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## Sidney Kay, January 1974

Sidney Kay

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S.K. My name is Sidney Kay.

L.B. Sidney Kay. And, were you born, where, please?

S.K. I was born in Lodz, Poland...and industrial<sup>city</sup>, which is known <sup>in the whole world</sup> as a city of textiles, and all different things.

L.B. In what year, please?

S.K. 1903.

(Tape off)

L.B. O.K. Now, you were born in Lodz, and I have the map, a little map here, this is the Kingdom of Poland. And Lodz had another name, didn't it?

S.K. No.

L.B. Was that not Lublin?

S.K. No, Lublin is, it's a city, and a well-known city, which has nothing to with Lodz, and it's pretty far.

L.B. Where would Lodz be, on the map, here? About.

117. S.K. You see, it will be here, here you have *Haskame*. Here is Warsaw.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. Now, here is Lodz, L-o-d-z, and here is Lublin.

L.B. Ah hah.

S.K. You see, Lodz is closer to, uh, you see, this, it is in, in the, uh, measure, Warsaw is the capital, Lodz is the second city, which population and, and, and the growth. Lublin is...far, and closer to the, uh, to the Russian part already....it was not under Russian, but it was closer by...Lodz was more close to Germany.

L.B. So, the, when, if you talked about Lodz, had the Haskalah reached you by the time you were a young boy?

S.K. The what?

L.B. The Haskalah, the Enlightenment.

S.K. The Haskalah, oh sure.

L.B. It did?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. All right. Now, tell me something...Lodz, in 1903, you were born there, right?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Uh, how large was your family?

S.K. Uh, my, my...whole family, or, or...

L.B. Your...your immediate family.

S.K. Was, uh, 6,-4 children, 2 brothers and, I mean, I and my brother, and 2 sisters, and my father and mother.

L.B. And you lived in a house, in an apartment?

S.K. Yes, in an apartment, sure...together with parents, and uh... My father was a, uh...a tailor.

L.B. Did he hire people, did people work for him, or did he do his own tailoring?

S.K. No, no, he, he worked, he worked <sup>for</sup> people, but he hired <sup>people</sup> who worked with him together. He was, uh, this, this was not like in, like here.

L.B. No.

S.K. In, in, in the whole Europe, a tailor worked in his apartment where he lived.

L.B. Right, right.

S.K. And the most of the time, was in the big kitchen. It happened very often that the kitchen, in the cities of Europe, in this part, even in France or in Belgium...

L.B. Yes.

S.K. ...the kitchen was sometimes bigger, than, there was no livingroom.

L.B. Yes. That sounds interesting, can you tell me about that? Cause I never heard this before. How did the, uh, tailoring business work out then? Did your father get a contract or an order from somebody else?

S.K. No, no, he got private customers. The most of the time, the most of... tailors, in, in Europe, you see, it was, it was unusual to buy suits...

L.B. Right.

S.K. ...for, for, let's say, middle-class people didn't buy suits, because it was only for the lower section of people who worked in magasins.

L.B. Mmm, stores.

S.K. A magasin means, not a magazine you read, magasin.

L.B. Magasin, right, it's the French, right.

S.K. Yes. It, it, mag...it was, uh...in, in, in...what's a magazine called in...yeah, I'd say magazine...you'd think it was a magazine of, to, to read, right?

L.B. No, right.

S.K. Magasin. Now, the, so a tailor got his customers, and one recommended the other, if the customer was satisfied, uh, with his, everything was, uh... um, how it is called? Custom-made.

L.B. Right.

55: S.K. So anybody, even people who were not in the middle class, but more or less, he made a decent living, living, uhhh, he went to a tailor, so there were categories in tailoring. There were, there were tailors, let's say, my father <sup>just</sup>, was a, uh, not a bad tailor, so-and-so. But when I grew up and I established myself, I was married...and I was pretty well-off, so I went to a higher class of tailor than my father was, and he took 3 times as much as my father took for a, for a suit, or for a manteau.

L.B. Now, how did your father work? In the kitchen?

S.K. In, yes.

L.B. He cut, he measured, he cut, he stitched...

S.K. The measuring was...in the other room. You know, when the customer came, you didn't make it in the kitchen, but so...he invited him, you know, to the next room to do, to the living-bedroom...

L.B. Salon, yeah, yeah, right.

S.K. Living-bedroom. Uh, ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> sweet girl, when I tell you this, there is no stories in it.

L.B. No.

S.K. There is no show-~~ups~~ <sup>offs</sup>.

L.B. No.

S.K. Because, the most of the people, when they get a interview, you know, they, they would like to hide some aspects of their life which wouldn't fulfill right now their situation.

L.B. No, I don't want that.

S.K. The majority do that.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. And if you took such interviews, and I'm sure...if I would know those people, they didn't tell you one tenth of percent, the truth.

L.B. All right, but now you tell me the truth. So...

S.K. I'm telling you.

L.B. Yeah, so we go into the living-bedroom...

S.K. But in the same token, my grandfather was in <sup>Kall</sup> Petrograd, and he was a tailor, he was a very rich man. You understand wha...what, eh, what it happens? He was in a smaller town...

L.B. Mm hm.

74: S.K. And he was also a tailor, but he was a very known, and he worked only for Orthodox people, he made the long...jibbitzes, they were called jibbitzes, 74: jubitzes, and, and, it was like osch...an <sup>oschdeir</sup> oschdeir, you know what an oschdeir is? Uh, how you call here, an oschdeir?

S.K. A dowry. (His wife answers)

S.K. A dowry, you know, when you get married, you mother made your dowry, you know, and everything. So it was...and, there was no places to spend money. So my grandfather accumulated money, and then he lent money, he became a little, like a little shylock.

L.B. He was a, uh, money-lender.

86? S.K. And then, he, he, yes, he bought a house, he was an owner of a house, and his name was Klein Pichusel, which was known, anybody, everybody in the city of Petrokca knew Klein Pichusel. If you came to the station, railroad station in Petrokca, and you went down to take a Fiacre, you know a...

L.B. Like a cab.

S.K. A ca...yeah, it, no, but it was with horses...

L.B. A horse-drawn cab, right.

S.K. Yes, a horse-cab. And if you would say "Kazenowsky", he would look at you and say, "Listen, there is no such Kazenowsky among Jews."

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. But if you would say " ", he would say, "Why didn't you say right away?" He would tell, he would take you...to the, before was, bef...the First World War, before was, Vikovska, and when Poland was established it was Pilsudskego, on the name of the great leader. I hope that you heard about Pilsudski.

L.B. I certainly have, mm hm.

91? S.K. Yes. So, it was, the street was called, uh, As a matter of fact, I mean, his house used to live the, uh, the grandson of the, of the Rabbi of Raddischitz... Radishev

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. In which, you know, which, uh....was, you know, important...he didn't pay rent, and this is beautiful and?

L.B. But wait, I understand, but wait, we're getting out of, you know, sequence.

S.K. Yes, uh, uh, sure, but...

L.B. Now, let's go back to your father...

S.K. ...we will get out and we will come...

L.B. Back in, right.

S.K. ...back in.

L.B. Now let me get back to your father, and finish telling us how...he went about making a suit, that he would measure the person...

S.K. Yes, he'd measure the person, yes, yes...

L.B. ...in the living-bedroom?

S.K. Yes, in the living-bedroom.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Because, this, this was a bedroom and a livingroom...at the same time.

L.B. Right. And then?

S.K. Uhhh...

L.B. He would take the material...

S.K. And then, no, and then he took, he'd take the measurement, and then he took, on the big table in the kitchen which was, was a big kitchen; there was nothing else to do in the kitchen but to prepare food, mother...mother prepared food. And the other part, she haven't got nothing to do in the kitchen. So, over there was the, it was called washtat, washtat means "the place of the workmanship".

L.B. From what language is that?

S.K. It is from German, the weltstat, ein weltstat.

L.B. Ahhh, O.K., O.K.

118? S.K. You know the, which is, are in a certain, uh...distinction, mixed up anyway.

L.B. I thought Polish was more like Russian.

S.K. It is, it is a Slavic language.

L.B. Mmmm.

S.K. But, you see, certain words...were taken...

L.B. Were taken from the German...

S.K. ...because, you see, Poland was occupied by Prussia, so then they took some, the weltstat, so they made washstat.

L.B. Right. All right, now, let's finish the suit, so we started on....

S.K. Yeah, so, uh, then he, the man came 3 times, uh, to, uh, try...

L.B. Uh huh.

S.K. 3 times, because this was made-to-order, custom-made. And, he took the suit out.

L.B. And he took the suit out. Now, nobody else worked on the suit but your father?

S.K. My father and, and, and uh, 2 helpers.

L.B. Oh, he had 2 helpers.

S.K. He had 2 helpers, you couldn't do a, uh, without helpers you couldn't make a living.

L.B. Now, where did the helpers work, did they sew for him, or cut, or what?

S.K. They sewed, no, no, no, my father cut, and they, he also sewed, and they sewed, and everybody got his part, you see, because a suit...is, uh, it, it, it is divided in, in, in, 4 or 5 parts, to make a suit. There are the 2, and the back, and, and the collar, and the sleeves. You understand?

L.B. Yes.

S.K. And everybody, in order to, uh, to uh, to put this together, you got to prepare it.

L.B. So it's almost like what happened here in the Garment Workers' Union, where you got a certain portion, you worked on that, then it went to the next worker and they worked on that, and so on, like piece...

S.K. Yes, yes, yes, yah, but, yes...

L.B. It's not piecework, it's...

S.K. No, it's not, because over there, everyone who learned this trade, knew from A to Z.

L.B. They could make the whole thing.

S.K. They, they could, yes, because from, let's say, a young, a young man who came to, when he was 13, 14 years old, when he started, by 19 years he could be the tailor himself...

L.B. Right.

S.K. And if he, if he was, you know, able, and willing to work, he could, by 19, 20 years old, open his own...atelier.

L.B. So, Lodz, at this time, then, was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire.

S.K. No, no.

L.B. No?

