Montreal and changing the ballasts inside so I was thinking, why not make my own fixtures? To make my own fixtures you need tooling, you need dies...so everything I did myself. I bought a small machine for \$350 , a punch press. I made the dies by hand, with my own hands with a hand drill and a file and I made the dies for only one fixture model. Right now it takes us seconds to produce such a fixture, at that time to make that one fixture, it took me a couple of hours. Everything was by done by hand and single punches were used for each hole, but the fixture was light and it was good. I went to the suppliers to sell it. I couldn't sell it. They were used to heavy things, they thought it was no good. They were used to the heavy plate fixtures and cast ends that were needed to support these 25 cycle ballasts. The next one was CSA approved. To get CSA approval at that time, you got to go to Ottawa. So I went to Ottawa to CSA and left the fixture there for approval. There was no CSA in Toronto. And to approve it takes weeks. In the meantime I was still working in Regent Electric, still getting a wage about \$65 after taxes and I was doing moonlight jobs after work and I bought a car. I had sold the motorcycle because I needed the fridge for m sonand I bought an Anglia, an English car. That was end of 1953 or beginning 1954. And because I was doing some work, I bought a house on Queen Street with a partner, a little house because there was a shop there. I needed the shop. My partner got the house and I got the workshop. In that workshop was one room and there was no toilet there. It was a dump. It was on Queen Street East near River St. nd I started producing some fixtures there but I couldn't sell them to nobody. The lawyer who did the closing for me on that house, I

was his first client and he was my first lawyer. His name was Morris Fagan. And he's got his office in this house and he introduced me to another guy who needs some electric work done, his name was Reg Russell. When I went to him there to his factory and I told him I could do electric work and this and that and all sorts of things, and as we get talking he tells me that he is working on a am working now on a grid system and a system for ceilings. He had developed what today is know as the T-Bar or Grid Ceiling system. And he's got something, a machine that he's built himself, a roll forming machine. It was the second roll forming machine in Canada and it needs the parts to be painted. How to paint it, it's 12 feet long? Nobody in Toronto could do 12 feet long pieces, most of the contract painters could paint 4', 5' long pieces but not 12 feet. I told him that I could design an oven and a spray booth to paints such parts., In the meantime his design was not so good. I ended up painting them. I made the whole paint system by myself. The oven was made from asbestos panels. It was built like a big long box on legs and a rack slid into it like it was going into a tunnel.and the door would slide shut. There were channels on the ceiling of this tunnel and these channels had light sockets every few inches just as you would see on a sign marquee, and I put in infrared bulbs in each of these sockets. These bulbs were used to bake the paint and heat the oven. All the wiring had to be asbestos insulated so that they wouldn't burn. I made racks with cross braces. Each of the cross braces that had slots about every inch apart, just a bit wider than the width of the T-bar. We would put the T-bar on the rack and they were so close together it was like almost a continuous sheet of metal. I built a spray booth in a separate room and we would put these racks on a couple of wood horses in order to spray the parts. One rack would be sprayed, one rack was baking and one rack was having painted parts taken off and raw parts put on. The racks were then rotated. I built my own tanks to degrease the parts and special tables to pack the parts in boxes. I did this all in one small shop on Queen St. and we were painting and it was 12 feet long and it was very good. The first building which we did was an office building on the south east corner of Avenue Road and St. Clair and it was an insurance company. The building is still there. We built the T-Bar channels and another company was making tiles—asbestos tiles , John Mansville but the system was no good because it was falling apart. The T of the T-Bar was made from a single piece of metal and the T would spread like a V, pushing away so you could see a black line where the metal had been squeezed together. So because I was very friendly with him, we were discussing what to do, how to do, I was helping him in setting up lots of electrical things there. And I told him there is a very simple thing which we can do, we can put on a cap on the top which will hold everything and instead of using cold rolled steel we can use satin coated steel, which is a mild galvanized steet and then we don't have to paint the whole t we only have to paint the top, the cap. So he made the dies for this and it

worked out good. He told me now 'we have to put on the patent and because it's your idea, I want the patent to go in your name.' I didn't care about that. I just wanted the painting contract. The company was set up, but since Reg Russel didn't have enough money his lawyer found him a financial partner. As a result his lawyer, Maurice Fagan also had a part of the business. Reg still owned 50% I had no financial interest in the company. I was only getting paid for my work what I am working and I started to paint and it was going very well. I changed the place on Queen Street to a bigger place on Ossington, it was a bigger house with a bigger shop on the main floor and in the basement.

that was in 1954. And I built a big oven, a big spray booth, I bought some other equipment and I start making fixtures. Instead of one set of fixtures, I got three sets, different sizes, not only sizes, different models, there was 1 light, 2 lights, 4 lights and I got the CSA approval. Not only did I have the CSA approval, but everyone is scared about the paint quality, the paint manufacturer gave me a letter the paint is good, they can guarantee the paint for 99 years. But still nobody wanted to buy my fixtures.

