

Link to **Part 1** recorded segment, 94 minutes:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1etXfgk4dh5127LYJy-GNid616WZwsUQv/view?usp=sharing>

Link to **Part 2** recorded segment, second tape, 94 minutes - **transcription starts on ~p. 62:**

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1-2mUH2yLcXVNYtt_Fy0YWPSTp2JY51H0/view?usp=sharing

Link to **Part 3** recorded segment; third tape, 45 min - **transcription starts on ~p. 112::**

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1n8U19m0PR1H3ppdHVL4isPhF8QiO5uYg>

For direct links to official recording segments at USHMM (those interested may ask register as private researcher with USHMM <https://collectionsrequest.ushmm.org/aeon/aeon.dll?Action=10&Form=79> and then email James Gilmore, archive specialist at jgilmore@ushmm.org, for access to links because they cannot travel to DC to listen in person, per usual protocol).

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Notes:

In Part 2/the second segment (duration: 94 mins), the questions lead Lella to refer to Casa Alpina and Father Re again. Lella mentions that Father Re arranged assistance but does not explain further (his story earlier in interview is about taking people who were staying at Madesimo hotel). In context, references to Father Re and Casa Alpina come across as name-dropping more than anything else.

Lella belatedly mentions for first time that Casa Alpina was his “boarding school” and refers to “many years” [\[\[Part 2 at ~2:04 time mark\]\]](#) (when topic of school comes up earlier, it isn't mentioned). Research indicates Casa Alpina was a Catholic summer youth retreat or you might say a “holiday home”. One *might* call it that during the war, but it's worth noting before September 1943 when Father Re moved there full-time, Casa Alpina was only open during July and August. The few kids (6-8) who lived at Casa Alpina from ~Sept 1943 until April 1945 were of course offered schooling. There is information that Casa Alpina was a youth retreat in the years after the war.

Part 2 is where Lella refers for the first time to Carlo Beltramini (~ 23:00 mark). **Lella also mentions that Tullio Galimberti is Beltramini's best friend. [See ~26:10 time mark.]** (This doesn't make much sense because of the age difference between the two. Galimberti was a 22-year old member of 3rd Garibaldi GAP “Egisto Rubini” assault brigade (Communist) in charge of gathering and distributing weapons ... not spying, much less for Uncle Alberto and Aunt Greta as depicted in novel. Also note: Alberto, according to Lella, was *single*, and Alberto and Porzia/Gemma's parents apparently lived with him, or he with them.)

Lella does claim that some (allegedly) unknown person at his Uncle Alberto's house [allegedly] told him over the phone to come to a particular police barracks at midnight in relation to what it was understood would be referred to but not in fact BE a “prisoner”: the (unnamed, unknown) “general” described in **Part 1** as “small”, “no hair”,

"ordinary looking" German who spoke Italian whose "big number one" job (assessed by Lella as such evidently because he had a secretary and a car 😊), according to Lella, was as a "buyer" to "supply[] items to German troops", specifically "food". **[Search 1:14:09.]** (If indeed food supply procurement for "troops", this would tend to exclude the idea that this person was Org Todt (which wasn't a "wing of the German Army" but at any rate almost certainly had its own in-house supply procurement unit. We know this man wasn't Leyers, who was not Org Todt and whose role was very different and quite a bit higher.)

There is nothing about Knebel giving Lella an assignment (much less related to a "hero" in the eyes of the Americans). However, Lella (according to Lella) decided to ask Carlo Beltramini to accompany them to watch his back/be Lella's bodyguard. Lella does not mention any particular person assigning him to retrieval/pick-up of "the general", just a supposed phone call made by a stranger from Albert's house. Lella mentions that he understood the task was to take the general to Innsbruck - which Lella considered "Germany" vs. Austria - but (the tale goes) that after being met by military police, Lella left the "general" in Bolzano at American "headquarters" with, it's worth noting, zero tales of exciting events en route much less what anti-partisans or Fascists/Nazis would refer to as "bandits"/banditi vs. "partisans"/resistance fighters.

It is in **Part 1** that Lella mentions that Knebel told him the general was Jewish when Lella met with Knebel in California in 1950 (?).

* * *

Interview occurred on July 3, 1985.

This verbatim transcript is materially different from the so-called 'transcript' prepared by the Institute - see separate file 12-12-19. In that much, much smaller 'transcript' summary, many questions, remarks and answers are not captured.

The bracketed alphanumeric designation in red, i.e., "[A1]", corresponds to the questionnaire.

PART 1

Q - OK. So this is Pino Lella. OK. 'Section A - Growing Up.' [A1] I'd like to talk begin by asking some questions about you and your family when you were growing up.

First of all, when were you born - in which month and what year?

A: June 1, 1926.

[A2] Q - In which town and which country were you born?

00:31

A - Italy. And the city was Bari down south.

Q - Bari?

A - Bari. B-A-R-I.

[A3] Q - OK. Where did you grow up - in which town and which country [...]?

00:44

A - Milano. That's the city where I went first to school ... **and Madesimo**. They're both in north Italy - Madesimo was in the mountains.

Q - Mm-hm. Which-which city did you live in the longest when you were growing up?

00:59

A - Oh, mmm, **because Madesimo was my school**, so ...

[[Franco Isman advises that Isolato-Madesimo was far too small to accommodate boarding schools. It was a resort town. In Part 2, Lella declares that Casa Alpina was his boarding school, but it was never any such thing (except nominally from Sept 1943 to April 1945 due to the 5-6 kids living there who were given schooling). Found information re: a 'collegio' called "Casa Alpina" affiliated with San Carlo College in Milan that was located in Montespluga, but it was determined - and Franco confirms - that despite the reference to "collegio" in its name, it was just another religious holiday retreat.]]

[cross-talk]

A - ... there ...

A - Oh, you went back and forth?

A - Well, **no, actually** I was in ... [pause] it was an institute - we call it collegio. It's 'internato' - I don't know how you say in English [boarding school]. But it's a place where you do room and board.

01:17

Q - Uh-huh, but your parents lived in ...

A - My parents, yeah. My fam- ... my home was in Milano, yes.

Q - Ok. So, now Milano was a large city, right?

A - Yeah, big city.

[A5] Q - What was the approximate size of the population, just ...?

A - At that time in Milano? One million.

Q - I would like to ask you to think of your home when you were ten years old - that would be in 1936. Were your father and mother both living in your home when you were ten?

A - Yes.

01:48

[A7] Q - Let me see here. Did you have any older brothers or sisters living with you when you were ten.

A - No. Younger.

02:03

[A8] Q - Younger brothers. You did have younger brothers or sisters?

A - Yes.

02:07

[A8a] Q - How many younger brothers ...

A - Oh. Excuse me. When I was ten, my younger sister wasn't born yet, no.

Q - OK. But you ...

A - My brother, yes. I had a younger brother two years younger than I.

[[Turns out Mimmo was just shy of two years younger - born March 20 1928 to Lella's June 1 1926. Author had the year of Mimmo's death wrong at 47; Mimmo died on August 2 1974 at 46.]]

Q - So you had one brother and-and no younger sisters...

02:23

A - **My sister came in 1939**, so three years later. We are talking about '36 when I was ten.

[[Turns out that Francesca/Cicci was born in Oct 1937. A picture of the kids with father at Lake Como (?) on the Pino Lella Instagram was not, as I suspected, taken in mid-1930s but apparently 1939. Given Cicci's appearance in that photo, I'd assume very late 1939 so that she'd be ~two years or so old.]]

Q - So in '36 your younger brother was how old? ... how much younger?

A - In '36, he was eight.

02:36

Q - So he was two years ...

[A9] Q - Now was anyone else living in your household when you were ten? For example, did you have any aunts, uncles or boarders or ...?

A - No, we had maids, and ...

Q - You had a maid living with you?

A - Yes.

Q - Ok. One maid.

A - Two.

Q - Two maids.

02:58

[A10] Q - In what country was your father born?

A - Same - Italy.

03:07

[A11] Q - Now, let's see. Uh, when your father ... What did your father do while you were growing up? Was he employed, unemployed, retired, in the military?

03:16

A - No, he was a ... he was a businessman, and ... his own.

[A11a] Q - [unintelligible] And he was a-an owner in [of] the business?

A - Yes, with my mother. Leather ... leather, uh, goods. Manufacturing and retailing. When I was ten.

03:45

Q - Leather goods, like uh ...

A - .. which eventually would transform into a fashion ...

Q - You mean like purses and sh-...

A - ... like ...

Q - ... belts.

A - ... from leather goods ... mainly bags, things of leather, turning into, what do you call ... casual wear ... clothing. Clothing. Fashion, actually ... it wasn't clothing. It's quite a notorious [he means well known/famous] name in Italy.

Q - [unintelligible] What was the size of the business at that time?

A - Mmmm-m-m-m, medium ... medium, medium.

04:29

[A12] Q - In what country was your mother born?

A - Same.

Q - Italy.

04:36

[A13] Q - Ok. What did your mother do while you were growing up - was she employed, unemployed, a housewife?

04:43

A - She - she was attending the business ... my mother [sic] business ... my father ... family business.

04:53

A - [throat clearing] In fact, that is the period where the business was transforming into a-a lady business more than a ... bags and fashions more for the ladies. So my father wasn't ... was only doing the administra- ... the administration part of it.

[A13a] Q - So what-what did your mother do - what was her role?

A - She was directing the whole thing.

Q - She directed the whole business?

A - Yes.

Q - And your father was ...

A - My father only the administra-administrative part ... the economic part ... the ...

Q - Oh, so in other words, your mother took care of the day-to-day like ...

A - She all the ... the-the administration was in the hands of my father, but the business was in the hands of my mother.

05:36

[long pause]

05:42

[A14] Q - Uhm. Let's see, I'm going to turn to page 3. I don't know if you need this or not. It just helps make the answers go quicker. Let's see, ok.

Now, how would you describe the relationship between the members of your family when you were growing up. In general, would you say your family was very close, somewhat close, not very close, or not at all close.

A - Ah, somewhat - somewhat close.

06:09

[A15] Q - Somewhat. Uh, now, next page. When you were growing up, was your family very well off financially, quite well off, neither rich nor poor ...

A - Quite well off financially.

Q - Quite well off. Ok. Now on the next page ...

06:24

[A16] Q - How would you describe your neighbors when you were growing up? Were they in general very friendly and helpful, somewhat friendly and helpful, not very friendly and helpful.

A - Mmmmm. [chuckle] Heh-heh. It's very difficult, because I ... Yes, I remember my ... Is this going? [\[He's referring to tape recorder.\]](#)

Q - Yes, it's going.

A - Yes, the man next door to us was-was a very friendly but very, very rarely saw because we-we didn't see them

06:51

We did not have too much of a neighbor.

Q - Mm-hm.

A - Even so, we are in the center of town, the relations in Italy are not like in California, [unintelligible] somewhere first you go and meet your-your neighbor.

Q - Not always.

A - Not always.

07:06

Q - So in general which would you say describes it best.

A - Well, not ... absolutely not this [\[\[think he meant to say "that" - still referring to California/U.S. because they are in Italy\]\]](#), so I would say ...

Q - Somewhat? OK.

A - Yeah. I don't say 'very friendly' because uh they never invited us over to eat for instance that's the point, but somewhat friendly that ...

[B1] Q - OK. Now, I'd like to ask some questions about certain people that you knew when you were growing up. First of all, who was the one person who had the most influence on you when you were growing up? That is, who taught you the most about life?

07:36

[long pause]

07:43

A - My father, in part, but not my mother. Uhm, mm, looking back at that ... this is related to my ten years old age?

Q - Well, when you were growing up.

A - As I was growing up? Oh, usually the people I was ... shared with at school, yes.

07:59

Q - Well, ok. If you choose just one person who would you say it be?

A - One person?

Q - ... who had the most influence.

A - My father then.

Q - Your father? OK.

08:11

Q - Umm...

[very long pause - hearing an airplane buzzing by]

08:40

Q - Just trying to follow directions here.

[paper rustling - long pause]

08:53

Q - Ok, now I'd like to ask you some questions about your mother. First of all, did your mother attend elementary school?