S.K. The Prussian.

L.B. Lodz was part of tshe...

S.K. The Prussian.

L.B. ...of the, uh...Germanic States?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. It was not Austro-Hungary?

S.K. What is your name?

L.B. Lodz? My name?

S.K. Yes, yes.

L.B. Lucille.

S.K. Lucille. Lucille, here, here we have Lodz, right?

L.B. Right. <sup>Kal</sup>

S.K. Now, <sup>Kal</sup> is also, you see, this city, Kalnish, is laying on the border...

L.B. Right.

S.K. ...between Posen, and after Posen goes Germany.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Now, Posen was...taken by the Germans, and Germanized.

L.B. When?

S.K. In, in, uh, 17...74, 1775, when uh, we, uh, we...here, the Americans took over and became a country, a republic.

L.B. So when did Lodz become part of Prussia?

S.K. When they...

L.B. Was that when they split up the Kingdom of Poland in 3 parts?

S.K. When they split in 3...yes...

L.B. Aaaaah...

S.K. Sure.

L.B. That was 17-, what?

S.K. 17-...

L.B. '89?

S.K. No, 1774, or 1775.

L.B. It was before the French Revolution?

S.K. Yes, in the, almost in the same time. Because, you see...1794, Napoleon already started.

L.B. You know, you have to help me with the history, because the fellow I work with...

S.K. Why don't you know?

L.B. I'll tell you why...

S.K. You were at college, University, everything.

L.B. Now, wait a minute...

S.K. (Laughs). I'm joking.

L.B. My history professor...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. ...is the one who is working with me on this, he's the one who interviewed Jack, and my father, and, uh, Kwartler, and *quite a few...*

S.K. Who?

L.B. Kwartler, you know Leo Kwartler?

S.K. Kwartler.

L.B. Yeah, he's a friend of Jack's.

S.K. He lives here?

L.B. No, he doesn't live here. Anyway...

S.K. Oh, so I never heard, I'm surprised.

L.B. All right. Anyway...he knows all these things, but I'm just studying, you know, so...

S.K. You are sure that he knows...your professor?

L.B. Yeah. (Laughs). I'm sure. So, I'm just learning some of these things. Like, uh, this map is to help me, he doesn't need the map.

S.K. Yes...no.

L.B. And, when, I usually interview the women...and we talk about slightly different things, but when the men talk, they know, uh, they usually discuss history, and so on, so I'm learning myself, I did not know that Lodz was part of Prussia, and I didn't realize when...he told us, but I didn't remember, when Poland was divided into 3, it was before, it was 1794 you think, then?

S.K. No, it was in 1775-6.

L.B. 1775?

S.K. Or 6. I mean, this...

L.B. Oh, you said 1794 was when Napoleon came through.

S.K. No.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Napoleon came through a little later, but Napoleon started already, then he went through Poland, and, matter of fact...that he established a Constitution...

L.B. Right.

S.K. ...in Poland.

L.B. That I know, all right. So you were actually Prussian citizens?

187-9? S.K. And he, he made, a, uh, his motto was, in Polish is "Kazda obywatel jezuruwne voblitchu pravar", "Every citizen has the right, in order of law, has the same right."

L.B. Mmm.

S.K. This established, this is the Codex, Code, in Poland, Codex Napoleana, the Codex of Napoleon.

L.B. Yes, I understand. Now, you were actually, then, when you were born, you were Prussian citizens.

S.K. No, Russian.

L.B. Russian?

S.K. Sure, Russian, I'm telling you, Russian...

L.B. I thought you said Prussian.

S.K. Prussian was here...you see, Kalish...this was, because, Poles in Kalish. I was...Russian.

L.B. Aaaaah....

S.K. Lodz, you see, here...this, everything cha...you see, this is the part, here, I will show you, if you have it on the map. You see, this is Prussia.

L.B. Right.

194. S.K. Even? was Posen, it was Posnan, according to the legend, the 3 brothers recognized each other, and it was called, "posnatche" means "recognize", and there was the name Posnan, and this was Posen. So here...now here, madam, here starts...this part, you see?

L.B. Yeah, cause this is already, is Austria...over here.

S.K. Yes...

L.B. That I know.

S.K. This is Galicia, it belonged to Austria.

L.B. Right. That I learned. O.K. So this...

S.K. To Austria.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Yes. And, uh, this was, everything was Russia, include Lublin.

L.B. Now, which one had the German name of Lemberg, was that Lublin?

S.K. No, Lvov.

L.B. Lvov?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Oh, so that's not on...here it is, Lemberg,

207. S.K. Lemberg...you see, here. <sup>Stanzaw</sup> <sup>Stanzaw</sup>...<sup>Stanzaw</sup> <sup>Stanzaw</sup> Lvov...and here is Stanislaw, so here starts already Rumania, and here Shniatinszalucha, which wouldn't be here, is the last station between Rumania and Poland. But Stanislaw is the biggest city, so that's why. So it was to Hungaria.

L.B. So I'm learning some history...and geography. All right, now, so you were then under Russian...rule?

S.K. Yes, under, yes, under Russian...

L.B. In 1903, when you were born.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. And you lived in an apartment, and your father was a tailor, and there were 6 people in your family.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Now, what kind of an apartment? Was it a building with other apartments in it?

227. S.K. It was a, yes, , this was a huge building, with a lot of apartments.

L.B. Was it stone, or brick?

S.K. What?

L.B. The building.

S.K. Oh, brick.

L.B. Brick.

S.K. Brick, yes, it was a big house, a very big house.

L.B. And Lodz was a big city, of about how many people?

S.K. 650,000.

L.B. 650,000. It was in the Pale?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. It was in the Pale.

S.K. Yes, it means, Pale was, it means...

L.B. Right, where the Jews lived.

S.K. Sure...

L.B. Right.

S.K. No, but this...Pale, was another section of Lodz. (Pause). You see, Lodz...

L.B. No, I'm talking about the Pale being the section of Russia within which the Jews could not, uh, from which they couldn't go out.

S.K. No, in that time, no, they couldn't go.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Because, to go, yes, I mean, this you call Pale.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Yes, sure it was limited, you were, it was, uh, Russia was, especial the big, the, the capital cities like Moscow, Petrograd, they were restricted to Jews.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. To...all Jews...

L.B. Yes.

S.K. ...except to ones here and there.

L.B. Right.

237' S.K. Like, if you would say...? *Fauchtman* wrote "Jud Suss", so, how we got the language, how we got this rotten...jargon?

L.B. Yeah.

240' S.K. From the Jew who went out from the ghetto, there were not many, they, *"the Jud Suss"* (used their *z's*), who was privileged, who ~~earned~~ money...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. So, they, those Jews who could go out of the ghetto in Germany...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. ...they brought back this language.

L.B. Now, which language are you talking about, is a rotten language? Yiddish?

S.K. Sure, and I speak a pretty, uh, well, Yiddish, and I love Yiddish. As a matter of fact, you see that...

L.B. No, sit down...

247' S.K. ...I am, I am reading "only *Forwards*".

L.B. Yeah, I see, you say...

S.K. And I don't read no English language...what I mean...

L.B. Why do you call it...

S.K. Because I'd rather have...the day...How you say, uh, in Brookly, a, a girdle?

L.B. You mean something you wear around your...

S.K. Yeah, a girdle, how would you call it in Brooklyn?

L.B. A girdle.

S.K. A goidle.

L.B. Oh, yeah.

S.K. No?

L.B. Not quite, no.

S.K. Oh yes. And how is a girl?

L.B. No, it's not...

S.K. A goil.

L.B. I understand what you're saying.

S.K. Here comes the, the, the...

254' L.B. The "*wergot*", you're saying.

S.K. Yes. So that's what they made from the German language, they, they built it up, their own, like from *weltstat*, I mean, *werkstat*, *washtat*...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. So the people who went out, they brought back the, you know, this language. And...

L.B. Now, do you consider that Yiddish had a life of its own, a literature of its own, uh...



S.K. It's not a rotten language, it's the most beautiful language, now, as,  
 200? as a grammatic, as a stylistic...?

(Tape off) (Phone rings)

L.B. Now, we're, we're back in Lodz, and you live in the apartment house,  
 and your father's a tailor, and you're born in 1903. We have to go back now,  
 because we were interrupted.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. And you went to school.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Were you the oldest child?

S.K. I was the oldest son.

L.B. You were the oldest son?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Not the oldest child?

S.K. The oldest child, and the oldest son.

L.B. Oh, oh, because there's a difference.

S.K. Yes, we are 2 brothers, 2 sisters.

L.B. Right. Now, where did you go to school?

S.K. In, in Lodz?

L.B. Yes.

S.K. I went, uh, to a, I didn't go to a cheder.

L.B. You did not?

S.K. I went right away to a Hebrew school.

L.B. Hmmm.

S.K. It was, a, uh....how to tell you? (Long pause)...a preparation school.

L.B. For the gymnas?

S.K. Yes, a preparation school for gymnasium, for high school.

L.B. For which gymnas, for a Hebrew gymnas or...

S.K. No, no, no...

L.B. ...public, or Russian...

S.K. No, no, no, for a regular gymnasium...uh, gymnasium, there, uh, I mean,  
 will mean, a gymnasium, in America is...

L.B. High school.

S.K. ...a gymnasium, is a gymnas also, because here a gymnasium, you make  
 exercise, you...

L.B. No, it's not the same, gymnas, it's the high school you were preparing for,

S.K. Yes, yes.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Yes, so, and this was...a prepare...

L.B. Mm hm.

294? S.K. And, where I learned, also, Hebrew, you understand, and uh, and, oh,  
 and everything.

L.B. What else did you learn? Tell me what you learned.

(Telephone rings, tape off)

S.K. It was a, uh, was not a cheder, was a, uh...

L.B. An academy, you said.

295? S.K. As, as, as a young fellow, was not an, <sup>more or less,</sup> no, I was only 6 years old, not  
 even, old, you know, 6 years, uh, when uh, I started to go to the school, named,  
 Eigenburg, were 2 brothers, and they led a very fine school, where, a uh....  
 it's...it's not even nice to say, where a better class of children...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. You are...where a, uh...how to tell you? (Long pause). They're permitted,  
 or, or, uh, received.