No electrical supplier wants to buy them. And to produce the fixtures was a big job. The big deal was: You couldn't buy steel from a steel company—they question who are you? You're not a company. For cash you couldn't buy nothing. They didn't want to sell me one gram steel. You had to be a qualified manufacturer or distributor before you could be set up to buy. Paint, there was two companies for paint—CIL and Dupont, you couldn't buy paint from them. Ballasts, there was General Electric, you couldn't buy anything, no sockets, no ballasts from GE. So I had to buy from the second hand. I got to buy steel from a distributor. Now because Reg Russel set up his company to manufacture those grid sections that I was painting, called Universal Sections. So he was buying steel for me. Paint I bought it from a distributor, ballasts I bought from a supplier. Now to buy from a supplier, the supplier has to make at least 10%, I couldn't make no profit. Even without profit I couldn't sell it. One year went by, the second year in the meantime I was painting and in 1955 there was a new set of television. Television was the old type, the new type had tuners to see other channels in the UHF band, whereas the VHF band only went to channel 13, UHF could tune in channels like 60's, 70's. There was a good channel called Channel 17 in Buffalo. So I turned away from lighting and went to UHF converters—I was making about 50 I was selling them, I was making 100 selling them, now we got a distributor who wants a big quantity. I was making good money. They worked on tubes. I had about 6 people working. I got electric engineer there too, I got a tester, it was going not bad for one year, for two years and in 1958 I got the big order for about 10 000 of them. And

I took the order, it was a big company and the television station, Channel 17 in Buffalo went bankrupt and I couldn't sell them. I was stuck with 10, 000, only chassis and cases and some other parts. I nearly went bankrupt because of this. I put it away on the side. I didn't want to think more about that. I still continued with the channels for Reg Russell and I got some other painting contracts for other products like heating registers. At that time heating registers were made from pieces of steel welded together and I had a die made to punch and form the louvers from one piece of steel, which is how they are still made today. I would then paint them grey or brown. My factory was working three shifts and I was working very hard. I went to the factory about 6:00 in the morning, prepare everything, the paint, the dies and the tooling so when the people are coming 7:00 everything is ready and they can start working right away. Not like here now, Now when they say 7:00, it takes them an hour to start and get into full production. Because of this I was making money. So as soon as I started making money, I changed my car for another one, a station wagon which I could also use for deliveries. In the meantime I started making fixtures and since I couldn't sell them to distributors I began selling to contractors, It means that if you can't go through the door, you have to go through the window. so I was selling to contractors for the same price like selling to wholesalers. They were buying from me they didn't buy 100, 200, the volumes a distributor would buy, they would buy 10, 20, 50. Soon the contractors they wanted from the suppliers the same fixtures. If they bought from me 10, they might need another 2 to finish off a job, they want the same fixtures to match. So in this way the distributors willingly or unwillingly had to start buying from me. Now I ask them the question, 'why you didn't you buy from me before?' one told me, 'you are a newcomer, you started a company. This fixture business belongs to big companies. Now had I started buying from you and had you gone bankrupt then the other companies wouldn't have sold me again I was scared.' It was too risky. So one of them gave me a chance, he was buying, and slowly the other ones start to buy and they are buying.

I designed my own fixtures. My first fixture design that I made in 1954 is still in use today. My son retooled this fixture using an American design about 15 years ago, it's a beautiful design, but it does not sell well. Contractors still prefer to use my design. When I first designed an Industrial style fixture I had a problem. Most manufactures were using a smooth curved reflector but I didn't have a machine large enough to do this nor could I afford such tooling. I decided to make a reflector using faceted bends that I could do on a simple brake press. It worked fine. Interesting enough, what's happened now, is that in USA and Canada, this design is now preferred.