A - Yes.

09:03

Q - Did your mother attend, uhm, I'm not sure in Italy ... is it gymnasium ... whatever you say.

A - Yes.

Q - Is it gymnasium?

A - Yes.

Q - Did your mother graduate from the gymnasium?

A - Uh, yes.

Q - Did your mother attend university?

09:18

A - Ah, no. No. No, she got married before. She-she did ... uh-uh ... say ... mm... subscribe ... inscribe [\[\[Per Giovanni C., Lella was attempting to find English version of “iscritta” = “enroll”.\]\]](#)

Q - She began?

A - She did enter that ... she was married first, uh, ... World I ... during World War I.

[B18] Q - What was your mother's religious affiliation? Was she a Protestant, a Catholic ...?

A - Catholic.

09:48

[long pause - paper rustling]

09:58

[B19] Q - Ah, let's see now...page 6. Uh, was your mother very religious, somewhat religious, not very religious, or not at all religious?

A - She was not religious at [the] time. She became very religious after the war ... [unintelligible] recently.

[B20] Q - Oh really. Did your mother belong to a political party when you were growing up?

A - No. [\[\[This was very quick 'no' - arguably too quick ... cut her off. Not sure this is credible \(even if his mother was “liberal”, whatever that means for 1930s-40s or as of 1980s when he is thinking about it\). There's every reason to believe his mother also would be a member of the PNF/Fascist Party \(and PFR post-Sept 1943\), and all but certainly affiliated with other Fascist organizations.\]\]](#)

Q - Now on page 3. I have to keep looking back and forth here.

10:28

[B21] Q - Uh, how close did-did you feel to your mother when you were growing up? Would you say you were very close, somewhat close, not --

A - Somewhat close. [\[cuts her off/quick choice\]](#)

[B22] Q - What were the most important things that you learned about life from your mother ... would you say.

A - She was very ... the most important thing?

Q - That you learned about life from your mother...

A - Ohh-h-h, she was a hard worker.

Q - What other things did you learn from her?

A - Well, she had good taste and uh ... **11:03** [long pause] **11:07** and uh very, very, very liberal.

Q - Were there other things that you learned from your mother?

A - Oh ... affection.

Q - Affection? [writing] Anything else?

A - I can't think of, no.

11:32

[B23] Q - Did your mother ever discipline you - that is, did your mother ever tell you that you did something wrong or keep you from having things that you wanted, or did she ever scold you or-or strap you?

A - No, no, no. She passed that to my father.

[B24] Q - [chuckle] **Did your mother ever talk to you about Jews?**

A - No.

11:58

Q - Now I'm going to ask you some questions about your father. First of all, did your father attend elementary school?

A - Yes, yeah.

Q - Did your father attend gymnasium?

A - Yes.

Q - Did your father graduate from gymnasium?

A - Yes.

Q - Ok. Did your father attend university?

A - Yes. Not, uh, not to a degree though, because the war came and even then you know [unintelligible].

12:32

[B28] Q - And what was your father's religious affiliation?

A - He was a Catholic.

12:37

[B29] Q - Ok. Now, page 6. Uh, was your father very religious, somewhat religious, not very religious, or ...

A - Not very religious.

12:50

[B30a] Q - Did your father belong to a political party while you were growing up?

A - Well, like *most of Italian* [sic], he was a - he was a - he was a ... in a Fascist organization, like. You know that was obligatory in the time.. [\[\[Best not to call it 'obligatory' or 'compulsory' because not everyone was - if every Italian adult even in Northern Italy were a member, the PNF would have been much, much larger.\]\]](#)

Q - But would you call that a political party?

A - *It was the only one, yes, but ...* [\[\[Not exactly true...\]\]](#)

Q - So ... the fascist ..

A - *There was not too much choice.*

Q - It was obligatory?

A - Yeah, it was obligatory. Because he was very liberal and ...

13:20

[long pause - Q writing]

13:30

[B30b] Q - OK. Was your father politically active when you were growing up? For example, was he an officer in a party or did he attend political meetings?

13:38

A - Mm, there was a period when he did, but then he stopped doing. So I would say as a - as a ... generally speaking, no.

13:50

[long pause]

14:01

[B31] Q - Now, back to page 3. Ah, how close did you feel to your father growing up? Would you say that you were very close, somewhat close ...

A - **Some- somewhat close.**

[B32] Q - Somewhat. What were the most important things you learned about life from your father?

14:18

A - He loved all kind of act. He was a musician, so he liked to play the violette, ah violin. **14:24** [long pause] **14:28** And then he-he would ... looking back now so many years ... I mean, he was ... what I would love to see every man be like. So ... he was a-a example as a father.

Q - What sort of ... in what way would you say?

14:50

A - Because he was ...a sort of ... ah-ah, he had a very open understanding for **14:52** [pause] **14:54** things that he didn't even understand, like youth for instance.

Q - Youth?

15:00

A - Yes. <chuckle>

[long pause]

15:07

Q - What other things did you learn from your father?

15:10

A - Mm, love for music. [long pause] **15:18** Many things. Uh, I mean, I could write a book about him ... and my mother.

Q - <chuckle> Any other important things you can think of?

15:28

A - Yes, he was ... very sophisticated kind. He liked theater, he liked music, he liked paintings, he liked ... And he had a very, very strong belief that, uh, that's it's true that science are important, but there are things like uh arts and -uh- that are more important.

[long pause]

15:58

[B33] Q - Did your father ever discipline you? That is, did he ever tell you that you did something wrong, or keep you from having things that you wanted, did he ever scold you ...

A - Yes, with a lot of understanding for the ... for my wrong things. Always, I mean he was the one...

16:19

[B33a] Q - So how did your father discipline you?

[What follows is hilarious product of his misinterpretation or subconscious - he thinks "discipline" meant "reward" or "entertainment" ...]

16:23

A - Mm, because he was a busy man and he understood that my mother was also a busy woman, the best thing he could do in time is to send me a ... good-good college or good educational places.

Q - No, mmm, when-when he needed to ... [discipline]

A - Oh, by ... when-when possible, by taking me to the theater with him, or to ... that is to surprise me, or to-to-to ...?

Q - ... what did he do ...

Q - When you did something wrong ... to punish you.

A - Ah, to punish me! Ah, well he just tried to explain me things ... Only once he-he gave me a big schiaffo [smack]. I remember only once.

17:14

[B33b] Q - Uh, what kinds of things did your father discipline you for?

A - For the wrong things I used to do? Oh, for instance, like to lie, like smoking and stuff of course. And, uh, he did not want ... for not study[ing] too much, because I have never been a good student.

17:42

But I could say then more than ... he encourage me to do other things, but he never repressed me from doing things I was doing. Very few times.

17:57

[B34] Q - Did your father ever talk to you about Jews?

A - Yes. *[[Lella almost made it a two syllable - "Ya-ess" - can't describe his tone ... hesitant?]]*

[B34a] Q - What did he tell you? What did your father tell you about Jews?

18:04

A - Oh, many, many of our friends coming to the house were Jewish. Many of his best friends were Jewish. *[[Mm-hm. Then, so, how could you be clueless long before the age of 17 about what was happening ... if not in 1938 then at least by 1940 when there was active persecution of Jews, incl. expulsion from most professions (to include musicians at La Scala and Jews who held season tickets being told to turn them in). (Belatedly, he mentions a scientist known to his family/father that had to leave the country.) Notably, Lella also offers no info about what would be de rigueur antisemitic indoctrination/propaganda at school and elsewhere by 1940 a la "No dogs or Jews allowed", etc.]]*

18:10

[long pause]

18:16

And they were ... what they used to say, they were very much inclined for arts 18:23 [pause] 18:27 and music in general, and, uh, and because those were the things he loved most, he had a great deal of respect for these people. 18:35

[very long pause - do not hear writing]

18:53

Q - OK. Uh, now I'd like to ask some questions about you during the time you were growing up. Did you attend elementary school?

A - Yes.

19:00

[C2] Q - And ... What kind of elementary school did you attend? Was it a Catholic school or a non-sectarian school?

A - Uh, it was a - it was in the beginning non-sectarian [later, he mentions a military school], then it was Catholic. You could say Catholic because all of my education was Catholic too.

[C2a] Q - Uh, did any Jews attend your elementary school?

19:20

A - Yes, but at the time we didn't even know the difference, you know. At the end we were in-in the fall of the Fascist period. But until the war came, we didn't even know what the Jewish were actually, uh--- why they were so different, so ... [mumbling] We never put [brought up?] the subject on the Jewish people. [[This makes no sense under the circumstances and see below.]]

19:45

A - The only few times, and this has been done in my remembrance, because of the things that were said at school, at church or something like this.

[[Lella says this as though the Catholic doctrine wasn't vehemently anti-Judaism where it wasn't outright antisemitic on an individual level with a good portion of clergy, depending on the priest/bishopric in question. From where does he think anti-Semitism largely derives if not the Catholic church's ongoing efforts to (literally at times) demonize them throughout history? How does he think the Holocaust happened?]]

[[And at this point, we have yet to hear Lella's claim that a 'good friend' of his turned out to be Jewish - Leo Vestri - and then Lella mentioned someone named 'Siggy Gottlieb'. I'm not sure of probability of Italian Jews living in Milan with this last name, so if real, perhaps this kid was from elsewhere. After the racial laws were passed in 1938, Jewish kids weren't allowed to attend schools with gentiles. So it could be he meant but failed to mention where this was, or was embellishing a bit of truth from another point in time - changing the "when" of the friendship for effect. Keep in mind that Lella also later labels "good friend" and "friend" someone he's met only a few days earlier, when he ought to use the word "acquaintance" - which evidently is not part of his English vocabulary.]]

[[Lella later also describes those he identified as Jews ... along with gypsies and protestants ... as "not like" him. He never explains what about "Turks" or "Jews" are different from him, so]]

Q - Uh, were there many Jewish students, or some or a few ...?

A - Some, some.

[C3] Q - Did you attend gymnasium?

A - Yes.

20:06

Q - That was a Catholic school too, or it was ...?

A - It was a Catholic school, uhm, **[phonetic]** Abernathy-Afternathy **[[may not be a place]]** and then because I went first ...

20:19

A - When I start in Milano, that was not Catholic school, it was a military school, and then I went to an institute which was Catholic. **[[It's unclear why Lella would not claim this "institute" was Casa Alpina; later, in the Part 2 recording, he circles back to claim that Casa Alpina was the/a "boarding school". (It was not a boarding school but a summer-only camp and religious retreat, until September 1943, when it opened full-time and housed very few children, whose education was naturally addressed during their stay.) Interview also never quite touches on/get to where Lella went to (equivalent of) high school; in an Italian article, it was referred to as "il liceo classico San Celso" (in Milan, apparently).]]**

20:27

Q - So which did you spend the longest time at?

20:33

A - Oh, then I spent the longest time on the second one, and uh the Catholic ...

Q - Catholic.

A - Yes.

Q - I have to make a decision here.

20:43

A - Only one of the three things?

Q - I'll put the Catholic, because you were there the longest.

A - Yeah.

20:51

[long pause]

21:03

Q - One of the troubles with scientists is that I have to get everything ...

A - Yeah, but it's very difficult to give you the proper answer, because it's - my situation was very flexible. And even so we were Catholic ... Catholic education, we were a fascist country. We never discussed fascist matters so much, and we never discussed Catholic things so much. We took it for granted. Actually, we'd go there but we never listen to, because ... you know, there's no argument that could be taking place. There was no choice.

Q - No choices. [echoes]

A - No choice.

[C3c] Q - Did any Jews attend your gymnasium?

A - Yes.

21:34

Q - Would you say there were many Jewish students, some Jewish students, or a few.

A - Few.

[C4] Q - Did you graduate from the gymnasium?

A - Yes.

[C4a] Q - In what year did you graduate?

21:47

A - Mm, I think ... Gymnasium ... See gymnasium, not high school, yaWe have gymnasiums the-the first five years, then three years of **il liceo**. [[phonetic: 'luchiero' or similar, which seems to match 'il liceo' when pronounced in Italian.]] And I graduated five [?] - the ... Let's see, the ...