L.B. Uh huh.

S.K. You know, a, a, a better class, not from the, from the very poor who  
 couldn't afford it, because this was not a public school, out of the city, but  
 this was a private school...where I started.

L.B. So you paid...your, your father paid, to have you go?

S.K. Sure.

L.B. And what did you learn there?

S.K. I learned....secular education and, uh...and Hebrew.

L.B. What did you learn in your secular education?

S.K. The first place, was, in Russian.

L.B. You learned<sup>14</sup> language, Russian?

S.K. The language, yeah, the language, in Russian, Arithmetic, History, uh...

L.B. What history? Russian History?

S.K. History of the world.

L.B. World History.

S.K. No, but you don't, you don't start, being 6 years old, learning...I'm talking about what was the program...

L.B. Right.

S.K. ...of this, from one...class to another, you understand, by promotion.

But the start was...you know, like, Chumash and Russian.

L.B. Chumash in Russian?

S.K. And Russian.

L.B. And Russian, yes.

7 310? S.K. Yes,?

L.B. Yeah, yeah.

S.K. Chumash and Russian.

L.B. Right.

318? S.K. And, then, uh, Tanach, <sup>the Psuchim</sup> Epsuchim, and <sup>the Devim</sup> the Devim

L.B. Right, right, right.

S.K. So, uh, this I learned by, a, uh, 3 years.

L.B. In what language did they teach you arithmetic, in Russian?

S.K. Russian language, in the Russian language.

L.B. And all the teachers were Jewish?

S.K. Jewish, and, yes. And they were called Litvaks.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. Yeah, well, the Russian...they were Litvaks, you know, like from Litvak, from Vilna...

L.B. Yes, right.

S.K. ...which were, you know, uh...were the...so, so far, the most, uh, well, in mine opinion, in mine opinion the Russian Jews are the best Jews in the world. I mean, uh, this is mine opinion, which I went through, in my wide practice, which, what, I meant, what I met with people.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. So, uh, I, I, I have mine opinion, there is known that the Russian Jews are very hospitable, and very good, and uh...even, they used to say, uh, they are, uh, <sup>rishishichazim</sup> because...the Russia are called Chazerim...

334? L.B. Yeah.

S.K. The Russians. But then, you, the people who live over there, adopting? in the same epithet. Like, let's say, the people in my city, Lodz was a

339? industrial city, and was called the <sup>Lodzgonim</sup> Lodzgonim... So everyone who was a poor, poor fellow, was called a Lodzgonif. Why? Because, the, they were business-people, and in business, in that time, there, you know, got an opinion that everybody's a gonif. So, uh, all right, this is uh, defame, which it goes after, uh, nations and people, and individuals.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Everybody has his burden on his shoulder, which he doesn't, uh, know it even.

L.B. Right. So you learned in Russian, and you learned in Hebrew...

S.K. In Russian, because Polish, Polish was not permitted, the Polish language.

L.B. So how did you learn Polish?

S.K. It was, Polish I learned home, from the, uh, maid. You see, in Poland... except the very, very poor, couldn't afford a maid, a, a, a maid, home.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. But the one, more or less, had a maid and she was...a, a Polack, a Polish, from, from, uh.....village, from...

L.B. A peasant.

S.K. Peasant, yes.

L.B. Peasant, yeah, mm hm.

S.K. So, she, she didn't speak no other language than Polish. And we were, my, my mother was a, a, a progressive lady.

L.B. Mm hm.

361. S.K. Every son, except<sup>me</sup> Philip Roth hates, uh, loves his mo...uh, their mother, Philip Roth hates his mother, but, so what can you do, I mean...He doesn't hate his mother, this is money, it's only money, it's...

L.B. Well...

S.K. It is cheap money, and dirty money.

L.B. Well Philip Roth is not, you know, our problem now, right.

S.K. No, he's not involved here, and he's not a problem for me...

L.B. Right, right.

S.K. Anyway, and I don't think that he thinks that, as he wrote.

L.B. Well that might be...

S.K. Now it comes to another part of Jewish, you see, because his mother is a, a Rumanian, but father was a Polish Jew, but, no, you know, Portnoy, you know what Portnoy means, Portnoy is a tailor.

L.B. Yeah, yeah. Oh?

S.K. In Russian.

L.B. Is that right? No, I didn't know that, yeah.

S.K. You, you...ohhh, you have a Russian mother, and she didn't tell you?

L.B. Yeah.

362. S.K. In the Russian partnoy is "a tailor", and, probably, you know, everyone, almost everyone who got the name Portnoy was a tailor. Because, when they gave the names, (on the markets) you know, when they ass...assembled all the people, and everybody, they looked at him, he said, "Do you want to, your name will be so-and-so. What you doing?" He said, "Portnoy.<sup>badish</sup> Dach vu dish portnoy."

L.B. (Laughs).

S.K. Yes. So, I mean, this is history, again, about something else.

L.B. Right, all right, now...so you went to this school, from 6 until when?

S.K. Til 8.

L.B. For 2 years.

S.K. 6, 7, 8. No, 3 years, almost.

L.B. 3 years.

S.K. Almost. And then I, I went to a gymnasium.

L.B. Right.

S.K. To the first class.

L.B. Now which kind of, who ran the gymnasium?

S.K. A Russian gymnasium, it was called Gymnasium Alexandrovna.

L.B. And what...

S.K. Alexandrovna.

L.B. That would be in about, let's see...

S.K. Uh, '11.

L.B. In 1911?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. And, it was run by the Russian, what? Government?

S.K. By a Russian director. It, it was, ih...government, it was by the government, but, uh, they had, you know, uh, Alexandrov was the director of this gymnasium. And...

L.B. I'm trying to think...in 1911, Nicholas was already on the throne.

S.K. Oh yes, he was on the...sure he was, Nicholas was on the, on the throne.

L.B. As a matter of fact, that, it was 300 years of the existence of the Romanovs...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. And it was a, one of the greatest feasts, a feast, a fiesta...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. Made in the streets of, of, of, uh, Polish cities. When I was a little child, there were food in the streets, on the big market, you know, on the big place, you understand, the middle of the city was a big...place, and there were tables with everything, for nothing. And it was 300 years of the Romanovs.

L.B. All right, now, the gymnas then, what did you learn in the gymnas? That was strictly in Russian, then?

S.K. Yes. But...you see, here comes the, uh...uh...conspiration to teach Polish, but it was conspirative. The teacher, who, whose...who learned calligraphy, he was a Polack... So he, as he learned calligraphy, in the same time, he, he learned also Polish. But, can you imagine that we, being...8, 9, 10, 11 years old, children, we were so conspired that we didn't reveal that this man is teaching Polish, because, uh, if suddenly the door opened, and the director came in to make, you know, a, an inspectinn, the books were hidden insáde the pulpet, it is called pulpet also in English, I hope. No?

L.B. Well, I know what you mean, it's the desk that lifts up.

S.K. The desk, so I call it pul...yes, pulpet.

L.B. Yeah, yes, yes...

S.K. And, it was really something...which is hard to believe, you see, but  
433? I, I'm not *talkin' out of my finger: I went it through.*

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. I'm not telling you stories just to show...And I, I'm...

L.B. Mm hm. So you learned Polish in the gymnas, too?

S.K. Yes, yes. Then in home, then my mother spoke Polish, and my father spoke Polish, pretty well, and my mother spoke very good Polish.

L.B. So you spoke Polish, you spoke Russian...

S.K. And then we learned, also, German.

L.B. Now, wait a minute. And you also had studied Hebrew, you could read Hebrew..

S.K. Oh yes, yes.

L.B. Did you speak Yiddish at home?

S.K. Uh, very, very little, uh, uh, uh, no.

L.B. You did not speak Yiddish at home?

S.K. No, we understood, because mother and father spoke Yiddish...so, obviously, it came through, you know, through, uh...

L.B. I understand. You sort of, uh...

S.K. ...~~the~~ *learned* by heart...

L.B. ...acquired it, right.

S.K. Yes, by heart, by ear, rather.

L.B. But you eventually learned to read and write Yiddish?

S.K. No, I, I never learned Yiddish, not to read and not to write, but alphabet in, is the same what in...

L.B. As Hebrew.

S.K. Sure.

L.B. But you can read the Yiddish newspaper.

S.K. I'm reading so fluently, that, uh, I don't think there were many Jews, even, uh, journalists, who read better in Yiddish than I do.

L.B. All right. But you...so you just picked up the reading.

S.K. Yes.

456? L.B. "Canst, kanst schreiden Yiddish?" *(Can you write Yiddish.)*

457-9? S.K. "Ich schreibe *a guten Yiddish und ich lög a Zehor guten Yiddish.*"

L.B. Well, where did you learn to write Yiddish?

S.K. From the alphabet, from Hebrew.

L.B. But the script is different from the print.

S.K. Yes...no, the print is the same...

L.B. Oh, but the script is the same as the Hebrew script, right.

461? S.K. Is the same, *the orthography*...

L.B. Right, very good, all right. So it's something that you just picked up, actually?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. So, here you have Yiddish, Hebrew, Russian, Polish, now when did you learn German?

S.K. German we learned...a little later on, after the First World War. Now...uh...in 19-, yes, aft...in, when, in 1915...we went from Poland to Petrokal.

L.B. Now where is Petrokal?

S.K. Oh, it wouldn't be on the map.

L.B. Well, just about where is it? Here's Lodz.

S.K. Yes, Lodz. You see, Petrokal would be here, not far there. Here.

L.B. Yeah. In 1915 you went there. That was where your grandfather was.

S.K. Yes, and he had a house, and it wasn't so restrict as it was in the Second World War...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And, uh, you know, he was a wealthy man, yeah sure, was the restrict, food was restricted, it, you got to stay in line a whole night, from 2:00 at the morning when they opened the, the bakery, when, uh, and you got coupons, you couldn't get more...but, for money you always get. So, because my grandfather was a wealthy man, so he could buy, you know, like smuggled, what the, the bakery, you know, he got his own, a, a peasant delivered to him...*farine*

L.B. Yes.