In 1960 I sold the house on Atlas Ave and bought a new bungalow on Risa Blvd in the Dufferin and Glencairn area. It was a new development, brand new houses. I bought a bungalow before it was finished. We got a whole bungalow for ourselves. There was a separate entrance that went to the basement, so I made a basement apartment as well as a recreation room and a laundry room. and so we had a beautiful nice house. We rented out the apartment downstairs, and the tenants didn't bother me at all as they had their own entrance. And the kids at the time, in 1960, my daughter was 12 years old, my son was 7 or 8 years old and my daughter was starting to go to junior high and my boy was going to the neighbourhood public school and I was making money. The business was now going well. The first time we went on a vacation in Canada was in 1962 to Los Angeles. My wife's sister Cecilia had emigrated to Los Angeles and she hadn't seen her in so many years. My wife did not want to fly there, she was scared of flying so I booked sleeper cars on the railway to take us there. The car was going from Toronto to Chicago overnight and there we would change over to the Santa Fe Railroad to take us to L.A. The tickets cost more money than going by plane. The trip was supposed to take three days. Anyways my wife always takes food with her. She doesn't care. We are leaving the railroad station here in the night. At the border the custom agents are coming in to ask if we have something to declare in the U.S. and ask us whether we have some food? No. My wife says no. About 10 km before Chicago we got an accident on the train. Our train hit a car on the tracks and somebody was killed. We were waiting there a whole day because police were there and they couldn't move the train. As a result the restaurant ran out of food. So my wife was supplying food for everybody, sandwiches for everybody and after 24 hours we arrived in Chicago. By this time our connecting train was no longer there so we got to wait for another one. So finally we got on another train and my son was sleeping with me in one sleeper and my daughter with my wife in another one and we got not too far from Chicago when the lights in the train went off and the train started to jump and we were jumping like riding on a wild horse a bronco then we stopped and it was dark. I was holding my son tightly in my arms and I was thinking for sure it's an accident or something. After the train stopped moving I'm going out, some other people too and we go up to the end of the car and there is no car in front of us, no engine, so we go to the other end of the car and there are no cars behind us and our car is standing by itself, off the tracks, but standing. It was a bright night and there was lots of snow outside. It seems that our train was going along side and embankment when it got derailed. All the cars in front of ours turned over and fell over the side of the embankment and those behind us derailed and just turned over. Our lone railroad car is standing. Just us. Because there was lots of snow it helped break the fall of those cars that fell down the embankment into the snow drifts. There were lots of broken noses, broken legs, other

types of breaks but miraculously there were no deaths. The rescue was unbelievable, it was so fast. The accident took place near a village or small town but right away there were buses and other vehicles and they took us to a school and gave us blankets and sandwiches and hot drinks and they gave first aid to the injured. It was as if the entire town was mobilized, the gymnasium was full of volunteers tending to us. They were all so wonderful. I can't remember the name of the place. The next day they took us to a nearby railway station by bus. They organized another train to take us but this train did not have any sleeper cars. All of us had to travel by coach, regardless of class, and this is how we traveled to L.A. Just before L.A. our train was in another accident. We had three accidents on one trip to Los Angeles. A trip that should have taken us three days took us six. We got 3 accidents. From that time my wife doesn't want to go by train, now she only wants to fly. Now she is flying.

When anybody was making a wedding, or a bar mitzvah, where we were invited, I always went. It didn't matter where because we didn't have relatives. All the newcomers, from my city, maybe there was about 50 living in Canada, would usually invite each other and we would always go.**

One time about 1980 my wife and I got invited to a wedding in Chicago. As I mentioned when somebody made a party for a Simcha (a joyous occasion) we always made a point of attending regardless of where it was. It gave us a sense of family as we didn't have relatives and it was nice to be at parties like that. One of my acquaintances from the Kielcer Sick Benefit Society, the group of people from the same city in Poland made a wedding for his daughter in Chicago. In our society we tended to invite one another to our Simchas. She was marrying an American and I believe that she still lives there. It was Morris Libfeld, one of the son's of the man that owned the factory in which I was circumcised. So I went to Chicago. In Chicago we are staying in the hotel where the wedding was taking place. It was a very fancy affair and in a very luxurious hotel. We booked for a long weekend so that we could attend all the pre and post parties and get-togethers. At the wedding reception, while we're having cocktails a short gentleman that I don't recognize approaches me and tells me " Dave, I want talk to you" is coming to me and he tells me 'Dave, I want to talk to you.' So I went aside with him and he gives me his hand and puts my hand inside of his and tells me to shake hands with him. So I shake hands with him and then he says to me. I'm begging you for forgiveness. 'Forgiveness? What you did to me? Who are you?' 'My name is Meyer, Murray Meyer. 'What did you do to me that you should want my forgiveness?' 'I am your cousin.' 'How are you my cousin?' 'Your father and my mother were sister and brother.' So that means I am a real cousin. 'Where did you