Q - Gymnasium, luchierio *[[il liceo?]]*, and then university. OK, let's put those two together.

A - When you finish elementary, then when you finish elementary was five years after ... ok ... 1930 ... 1936, I finished the elementary. **22:22** Then 1941 when the war started *[not quite - it was 1940]*, I was in gymnasium. **22:30** Then I had to finish the gymnasium in 1941. And then the war started, yes, so ... what is it you want *[unintelligible]* to know...

Q - Well, let's see you graduated gymnasium ... 19-

A - '40 ... started ... finished in 19- ... Uh, let me go back to this. 1936, I'm ten years old, and I'm *[sic]* been at school for four years. **22:55** In '37, and in '38, I was ... '38-'39-'40-'41 ... '42. When I, when I was in my last year of uh gymnasium in 1942 **[23:08]**, uh, *the family moved in *[sic]* another city because of the bombing of Milano.* *[[In part 2, he mentions that his mother was in Parma for a while and then another (unnamed) place. He never mentions the place referred to in the book - Rapallo.]]* It was '43 - in I think '43.

[C5] Q - OK. Did you attend university?

23:22

A - Mm, that is beca- before to go to Lucierno. **['Lu-chi-er-no' Maybe?]** I attend university after the war. *[Emphasis is his.]*

Q - Mm-hm. But you did attend university.

23:30

A - Oh yes.

[C5a] Q - Ok. And what field of study did you emphasize at the university?

23:37

A - First, first, first I pick up ... I took Fine Arts after *being at di Libirera* *[[best I can make out, not 'liberale' but 'free']]* **Milano.**

Q - Was that your major study then?

A - That was my intention. And then I was too ... I was committed with skiing, and I went to the United States at that time, so I never finished.

Q - When it was there, it was Fine Arts.

24:01

A - It was fine arts. And then I even went for a course at *Le Sorbonne* in Paris and picked up Letter and Philosophy. [[This is one of very few items that lines up with one of Mike Lella's remarks, but of course the book has him wandering aimlessly and brokenhearted with no mention of schooling.]] More than my student desire was a necessity to keep on going with my skiing sport, you know. It was an athletic situation.

24:23

[C5b] Q - Uh, did any Jews attend your university?

A - In Milano? Uh, yes. Yes, quite a few.

[[Important to note that, with his tendency to misinterpret, he may not be referring to *university* vs. another level of school in a prior year. If he was attending private or public school, if referring to 1943 or before end of war, Jews would at least need to be Catholic converts in order to attend, so ...]]

Q - Would you say there were many Jewish students?

A - No, very few ... few ... few.

24:39

[C6] Q - So you didn't graduate from the university.

A - No.

Q - Ok. Let's see ...

24:47

Q - Did you ever apprentice in a trade?

A - No. Unless ... unless skiing or ...

24:54

[C8] Q - I don't think that's a trade. [laugh] Uh, what was your religious affiliation during the time you were growing up?

A - My what?

Q - Your religious affiliation.

A - My religious?

25:04

Q - When-when you were growing up.

A - Uh, well, I was uh Catholic [Cath-ol-ic].

25:11

[C9] Q - Now, how religious were you when you were growing up - would you say you were very religious, somewhat religious, not very ...?

A - I, because of the situation where I used to go, I was obliged to be very, very religious. <laughing> But I was not in ah - deeply inside ... sort of rebelling to that.

Q - Well, inside you would say you were ...?

A - Mm, just casual.

Q - Not very or not at all [religious]?

25:37

A - Mm, I would say quite ... not-not very, not-not at all, but I don't think I know myself how to judge that situation. I would say not very religious to put it mildly ... mildish. [laughing]

[C10] Q - [laughing] What were the most important things you learned about life from your religious leaders?

A - Which leaders?

25:59

Q - From your religious leaders, like a priest or ...

A - Oh.

Q - ... whoever.

A - Mmm, sort of discipline ... highly authoritarian, I would say. They ... what did my impression of them, that's the question?

[cut out cross talk]

Q - No, no, the question is what were the most important things you learned about life from the priests or other religious leaders.

A - What I learned?

26:25

A - Brotherhood. They preached that. Maybe they don't do it much, but they do say a-a lot about it ...
[[It is strange and telling (to me anyway) that Lella refers in Part 2 to years at Casa Alpina and identifies it as the "boarding school" he attended and yet does not here refer to Don Luigi Re at all as a person-priest of influence.]]

Q - Were there other things?

A - Honesty in general.

Q - Honesty.

26:43

A - A respect for other people.

26:44

[long pause]

26:52

A - Mmm, brotherhood that's what ... what I said. Very, very, very normal things.

[pause]

27:07

Q - Uhm, any other things?

27:11

A - Mah. They sort of, uh, sort of tried to put into .. into me the ... uh ... the terror [fear] of Devil, of Hell, but that ... I don't notice for ... [those were] not my good teachers, those were the poor teachers. **27:29**
[pause] **27:35** If you understand what I mean.

Q - [laugh] I understand.

27:43

A - Well, they didn't do any harm, I think they did me some good.

27:46

Q - During the time when you were growing up, did you have many close friends, some close friends, a few close friends, or didn't you have any close friends.

A - Few close friends.

Q - When you were with your close friends, were you usually a leader, usually a follower or what?

28:06

A - Uh, with ... I used to be a follower of the-of the uh older people and a leader of the-of ...

Q - ... well, with your closest friends, what was ...

A - With my closest, I would say I would be-would be a follower.

28:23

Q - Among your circle of friends, did you go along with what was happening or did you sometimes object to some things?

A - Uh, say again? I wasn't following you.

Q - When you were with your friends, uh, did you always go along with whatever was happening or did you sometimes object to something and say 'no'.

28:40

A - If they were good friends, I usually go along with them.

Q - Were any of your close friends different from you in terms of religion?

A - Yeah, one. My ... Leo Vestri was a Jewish, he was a very good friend. He was a leader, too.
[[Keep in mind that Lella elsewhere categorized 'Mr. Didt' (sp?)(did he mean "Ditz"?) - a man with whom he'd been acquainted only a few days - as a "close friend".]]

Q - Were any of your close friends different from you in social class?

A - Mmm, a few - a few.

29:07

Q - And you said one of your friends was Jewish? [\[\[Based on some of Lella's remarks, one can interpret this as meaning that he learned later this friend/person was Jewish \(and likely a Catholic convert if they attended school together during 1938-1944.\)\]\]](#)

A - Yeah.

29:10

Q - OK. Did you know, uh ... questions, ok. [stopped] Now let's go to page 7. Now I would like to name some personal qualities. For each quality that's listed here, I'd like to know if you thought that you had the quality very much, somewhat, not very much or not at all when you grew up. This is after you grew up. OK, so I have a whole list of things. Now, uh ... Honesty.

A - I had this quality.

29:46

Q - Would you say very much, somewhat, not very much.

A - Now you asked it about honesty?

Q - Mmm. When you grew up.

A - Yeah, honesty very much. **I like that.**

[\[\[Here, is Lella clear that the interviewer refers to what qualities he thinks he POSSESSED when growing up, not which ones he likes?\]\]](#)

Q - Self confidence?

A - Yes.

Q - Very much? Somewhat?

30:03

A - Mmm somewhat - somewhat.

Q - Independence?

A - Somewhat.

30:11

Q - Able to take responsibility.

A - Somewhat.

Q - Willing to take chances?

30:16

A - When I was a ... that was a little crazy. I ... very, very much. [laughing]

Q - Able to make decisions.

A - Somewhat.

Q - Adventurous.

A - Very much.

30:29

Q - Helpful to others?

A - Somewhat.

Q - Willing to stand up for beliefs?

30:34

A - Yes, very much.

Q - Patriotic.

A - Some of the time I do not have it. I- I ... great [unintelligible] because convention about patriotism, because I was ... confused, yeah.

Q - So would you say not very much?

A - Not very much.

30:50

Q - OK. You're a good respondent [unintelligible] [lots of paper noise]. [laugh] Sometimes I have to ask the question over and over and over.

A - No, but sometimes ... Some of those things I don't know myself I have to think about ... It doesn't come, because maybe I feel that I am patriotic, and-and ... **I remember times in which I detest the, ay, the feelings.** I even don't like the people that are, you know, and then I feel **then they had to be that way.** So I'm confused even today. **So I don't remember exactly at time what my standing was.** Patriotic? No, I was against. But because maybe patriotic meant to be the other way around, you see, which we could - we were not allowed to be. It's not so simple.

Q - Yeah.

31:33 [[This is somewhat wishy-washy. Compare to Lella's disdain about the Italian surrender in '43. I note that they did not send a experienced researcher who had a general knowledge about Italy and might have otherwise dug into his Fascist indoctrination and participation in follow-up queries.]]

31:35

Q - Mmm. Uhm, now I would like to ask you some ... Mm. I'd like to ask you some questions about the five or so years immediately preceding the war ... just before the war.

31:46

Q - First of all, where were you living at that time - this would be ...

A - First in Milano. Five years before the war?

Q - Mm-hm.

A - Milano. [pause] Milano, uh, **six months out of the year, seven months.** [[So...1935-36.]]

Q - And then ...

A - That ... that because we at school. Scholastic, yeah, then during the school, we have one and a half month vacation, and then the **four month vacation summer time, that time always I was not in Milano when I was not going to school.**

Q - So?

32:30

A - I was never in Milano unless it was for school.

Q - Ok. Milano for school.

A - Mm. That's the first ... that's five years ... that before the war. So that means when I was a child, a small kid.

32:34

Q - But your parents were living there, I mean, that's where your, that's where your ...

A - Yes, that's when I was in a ... Yes, my - my family lived in Milano. [Q-Mm-hm] I ... but in the-the first three years when I was a child, I used to live with my family. Then when the war started [[1940]], I was sent to a collegio out of ah ... 'collegio' means a boarding school.

[[At first, I thought Lella might be thinking of the time when Italy invaded Ethiopia in 1935. Italy entered WW II in June 1940. Lella later also refers to running away from a boarding school at six years old and implying he walked 35-40 km to Milan (that's not clear - it wouldn't be a surprise if he only walked a short distance before being picked up and decided not mention it).]]

Q - Mm-hm. But the five years before the war, you were ...

A - I was going to school. I was living in - with **the** family, that ...

Q - So where was that?

33:05

A - In Milano.

Q - Oh, in Milano.

A - In Milano. But as I said, then the vacation time come, and in vacation time we are not in Milano. Some ... in winter vacation ... see, in-in even today and at the time too, we have almost a month vacation in winter time, then I go in the mountain ... we have a small home in the hou- [house] in the mountain[s]. [[The "mountain house" is different from the "country house", which Lella says is "somewhere else" - LOL! - which he later indicates is in Madesimo, formerly (also) Isolato.]]

33:27

In the summer time, we have long four-month vacation. As a vistu ... [unintelligible]. I understand in-in America you don't take that long, but ... uh, that's ... And just for a month, I used to live in the mountain all at [sounds like 'sea'] [unintelligible].

Q - I have four months but my daughter doesn't.

A - [laughter] Ah, I see.

Q - Uh ...

A - So that means five out of twelve you see.

Q - Were you married before 1945?

33:51

A - No.

33:52

[long pause, pages flip]

34:02

Q - Ok. Uhm, what did you do immediately before the war - were you employed, unemployed, a student?

A - Student.

Q - Student.

34:15

Q - Did you have any Jewish friends before the war?

A - Yes.

34:24

Q - ... page 4. [paper rattling] Uh, let's see. Before the war, were you quite well off financially, very well off, neither rich nor poor...

A - Quite well off.

34:42

Q - Now on page 6. Before the war, were you very religious, somewhat religious, not very religious or not at all religious...

A - Not very religious. [[Also see answer at ~ p. 21 (time mark 25:37) and in Part 2 at ~ p. 118 (time mark ~21:00) when this question is raised about Lella's present view.]]

Q - Did you belong to a political party before the war?

A - Mm, yes, **like every Italian**, you know. Just let me take a moment to explain this. The moment you enter school, you know when you are in the first elementary school, you have to be associated with the juvenile Fascist organization, Opera Nazionale Balilla at the time it's called ... ONB. ONB.