S.K. *Flaw*, it was, it was not controled by the government, uh, uh, out...here was, you see, uh, uh, when uh, the Russians left Poland, Lodz was under the Germans, and Petroka~~l~~ was under the Austrians...occupation. It was, um, a lot easier, you know, because the Austrians were not so strict, they were not so...how to say? (Pause). You see, sometime I am missing very many words, and I shouldn't.

L.B. Say it in another language, maybe I'll pick it up.

505? S.K.? *Zey tuben nisht geshen arpi shtranz.* (They were not so cruel.)

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. They weren't so cruel as the Germans, because...

L.B. Right, as the Russians.

S.K. No, as the Germans, when they occupied, the second time...

L.B. Oh, oh, I see.

S.K. During the World War...the First World War...because...

L.B. Yeah, so you're saying the First World War, they were much nicer than they were in the Second World War.

S.K. Oh, this is, it's nothing to compare.

L.B. There's no comparison, right.

S.K. In the Second World War, they were all "barbars."

L.B. Right, all right. But they were not so in the First World War?

S.K. No, no.

L.B. All right. In fact, they...

516? S.K. They were intruders themselves.

L.B. Right, I, am I...

S.K. Erich Maria Remarque wrote On Western<sup>nick</sup> Noise, There is no News on the Western, when American, uh, German soldiers ate rats...I don't know if you read it...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. I hoped, so you don't remember. They ate the rats.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And the bulletins came, there's no, no news on the western front.

L.B. Right. Now let me ask you, the, uh, you considered then, that, this is in the First World War...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. That when the Austrians and the Hung...and the Germans occupied this section, they were kinder to the Jews than the Russians?

S.K. Yes, sure.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Then the...Austrians were even...kinder than the Germans, but the Ger...they were very strict, the Germans, in the part where, where they occupied. If somebody did something not so...uh, you know, as, as the law was providing...

L.B. Yes.

S.K. Uh, you could go to jail for, for a year and 2. And sometimes they made 5 years, and they didn't stay in 5 years.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. But, you know, the sentence was. While, in Austria, that's why there was a big smuggling...

L.B. Yes.

S.K. ...from people from Lodz, to the part which were occupied, was occupied by the Austrians.

L.B. All right. That's very interesting.

S.K. Yes, so...they were more tolerant...more liberal, and, the life was much easier. So then I went over there to the gymnasium, in, in Petroka<sup>l</sup>. Uh, I continued from, from Lodz, because...

L.B. So you continu...you were no longer in a Russian gymnas, then?

S.K. No, they, they, were...liquidated, oh yes...

L.B. No, it's, it's, <sup>it's</sup> Russian, yeah. (*Russians - out*)

S.K. You see, in 1914 the War start, in 1915, in the beginning already, the, I mean, the Russian left already in 1914, because the German defeated them and they...

L.B. Well, first the Russians pushed in, and then they were pushed back.

555? S.K. ?

L.B. Right.

S.K. Out of all...so then the Russian gymnasiums stopped already existing, and started to be Polish, because the Germans allowed Polish language to be established as a direct language...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. ...in the, in the schools, in ~~all~~<sup>all</sup> schools and, starting with public school. So then we start, we started to learn also German in the ~~gymnasium~~ Polish gymnasium, because of the border.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Goo...War ~~not~~ not for good or bad, the next border to Poland...

L.B. Was German.

S.K. ...is German. And the next border is Russia, so...Russian we didn't learn anymore, almost...but, German we started to learn German. So, that's why anyone who has a certain school...in Pol...from Poland, as I, so the languages were...uh, Hebrew, when I started, but I forgot...

L.B. Yeah.

? 577-80? S.K. ?

L.B. ~~Yes~~ No.

S.K. I forgot the whole language, because it's more than 55 years that I am not practicing Hebrew.

L.B. Mm hm.

595? S.K. But here and there, I, as I...said, now, right now, that I forgot all? and I ask you if you are speaking Hebrew.

L.B. No.

S.K. So you said no, which, uh, I am a little bit disappointed.

L.B. I'm sorry. (laughter). I'm learning it.

S.K. Would be very nice if you would speak Hebrew.

L.B. Yes, I'm sure it would.

S.K. I mean, I anticipate from a lady as you are...among your education to have, to know Hebrew.

L.B. I expect that I will. Now, let's go back and see...I want to ask you, you say you had a maid in your home, what did your mother do, what was her, her role in the family?

S.K. The role, to, to, to, uh, bring up her children, we were 4 children in, in different, and 2 years different from each other. So, let's say, when I was 6, my next, my brother was 4, my sister Manya was 2, and Karola was 1; when I was 7, Karola was 1...

L.B. Yes, yeah.

S.K. ...3, 5, and 7.

L.B. But she, did your mother cook?

S.K. Yes, she cooked, because, because, those maids only prepared, or they kept...clean...

L.B. Ahhh.

S.K. And don't forget that it was a lot to keep clean, because my father worked in his, in the apartment.

L.B. Right. And who did the, made your clothing, and your sisters' clothing, and your mother's clothing?

S.K. Uhh, my mother, her clothing was also made by a, uh...

L.B. A seamstress?

S.K. A seamstress.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Couldn't afford very elegant, but a seamstress...because, we, I don't remember a time when, uh, it was...we bought any clothes.

L.B. All right. Now, that's, so you mother really didn't clean, but she cooked...

S.K. She prepared, she cooked, and everything.

L.B. She oversaw the...

S.K. Yes, yes...

L.B. ...general upbringing, and the...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Did she teach you anything...

S.K. Yes, she...

L.B. Was her role that of a teacher at all?

S.K. Yes, yes, my, my mother, exceptionally, my dear lady...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. ...was also our teacher, our good bringing up mother. And, uh...if I could, would be able to make 5 million dollars, and, and to be a writer like Philip Roth, because this is a blessing...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. You see, writing, in mine opinion, is a blessing. Is not the one, learning to write, you cannot learn to write, you have to born with it.

L.B. Right.

S.K. I was born with the blessing that I am able to music, and my father didn't send me to school, if he would found out that I am, uh, inclined to music, and I, that I had good, uh, ear to pick up. But later on, when I was 12, 13 years old, uh, and mine, uh, uncle had a dance studio, a big one, I went to the piano, with one finger I start...you know what the first melody, I, a little Jewish fellow starts? Hatikvah...with one finger.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And then, whenever I sat down, I started with 2, and then with one hand. And when I, uh, got occasionally, I, I don't know how it was, I took a, a violin, I start to play the same Hatikvah.

L.B. Now, tell me something, you say you were a little Jewish fellow, You are the first person I've spoken in which, uh, Yiddish was, where Yiddish was not spoken in the home, and yet, you say you were Jewish, did your, uh, but your parents spoke Yiddish?

S.K. Yes, my parents spoke Yiddish...

L.B. Were they...

S.K. ...my grandfather and grandm...they spoke Jewish and I learned.

L.B. I understand.

S.K. When I was, you see, 11 already...

L.B. Yes.

S.K. 10, 11, then I spoke already, Yiddish, I got to...because the environment was...

L.B. Yes, but your parents did not speak Yiddish to you?

S.K. Uh, not specially.

L.B. No, it was not considered the language of the home.

S.K. No, no, and it was a typical Jewish family home.

L.B. No, uh, well, you're the first one I've met, it's, that's why it's, each person is so different. Now...

S.K. It was a typical Jewish, Jewish home.

L.B. Would you consider that you were middle-class?

S.K. Uhh, one class lower than middle.

L.B. Lower middle class.

S.K. Lower middle class, because otherwise...

L.B. Tell me...

S.K. ...I couldn't go to a school for...

L.B. Where you paid.

S.K. Uh, where you paid, yes.

L.B. Right, because there were plenty of luftmenschen.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Right. Tell me, um...um...if you were Yiddish, you were Jews, but you didn't speak Yiddish, now let me think, I had something specific, uh...where was your mother born?

701 S.K. My mother was born in, uh, in a small town...?Rockitchina, where mine grandfather was a, uh, landowner.

L.B. Was this under Russian, uh...

S.K. Russian.

L.B. And he owned land?

709 S.K. He...yes. Uh, as a matter of fact, later on, when they moved from there to city of Lodz...Lodz, he become a padrienchik, I mean, the man who took the, who, uh, uh, was a contractor with the government.

L.B. Uh huh. And what did he contract for, I mean, what did he...

S.K. Building, he build~~it~~, he build~~it~~...

L.B. Oh, a building contractor.

S.K. A building contractor, and he was a very wealthy man. Was a lot, uh, and he was not a, a, a, a Trade Unionist, like my grandfather from Petroka~~l~~ was a tailor, so he was not.

L.B. Mm hm.

722 S.K. ? was a man of uh, of Jewi...of Hebrew education, Talmud, uh, you know, because the old people from the vil...from the small, how you

727 call it in English, a, a, a ~~clorf~~? 'clorf'?

L.B. A village.

S.K. A village?

L.B. Yeah, yeah.

S.K. The people in the villages learned more than the people from little towns, from small towns. Because, over there, small towns, they started trades, while in villages they didn't.

L.B. Yeah. Now, in your family, in your parental family, did they, uh, did your mother light the candles on Friday night, or not?

S.K. Yes, yes...

L.B. She did?

S.K. Yes, yes, it was a Jewish home.

L.B. Did your father go to shul?

S.K. My father, uh, went to, to shul, and I went with him, uh, to many, many <sup>ful</sup>



S.K.cont. many years when I became so, uh...

L.B. Liberated.

S.K. So-called, liberated.

L.B. Right, but you didn't...

S.K. Even when I was, uh, liberated already, in my mind, I still got to respect...and I weren't married yet, I still got to resp...and I st...and as long I ate home, by my father's...table, I got to fulfill his commandments.

L.B. Right.

S.K. And, as well, the Ten Commandments.