live?’ ‘In Kielce.’ I reply, ‘I was living in Kielce.’ Where did you live in Kielce, on what street?’ He tells me a street and a address. I was coming to that address 4 or 5 times a week because I had two friends there. One was a friend which I was sitting on the bench at the school, the other friend was his older brother and I was dating their sister. So I ask him “Did you know of me in Kielce?” He told me ‘yes’, So I asked him ‘Why didn’t you ask me in Kielce.’ And he replied ‘because my father told us that we shouldn’t talk to you because you are not a Jew, you are a Gentile.’ ‘What? I was going to the Jewish high school, I got married to a Rabbi’s daughter and you are telling me that’s why you didn’t want to talk to me.’ And he said ‘I’m sorry, I was listening to my father.’ ‘And do we have any other relatives, do you have a brother?’ ‘Yes, I got a brother, he’s still alive, and he is living in New York. And my brother knows more than I know because I am younger.’ So he told me all this and it’s like somebody hit me on the head with a two by four. Did you know of me in the wartime? Did you know of me in the ghetto? Did you know of me here in Canada? ‘Oh I know. I didn’t want to talk to you.’

He was living in New York and he said that he wanted to look me up earlier but because he has to make a living and time was flying and he didn’t get a chance. That’s why I want to talk to you now and I want your forgiveness. He shook my hand and looked at me and with a pleading voice said “Please” So I told him, ‘okay, it’s not bad to have a cousin, even if it took so many years to find out. Tell me, did you have a grandfather or grandmother on your mother’s side. Your grandfather is my grandfather, no? Yes. They were living in Kielce on such and such street. Kielce was a small city, and everyone knew each other. They were my grandparents, why didn’t they tell me? I was walking on that street every day. I didn’t know anything about them. Sometimes they would even talk to me! Their name was Barwiner.

My wife told me, he didn’t want to know you till now, you shouldn’t know him from now. I told her, ‘No, he is my cousin. I wanted to find out some more things about my family so I went to New York to see his older brother who’s name is Abram Meyerkevitch (Majerkiewicz). His brother’s wife was also from Kielce and she said that she knew of me in Kielce although I didn’t know her. She said that she knew me and she knew my wife. She didn’t know about my paternal grandparents because she got married after the war. She didn’t seem to know too much, I told them about how I used to walk by my grandparent’s house all the time and how nobody mentioned to me that they were my grandparents. So he took out pictures, and he gave me a picture of my grandfather and my grandmother. Then he said ‘I have better news for you. You still have an aunt in Montreal.’ ‘An aunt in Montreal? What is her name?’ ‘Leave this for next time. I will be in Toronto, I will tell you then.’ He didn’t want to give me her name or to give me an address or any other information. This woman was supposedly my father’s sister as well as

his mother's sister. He passed away and he didn't want to give me anything. The younger brother

which I am with him like brothers now, he doesn't know anything. Anyways that's what he is telling me. After Murray's brother passed away his wife went to Israel and I told her I want to go to Israel too and we went with to the same tour because I wanted to find out lots of things from her. So I went to Israel and there I asked her, 'how many times did you visit aunt in Montreal?' She told me that they visited this aunt many times' Did you ever talk about me?' "Yes, we were talking about you." Did she ask anything about who I am, what I am?" "Nothing. She told me we shouldn't talk because you are not Jewish.' And she gave me pictures of my aunt, pictures of my aunt's children, more cousins, to add to the pictures of my grandfather and my grandmother Montreal from Toronto is not so far and I got lots of friends in Montreal and I have dealings in Montreal. Some of them are involved with the Canadian Jewish News so I give them pictures, I couldn't give them names because I didn't know them and I asked them to advertise. That was about 10 years ago. Couldn't find nothing. And till now, I don't know who I am. All I know is that I am Jewish, and that is only because my mother was Jewish. My mother was Jewish, my children are Jewish and I am feeling Jewish.

Finding my cousin was my biggest surprise. Anytime I am in Florida, where my cousin is retired I am meeting with him and the same goes for when he visits Toronto. I always made a point of getting together and going out for dinner. EVEN NOW I still cannot find out the names from him. I really don't know if he doesn't know the names or he just doesn't want to tell me. And this is what bothers me. And so I gave it up. What should I do?

(It seems that since birth there was a conspiracy of silence between members of Daniel Wiener's family and their friends to keep it secret from him who these people were. He was unable to ever find out why this was so. He would follow up any lead he could get, going as far as Australia, without any luck. Other than Murry and his late brother, and perhaps that chance encounter with the young lady with the same last name in 1944, Daniel has never met or even knows of any other family members from his father's side.)