Q - ONB.

A - ONB. Just-just as adult would have to do if he has any business or anything, he has to ... along with his registration for any business or any kind of profession, he has to show also his registration to the Fascist Party. That's why my father was a Fascist and so was every person I -

[[He is not pressed/asked to and doesn't of his own accord go on to mention a thing about groups like the GIL (after ONB dissolved) or any other social and political entities he'd be expected to join later, esp. the PNF and then its successor PFR (or, obviously, perhaps also join/participate in as a matter of choice but disinclined to mention it)...]]

35:42

Q - [[she interrupts! GAH!]] Because nobody in Italy couldn't be ...

A - ... Because nobody if you say 'No', you get in trouble and everything else. But that-that doesn't necessarily mean that you were a Fascist inside.

35:54

[pause]

35:57

So at school that was automatic, as of the moment you enter ... as you ... as you ... as your father sign for ... he also signs and you are in-in engaged into the ...

Q - I didn't know this. Yeah. This is interesting, 'cause these ... Of course I've asked these questions with other ...

A - The French people.

Q - ... his question ... and it's different. Each country has a different situation.

36:19

A - Yeah, for instance, Boy Scouts, I know **even when I had kids in the United States when I used to live there** [[it turns out they are in Italy during this interview, not California]] and they asked me at school if I want to enter them, is it my choice. But in Italy we did not have the choice. [[Note: this may be confusing, but Italian Boy Scouts equivalent was banned many years earlier.]]

Q - Automatic.

[[That is, if you weren't poor and in that case could not afford the trappings, outfits, etc. He's suggesting here, from an adult perspective, that kids might otherwise dislike and object to pretending to be soldiers, parades, etc. when in fact they generally love that stuff and are malleable to indoctrination.]]

A - Automatic.

36:36

Q - Were you politically active before the war?

A - No.

36:41

Q - Thinking back to the place you lived the five years or so before the war, did you have a sense of belonging in your community - did you feel like an outsider or what?

36:55

A - [strong throat clearing] Very pertinent question for my youth. I would say that I sometime I was very strongly convinced that I was absolutely out ... and-and that I belonged to another world. And then some other time, I had you know this was made me ... this reality ... just thinking I was that way out, it made me think that I HAD to belong. So I was confused.

37:21

And I think that very few person we knew what was going on at the time.

Q - In gen-

A- ... in terms of society in Italy. Because the war was coming. I'll tell you why. **There was a period which I used to vacation in Switzerland.** And the-the news, the information I get there even through children, even in my infantile world were different than the one I get in-in-in Italy back home. **37:53** Ah, even so, those are pertaining to the-to the world of children, they were quite different uh influences.

38:05

So some time I felt when I was home that I felt I belonged to the Swiss world. For instance, I used to listen to "Stardust", it was a song then, and I knew because I heard that in Switzerland and because I was studying as a **young guy, I was studying English**, that Carmichael wrote "Star-dust". [\[\[Note: there will never be any mention of an English nanny or being asked to be a translator when he \(allegedly\) becomes employed by Org Todt.\]\]](#)

38:27

Then when I came [home] to Italy, I had to fight [\[argue\]](#) with my friends because they said “Stardust” was not an American song, it was an Italian song by **[phonetic: Nixio-Nitzio Calbini]**, I have to tell you.

So-so I say you know ... Because why? Because during the Fascist period, it was forbidden to-to have ...

38:50

Q - American influence ...

A - ... music, the usual word ... the enemy of England and the Anglo-Saxon world. That was soon before the war, and I would say five years starting [unintelligible] after ... We are - there is ... can I talk about this?

Q - Sure, sure.

A - There was a little historical moment that will explain the situation. You must remember that in **1936**, Mussolini - our leader - our ...

Q - Il Duce.

39:16

A - Mussolini, il Duce, eh, sent Italy to war against Ethiopia ... Abyssinia.

Q - Right.

39:26

A - It was '35 or '36 [\[\[it was 1935\]\]](#), and then I was a little ... I was nine years old then.

39:30 And, uh, because of the reaction of the British which created the sansione - sansione [sanction?] means the sort of, they closed a sort of gap against Italy to try to convince Mussolini that he should not have such ambition, and this gap created a reaction by Mussolini. Uh, this reaction was mainly in the form of ‘The hell with anything that is British.’ You, so no British name, no British ... You could not ... For instance, there was a friend of my father that used to have a sporting goods shop called “Sportsman”, and then he had to [Q - change it] he changed it to “Sportivo” because he could not use an English label for it.

40:20 And those small things, they-they created a reality which was of a phobia against America, against English. So I was educated under this light, but when I was out because I was in a position of going to Switzerland or so, then I also hear the other side of the **bell**. [\[\[Above he refers to Switzerland in relation to vacations - time mark 37:21-ish at ~p. 31.\]\]](#)

Q - So in general would you say ... for the most part would you say you felt you were not part of the community, or ...

40:50

A - I-I took immediately the standing of being - of being different - of being against, so I was ... I was not uh associated with the Italian people ... with my friends. [\[\[But see his irk about Italian betrayal in terms of armistice of September 1943 - p. 41 ~57:20.\]\]](#) That's where uh all my-my standing as a man was created, and [one word unintelligible] cause ... I'm usually very ... I critics much more of Italians than the Americans or the English, you know ... which has also probably is a mistake too, but that's the way I am.

41:20

Q - Uh ...

A - Is that confusing?

Q - No, not at all. To page 8.

41:31

Q - Now, in which ways did you feel like you were **not an outsider**? [\[\[Note that he quickly loses track of this at certain points...\]\]](#) Uhm, in political beliefs would you say?

A - Don't forget that I was only ten years old, you see [referring to 1936] ... but in some sort I could also, I would say educational background, but even that is too much of a word for a child, ... [sounds like he's reading] social class, but income, lifestyle or business.

42:03

I would say 'lifestyle' because that is something that I can think that a child would also realize.

Q - Mm-hm. Any of the others though?

A - Political belief, yes, because I was already in a sort of ... if that ... just before the war?

Q - Mm-hmm. Well, you know the five years up to the war time.

A - Mm-hm. Political I would say, yes.

Q - Any of the other others? Educational, ethnic?

42:30

Q - Not religion, not occupation [\[\[and by this he means a job :\) \]\]](#), not ... Lifestyle a little bit, because the ... I-I-I used to go a lot for American way of living you know, just because of my situation of mu - knowing music, uh ... **learning al [or 'a little'?] English through the songs**, jazz. [\[\[Again, no mention of British nanny...\]\]](#) Uh, people be against jazz and I was, so I would say lifestyle. **42:54** Income wouldn't make too much of a difference. Many [slightly unintelligible] friend of mine were the same income bracket of my father, and that means social class the same, so ... Ethnic the crowd [?] we're all ethnic from the same point. [\[\[Lella is confused about this question being where he was NOT an outsider/did NOT feel like an outsider.\]\]](#)

43:07 And my Jewish friend were ethnically just like me. There was no difference between Jewish or Catholic. We wouldn't even know then they'd be Jewish.

[\[\[Lella later utterly contradicts this when describing the friends of the "general" that Lella drove to meet a person that \(he claims to have known with no apparent basis\) would help them cross the border. There, Lella in effect declares they could be identified as Jewish based on their "dark" appearance. Also see 50:40 below/five pages from here.](#)

[Anyway, in Lella's circle, it's reasonable to conclude there weren't Jews that revealed they were Jewish, and Lella discovered it after the war. They also may have been converted to Catholicism or simply did not practice Judaism, e.g., Franco Isman's family. If Lella had friends like "Leo Vestri" and "Siggy Gottlieb", he likely didn't attend school with these kids because after 1939, they wouldn't have been allowed to attend public or private school as Jews \(unless it was a Jewish school\). It is probable that a 'Leo Vestri' could and would conceal Jewish identity - it was very common in Italy, esp. if a secular vs. observant Jew. Regardless of the school situation, you'd think that Lella would refer to what happened to these kids after 1940 when the racial laws made life miserable for all Jews. Lella only mentions a scientist known to him-his father \(?\) who had to leave Italy.\]\]](#)

43:16

Then my friend uh **Siggy Gottlieb**, his name was too obvious but he was just like one of us. No ... Political beliefs? Yes. But our political information was very much reduced at the time ... very much uh kept ...

Q - Censored?

A - Censored.

Q - Mm-hm.

[[Unclear what he's trying to convince her of, because the campaign to mark Jews as "other" and then after 1938-39-40 as "enemy" was common knowledge. And this leaves aside Catholic indoctrination of Jews as doomed Christ killers, etc.]]

A - So I would say lifestyle, and I don't know ... judge you, you can judge it ... [unintelligible]

43:41

Q - Ok. Now I would like to ask you to think about things that you may have done that were out of the ordinary, either while you were growing up or before the war, which was for you was about the same thing.

A - Before the ...

Q - Before the war. But first of all at any time in your life before the war, did you ever do anything unusual to stand up for your-for your beliefs ... for example, did you ever fight for something you believed in, or did you lose friends for standing up for what you believed in.

44:09

A - Yes. The uh ... with some close friend who were very much inclined about thinking that the ... future entering the war against the English was a necessary thing, so then I stand up against that. But I would say ... just for a ... it was more a lifestyle for me even to take that uh-uh position more than a really convinced -uh- political know-how, I did not know too much. But I felt that that was ...

44:47

Q - So it was, you would argue ...

A - Ah, vilarious [sounds like "vilarious"? - not entirely intelligible], yeah I would ... fought them.

Q - You fought too ... get in fights?

A - With my friends? Ah, sort of yes. [[Context reveals he means debates-disagreements, not physical fights.]]

45:03

Q - At any time in your life before the war, did you ever do anything unusual to help other people? For example, did you work as a volunteer in your community or in a hospital.

A - No.

Q - ... or anything to help other people.

45:18

A - No. I must say that we were not exposed to much of that sort of volunteering offer [off of?], because things were run very smoothly, and we were ... we were young. Yes, if my ... some friend of mine need that, we were a close body, but ...

Q - But nothing out of the ordinary?

A - Nothing out of the ordinary that I can think of.

Q - At any time in your life before the war, did you ever do anything unusual to defend or support your country? For instance, were you active in political youth or student group?

45:49

A - No. [\[\[This is a quick interrupt before she finished the question, and the answer is actually untrue. ... Lella says nothing about dropping out of ONB/Balilla or any other youth groups. And mere youth group participation wouldn't get him the position at 17 in Org Todt - he later mentions April 1944 and being with the general for a *year* - so consider his possible status as a devoted Fascist vs. his \(alleged\) resistance member Uncle Alberto being a Fascist just for show.\]\]](#)

Q - At any time in your life before the war, did you ever do anything that was risky or adventurous?

45:59

[pause]

46:03

A - Well, uhm, strictly as a matter of sport, yes. Because I ... uh, you know I was on a ski ... I was on a junior ski team, and uh I was doing ... I was busy in ... uh ... athletic discipline. But uh I won't say that-that wasn't ... It was ordinary administration for a fellow that was involved with skiing.

Don't forget **I'm a professional skier** [\[\[vs. ski instructor\]\]](#), so that's where the whole thing started when I was a kid.

Q - So what would you say you did that was unusual or adventurous?

46:46

A - In the ... oh, I didn't ... uh, I got you wrong. Uh, something unusual in general adventure?

Q - Mm-hm.

A- Oh, I thought it was [that interviewer meant] some-something that other people did not do. Ah ... no, no, nothing like that.

47:05

A - You are referring now to-to something private like ...

Q - Oh. Well, anything at all that you did before the war that was risky or adventurous - unusual that was risky or adventurous.

47:15

47:20

A - Well, I think that I stole my father's car and I went [laughing] for a ride.

[sound cuts out for a while]

47:33

[recording repeats]

A - Well, I think that I stole my father's car and [laughing] I went for a ride.

I don't think ... but don't forget that before the war. The war started in I think '39 [actually 1940], and I think then I was 13 years old. You know I did not have the age for ... **47:49**

47:51 Oh, I don't know swooshing [down?] the mountain with my ski, with one ski, I didn't have ... if you like that. That was my crazy thing. Oh, I don't know, I went up to ...