L.B. That's right.

S.K. And the most important Commandment which was, is the Fifth, which is the most important Commandment than all of them, which is not necessary anymore. This is mine...individual opinion, there is not necessary no more commandment than five, the Fifth, "Respect your father and mother". So...w...why? Because if you respect your father and mother, you wouldn't steal, you wouldn't kill, because if you steal, and, and somebody comes and tells your father or mother, "You know, your son, Shlomo, was a, is a gonif." Then father and mother are almost dying...

775

(Tape off)

Side 2

000

L.B. Are you taping? (Tape off). So your father went to shul every Friday?

S.K. Friday, and Saturday, and the Hól...Holidays. I was Bar Mitzvah, and I could read the Torah. I was really, I, to my...greatest regret, when I meet... but, you see, another part, if I meet now people here, who knows more...in Talmud, than I, I don't feel comfortable, because I don't want nobody to know more than I do. You see, nobody, almost nobody, and you can tell your professor, can beat Sidney Kay in any aspect of anything! And if you want, I can prove it. This aspect means literature, international literature.

L.B. All right, now, how did you dress?

S.K. You know better, you, you, before you mentioned...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And I don't remember...that...that you didn't know, I was once, I worked in a hotel here in United States, a Fifth Avenue hotel.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. Where I started as a busboy, because I couldn't do nothing else. Then I became promoted to a waiter, which was a great promotion. And all, in the Fifth Avenue hotel used to come the, N.Y.U., which is nearby, and I was in Room Service, waiting. And there were, almost every day, luncheons. And, when we served the tables, there were students, and when we served, during serving, I, you know, I got acquainted with them, even with my poor English, but they appreciate. And I asked these students, every day, other questions of general education and knowledge...95% nobody knew the answer. One day, it's a very, a very interesting episode...one day, a professor approached me, he said, "Listen Sidney, I heard that you are testing my, our students, and they are failing. Maybe you are going to do it with me." I said, you know, and I'm...I'm a very easy man, I like to joke, I said, "Professor, why should you spoil your luncheon?" So he was very, he said, "Don't worry about luncheon. You just ask me the question." I said, "How well you are in literature? In general literature." He said, "Sure I am. I'm pretty well." I don't remember

33? if this was his cathedra, cathedra, you know...

L.B. Yes, his specialty.

S.K. Specialty. So, I said, "You know, there is a...a writer, a very great writer...which is almost in the same category with American, one of the greatest writers in American, many, many of them, millions of them don't

S.K.cont.. know Jack London...and his name is Joseph Conrad."

L.B. Mm hm.

387. S.K. "So Isaac, <sup>Secret</sup> now, now tell me...now, if you want to be stuck, Professor. But if you answer me, then I bow to you. What was his original name?"

L.B. He was Polish...

S.K. Because...he said, "You know, Sidney..." And I said, "He, you know, he was from Poland." "You know, Sidney, I almost, no, I am stuck, and I, and I am scared to go home, because my wife is a Polish, and she's also a professor."

L.B. (Laughs).

2. S.K. So I told him, "His name was Jusef Konrachevski." He said, "All right, Sidney, you've caught me." So, uh, and this was really, this was, uh, years which, which I worked very hard, and I was not born to be a waiter or to wait on anybody, not even on a king, and not on a professor, and not on a...uh... parvenus...because, there are many parvenues...

L.B. Do you know French?

S.K. Moi, je parle Français, oui.

L.B. Now where did you learn French? That's another...

S.K. En école...

L.B. You have...Hebrew, Yiddish...

S.K. In school.

L.B. ...Russian, German, Polish, that's already 5, now French...

S.K. In school, I started to learn French in school, in Poland.

L.B. That's 6 languages.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. And then you learned English here, that's ?

S.K. Yes, yes...that...

L.B. Is there one I haven't picked up?

587. S.K. Uhh, no, but, you see, let's say, I was a year in Sweden after the War, because my <sup>father</sup> I was taken to Sweden by <sup>Grand</sup> Bernadotte, and af...in, within one year, when we left Sweden, I had a <sup>fairly well</sup> speech in Swedish. The, the, the owner, the proprietor of this, was invited...because we were very respected in the...and he was crying because I made, in the Swedish language, you know, but, you know, I made this speech with the amount, with the vocabulary which I knew.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. And if, if you are a little able, you make in this, you know...

L.B. (Giggles). Yes.

S.K. And he...he begged me, he said, "Mr. Kazenovsky...you will get from me everything. Stay with us. Because it is such honor, after one year, you, you make a speech in, in Swedish." He didn't know that I, how is this called, uh, manipulated, you know, words, a, a vocabulary which was easy for me. But I spoke.

L.B. Yeah, now let's go back.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. I want to know, for example, how you dressed, and, did your father have a beard?

S.K. No.

L.B. No beard?

S.K. No.

L.B. He was clean-shaven?

S.K. Uh, yes, uh, uh, just one, a short time, he let in, grow a little beard with a moustache.

L.B. No, but that's different, he wasn't one of the Jews...

S.K. No, no, no, no, it was not a beard.

L.B. And you didn't wear payis?

S.K. No, no, it was not, you couldn't in this school, it was a progressive school.

L.B. Aaaaah.

S.K. It was a school of Haskalah.

L.B. O.K. Very good.

S.K. They were Litvakers, Eisenburg. If you meet...

L.B. They were Mitnagdim. (Laughter).

S.K. If you meet a man from Lodz...

L.B. Yah.

84? S.K. ...brought up in a good environment, you know, even my father, he's so, you know, it's a saying that, uh, it was a very bad thing, but, which is not right, but tailors and uh, and uh, shoemakers are not people <sup>there was such saying</sup>. But, in the first place, there is such distance between tailors and shoemakers, that people cannot imagine. There were a tailor's, people, many had high school education, and were many Talmudists, who couldn't go in business, and had to learn a trade.,,you want...

L.B. Yes.

92? S.K. Being in cheder, and after the cheder, they couldn't go in business, so all...to go, to, to be a mischoris, a mischora means a, a, uh.....a clerk, you know, and they paid so little, you understand, in, in the, in this shops, and in the stores in, in Poland, that a clerk who started, in the beginning he hadn't got a yen, almost nothing, worked like a horse. While, practicing a trade, you understand, like tailoring, he started to earn something after 4 weeks.

L.B. Now let me get my thoughts organized, so I can...

S.K. Yes, get organized...

L.B. Yes, yes, because I want to, um...I want to...pull this all together...

S.K. So this is the difference.

L.B. You went then to a progressive school. There were Hasidim in your section, or not?

S.K. No, Haskalah...

L.B. No Hasidim?

S.K. No, there was no progressive...

L.B. Not in school, in Lodz?

S.K. In Lodz we had many Hasidim.

L.B. What did your father think of the Hasidim?

S.K. What?

L.B. What did your father think of the Hasidim?

S.K. My father? Uh, no, he was not, I mean, he was progressive, but, uh, he didn't, you see, nobody thought any bad about Hasidims, in our town.

L.B. No?

S.K. Oh no...there was a great respect for Hasidim. You see, for somebody's faith and belief, were respected, except the goyim, the Polakim who made the pogroms. So, that's why we are Jews.

L.B. I'm talking about the Jews, I'm talking about the Jews.

112? S.K. The Jews, no, no, even the most progressive Jew...he could go his way, he could think as he did, like <sup>the Vilna Gabbai</sup>...and the Hasidim, why, they're, their founder was Bal Shem Tov, this is nothing to do...not...to do, everybody respected.

L.B. What, uh, kind of a shul did your father go to? Do you know? Was it an Orthodox shul?

S.K. Uh, it, it was a, uh, a, a progre...it, it was an Orth...it was shul for Jews...but it was not...

L.B. But what kind of Jews went there? Because there was more than one shul in Lodz, right?

120? S.K. Yes, then, then it was a, a Deutscheshulotsky, it was a, it was called "German Temple".

L.B. Yes.

S.K. It was called, but it was not German.

L.B. I understand. <sup>because</sup>

S.K. They called it, the progressive Jews and the rich Jews, and the upper-middle, and the, a little lower middle-class, attended to this synagogue.

L.B. Right.

- 125? S.K. So, uh, it was a progressive, where the, uh, the 'chazan was nice-dressed,  
 ? 127? and stood and, you know, and, uh, and he was the? , he was the,  
 you know...and he didn't, you know, move his...
- 128? L.B. "Shokol." (*Shaking*)  
 S.K. Shokol, they like to...I tell you about ~~Shokol~~ "Shokoling"  
 L.B. No, don't tell ~~me~~ me, I want to hear this. Go on.  
 S.K. You see... (*gets up*)  
 L.B. No, sit...
- 130? S.K. Our Jack Koenigsburg, if he?  
 ? 130? L.B. "Ich veis. Ich shokol oichet." (*I know. I shake also.*)  
 S.K. But your father's not ~~shaking~~. Shokoling.  
 L.B. No.  
 S.K. You see?  
 L.B. My father's very quiet, that's why.  
 S.K. Yes, so that's it. This was Eilenburg, the Eilenburg, mine teachers, were  
 like, as your father. You know, we didn't <sup>shout</sup> shout, we didn't scream, you  
 ? 134? understand? (Shouts): " " . It's not necessary, you  
 can say, " " , which means the same. But, the difference  
 is, that those Hasidim, in business, and, I'm sorry to say, but I have...  
 L.B. Say it.  
 S.K. Were in business, scrupulous.  
 L.B. Unscrupulous, or scrupulous? Were they crooks, or not crooks?  
 S.K. Crooks. I mean, how you, how you say in English?  
 L.B. Unscrupulous.  
 S.K. Unscrupulous, they haven't got scruples.  
 L.B. Right.  
 S.K. You see why, a, auh, progressive Jew, you understand? We each attended  
 144? the school and everything, was a Jew, he didn't put his <sup>tsitsit and Kap: T</sup> tsitsit and Kap: T  
 on top, on everything, which wasn't necessary. You understand? It didn't make  
 ? 146? a Jew, to wear outside the? . You could wear it, and I  
 wore it, I and my brother, we wear it til very, very late. So did my father.  
 L.B. Now, your service was conducted in what language?  
 150? S.K. In Hebrew, "Ioshen Kodesh" (*holy tongue*)  
 L.B. It was all in Hebrew?  
 151? S.K. "Ioshen Kodesh". As the Torah is written, everything the same.  
 L.B. I go to synagogue in, uh, America, it's what they call the Reformed  
 Synagogue, and the service is mostly in English.  
 153? S.K.?  
 L.B. And then, there's some Hebrew, more and more as time goes on. But there  
 were many German shuls where the service was in German.  
 S.K. Yes...no, the Germans...  
 L.B. Right?  
 S.K. The Germans, the Germans, sorry, Germans are not...being con...cons...  
 considered among Jews, as really, truly Jews. They were...very easy to assimilate,  
 and they did. Even, we have now very good German Jews in Israel, but we  
 haven't them got here...because the Germans here, will still discriminate  
 against a Russian, a Polish, and another Jew. It is something where they  
 adapted too much, in their blood...and, sometimes, and <sup>is</sup> I am an open-minded  
 man, and on mine, top of the tongue, is, is laying the words of...how to say  
 it? you know, to scold, not only to scold, more than scold. But, I'm holding  
 back, because, why should I make more enemies than I made friends. Because I  
 170? am? *like that*, I am.  
 L.B. So, you mean to schld the German Jews?  
 S.K. Jews, that they don't pretend...you see, in, in the time, 50 years ago...  
 L.B. What year, now, are you talking about?  
 S.K. I'm talking about in the '20s.  
 L.B. Yes.