A little background. Kielce was a small city before the war , 70 000 population, 1/3 was Jewish and the population generally was very poor . Some people were well off but they had to send their children away for a better education. ,As an example the doctor from my high school for which I installed the first Rankin machine as X-ray machines were called,(The first X-ray machine in Kielce, I installed it in the hospital. The reason I was asked to do this job was because I knew German and I knew electric work. The machine was made in Germany and all the

instructions were in German) so his son went to a Gentile school. He was permitted to do so His son couldn't go to England or Germany or to other well known schools so so he went to Israel, which at that time was Palestine, and he studied at the Technion to be an engineer, and he left to go there before the war started. I bring this up because even in wealthy families, my school friends even if they went to University, were restricted into which fields they could study or practice. They could be an architect or a lawyer, nothing else because no Jew was accepted to a Polish factory to be an engineer, no building was being built by a Jewish architect. Jews could only be be an architect building for Jews. No Jew could be a superintendent, no Jew could clean the streets, no Jew could work for the railroads, no Jew could hold even the lowest government position, even to clean the streets. That was a very bad situation for the Jews. Most of the Jews they were doing trades like photography, shoemaking. Jews were excellent shoemakers and tailors because they were limited in which trades they were permitted to do. So when these Jews arrived to Canada, it's a different story because there were opportunities. Jews were carpenters too and there was not too many houses here, no buildings here. The Jews that were carpenters took on partners and would begin small contracting firms doing small jobs like building bathrooms, recreation rooms and apartments in basements. Slowly they started doing larger jobs and then started building their own houses and then their own subdivisions or apartment buildings. And just like in Poland, the industry was generated by our generation. This was the people I know, this was my generation. We started the building business in Toronto. The modern Toronto was built by newcomers. Mostly the newcomers were doing everything, they were doing blocks and bricks and houses and building. At that time there were Jewish builders and Italian workers and that was who built Toronto until recently.

Anyway something else, when I arrived here in the 1950's, there was anti-Semitism. In the CBC there were some anti-Semites and they were getting one guy from Germany, a speaker to talk about why the holocaust didn't exist. One of these speakers was Ernst Zundel. Now Mrs. Citron, was suing him. And we got an organization called The Holocaust Survivors, and we were making demonstrations. In Allen Gardens there was a big demonstration where a Mrs. Airst got kicked by a police horse. Why I remember the name, this Mrs. Airst's family was murdered, the family was murdered, the husband and the wife and the son were murdered in their own house in a quiet upper middle class neighborhood in Toronto, in the 1980's. They cut their throats and until now nobody find out the motive why. Now I belong to the organization and she belong to the organization and we were demonstrating in Allen Gardens. And we demonstrated at the CBC on Jarvis Street and we were successful not to let the guy to speak. Our organization is still in existence, but from so many people, now we have only 15, 20 people. so we are still meeting,

most of the time once a month, but we are no longer active. And I belong to other organizations like United Jewish Appeal which I was working for them. I am giving support for a variety of charities both Jewish and Non-Jewish like the United Jewish Appeal, for the United Appeal, to cancer research and to almost every one hospital and we are spending many thousands of dollars on charity. I don't mind this because Canada was good for me. I like Canada and I am trying to do the best that I can for Canada. The first time I went back to Poland was in 1988 I couldn't go back before because I belonged to the National Army and Poland was Communist during that period. If someone went back they were arrested right away, so I didn't want to go back before and further more they wouldn't even let me in. In 1988, the regime changed, they were still Communist, but they wanted all the Partisans, the underground, a reunion and so that time I was thinking should I go or not? A gathering of Jews from my city, Kielce, was organizing a tour in commemoration of the 45th anniversary of the liquidation of the Jewish Ghetto. Jews from USA and Canada were going. Because Poland for me was a bad country, a bad part of my life, so I didn't want to go. I would have bad dreams at night, which have plagued me since the War. When I thought of going there my nightmares would return and I became very anxious. Bill, my son, told me, 'you should go' and Bill went with me and about 11 other people from Toronto. My wife, my grandchildren Sheldon and Julia, my son Bill, Cantor Joe Cooper from the Beth Tzedek, Sterling Spears, Sam Ejchental and his son Boris, Michael and Sophie Steiman, and Izzie Abrams. We arrived there and we got the red carpet treatment, I mean it, red carpet treatment beginning from the airport. We went to the nice hotel, they took us with music. We got high dignitaries talking to us, how everything is changing, how they want us to come back. They want us to return and to help start re-building Poland. I went there but the most important thing for me to see in Poland, I wanted to see the concentration camps. Now I was in Auschwitz, I want to go there, I want to go to Triblinka because there my family was killed. I had always wanted to pay my last respects and to have closure. Now in Triblinka, what they did, for each city or town was they put on a stone marker for each city who's Jews were liquidated there—it was like a forest of little monuments – there was one for Kielce. (See Figure-5) I went to Triblinka but we couldn't see anything in Triblinka, only the railroad station, no ashes, nothing left, everything gone. Only they are telling you how is the killing, where is the killing and from there we went to another concentration camp called Maidanik. Now that was really something. It was liberated by the Russians in 1944, when they opened the gates, by the fence of the camp, the Germans didn't run away only they were killing the Jews, they were killing at that time 32 000 Jews. When the Russians arrived, the bodies were still there, some were half alive, mostly dead and the Russians, which Germans were there, the Russians took them and they took them to court and they were