48:05

Yes, when I was four years old, I walk [laugh] ... I-I walk ... I-I'd just run away from co- ... from my institute, because the priest took me into [laughing], so ...

Q - When you were four years old?

A - No, that was six years old I believe. And I walked from ... by I-I-I woke up and I remember then I'd run away from a- from a-from uh school, and I went from padi- ... from Cantù to Milano, it's about 35 kilometers ... 30 mile by foot.

[['35 km' is alternate word search to reach this spot.]]

48:33

Q - And you were six years old?

A - I was six years old but the people won't believe it.

Q - That's unusual. [laughing]

[cross-talk]

A - Very unusual.

Q - It's not like ... [unintelligible]

48:44

A - [unintelligible] The ... carabinieri all over looking for me and I was going to Milano by foot. I remember that I was very, very outraged and well, I don't remember very much. I remember more what I'm saying through what my mother used to tell me than what I really ...

Q - Ok. Let's turn to page 9.

49:03

[D21] Q - People sometimes think of others as being like or unlike themselves. I'm going to read you this list of different groups of people, and I would like you to think back to a time before the war. For each group of people, I'd like you to tell me what you thought of those people before the war in general. Did you think the people were very much like you, somewhat like you, not very much like you or not like you at all - just in general.

Uh. Rich people. They were very like you, somewhat like you, not very like you ...

49:34

A - Not very mu- ...somewhat ... I mean ...

Q - Some-

A - Uh, rich people. **I would have loved to be rich that's for sure**, but uh ... some-somewhat like me. [\[\[What the quite wealthy Lellas likely considered 'rich' would be, i.e., the Agnellis \(Fiat\) - which family Lella later mentions \("aristocrats"\).\]\]](#)

Q - OK. And poor people?

A - They were like me for people ... yeah, some poor people were like me and _____ [unintelligible] I would want to be like them. Some. [[Note: compare to just below when Lella is asked about whether he considers himself like Jews, Turks, gypsies - different answer.]]

Q - ... somewhat like you.

A- Yes, mm.

Q - Or ... how would you characterize how you thought about them, in general.

A - Poor people?

Q - Yeah.

50:11

A - Poor people that were ... Uhm, thinking back, they were very ignorant at the time, because of ... a-any kind of education used to cost a lot of money at the time. But among them there were many very exquisite people ... intelligent, wise, they-they ... so I think that they were somewhat like me. [[LOL.]]

Q This is how you felt before the war.

50:40

A - Yes, yes, but again remember that I was totally young. Catholics are somewhat like me too. I mean, protestant [is] unlike me ... we did not know too much about them, so that ... not very much like me, not at all like me. Protestants. Not at all like me because they were different. [[Lella is likely looking at questionnaire]] Turks, Jews, gypsies and that is not at all like me - they were all different.

Q - What about Turks was different? Not at all like you? And Jews?

51:14

A - Well, the-the friends I, the friends that I knew that I didn't even know they were Jews, so they were exactly like me ... the one that I did [I did] not know they were Jews. [[Emphasis is Lella's.]] So ... gypsies, they were not at all [like him]. [[Lella never really answers the question...]]

And Nazis. There were Nazis and Fascists but very similar at that time, esp. after ... but that was at war [?]. You're talking about before the war.

Q - Mm-hm.

51:35

A - Our education was very limited, you know - ethnically speaking and politically speaking because we were young ... too young ... and too sense- senseless?

[[Somewhat contradictory given another comment to indicate what Lella would hear in school and at church. He prefers to forget kids were brought up/ indoctrinated by Fascism and the Church, esp. the latter as to anti-Judaism if not anti-Semitism (the latter depended on the priest, etc.). Keep in mind Lella likely fibbed by omission when in a position to suggest the extent of his engagement was limited to ONB/Balilla.]]

Q - Censored?

A - Too censored, so very difficult to come ... While rich people and poor people, everybody knows the difference. Catholic? Mmm. Not - no not important to see ... we didn't feel too strongly about religion because the religion was a state religion. You were ... everyone, just like being Fascist. It ... being Catholic was just the same thing - we were obliged to be.

[[Nope. As to Fascism, were it true that everyone was obliged to be a member of the PNF and then (in the north, the) PFR, then more folks would've been registered members vs. members in the many ancillary social organizations ... and were this true, there would be many more than 900,000 to a million members in the PFR (new fascist party of RSI/north Italy formed Sept-1943).]]

52:25

Q - No choices.

A - No choice.

52:20

Q - What about Nazis and anti-Jews [? - not "anti-Judaism"]?

A - Absolutely ...

Q - I mean, were they ...

A - Not so special [?] at all.

Q - I mean ... But did you ... you never thought about it [??].

A - Not at all, because uh ... No, not at all before the war, I didn't even know that there was any-any difficulties, you know. Actually, I must ... 52:37 [just] between us, and because there's nothing you can write down about this ... The Jewish people, [[slight pause/hesitation as though he's not sure he should be saying this 😊]] I knew they were all well-to-do and rich people, because they spoke different languages, and it ... Milano was like that. [[In context, given his English, it's reasonable to interpret this as

"confidential" and not wanting it on the record. Witg regard to smuggling things and not people later on, Lella later explicitly says "between us, and because there's nothing you can write about this" ... a directive to keep the remark off the record. Sentence interpretation is quite different without the brief pause calling for a comma after "The Jewish people". Try it both ways and you'll see what I mean.]]

And my father used to have many friends that were Jewish, and they were all good artists, and they were very ... *I remember good cars and servants in the house and things like that.* [[So this was on social occasions where his family was invited over or is he talking about actual friends?]]

53:00

Q - Hm. [noncommittal]

A - So .. I ... you know ... so I would not have considered them Jewish, I would have considered them rich.

Q - Mm-hm, first rich.

A - Yeah, as they say ... I didn't think of that.

Q - Ok. Before the war, was there any group of people that you had strong positive or negative feelings about?

A - Before the war?

Q - Mm-hm.

A - No.

53:23

[long pause]

53:30

Q - Thinking back to the time before the war, were you distressed by the anti-Semitism in your country, were you unaware of it, or didn't you have any feelings about it one way or the other.

A - Uh I would say I was unaware, I didn't know. [[Lella spoke very quickly. So it seems Lella would have, if pressed (had interviewer done some homework), might have - incredibly - denied knowing a thing about the impact of the 1938 racial laws despite his father supposedly or actually having a number of Jewish friends ... and nothing about the active persecution of Jews that began in 1940. THAT SAID, search "scientist" or search time mark 59:09 below to see Lella comments about a scientist who had to leave the country because, it is implied (and was true), Jews were no longer allowed to be employed in many professions ... this eventually included a ban on working as a musician or even holding season tickets at La Scala.]]

Q - Sounds like Milano must have been a special place.

A - Yeah, yeah, yeah, different. [[Sure, Milan was cosmopolitan, but not radically different in terms of what became open anti-Semitic abuse and mistreatment from 1940 onward (after the racial laws of 1938) a la "no dogs or Jews allowed" and all the economic and cultural persecution, etc. Lella also cannot pretend that anti-Judaism wasn't part of every Italian Catholic's upbringing, hence many Jews choosing not to reveal they were Jewish (where possible) and/or converting to Catholicism, which helped them get assistance when deportations started.]]

53:54 - "during the war..."

Q - OK. Now I'd like to ask you questions about your experiences during the war. First of all, was your work during the war the same or different from the work just before the war - well, before the war you were a student.

A - Yes.

Q- Were you a student ... you were ... during the war?

54:07

A - I was a student all the time. Only during the war it was difficult to be a student though, so because [of] the bombing, and see that's why my-my educational life scholastically speaking was only stop[ped] [?] ... I didn't finish my school[ing]; I had to do exam again after the war and all that.

54:25

Q - Uhm, let's see here ...

54:36

Q - Now when the war broke out in your country, you were living where?

54:41

A - Uh, I was at, I was going to school in ... well, in Milano. Milano. [[So ... the military institute?]]

54:53

Q - Before the war, did any Jews live in your neighborhood?

A - [long pause] Yes, several Jews. But I didn't even know they were Jewish.

55:04

Q - Uh, do you remember the date that the war broke out in Italy?

A - Hmm. If I remember ... now I don't remember. It's the ... in Italy, it was in 1940. [pause] Yes. [pause] Yes, I used to know to day, but my memories betray me now.

[[1940 was when Italy entered WW II as part of Axis, though WW II began 1 Sept 1939. In June 1940 Mussolini declared war on France and Britain. Italy engaged in the 'Second Italo-Ethiopian War' from Oct 1935 to Feb 1937, and there was occupation and (Italian) guerrilla warfare that lasted through, I believe, September 1943. There's also the brief Italian invasion of Albania in April 1939, and the war between Italy and Greece from October 1940 to April 1941.]]

55:30

Q - 1940, yeah.

55:35

A - 1940, yes. I think '39, I remember when Hitler enter Austria was '39. And there-there was a [unintelligible] ... remember, I was a child then, not uh... Because ... if I know I know because of after and recently, I think ... you know ... through television programs, and through books and things, you keep on reading of the tragedy of that era [[in Italian, meant "era" but sounded like ah-rea]] ... so I should know the dates, but as I said before I try not to be interested in those things.

56:18

Q - How did you feel about the Nazis taking power in your country? Can you tell me in your own words what you felt?

A - Well, first of all, it's difficult to say that they took power in this country ... And when they DID take power in this country was, uh, after, uh, the uh October of 1943 decision of M- [[stopped before he said "monarchy" or Mussolini?]]... the Italian government to stop from to stop hostility. And in other words, that was from a certain point of view, just like uh betraying the Germans because it ... Fascists and the Germans and the Nazis had come to work together.

57:02

Q - Right.

A - So if one withdraws just because he sees the boat is sinking, that-that sort of shocked me. So I didn't see that very favorably. I saw it [thought?] ... if I wasn't ... let's say - I wasn't ten years old any longer at that time, so I felt it was ... it was not very honest. [[Did he intend to say "honorable"?? In any event, these are noteworthy remarks.]]

57:27

[pause]

57:32

Q - On what occasion did you become aware of what the Nazis intended to do to the Jews?

57:39

A - Right in that same period, when uh after the October 1943 ... [pause] and at the time I was 17 years old, I had a little more ... more cap-ability to understand the situation in general, and I realized that something mmm against the Jews was done **because I had some Jewish friends telling us in the house.** **[58:17]** And my father was always you know maintaining his friend-friendship ... his relational friendship with those.

Q - So some people came to your house.

A - People came, yes, and then my father talking things and ... [long pause] And then was the period which the propaganda start to - start to become less ... less, uh, w-word ... words wise and more effective. Actually they were taking the Jewish and something was happening to them.

58:57

Q - So in Italy that was after ...

A - That was during the war after the first few years it was [??] ... because I know that ... I know after the war **[1940]** that those things were taking place even before, but at the time I was too little to understand. [\[\[Esp. given he refers to hanging out in Switzerland - presumably in the '30s - this doesn't seem entirely likely but ... what about illegal radio, etc.??\]\]](#)

Q - Mm-hm.

59:09

I knew the family that was Jewish, and there was a scientist and they had run away from Italy because he was Jew, he didn't have a chance here [\[\[because he could no longer make a living\]\]](#) **but this, the other thing then I would - I took in constellations [consternation?] and I understood as being when I was an adult ... not-not when I was a child.**

59:30

Q - How did you feel the first time you saw a Jew wearing the yellow star of David?

A - That I've seen only [pictures of after coming to?] in the United States after ... you mean the emblem, the ... ?

[cross-talk]

59:45

Q - Well in Germany and most occupied countries, they had to wear ... in Italy too, I think, didn't they have to wear a star?

A - No.

Q - They never wore the star in Italy?

A - No, no, no.

Q - ... not dismayed the Jews wore a star to identify them.

[[This threw interviewer for a loop. Among other things, she isn't keeping in mind how few Jews there were in Italy, and wouldn't know how Italy created very detailed records of who was Jewish, where they lived, etc. from censuses even before the 1938 racial laws were instituted, etc.]]