176. S.K. In Yom Kippur, or Rosh Hashonah, the German Jews, they went to the synagogue with, with their, with their karets, karets, you know what a karets is? With a horse and, and, with bugs...

L.B. Oh, yeah.

S.K. How would you call, "Bugs"?

L.B. No, no, what language?

S.K. In English. How would you call this, what, what you have? Uh, you know, a horse, and a, and a carriage.

L.B. That's it, horse and carriage.

S.K. Horse and carriage, but I think...

L.B. There's one, you mean like a fiacre?

S.K. Uh, yes, a fiacre is in, in...

L.B. In French.

S.K. Fiacre, in French, and also the Austrians called "ein fiacre".

L.B. And in Russian...

S.K. Oh yes.

L.B. Yeah, in Russian it's a droszky.

S.K. Droszka.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Droszka, in Polish, droszka.

L.B. I don't what it is in German, I don't know German.

S.K. Ein fiacre, eine karete.

L.B. Yeah...well all right.

S.K. Eine karete.

L.B. All right.

187. S.K. "Die Yidn in Kareten gefaren", so <sup>they</sup> went in...you un...uh, so, on Yom Kippur.

189. So they stood, they took off their hats, but they are very, so-called, <sup>for them they are</sup> religious, and some of them, they wouldn't even touch, I think, which is not

kosher. But, on the other hand, to me, they are...condemned Jews. If there wouldn't be...a Second World War, no one, German Jew, would ever emigrate to Israel, and I, I'm sorry to say it, and even I can be spit in my face by

190. Germans, they would say, "You are an, you are a scoundrel, a"

Mr. Kay, that you'd say it." But there is, during the first Aliyah, and was

199. the Russian Jews...who went to? with, with, uh, you know,

201. what you are building houses, like the Jews in Egypt, they worked,

L.B. To build the bricks.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Now, tell me something, now you're on the subject of the 20s, and the Aliyah. Was there, at that time, you were living where, in the '20s, where, which city? In your grandfather's city?

S.K. In, in between '50, between, between...

L.B. In the 1920s.

S.K. In, in '18 I was, in, in, in uh, Petrokoll..

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And I was in gymnasium over there, but then, was started to build the movement of Zionists, the Zionistic movement.

L.B. That's right, that's what I want to know.

S.K. And I belonged to it.

L.B. You did?

203. S.K. Oh yes, and I belonged to the Tarbuth, and then to the B'nai Tzion, B'nai Tzion means the "Sons of Zion".

L.B. "Sons of Zion", Mm hm.

S.K. The Tarbuth belonged the elderly, the adults, and, because I was 13, 14, 15 years old, then I belonged to the, uh, to the young, B'nai Zion.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. As a matter of fact, that for 2 years I was the vice-president of our organization, being only 14 and 15 years old.

L.B. Now, whom did you read at that time? You read Achad...

S.K. Achad Ahan?

L.B. Achad Ahan, right.

S.K. Yes, uh...

L.B. And who else?

220? S.K. Uh, uh, I read, um...uh... *Mendile Mocher Sfaum.*

L.B. Yes.

7 222? S.K. I read, uh, *Denizon*

L.B. Mm hm. It's all in He...

S.K. But, the most I read Polish books, I am very well read in Polish liter...

225? as I am very well, very well read in the *belletristic* of the world.

L.B. I know, but we're talking, I'm talking about Zionism now.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. I want to know how did this Zionism get to you?

S.K. I was born in it...

L.B. So it was, you were surrounded...

S.K. My father was.

L.B. Oh, your father was a Zionist?

S.K. Yes, he was a Zionist, in his way.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. He didn't belong to the, to the Party...but he was a Zionist.

L.B. Yes.

7 231? S.K. You know, he's a, he belonged to this, uh,?"

"If I forget you, Jerusalem, my right hand should..."

L.B. Right, right..."...I should lose the cunning of my right hand."

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Right.

S.K. This was...his motto, his idea. But he didn't belong, because there wasn't time, my father hadn't got time to attend to, to, you know, this, to this section belonged already people who were wealthier than my father was.

L.B. They didn't have to work so hard.

S.K. No, no...but those...

L.B. Right. But you were young.

S.K. But, I was young.

L.B. How old were you, then, how old were you at that time?

S.K. 19-, 1915, '16, '17, I was 11, 12, 13, 14 years old.

L.B. 15, yeah, yes right.

S.K. 15 years, in '17 I was, 1903, I was 14 years old. And we builded the Maccabee with our own hands. There were, you know, Polacks, because, uh, since when, in Poland, a Jew, uhhh, would know how to build a building, you know, a little hole; it was a, a, a gymnas, gymnas, you know, like here, gymnasium means the, the, the, uh, "hall of exercise".

L.B. Right.

S.K. And then...weplayed, uh, so we, we met every day and we played, and we spoke Hebrew, and that's why I was very fluent in Hebrew. And in 1914, 1915, I,

7 253? we played, on Hanukkah, we played, it was a play, "Hannah *Ushiva*  
255? is "Hannah and her Seven Sons", you know, in the time of *Antiochus*.

L.B. Yes, right.

S.K. And he killed all, and they...

L.B. Yeah, yeah.

257? S.K. So I played the youngest son, the youngest, and the next year, 1916, I played *Antiochus*.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. And...and you will be surprised that, I almost remember, til now, the role in Hebrew, what I played that time, as *Antiochus*.

L.B. Mm hm, now tell me...

S.K. But this is not important to put this here.

L.B. No, what I want to know is, uh....you had, all your friends were in the, uh...

S.K. Yes, all my friends, yes, uh, th...they, there was a better class, the better class of Petrokal, you see, because....my grandfather, *Klein Pmchusel* you know, was a, a very wealthy man, uh, and, so his grandson couldn't, I mean, in the first place I was brought up fine...you know, with, with a, strictly, my mother was very disciplined mother, very disciplined, she kept us...with, with great respect for people, for everyone.

L.B. Yes, yeah.

S.K. So, uh...uhh...

L.B. I want to make a note, go ahead.

S.K. Uhhh...

L.B. So all your friends...

S.K. So I...yes, I belonged to, you know, to this organization, to the Hebrew organization, and in the, in 1918, when the first...established the Polish establishment, the government established, there was then the first *Sejn*, *Sejn* was like the Congress. *Sejn Sejn*

L.B. Yes.

S.K. So, uh, we started to work, you know, like, um....to, uh...

L.B. Go ahead.

S.K. To get people, the Jewish people from Petrokal, to vote for the, uh, Zionistical movement, and to have representatives in the, in the Congress, in the Polish *Sejn*, it was called, in Polish, the Congress is called *Sejn*. *Sejn*

L.B. How do you spell, oh, like...

S.K. Sein, sāne.

L.B. Sein, sienne, yes...

S.K. No, sein, s-e-i-n.

L.B. Oh.

S.K. In, in English it would be "seen", but this is sein, s-e-i-n, it was, it is sein, *Sejn* *Sejn* Polish. So, you know, we went to, we run through the streets, and to the houses, and, and, uh, to the, uhhh, to, you know, to people...to get them in, uh, to vote, for Zionistical representatives.

L.B. Now, my father brought this up, and he grew up in a sm...a small shtetl. He was not allowed to play with certain children...uh, in the shtetl. In other, not that he wasn't allowed, it's just, he knew that he sh...it wasn't done.

S.K. Sure...that they shouldn't...

L.B. Right.

S.K. That's what I did.

L.B. And those were all Jews.

S.K. All Jews, but we couldn't mingle, it was a...

L.B. Now who were these children?

S.K. Children, very poor children, all...

L.B. And you knew you couldn't play with them.

S.K. No, because they, very, those poor children were brought up without any, uh, you know, uh....attention, by parents, because they couldn't afford to, you understand? To, to, to...

L.B. I understand.

S.K. ...to bring up, they were very, very poor. So, they weren't, they, they weren't, they're children themselves, so those children were brought up in the streets, so we couldn't mingle with them.

L.B. You had none of them for a friend, you never had one for a friend?

S.K. No, never had one of them.

L.B. So you never knew what they thought about, themselves?

S.K. But I...no, but then...because of this organization...

L.B. Yes.

S.K. Maccabee, so I was like...a counselor...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. And, they were very poor, so they used to come to Maccabee, let's say groups, 12, 14, 15, 16, and we went to, a, a, a kilometer away, on the *peripheries* of the city...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. And, uh, and uh, we got for them milk and bread, because they haven't got enough home. Uh, and this was the Austrian occupation.