hanged. Other Russians took pictures and they sent copies out to the President of U.S.A. who was Roosevelt for him to see what is going on. What the Russians did, they took the Jews, they buried them, they made a big mountain of ashes. There were 32 000 Jews killed in the last day before liberation and the barracks, the big ones, they put on shellac so they wouldn't rot, they wouldn't deteriorate. In some barracks are the suits from the people which they were killed because what they did, they killed the people and they took everything away. The Germans would kill the Jews and after fixing their possessions they are putting on an auction sale and businessmen from Germany were coming and buying these goods. Some barracks are still with the suits and other things. One barrack you see thousands and thousands of eyeglasses. In one barrack you see suitcases, which is from Poland, from France, Italy, still there lying. The ovens are still like they were before, the gas chamber is still there and in the gas chamber you can see what is going on everything there and they have a museum. A big nice old museum. In 1988 not too many westerners were coming, mostly Russians, so the Russians were coming there and there were pictures on the walls of the Germans, the Lieutenants, of the years, how it's written, this man is named so and so. This man is so and so, he killed so many Russians, so many thousand Poles, Jews. Right now he is living in Hamilton, in Canada on that and that street and you have hundreds of pictures like that. This one is living in Detroit and is working in General Motors. This one is working in Chicago and other places. Everything is written and those are people which are in the west because that time Russian was against the west. Now the pictures are still there, everything is still there, not changed.



Figure-5

Kielce

Somehow the Russians knew where to find these war criminals and yet the authorities in the west claimed

that they weren't able to find them. From there we went to Auschwitz, in Auschwitz the oven is still there, the ashes of some are still there. I showed my son and my grandchildren where was the barracks. When I arrived there was only one barrack and from there we went to Austria to Mathausen. In Poland everything was so cheap. I got 2 taxis for 2 days from 8 in the morning until 11 at night. It cost me \$250.00 for everything. How cheap was it? We went out every night for dinner in a beautiful nice hotel and when I asked to go in there they tell me everything is full, no space but when I give them a dollar, suddenly there is space. You know how many people were in the room? Zero. It was occupied by zero people. We were 14 people now because I got my wife's sister in-law and some relatives that still lived in Poland. My wife's sister-in-law is not Jewish, she's Gentile and so is her daughter. There were 14 in the hotel and we got a beautiful dinner with smoked salmon, steak, lobster, champagne with ice cream and cake and you name it, the best food that is available. We got 4 people servicing us, the whole bill with the tip was \$35.00. That was in 1987. From there we went to Kraukau, from there to the hills, Zakopane and I want some vacation for the children and from there to Vienna. The airport in Warsaw was exactly like before the war and the airport in Kraukau is like before the war, it was like a shed, they didn't put on a coat of paint or anything. And the plane was a Russian plane and the children were scared to go there and I told them 'don't worry, it's only 1 hour until Vienna, not quite an hour.' And it was a two engine plane and we went to Vienna and the kids were holding on and they were scared. The first thing, they escaped the two little children was 12 and 14, they escaped and they bought potato chips. A different life, in Vienna you could buy anything like Canada. In Poland you couldn't buy anything.

By the communists you could only buy only flowers and newspapers.

When I went back there for the first time and I walked through the camps I was crying. The first time I understood why people are coming once a year to the cemetery to visit the dead people. After crying, after seeing everything, is like a stone fell out of my heart.