A - No.

Q - So you never saw it.

A - That- if that happened I've known this, I've seen this in the movies I've seen but not then.

[recording stopped and then resumed]

1:00:15

Q - Ok. So now could you please tell me in your own words about your rescue activity. Because your story is so important, I'll be taking notes as you talk but also making a recording ...

A - Mm-hm.

Q - ... so as not to miss anything. So, uh, just begin at the beginning of ...

A - Well, there are several ... yes, there are several, uh ...

[cross-talk]

Q - I'm sure you've got a good story [??] ... I'm sure you've got a lot to say.

A - ... several instances in which ... For instance ...

1:00:41

Q - Why don't you start with how it started.

A - Uh, the way it started, uh, it started when being in the age of having to attend military service, uh, and because in my family, I had as I said, I told you before my-my mother's brother Alberto Albanese was quite, uh, quite active in the underground, and of course this was after the September of 1983 [sic], you know when the ...

Q - '43.

A - '43, yes. When uh, what did I say, '83? '43. When the Italian government withdraw from operations and well had uh, we thought the war was over, but it wasn't-wasn't so...it had to continue for a couple of years again.

1:01:37

And at the time I was in the age of being ... almost in the age of being in the army. So through my uncle Alberto, I volunteered to go 1:01:51 [very long pause] 1:01:57 in a particular service which was part of the Todt ... German Todt organization.

Q - How do you spell that?

A - T-O-D-D [sic - Todt].

That was a - some kind of German paramilitar- German paramilitaristic? [sic] ... how do you say paramilitar [sic] organization. They had mmm, eh, a special department which was strictly the volunteer. [[There was no "special department".]] And I never, I never found out what actually their - their -uh- missions were, but they were supposed to be some kind of a uh arm - armed guard. 1:02:45 There ... actually, this was not of great interest to me, because the reason why I went there is because my uncle said so. And the reason why my uncle send me there is that I could have been of some help to-to what he was doing. 1:03:04 And -uh- as I said before he was in the underground as a ... was already he was part of the Comitato di Liberazione Nazionale [CLN], so he was working underground with the British and the Americans. [[One does not necessarily mean the other, so ...]] So that was what we called the 'partigiano' in this country. [[Why does he declare "so he was working ... with the British and the Americans" as though that's what it meant to be CLN? Ignorance or preference to be deceitful?]]

[[So why is it that if Lella gave Sullivan this information on specific affiliations, Sullivan chose to exclude it from the book? I mean, it wouldn't be hard to look at the Albert Albanese files in the Ministry for Cultural and Environmental Heritage aka beniculturali.it if indeed Albanese was "Resistance". There is NO reference to any of this in the book by Sullivan. This includes the heroic role contrived for Mimmo. Only outside the book at a presentation does Sullivan specifically claim Mimmo was "honored" by "the Garibaldi organizations". It's a wonder that Sullivan doesn't recognize Garibaldi was a *Communist* partisan group. The notion that Mimmo would be involved with that faction vs., say, Christian Democrats, is mind-boggling. His parents would've blown a gasket. Anyroad, is the absence of specific references to organizations in the book part of a fanciful notion that then no one could prove the tale is almost entirely a fraud?]]

1:03:25

So that's how I started. And then -uh- and soon I was out after three or four months of -uh- training with the Germans **which was strictly army** **[[almost certainly inaccurate even if talking about an Org Todt 'enlistment' (vs. common civilian employee job like every other Italian)]]**, and once I was there, I was not subject to-to be taken or be sent away or taken by the Fascists to go to serve military service **God knows where, maybe in Russia or something like that.** 1:03:50 When I was out of there, I was given the assignment of driving this general 1:04 [pause] 1:04:04 through northern Italy in whatever the general was com-committed to do.

1:04:11

Q - So this now was a uh was an Italian paramilitaristic org- ...

A - It was a German. A German associated [with] Italian, because you know ... the war ... **[[Unclear why Lella seems to be or, less likely, pretending to be unaware of the Italian equivalent entity(ies), e.g., Paladino Organization, etc.]]**

Q - Was it really a partisan group, or it was ...?

1:04:25

A - No, no, it was the absolutely the opposite. It was-was-was a Fascist and German ...

Q - [cutting him off] ... but your first mission was ...

1:04:32

A - Yes, the reason why, the reason why my fa- [intended to say 'father'] my uncle -uh- suggested and **I go there because he already knew how to man-manuever my situation specifically** when I would have come back from my first three months of duty. 1:04:50 **And in fact through his -uh- conoscenza [?] through his -uh- through the people,** assign me this uh-h-h-h - this duty to be the chauffeur [Q - Uh-huh] and the-the bodyguard ... **[[Lots of "uh"! Anyway, Lella never really explains this or what the point is. Because he declares the "general" trusts him and the general (supposedly) asks him to take friends to someone who will help them cross the border, it makes no sense to me that the two would not openly discuss what their arrangement was about, etc. This sounds hopelessly vague and poorly contrived.]]**

1:05:08

Q - But he-he knew when he sent you to this-to this training that ...

A - That this was all ready to be done, yeah.

Q - So he sent you for this training so specially to get these later assignments.

A - Yes, yeah.

Q - So he had some connections, some ...

1:05:19

A - Definitely, so he was working as I said, **he was the man that had the radio, he was in jail for it.** He was ...

[[Now this is important. If Alberto was arrested and jailed for possession of a radio, then how is it that this 'radio' - the suggestion being that it was a radio transmitter - was left behind in Alberto's home for Lella to later retrieve and move to his parents' home?? Had Uncle Albert actually been suspected to be in possession of a radio transmitter, the unnamed authority would NOT have failed to find and take the radio (also seems strange that he would be released **after being held for "months", but Lella does not explain**). I am willing to believe this is the same Albert Albanese that was held at San Vittore. Records suggest it was some time between March 1 and November 30 1944. In Part 2, Lella indicates that Alberto was held at San Vittore for several months, and was not released until close to the end of the war.]]

Q - So his group had infiltrated this Todd [sic-Todt] sit-situation... [[LOL. Not proper to refer to this as "infiltrated", but then Lella believes - or wants people to believe - Todt was a "wing of the German army" as declared in the book, when it was not.]]

1:05:25

A - Right-right. All of those things we were not supposed to know afterwards [?] ...

Q - So were there others training at the same time as you for this similar ...?

Q - **Several, but for the-for the usual routine of them coming down** and be vehicle _____ [unintelligible] around north Italy for their regular duties, which consisted of **[1:05:44]** guarding, driving ...

A - A-and did you know when you were having this training that this was going to be ...
[[Why does interviewer continue to interrupt?!]]

1:05:47

A - Well, my uncle mention it, but he said when I ask question, say 'no questions', otherwise you just take your own decision and go whatever you want to do ... wherever you have to go. **Either [end] up in the mountain like a partisan, or enroll right now, enlist right now with the-with the Fascist Army, which I did not have intention to do, so I was sort of taken -uh- you know like so.**

Q -[laughing]

A - But ...

1:06:14

Q - You really had no choice. [\[\[Stop interrupting! LOL.\]\]](#)

A - I had no choice.

Q - So this was ... so you really -uh- your uncle's ... under your uncle's tutelage [A - Yes-yes] in this [unintelligible] like your ... your mentor.

1:06:21

A - My uncle through my father ... My father asked him, he was actually my father could not do too many things. **The only thing he could do is to-to lock me in the house waiting for the war to be, to be end ... to finish, you see.** [\[\[This doesn't make a lot of sense under the circumstances, if Lella wants to assert that he was subject to enlisting in the RSI armed forces...which he was not as of 1944.\]\]](#) That's how I-I ...

Q - But you had a military training then. [\[\[She interrupts ... again!\]\]](#)

A - Yes, for ... German training, yes. I was sent to Modena, and there the training -uh- the training -uh- began there in Modena, and **I-I-I had been told at the time that the training was same for any-any German soldier ... quite severe their discipline.**

[\[\[It is possible that he enlisted in a RSI armed forces entity but decided later to declare that he was Org Todt. It's also quite probable he was a Fascist Party member and *maybe* was inducted into a special unit as a result, because otherwise it'd make no sense for any German entity - even not-a-wing-of-the-'German Army' Org Todt to give a firearm to an Italian without knowing it for a fact that he was a devoted Fascist.\]\]](#)

Q - And it was for how many months?

1:07:07

A - For three months, fortunately for three months ... because it was a quick sort of training, because at that time they were [putting-pulling] out pilots in three months. So imagine to ...

Q - [laughing]

[\[\[Under what circumstance would Todt-related training be for months? Quite possible Lella had developed some very weird ideas post-war about how to spin this. I don't know of Italians doing anything but hiring on as \(civilian\) employees for Todt. If he's contemplating some different position, an Italian in Todt in a "enlisted" capacity would be far more rare and, again, such a person would be established as a devoted Fascist ... to "enlist" as he likes to say ... similar to the "Italian" in a Wehrmacht uniform that Lella refers to...\]\]](#)

A - Because the war, you know there were **16, 17 years old -uh- people in the Air Force**, so the ... so I did not have anything so risky ... so difficult, which I would have loved to go [unintelligible] at least I drive a plane, you know, always been in my-in my fantasy, and I had to go in this thing.

[[If I recall correctly, the Germans were using Italian armed forces folks in manning artillery batteries and what not, etc.]] [1] [go to end of document]

1:07:34

But then the reason why I went there is because my uncle told me that when I - as soon as I am back, he fix me up in such a way that I have contact -uh- the sort of contact I like to have ... that he guessed my feelings, I think. And then I [unintelligible] always had a very good -uh-uh- opinion of my Uncle Albert with my ...

Q - Uncle Albert?

A - Uncle Albert.

Q - Was his name Lella also?

A - Albanese. Albanese.

Q - Ok, so then you have this first assignment and I know you told it to me before but I need it for the tape.

1:08:07

A - So this is what happened actually. As soon as I got back you see, there was a ... while on training, we -uh- we were under a bombing of the ... I don't remember if it were English or American airplanes, and I was wounded. [Q - Oh?] Yes, I was wounded but the ...

So in that ... I remember calling Milano and my mother said that "Uncle Albert has something to tell you, but -uh- he's not here now. Call back tonight." 1:08:40 I could not call ... and he come and he was able to make the call to the army base where I was staying, which made-which makes it very unusual.

1:08:50

And I understood that he was sort of powerful in such [sort?] a way, and -uh- he [Uncle Albert came and?] got me. But I was out of the hospital already, but my hand in the cast, I had broken arm and my finger may have ... of course they were angry and they sew me this finger because I was involved in this bombing.

[[It seems to me that Lella is perhaps weaving into a tale his childhood hand-arm injury. Remember, there is a photo of him as a 12-14 year old with his friends and his right hand and forearm heavily bandaged. At any rate, the injury almost certainly was not so serious as his finger almost being severed. If true, hand wouldn't be functional for months and presumes some remarkably advanced surgery.]]

So he wanted to know exactly what, uh, how it happened, because he was making -uhm- contacts to have me after -uh- in what do you call it when you are wounded and you go home because you are ...

Q - After recuperation?

A - [unintelligible - 'Call it an'?] recuperation, get me home, because he [Uncle Albert] had this project already going on ...

1:09:37

So I was back home in -uh- **five or six days after the episode [pronounced 'epi-so-di'] [unintelligible]** being in hospital for-for a week and we stayed _____ four days and the fifth ... four-five [Lella counting] ... the fifth or sixth day, **I was -uh- hidden in a *Corriere della Sera* little pickup truck.** [[Why would Lella need to be hidden??]] That's the little truck that delivers the paper from Milano to Parma, Modena, because I was in Modena, the city close to the lines where they were fighting, you know, the Americans had already *in gafenara* [phonetic] they'd already been in Rome, in Cassino, they'd broken through, so they were coming up in the northern part of Italy, and so I was hiding in this thing and I was taken to Milano with my German uniform with a swastika here, my gun - my-my duty belongings, which are the - you know - they were [unintelligible - 'tend'] the Germany Army had these things. [Q - Mm-hm.] **1:10:40** And I was ... then when I ... the-as soon as I arrived in Milano, I-my uncle picked me up at my shop **1:10:47** my family had a shop in Milano centro right close to the SS building. And he took me to-to his place, and I spend the night there, and **then the day after that a-a car came. It was a Wehrmacht car with a - with an Italian in German uniform** [[see below the "gentleman then first [he] met" before the general...]] and uh he just asked me to drive around the city. Remember, I was only 17 years old but I was a good driver, and he say ok.