S.B. That's what I was going to ask you, then, during this time, the '20s, you were, then...

S.K. Not the '20s, no...

L.B. No?

S.K. It was the teens.

L.B. Oh, the...oh...

S.K. Between the '14 and the '18.

L.B. Before the War was over.

S.K. Yes, '14 to '18, because in '18...

L.B. You were already Polish.

S.K. The, in the, in the, in the, to the end of the '18, when the War, when the War stopped, you know, "America..."

L.B. Right.

S.K. America defeated those...cockroaches, so, uh, we went back to Lodz, and I started again.

L.B. And then you were Polish, that time?

S.K. Yes, uh, yes, then we were Polish citizens, sure.

L.B. Right.

S.K. We were Polish citizens all the time. You see, we weren't Russian citizens, even by the Russians.

L.B. You were no citizens, then.

S.K. Su...sure. But we considered ourse...I mean, parents, Polish citizens.

L.B. Well, they considered themselves Polish, but...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. What would have been on your passport?

S.K. I, we haven't got passports, I don't remember that I, a passport, I don't remember my father had a passport.

L.B. Well, let's not get ahead. So you met some of these poor boys in this Maccabee Zionist organization?

S.K. Yes, and...yes, and, uh, they did belong, because they were very young, you know, they were 5, 6, 7, 8 years old...

L.B. There must have been...but, there must have been older boys who were poor.

S.K. Yes, but they...

L.B. They didn't belong?

S.K. No, they got their own life, you know, they were already rascals in the street, little, uh.....thgives...

L.B. So your society was very stratified?

S.K. Yes, yes, yes, it was a, a defined society.

L.B. Right, that's right.

S.K. A real defined society, I, I was not in, in a, you know, in a society where I could see some people.

L.B. When the War broke out, you were, uh, 9 years old, 1914. Did you...

S.K. I was, no, I was not 9, I was 11 years old.

L.B. Yeah, my arithmetic is terrible. (Laughs).

3507. S.K. *all your* arithmetic is terrible. You are not the only one.

L.B. So, you were 11 years old. Now, you were old enough to know and to hear. Where were the sympathies of your parents, and did you have sympathies? Did you want the Russians to win? Did you want...

S.K. No, we didn't want, we wanted the Germans to win.

L.B. You did?

S.K. Oh sure, we did, but it's no doubt.

L.B. So you went south to Petrokal?

S.K. Petrokal.

L.B. Petrokal. Why there? Wasn't that under Russian, uh, domination, too?

S.K. Sure...



L.B. But you thought...

S.K. But, then, then the Russians weren't anymore there.

L.B. Aaaaah.

S.K. They were, uh, they went, they got to withdraw, they were, uh, defeated...

L.B. So you were safe there, because you were under Austrian protection?

S.K. Austrian, yes, and it was nicer than to be under...and then, you see, we, we, we didn't have to pay for rent, because we got, all right, an apartment in our grandfather's, uh, uh, building, house, house. And, uh, and then food, and everything.

L.B. So...you did not want the Russians to win?

S.K. No.

L.B. And, were you, at any time, there was no time when you were eligible for military service? Suppose, after you went back to Lodz...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. By that time you were of an age to enter the army.

S.K. I was, only...

L.B. Shortly after.

S.K. Only...as a volunteer. You see...1918 the War ended.

L.B. Right.

S.K. I was 15 years old.

L.B. Right.

S.K. 1919 started the War between Poland and Ukraine, with the Russians, the Bolsheviks.

L.B. I see, right, right.

? 217 S.K. So I was 16, 16 years old...youngsters, young men, were permitted to volunteer, he was called a <sup>?</sup>, a <sup>?</sup>, volunteer.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. But I was not a volunteer, because I was under my father's regime, and I got to attend school.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. So, the most of the time, in that time, Polacks, 16 year old volunteer.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And, here and there, some Jews...also Jews, 16 year old volunteer.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. But, they were, they were assimilatory Jews.....assimilated.

L.B. I understand, they felt that if they defeated the Russians, then they would be, uh, treated better by the Poles, they would be Polish.

S.K. Yes, then, then...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. Uh, uh, it would be to, <sup>ru</sup> anyway, because, the...Communism didn't give nothing the world, at all.

L.B. Now, were you, at that time, legally, were you entitled to citizenship in Poland, after the First World War? When, 1919...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. O.K.? 1918?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. You're back in Lodz, you're Polish, definitely, now.

S.K. Yes, yes.

L.B. Were you a citizen, as a Jew?

? 218 S.K. I was not yet, a Jew, because here comes a <sup>curiasm</sup> curiasm, a, a curiasm, a great <sup>curiasm</sup> curiasm which was not only with my family, but with many families, maybe you heard, in Poland. When the, the parents were married, married only by a rabbi, <sup>calippigidsche</sup> calippigidsche, but they didn't go to, to the city, and, when I got to be, to became, to go to the, to the draft...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. Then my father took us to the office, to the municipal, and then he made the Acts that they are married and they have 4 children. So this tell, til that time, we were, uh...how you call it?

L.B. Illegitimate.

S.K. Illegitimate children, bastards.

L.B. The Polse did not recognize the religious ceremony, it had to be a civil ceremony?

S.K. Oh, you got to be, you got to, then, you got to be a citizen. You see, they recognize, but you got to be, I mean, uh, I wasn't even, I wasn't even in, in the list.

L.B. In their rolls, yeah.

S.K. In the ro...in the, in the rolls of the city. It didn't exist.

L.B. In 1903...

S.K. We didn't exist.

L.B. Tell me, in 1903, were there still Kehillahs? Was there still a Kehillah structure in Poland, in Lodz?

S.K. In, in, sure it was, kehillah, kehillah was always.

L.B. There was. Right, no...

S.K. Not even, you see many, you see, those kehillahs were even builded...

in, in, by the Germans during the World War II, and they called them Judenrat.

423' L.B. I know (inaudible) (s. ren outside)

S.K. So, no, no, don't say that...don't say that. Don't listen to everyone.

Don't. Because there wouldn't be judenrats, there, those little Jews wouldn't be left, because, the, uh...the idea, the idea of, of, and, the <sup>purpose</sup> practice of

the Germans was to destroy all Jews, so they got to be, they gave an order, you are going to build a judenrat in 12 hours, and you send me the list who,

or they appointed. So you got to be. Don't, don't follow, Lucille, you and your

7 431' professor know other Jews who didn't <sup>wait</sup> nothing, when we were, in <sup>it was and you</sup> ~~lead~~ a Jew ate <sup>chickens</sup>

432' And you went to the Copacabana, dancing, once a month. You see, I am so tolerant,

433' liberal, not every week, once a month, to the Copacabana. And here <sup>there is saying</sup>

my family over there. But this is life, c'est la vie. What we are doing right now, in this day of Yom Kippur, uh, uh, we should fast 3 times a week. We

shouldn't permit us, us, our Jews shouldn't permit ourselves to eat cake and

chocolate, and nothing, as long this War was there. But we did not! We ate,

we went to Miami Beach, we went to the Las Vegases, etc., etc. And we did all

the good things, so what did the rich Jew, they give money. They gave money

because they have so much they cannot count it. My dear girl, we have here in

this building, a Jew, who cannot count the money. They don't know how to count

to thousands, so help me! They are, they are almost millionaires, from

Canada, from here, from there. (Pause). And I know them. And I'm meeting them

434' minute-to-minute, <sup>and the worst of</sup> parties, that they pretend that they, they

are...show-offs. Is here a fellow, <sup>what</sup> is an ignorant, an ignoramus, a nobody,

and he is the chairman of the Cultural Club, he's... Don't laugh. You ask

Jack Koenigsburg, he will tell you, but he is hypocritic, in, in this case.

And he knows about whom I am talking. And that's why I started with them, and then I talk...the man who is the chairman doesn't know nothing about, nothing,

rien de tout, in French, as you'd say. And he's in Cultural Club.

L.B. It happens with most non-Jews too, you know. (Laughs).

S.K. Who cares about non-Jews?

435' L.B. (Laughing). I was just telling you, it's human nature.

S.K. Ohhh, Lucille, who cares about them? No really, I...you see, I am a very altruistic man.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. You see, everything, you see, otherwise I wouldn't survive, because I didn't.....I was never pessimistic in, you know, uh, uh, inclined or pessim... I always got...that I would survive.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. I was not the smartest Jew who survived...I was not, because the very, the great intelligent ones <sup>were</sup> destroyed in the first days...as soon as the Germans came in, they destroyed the intelligence, because intelligent people can be the leaders. So here and there, survived one. How I...I haven't got a profession,

S.K.cont. my profession was dancing. You see, I got, I got a, a Achilles heel, I like dancing.

L.B. Now wait... now wait a minute. We got, we got off from...

S.K. Yeah, very much off...

L.B. Right. I think we better go back, now...

S.K. Yes.

L.B. This is very interesting, but you brought up another subject, so I'd better write it down. Now, let me ask you something. Now, we talked about the First World War, you wanted the Germans to win.

S.K. Yes, because they are very liberal.

L.B. All right, and you...you lost, and you became Polish.

S.K. Yes.

L.B. And then you became a Zionist.

S.K. No, a Zionist, I bec...I was born in it, I, I went to a Hebrew school.

L.B. Now, I understand, but what I'm saying...

S.K. To a Hebrew school where parents sent...no other parent then, but Zionistically inclined.

L.B. Oh...all right.

S.K. All, uh, uh, in Zionistical movements, send the, to Hebrew schools, not in chederim, You see, a cheder was the most of, Orthodox.

L.B. Right.

S.K. My father was not an Orthodox. He was a Jew, an "erlicher Yid"

L.B. Yeah, right.

S.K. A kind man.

L.B. I understand.

S.K. So...I went to the school.

L.B. May I ask you a question?

S.K. Yes, more.

L.B. Why did you not go to Israel? Why did, I know you had to go someplace, when it finally came, it didn't occur to you, before the '30s, to go to, to Palestine?