From there we went to Vienna, we went to the synagogue. The synagogue was not damaged there during the war because it was beside two churches. The Germans didn't want to damage the synagogue otherwise they would damage the churches as well. Just before we arrived there was a bomb in the synagogue planted by the PLO. So that was right away police there, didn't want to let us in. We went in, we were trying. From there I rented a van, I was going around a guy was driving it, why should I drive, it cost me \$350.00 for 2 days for the van, over

\$600.00 with the guide. So we went to the shul, the synagogue, we went to another place where the kids want to see, some entertainment. And I want to go to Mathausen but the guide tells me, 'why we go to Mathausen, there's nothing there.' I tell him there was a concentration camp there. He tell me 'no, we did not have concentration camps in Austria.' I tell him, 'look I want you to take me to the city of Mathausen, to the railroad, from there I know how to go.' And we went there, next day in the morning, we went there and we went to the Mathausen and to the camp from the city is 5 km and it was just like before.

The guide had no idea. That was what he told me, not only he, but the Rabbi who was teaching small children in the synagogue there, he didn't got an idea. So we went there and I showed the kids there was the same gate where the 2 Russians were hanging one on one side, the other on the other side, upside down by one foot and even there they asked for an admission fee. I told them, 'do you know this? I was an inmate. They didn't pay me nothing.' 'Oh no, you don't pay nothing.' And they let me in and they give me a things like that which tells you everything, tape recorder and this barrack and that barrack so I should tell the kids the barrack and I showed them where was the crematory and the crematory nobody went out alive so we didn't know what was going on. Now we know what was going on in the crematorium, in the gas chamber. The gas chamber was—you think you are getting water, showers, that was concrete big table and they were cutting off before gassing, the people's stomachs looking for gold or silver or something. and that was really high sufficient table with water and everything cutting out automatically and the same tables was in Maidenik, the same tables in Auschwitz and the same Mathausen. In one of the cells where victims were beaten to a pulp, and then stayed until they died, one victim wrote in his own blood. "If there is a God, He would have to beg my forgiveness" in Hebrew, that is translated now in other languages. And from there we accidentally met a general from the U.S. who liberated the camp at the same time as us. He was there. On the film that they showed you could see when he arrived in Mathausen, how many dead people, how many thousand did moving and he was crying. There I find out why the Russians were hanged. This officer they interviewed in the movie, was only one who was still alive from 500 people. What happens—the Germans, in March of 1945, the Russians were going forward and someday, somehow the Germans had a chance and they caught 500 Russians and they took them to the concentration camp. And the Russians did know that their friends are not far away and they were strong and they were healthy they would run away from the camp. Some run away, sure right away there were German police and German soldiers so many run away, so many in camp so they put out on the city, a rabbit hunt, to hunt the Russians, not to ask questions. Any Austrian who's got a gun, he kills them, don't ask questions. Now they interview on the

film the mother of a daughter, which the daughter killed so many Russians and the mother was hiding that Russian Lieutenant and that's why one of the 500 is still alive because the mother of the daughter who killed the Russians was hiding him. And there was lots of crying. I showed my grandchildren where the staircase is, still there and how we have to walk 360 stairs up, how I am falling down to the water and how I escaped beside the stairs and how I went back in. I showed them the barracks, not all the barracks are standing some remain for history, and so many monuments were there from Poland, from France and now I find out in that concentration camp in 1988 which I didn't know when I was there, this concentration camp was built in 1936. The Anschluss, (annexation) between Austria when Hitler, that concentration was built in 1936. In 1936 there was a war in Spain between Franco and the socialists. Before Franco took it, they gave it to Hitler, most of Spain people, there was between themselves. And Hitler is sending people to Mathausen in 1936 and hundreds of thousands of them are killed there building the camp, they start to build the camp in 1936. In the mountains they build big caves, long ones, they are building the caves and they got the marble from Italy and they round this marble in kilometres long and I was there working so I know but I didn't know Spanish people did this. That's what I find out in 1988 and when I was there I was going to go to Guzen, there was nothing there, only a sign that was Camp Guzen. It is now a restricted military base. Only a sign, you can see the Alps far away and you couldn't see the caves which were built by Spanish prisoners there from 1936, they built thousands and thousands.