1:11:18 And from then on, he asked me if I wouldn't care to stay on this job rather than to go back to whatever assignment they would give me as soon as I am through with my-with my days of recovery [Q interjects], whatever they call it.

1:11:33

And so a couple of days after I met this gentleman, which was his job as a general of the Todt Organization [Org Todt] ...

Q - German general?

A - German, was uh-yes- full German ... He [who - Italian guy in German uniform?] had **said that he [the general] didn't-did not speak Italian, but he spoke Italian also** ... **1:11:47** And that's when my few things up started.

1:11:52

[[It'd make perfect sense for Fischer to speak Italian given all his interactions with Italian firms ... BUT I still do not believe this person to whom Lella refers was commanding Org Todt. The description Lella gives of this person's position does not match Fischer or anyone at top of Org Todt operating group food chain. Lella thinks this person was "big number one" because he had a secretary and a car. **See below 1:14:09.** That's not how it worked. Lella refers to how this man was in charge of "supplying items to German troops" (in the Institute transcript it mentions

food - and in Part 2 that "he was the big number one" in this way. Lella very probably promoted this man just like Lella did Knebel, who Lella declares was a colonel ... but Lella promoted from Knebel from major.]]

1:12:00

Q - OK, so now then have to tell the story over again because ... So, you drove him ... then tell me what you did.

A - So what -uh- what I had to do. Uh, I had to drive him in his assignment. He had, I knew **that for instance the officer then first I met before to meet the-the general** explained to me that my-my mancione, my duty was to drive him around. And he **[the Italian officer]** wanted that gentle-uh-he wanted somebody to trust and he knew my ... and he knew me because he knew my family he said, but it was not ... Actually it was my uncle that just did [sounded like 'adjusted'] all this, and he-they could trust me ...

[[It may actually be true that someone asked for an Italian boy in Org Todt as a driver. I do not believe that a relative of Lella's "arranged" for Lella to be the driver UNLESS there is evidence that this "general" was playing a double game and associated with someone at the CLN. Did the general have "friends" that he wanted to help leave Italy? Who knows. Lella declares that the general asked him to drive people to meet with someone who helped them leave the country. We cannot know if that is true. What we can know is up to Sullivan being obligated to provide recordings from his interviews. He wouldn't even produce the "ten-minute" video that he claimed was being put together in August 2017.]]

[[Mike Lella remarked that it was *Aunt Greta* who knew someone in the "German High Command" though of course Mike wouldn't know what the heck he was talking about here... Leyers wasn't part of the GHC, nor Fischer.]]

1:12:38

... I wasn't going to sell the-the German to the partisans or to betray him, and all I had to do was follow the uhm orders and my job was just so simple that ... In fact I did, **only I-the first time out I realize it wasn't so easy because -uh- no matter where we went, we were attacked by partisan** or we were -uh- we were right like at the eye in the - a [italian word sounded like 'shicuri'] [Q - interjected "hurricane"] hurricane, **because probably this man was important.** [[Hmmm - "probably".]] And, but anyhow, this happened in a-in a, let me see if I can remember approximately the dates, was a ... **must have been in-in around April of '44, and for one year after that ... I - eight months, until April of '45, I had this duty.** **[[So it seems he's including the 'training' time of three months.]]**

[[Muh-huh... You'd think that he'd tell Sullivan this version where he was continually attacked/detained by partisans, so it's rather remarkable that Sullivan didn't include it as "too unbelievable" - as compared to what Sullivan made up?! Note that Lella also referred to being "put up against a wall" in Swiss-Italo interview related to release of the Italian edition in early 2018:

<https://www.rsi.ch/news/ticino-e-grigioni-e-insubria/Pino-Lella-leroe-riscoperto-10060601.html>

This is the occasion when he said he knew many of the people allegedly helped but that he hadn't known they were Jewish. Makes sense to hide being Jewish since 1938 when their active, state-sponsored persecution began in Italy.]]

[[It's also entirely unclear why the author figured he had to fiddle with timeline, because anyone between 16 and 60 was expected to devote some kind of labor.]]

1:13:50

Everything-everything worked all right. I never had, I never got into real problem. I got into many problem that looked like it was the end of it, and then at the last moment [snaps fingers] like I said this morning, it was able to ... me ... you and this gentlemen are ...

Q - OK, so what ... you were driving him from wherever they told you ...

1:14:09

A - So whatever I told you [?]. And soon I understood then this gentleman was also, this gentleman was also participating in some sort of -uh- of duty ... a different kind of duty. He was actually the buyer of the-of the ... for the supplying -uh- items for the-for the German troops in Italy, he was the big number one because had secretary, he had-had a car at his disposal of which I was the driver. [[This does not make the man a "big number one". He would not have been a member of Org Todt unless he was a buyer of supplies for members of Org Todt. Anyone buying items for "German troops" in general would not be Org Todt. Org Todt was not a "wing of the German Army" as portrayed through a comment from the "Aunt Greta" character. I believe Lella was driver but do not believe he was a "bodyguard", much less for some German Wehrmacht officer.]]

1:14:41

And he had a-had a beautiful apartment in one hotel in Milano and then a palace ... [[exaggerating Como villa??]]

But I also understood then he was probably doing something in the other hand ... for two reasons I understood it. [[Wouldn't your uncle have mentioned it after the war??]] Because my uncle-in my uncle - uh- in-in the simple situation [fact?] that my uncle was _____ [unintelligible] of being on the other side of the fence made me understand it was something. [[Sounds like speculation, if this is not an outright fabrication. Lella says nothing about how his uncle and this general interacted...]]

Q - That he was an agent for the partisans?

A - Right.

Q - Mm-hmm.

A - More than for the partisans, for the Americans and for the English...

1:15:17

Q - And what do you think he was doing while you were driving him from these places.

1:15:22

A - Well, he was doing whatever he could, but keeping also the, uh, the ... keeping the American and English informed of what kind of situation. Of course he knew exactly what was going on of the moment of the-of the armies, and because he was in charge of feeding them. So he knew all ... so probably had the contacts. In fact, more-more than several times, I took him to a place where I know there was a radio there [makes no sense in terms of conclusions], so probably sending dispatches from there to wherever

Q - Oh, you took him to certain place where he would send radio ... messages?

1:16:02

A - Yes, radio and things like that, yeah. Now that, the extent of my-of my being so trusted to him were that-that they experimented ... they-they probably -uh- put me into the possibility of understanding what was going on and see what-what my reaction would have been. And because I didn't say anything, actually I was favored ... favorable to them. Then as I said my uncle also kept on saying 'Wait, wait ... things will happen.' So, well, anyhow, this went on for almost a year, I went all over the north of Italy with him and under ... in several occasion [sic] were taken by the partisan and _____ one night, we-we spend in a place right _____ to Cunio, which is a city around there and they killed some of the fellow that they took along with us. And -uh- right 1:16:54

Q - [unintelligible] stopped and ...

A - They were executed ... yeah ...

Q - You were stopped and ...

A - We were stopped, roughed up by partisans. So we were taken away and then before the ... before they killed the other fellows that were there, the two of us were given our car and 'Go', so can _____. So obviously there was something. This happened more than once, in a normal situation, just stop and go, but sometime in a situation like that, I was the last ... I thought this was ...

1:17:23

Q - That you were actually up against the wall?

A - The one time I was up-up against the wall, and so _____ [unintelligible?] and then he said two fellows _____ [unintelligible?].
So anyhow ...

Q - How did you feel when that happened?

A - Yeah, I did not know ... I mean certainly I was in a state of shock because I don't remember too much about ... I remember them ... I remember being thrown against the wall and that's it. And then when I ... just at the last moment 1:17:54, there was the guys already there if you follow with the [unintelligible - sounds like 'amps'] ready to shoot. [[I do recall in an Italian interview that Lella mentions being put up to a wall and mention of fear of imminent death by shooting.]] Because some of the guys [executed?] were Fascists, they were ... those are partisans that took us, eh? You understand.

Some of the fellows that were there and then eventually got killed ... got executed ... were ... had been accused of -uh- kidnapping or stealing or raping, I don't know something like that and were executed.

1:18:20

But that I knew wasn't true, it was just an excuse just an excuse just to kill some Fascists. You cannot kill just without giving an explanation, [[uhm, sure you can]] so they say "Ah, yes, we kill you because last night you raped my sister" or something like that. It was just out of the-out of the imagination. So they kill them, but it really was just because he has a black shirt on. So I was in a group like that, so imagine how I felt. And they can invent anything to kill me. I wasn't ["wore the"??] German ...

Q - And you were wearing ...?

A - No, I wasn't always in -uh- was rarely in the-the [uniform]... The general himself liked to be in plain clothes. But the car we were driving was an-a Wehrmacht, you know, a marked Wehrmacht, so...

Q - But you were wearing plain clothes too?

A - Plain clothes. Sometime I-I wear a German uniform. And, uh, the German uniform, I have to wear my swastika, which is, you know, Germans don't have to wear a swastika, you know they were German. I had to. And I-on top of it, the German [uniform] had the new Italian flag and they gave me the Italian flag to sew on it [patch?].

1:19:20

A - Maybe ... and that was one of the signals I was supposed to be recognized with. [[Er, or maybe it was to just designate you clearly from a distance as Italian. :)] So it's just like saying 'If you see that one individual or that young kid who drives the car, he is so-and-so [unintelligible] just help him rather than [Q - Don't shoot him.] ... rather than torture them.' And that was going on all the time ... And this happened also when it ... several times we picked up friends of his that were Jewish people.

Q - Now tell me about that.

1:19:48

A - Well, for instance, one time -uh- we were-we were on lake of Garda and we went up to Verona, _____ [??] which was very difficult -uh- traveling because it were a lot of things going on the road ...

Uhm, I have to enter where -uh- shooting and partisans were ... **This was almost the end of the war.** And - uh- where we were in Bolzano **1:20:20** the general decide to ... for me, he wants to spend the night there and say "Ok, I'll uh ... you pick me up tomorrow at this time, but now do me a favor. There's a friend of mine and his wife, they have to go to uh Trento. In Trento make sure you then you have and he gave me an address. So I went from Bolzano to Trento. In Bolzano, I pick up these people - the little depot Trento was a lady and her husband, and they were two Jewish people. **Of course they didn't say anything to me, but I knew that they were Jewish, [[How so? See below based on "dark" appearance.]]** and I give them ...

1:20:55

Q - How did you know they were Jewish?

A - ... and I give them... First of all, because we also at the time we had the-we understand, you know, **they were a little different - they were dark people**, dark in a sense of ... mmm ... I don't know how to explain **[[you mean politely, without self-declaring as bigoted white supremacist??]]**, but uh **just like I would have said a guy is a Anglo-Saxon, that fellow is Jewish**, it's ... I had in my-in my mind **[[what happened to "can't tell the difference" ... "didn't know who was Jewish"??** In 2018 TV interview for release of Italian edition, he said these people were all friends but that he hadn't known they were Jewish.🙄
<https://www.rsi.ch/news/ticino-e-grigioni-e-insubria/Pino-Lella-leroe-riscoperto-10060601.html>. Also search where he's asked questions about Jews, gypsies, Turks and whether he views them as the same as he. Only correct answer is: no difference (see, i.e., Barbareschi's answer). Lella fails test by saying they and he aren't the same.]] ... I didn't pay too much attention at the time; I did my duty and that's it.