S.K. (Long pause). You see, all my friends from, from Petrokal, from Maccabee, and Tarbauth, and B'nai Zion...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. A, 70% part, when, after the War, they went...as an Aliyah to Petrokal, to, to Israel.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Uh, to Palestine, rather, at that time. But I was under my father's supervision, and he wanted me to be, or a doctor or a lawyer, and I didn't, I didn't become none of those.

L.B. Right.

S.K. Because, as older I became, I, I became more, you know, uhhh, individual, and I didn't want to be, and maybe that's why I survived, because there is very little doctors who are left among Jews, after the War...

L.B. Right.

S.K. Very, very, and very little lawyers.

L.B. So what did you become?

S.K. A dance teacher, I, a dance teacher.

L.B. You didn't become a shneider, and you didn't become a doctor, and you didn't become a lawyer.

S.K. No, no, a doc...a shneider my father wouldn't...

L.B. He wouldn't let you be that?

S.K. No, so then I went//.

L.B. It was good enough for him, but not for you.

S.K. ...to finish gymnasium.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. To be a, she wanted <sup>Spuler</sup> Salomo to be a, a doctor, a lawyer, an engineer.

L.B. Yeah. So what happened after gymnas? Did you have any more schooling, after gymnas?

S.K. I, uh, I uh, started, you know, to, I started, I made an application, uh, to, uh, to University, as, as ~~was~~ ~~was~~...and I start already, then I dropped it, because....I got in, in a environment of.....it was called *Zlataya Maladyet, Gold, the Gold Youth*, Gold, uh, Youth.

L.B. Youth, yeah, right.

S.K. Gold Youth.

L.B. Yeah, yes, Zolataya Maladyet, right.

S.K. Gold Youth. And, you know, the Gold Youth was like playboys, you know, to go dance, and this and that, you know, so then I dropped education.

L.B. And who supported you during this time?

S.K. You know...I worked, I worked in a, a, a, I worked in an office, which, in an office. Then...you see, I, when I dropped, uh, so I went to a school of, um, of um, as an accountant, to become.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. And I finished this, it was a course of uh, 4 months course, because I had education. So this was a special, so I got a job, in, in a, uh, in an office, as a, uh....a help of, of the, uh, of the accountant.

L.B. Accountant, right.

S.K. But I didn't stay long over there.

L.B. And what, and then at night you went out dancing and partying?

S.K. Dancing, and, and parties, and, and night clubs...

L.B. So this was in Lodz, right?

S.K. ...and beautiful girls.

L.B. Right.

S.K. And it was the life that Riley hadn't got.

L.B. (Laughter). That's 'cause he didn't live in Poland, Riley.

S.K. Yes, believe me, Riley hadn't got it.

L.B. Right.

S.K. I would never change with your Rockefeller.

L.B. Right.

S.K. *Er, zeh life*. So, uh...

L.B. Where did you live all this time? Did you live home, or did you have your own place?

S.K. Home, yes, yes, home. Then...

L.B. And your father didn't say anything?

S.K. Oh yes.

L.B. He said a lot.

S.K. A lot of things.

L.B. (Laughs). What did he say?

S.K. Uh, he said, whatever, you know. (Laughter). He cursed me as, not, not with ordinary cursing, but this and that. And, you know, he didn't cry, but it ~~was~~ like crying, and mother, mother cried, you know.

L.B. Yes, yes.

S.K. But, my brother, he, uh, he uh....he, uh...he didn't go my ways.

L.B. He did?

S.K. No.

L.B. He did not?

S.K. But he didn't also, he did nothing, because, then, when he finished gymnasium, he run out of Poland, because it was ansit...ansemit...anti-Semitism, you know, and he, and he went to Belgium, he didn't want to stay in Poland.

L.B. So he got out.

S.K. Yes, he got out, he went to Belgium. But this is his story, he is alive, Thanks God.

L.B. Yes, Thank God. Now, that's what I was going to say, there was so much anti-Semitism, I thought, in Poland, after the war. Is this true?

S.K.. Yes, yes, it is very true, but you see...it is, so much anti-Semitism here.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. You have a Berrigan.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. You know, a Berrigan, and, and he's a representing the Great Lord Jesus, who never existed...

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. *This will be the one? (on the tape)* But I am responsible, he never existed, never.

L.B. Well what about Berrigan? He's the, the priest who was arrested.

S.K. Yeah, yes, and then there's the other one who got to, to receive now, a, uh, a 'Gandhi award...award.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. What is his name? It is Berrigan.

L.B. Yeah, there were 2 brothers.

S.K. Yes, 2, but, uh...

L.B. Yeah, they were both priests were they?

S.K. Yes, and one priest who, who...

L.B. Who married.

S.K. ...before they could give him, the, the award, is refusing, a Catholic priest.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. Said he's not going to give it to him, because he made statements against Israel, and, so here you are, we, we didn't suffered enough, according to them.

L.B. All right, now, tell me, uh...did you ever, uh, you were a playboy, and you...

S.K. Yes, I was.

L.B. ...were having a good time. And then how did you become a dance teacher?

S.K. I, I became because I was a very good dancer, an excellent dancer. So, where we used to go to, like here, the, like in New York, the, uh...how you call it? On the, 7th Avenue, the Ro...Roseland.

L.B. Yes.

S.K. Like Roseland.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. So there were people, young people, uh, young, and they wanted, they didn't know how to dance. So, uh, they came to me and said... "Sidney, 'Satek", I was in Polish...

L.B. Yeah, yeah.

S.K. "Teach me dancing." And I took money for it, and I ma...made very nice.

L.B. Yeah.

SK. And then I start to give lessons.....in private houses.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. You understand? Couples, they, they, um...they gathered together, 3, 4 couples, fine, you know, wealthy people, and I taught them, home, with a *palette phone*

L.B. You're the first Jewish dancing teacher I've ever met.

S.K. Yes, you wouldn't met another, you wouldn't meet another.

L.B. There weren't really many, no. So your father must have been really upset.

S.K. Very much.

L.B. Yeah, and your mother, too.

S.K. But then I became a wealthy man, by dancing.

L.B. Is that right?

S.K. I opened my own studio, yes. A very elegant, the most elegant in Lodz.

If you will meet a Lodzer, and you say, "Kazanovsky", he will ask you, "Kazanovsky who had the dance studio?"

L.B. Mmm.

S.K. Yes, I, I became...a wealthy, very elegant, the most elegant dance studio.

L.B. So there was no reason for you to leave Poland and go anywhere?

SK. No, no, no, I didn't, I wouldn't change my life in Poland with Rockefeller, because I had a nicer life than he. Believe me, Lucille.

L.B. I believe you.

S.K. In night <sup>clubs with</sup> go visit my wife, mine son, being 7 years, 6 years old, got a governess, an English governess, uh, Miss Mary, from London, she came to Poland, she was his governess, my son learned French, already, when he was 7 years old, he start to learn French.

L.B. Mmm.

S.K. I learned French in school.

L.B. Yeah, Now, and so another thing that I was going to ask was that you were, were you at, ever, at any time, touched by any of the socialist philosophies that were in the air, too, at the same time? Now, in 1917, you were, now my arithmetic maybe will be better, 14 years old, and there was a revolution in Russia, February...

S.K.. Yes, I read about it. No, I was not, I was not, uh, <sup>attached</sup> touched, or touché, and, it was against my, I was rather for Czarism.

L.B. You were?

S.K. Than for extreme socialism.

L.B. I see, so you were really an anti-socialist right from the beginning?

S.K. As an anti-, as anti-Communist, you see, I was Democratic Socia... Socialistically inclined, I was not even in the movement when Zionism, as a Poale Zion.

L.B. You were not?

S.K. No, a Zionist.

L.B. I was going to ask you that.

S.K. I was a Zionist.

L.B. But not Poale Zion.

S.K. No, not Poale, maybe I would've become, later on, you know, when you become older, then you think, then you see the misery, and the, the worker has to be respected. You understand? Uh, I didn't feel, even, being the child of a hard-working man, home, but he was his own boss, my father.

L.B. Yes, yes.

S.K. He could stop whenever he wanted to, and he could start in the early morning and stop whenever he wanted.

L.B. Mm hm.

S.K. So I was not a child brought up, you know, with the discipline of you got to be 8:00 in the morning...

L.B. Right.

S.K. ...at work.

L.B. And 12:00 at midnight, home.

S.K. At, yes, at 12:00 at midnight, home, and 6 days a week. So...

L.B. So, socialism really, um, would you say that your family was political, really? Were they interested in politics?

S.K. They were non-political.

L.B. Right.

S.K. My father was non-political. Then, later on, as I remember, he became a <sup>Polchist</sup> ~~Polchist~~, a <sup>Polchist</sup> ~~Polchist~~ was a party, a new party, it was <sup>Polchist</sup> ~~Polchist~~, it was between Socialist, be...like the Bund...

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. And...and Zionism, Poale Zionism.

L.B. Yeah.

S.K. But it was Polchiste. Pardon, you want a drink?

L.B. No, wait, wait, let me see now. (Tape off). ...something. You know, everybody is really different. Actually then....you only left Poland as a result...

S.K. I was forced to leave.

L.B. ...of the, hh, rise of Hitler?

S.K. Yes.

L.B. Otherwise you would have stayed there for the rest of your life?

S.K. Very end, because I was not scared for pogroms. In Lodz we have not, there were no pogroms in Lodz.

L.B. There were not?

S.K. There were only incidents, where a group of Polacks, you know, uh, hoodlums, you know, uh, attacked a...

L.B. Hooligans.

S.K. Eh? Attacked...

L.B. Hooligans.

S.K. Yes, hooligans, hooligans, attacked, here or there, a Jew. But otherwise, I want afraid...nobody was ~~attacked~~, who <sup>would</sup> ~~would~~ attack Kazanovsky, nobody.

L.B. (Long pause). Now, you met your wife in Poland? Your wife is Polesish-born?

S.K. Oh, yeah, we...yes, in the same city.

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(Tape off)