One of the other trips that I have made was to go to Israel. I've gone several times. My first trip was in 1965. I went to Israel with my daughter, I sent my son, my daughter and my wife to Israel for 2 months and I went only for 2 weeks. I couldn't go longer because I was still working. At that time, my friend that I mentioned before, Meyer Padolak, had a daughter and she was 18 years old and my daughter was 16 years old and she fell in love with a Gentile guy and she wanted to marry him. The father told me that day, 'I have nothing against the marriage. I have nothing against Gentiles. I am not a Jew that is very, very religious. I just don't like the big cross that he is wearing.' The boy is coming with the big cross and the father is in the church, he's a priest, Greek Orthodox. My friend is begging me that I should do something so that they shouldn't marry. So I told the daughter, 'you know my family,' we were good friends, my family was good friends with them too. 'You know what, you have an aunt in Israel. Before you marry go to visit the aunt.' And she finished high school and she needed to go one more year to be a teacher. At that time you didn't need university. So she went to Israel with my family—when I went there, her name was Shoshana, she was born in Israel. No before I went to Israel her mother

told me, 'you are going to Israel, I got a letter from my daughter, she doesn't want to go back to Canada any more.' She doesn't want to finish school, she doesn't want to come to Canada and she doesn't want to marry that boy. That's good. 'No, no I want her to come to Canada.'

Anyway, when I went there I found out that she's in love with another boy and now I am trying to convince her these are the things you have to do to be a teacher. The second one is that you have to stand up and tell your fiancée to break it up to his face. It's not nice like that. And I convinced her. And she arrived back and the mother begged me and she arrived back and she went to school and she finished to be a teacher and she broke up with her boyfriend and she went back to Israel to marry the other boy. She married the Israeli boy. The mother was upset, 'everything is your fault, you told her to go to Israel. I don't want her to marry that guy. I want her to marry that guy here.' The father too, what to do? How to get her back? Anyway, she married she come back here and he was a Lieutenant in the army, good looking boy. She was teaching here and he was going to the school here to learn some trade. And she was teaching in the meantime and they were living in the mother's house, so it didn't cost them no rent. It was downtown, on Palmerston Ave. It was not a beautiful house but a house. Once she comes in the daughter to me and she tells me, 'do something for me...I don't like the way my mother is kissing my husband.' 'She hugs and kisses him, I don't like it so I have to move out.' So she moved out and she got a baby here and she finished everything here, the school, he finished everything they went back to Israel. Why we are no more friends, the mother states, 'It's your fault, your fault, everything is your fault. I lost my daughter because of you.' I tell her, 'listen, what I did wrong? I am sorry. I took her someplace and she starts crying and she tells me what happened. Her daughter married her brother.

Well, not exactly. No and he was not a brother anyway. What happens, I have to go back to Poland. When she was going to school, the mother, she was working in that city, they were rich people. And she met a guy, he was a doctor, was going to study to be a doctor. And the war started. They married. Before the war, they married and the parents didn't know they were married and they were living by their respective parents and the wartime they told the parents they got married and they went to Russia. They escaped. In Russia, they were separated. The husband went to the army and she was working in a factory and the Germans arrived and they took her to a concentration camp. On the way to the concentration camp, from the train, she jumped out and ran away and went to a forest, have to make it short these things and she worked in the underground. In the underground she met a guy who later was her husband. She met him only. She knows she has a husband. After the war, she went back to the city to find out what's

happened to her husband. She finds out he was in Russia, he was in the army, he was killed. In the meantime, the husband was injured and he was in hospital there, a nurse was taking care of him. And he went back to the city, he was very good with the nurse. He went back to the city to find out what happened with his wife. He finds out she went by transport to a concentration camp and that she was killed. So he married the nurse. She married the other guy. One didn't know anything about the other one and they both went to Israel, Palestine. In 1951, walking in Tel Aviv, one recognized the other one. They start, they were in love before, they still were in love and they collapse on the sidewalk in Tel Aviv, both. And they didn't know what to do. The doctor got two children, she has got two children. The doctor is working in a job, the doctor is in a kibbutz---and they decided, the court decided, the rabbi decided one or the other has to leave Israel, they cannot be together in Israel. So how they went, this guy was my friend with his wife, they left Israel because they got here 2 brothers and they didn't want anything to do with Israel and she was still in love with him and when the son arrived he was looking like the husband. The son looked just like her first husband. This is the son of the man she is in love with. Legally they were still married.

Stories, I got lots of stories. And because of this the husband got mad on me because why I did it. And he passed away.

(In my discussion with my father while he was in the hospital about Feb 22 2001, just before he went off to sleep, I thanked him for surviving. He said that he didn't try, he just did, There weren't too many like him, just a few. The next day I asked him to explain. He said that he didn't do anything "wrong" to survive nor was he ever forced to. He bears no scars like the kapos or others who hurt others in order for them to survive. Even if he was forced to, he says that he wouldn't have. He never hurt a man, woman or child before or after the war. His conscience is clear. There are only a few like him! Bill Wiener)