1:21:24

But then I was told that they were Jewish **[by whom?]** because the several people I took were all Jewish, and because when I was in **Madesimo then later on** ... you know, as I said before, between one traveling [trip] and the next, **I had three or four days, and those three-four days I just stay in Milano with my folks or go back to my [family place or hotel] place in Madesimo in the mountains** **[[aka "mountain house" elsewhere. Lella may mean his family's mountain home vs. the hotel, but elsewhere he contradicts this and refers to "most of the time" at the hotel.]]** ... and that's where I used to go. And the reason why I used to go there is because now it had a **1:21:49 a normal thing for me to be there because most of the time I had to take some of the people from the Madesimo Don Luigi Re school down where I used to go down in [to] Switzerland.**

Q - Ok. We'll get to that in a little bit. That's another story.

A - But that's something else.

1:22:05

A - ...So back ... going back to the general, I for instance that one time I took those people from -uh- from Bolzano to Trento, and then ...

Q - Excuse me, how far is that?

A - Bolzano-Trento ... just three hours driving - uh - now a little longer because ... [unintelligible] at the time, much longer because of the deviation in the route in the north, they destroyed some part-bridges you know because they had several rivers to go across there. But anyhow, and then the person I-I gave this [these] people to, I know them ... it was a skier ... and I know the much older man than I was ... a guide-a ski guide in Valtellina where I-I used to live. And he told me and he say ... and that's the first time that it dawned on me that I was doing this as a normal routine you see. Because he told me, he say 'why are you doing this?' and [I?] say "What?" [laughing]

Q - Then he was going to [unintelligible]?

A - So he explained to me ... yeah, he would have continued the travel to-to the area where he would have taken them in safe[ty].

Q - To Switzerland?

A - Switzerland.

Q - Mm-hmm. So that was the first time it dawned on you that you were helping [?]. [\[\[Note: Helping people get to Switzerland - and he could only assume this was the destination \(if illicit travel, it wouldn't be discussed - does not automatically mean they were Jews. Many types of people were not allowed to travel but did surreptitiously or illegally.\]\]](#)

A - That's the first time. The first time. Actually, I -uh- maybe ... it may be we _____ [?] taken it without knowing the time. It dawned on me because I was _____ took some people. _____ aware of it.

1:23:40

Q - So how did you feel when you realized it?

A - Well, because all along I was sort of expecting something because I didn't feel too much. ... say finally I was becoming useful in some sort, that's why ... that's the way I felt.

Q - Hm.

A - Anyhow, then I went back to Bolzano, and the general was there, and I took him back to ... stop in Milano and then I went for five days in the mountain. I don't remember more precisely, but and then I back to Milano for next assignment.

Q - Did you never ... you never talked to the general about these things, or was it not your position to do that?

A - Ah. He was very friendly and he knew that I wasn't just a ... so he tells me about ... No, he never, no, he never -uh- did anything for me to become -uh- suspicious of that. But he was a benevolent with all sort of things, he was very ... I would say very, very normal individual. Actually, looking at him, he was a very simple person. He was little and ...

Q - Very simple?

A - Very simple looking fellow, you know, very ... when he had a uniform on, he looked like a German but otherwise it would've been a small fellow, no hair ...

Q - ___ extraordinary [?].

A - I would say minus.

Q - [laughing]

1:25:06

A - And, uhm, so I never ... Beside that, I knew then I didn't have to say anything. That sort of ... moment like that, you will have a feeling how to behave. And then everything you feel that you should not do, you don't do and this is then -uhm- explained to you by somebody else. And then when I saw, when I see my Uncle Albert he tells me [[tells you... what? :)]] ... But that was the end ... when he told me was at the end, you know. He said 'you know you're doing a good job, you know. You are ... you were the right person for this' and so on. [[The right person for ... what? :)]]

1:25:46

A - And this happened by the way happened for almost one year. [[Getting timelines garbled...]]

Q - So how many times do you feel you were delivering Jewish people for this general in this year?

A - All during the year [?], I would say that I would pick up up at least 25 people, you know in that six months, seven months, because at least twice, three times every month.

Q - And then you delivered them to people who ...

A - Yes, mostly from Milano to-to when I go ... he gave me, he gives me the car to go from Milano to Madesimo. Uh, but because he doesn't want to put me into trouble like that, sometimes he stops me, he tells me 'My friends will wait in Colico', so I didn't have to go from Milano to Colico with those people, but I pick them up in car they could have arrived in Colico with other, uhm, helps - Colico-Milano-Colico is ... Colico was the end of the line.

Q - Train line?

A - Train line.

Q - Mm-hm.

A - So he could have had a very good organization to-to help those people go in confidently in the station, then from the station to ... The station was guard from [by?] the German people, but this man had a knack [?]. So this is what I like to know, because this fellow was a general and yet he was ...

1:27:07

Q - So he had a network in place _____ [unintelligible]?

A - He had a - he definitely had a net...

Q - And you were part of it.

A - I was part of it only for [unintelligible] this. The only-only this way I can, uhm, realize [think], I can see how important were for the Americans then after the April, I would say before when they gave me the-the my last duty when the war was finished to take this the same general because they didn't have ... Colonel Knebel [pronounced "Kn-abel"] said a person you know, you know, you are to take this person you know it was ... like this person was under the protection of the American people. And when I go there, I see then it's the general, you know, and ... he sees me, and we were very happy in a sort of a way. And I took him.

1:27:57

But in fact I remember one thing now that it dawns on me. When he came, he came with a person then was his bodyguard then on this last trip.

Q - His last train [trip?].

A - Because he did not know that I was the one to take - if he would have known that I was the one, he wouldn't have needed a bodyguard probably.

Q - Well, if he would otherwise [unintelligible].

A - But because he could trust, I'd say. Uh, because many, many of the killing were done after the finish and _____ [unintelligible]

Q - That's revenge?

A - For revenge, yes. Then we had in the house of a guy by the name of Mario Alante [sp??], I think he was Jew too. And he was a pilot. But I'm not sure if he was Jew. I think so because I'm -uh- and he was a pilot in-in-in the Italian air force. [[This is the man Lella later describes as someone he identified as a

relative by marriage, so ... weird.]] He was actually a hero because he has fought brilliantly and valiantly, and he was, he had the _____ [unintelligible] **and then he was shot down** and somehow through my uncle finish in [wound up at?] my house in Milano, and he stayed there for five or six weeks just before the war ... he didn't dare to go out because he was afraid, no document, you know, and they could have accused him of being a pilot ... then a deserter, you know, that runs away. So he stayed there. OK. And then he was just ready to go back to Bari because he came from Bari originally, and that was the **26th of April**, the day after I was in ... the first day at home after the war, the night before at midnight I had taken the general to-to, I told you that, to-to the place.

1:29:42

And, uh, the concierge of our building says 'Pino, uh, Mr. Lella, there is a note for you.' And the note says 'Please come to Ci-Cimite ... please come to Musocco Cemetery [Cimitero Maggiore di Milano ('Greater Cemetery of Milan'), also known as Cimitero di Musocco ('Musocco Cemetery')] to pick up a relative of yours.' [How would anyone know Alante was a relative by marriage in the chaos much less quickly inform Lella?] And we were [had been] expecting our cousin and our cousin wasn't there - this fellow was a cousin of ours, this pilot. Cousin because he married the cousin of ours in Naples, in-in Bari but we did not know [him] because the war kept us separate you see. So I went to [it] with my father and with another uncle of mine with my little car that was just given to me the night before, and uh we went through thousands [??] of people that were killed to recognize this person. We knew him [it?] then ... we knew that Mario-Mario-Mario because he was not back, and he left yesterday and is not back. And I was the one to recognize him - he was shot. There was a big sign says 'Fascist' ... 'a known Fascist executed', you know. Now then we discover why - my uncle did discover why. He [Alante], the day before he was in the-at the headquarter to pick up his few dollars ... lire, Italian lire, a ticket and then ... a pass to go to see his family, to go back to his home. **And some, what they used to do those partisans, the gangsters, they were up in the -- let's not call them partisans, they were pigs you know. Bandits. Somebody sits there and on the first occasion when _____ sees that it could be done is accuses one of being Fascist. They take him away with this group ... the group ...** [This is perhaps the inspiration for the whole (fictional) "Anna Marta"-related scene and the old crone concierge Mrs. Plastino at the (fictional) Leyers' apartment.]

Q - This is after the liberation?

A - This is the *day after and they shoot them*. And they take them away their... watch and the money.

Q - Now these people who were coming for the papers and things, and then that was going on, and they know this was happening?

A - No, this was the first-the first thing that happened, because that, you know, they was ... [he] felt finally after hiding a couple -- six weeks in my house, he say 'Today I go out' and he was killed because he had 5,000 lire in his pocket and they just kill him. The ticket with the pass and ...

Q - And you think they just did it for ...

A - During the operation of doing this, you know, to the guy, this guy that I know with a big flag, a big partisan beard and things, see then he has a golden watch and the this ... and they killed him just for that.

This Mario - I remember his name - **Mario Atlante**. I have never ... no, I went back to America, so ... but I'm sure that **Mario Atlante** is part of my, uh, married a person of-in my family in the other ... in the other ... at the time, we say in the other side of the world, because the world you remember Italy was divided in two at the time, you know, the Americans stopped in Rome and Cassino. They were fighting back.

1:32:45

I remember this was 1942-43-44 and when the Americans went down to Anzio '44, 1944, and then they stopped ... or was it '43, I don't remember.

Q - I don't know. I haven't ... I'm not up on Italy yet. I've got France and Holland ...

A - Well, we're what ... easier ... check the books, I mean ... it's just a question of dates. But anyhow, there was a period in which the ... we were cut in two parts, so we did not have any comm-uh- ...

Q - Communication.

A - Communication ... contact. And but I know then-this. His name is **Mario Atlante** - he was an officer of the air force as a pilot and he was killed just-just was kidnapped. Kidnapped was a ... ? [[Lella is checking that 'kidnapped' is correct word to use.]]

Q - Abducted, yeah.

A - Abducted, then killed as an excuse so they could take a-they were ... just for a golden watch and a few thousand [lire].

[End of Part 1]

PART 2 [94 minutes]

00:05

Q - I'd like to know, uhm, when you drove this general's ...

A - Yes.

Q - How-what about you mentioned that you took people across the Alps, when was that ... on skis..

A - That was on-on skis. I was on skis for so I could come back quick because going ...

Q - I mean, when-when did this happen that you were ...?

A - That was in the period -uh- winter of 19-1943.

Q - Ok, so this was before you had the job to drive the general?

A - No, I had ...

Q - Same time.

A - At the same time. But as I said, I ...

Q - In between.

A - Let's say I traveled-I had the job maybe three days, two days as an average a week and the remaining five days at the Alps in Madesimo.

Q - Madesimo is ...

A - Because I was ... Yeah, Madesimo is up in the mou- is a ski place.

00:52

Q - Ok, where is Madesimo?

A - Madesimo is in Valtellina. Valtellina is -uh- a valley north of Milano. North, just go above lake of Como, [unintelligible] lake of Como on the map, straight up lake of Como there is a chain of mountains. There is a pass called the Splugen.

Q - Splugen?

A - Splugen-Splugen Pass. And Madesimo is a small ski resort. At that time it was just a nice Alpine village - now it's quite -uh- quite the resort.

01:21

Q - So how close to Switzerland is it?

A - Just on the border. Uh, my-the place *where I used to live*, the-the uh Casa Alpina di Motta is right on the border. [Not exactly, and this is the first time that Lella remarks that he *lived at Casa Alpina*. Remember, in the first hour and a half, he referred only to a small home at-near Madesimo ... and the hotel. Is he conflating a house in Madesimo and possibly later one at Motta with Casa Alpina?]

And at that time in that house were only priests and a few kids *[[living there full-time, which is true]]* and many persons that tried to escape away ...

Q - This was your, uh, boarding school.

A - *It had been my boarding school. Actually, my boarding school years before, yes.*

[BUT it was NOT a boarding school "years before" the war, so... Indeed, I've seen-heard nothing to indicate it was anything but a religious youth retreat open only in July and August, until ~September 1943 when Father Re moved there permanently and took in kids and (it appears) allowed it to be used as a temporary stop for some others. Even Communist partisans stopped to visit, much to Re's fear and displeasure (according to Dranco Isman.) It is unclear if Lella understood this quite well and told the interview a lie or if Lellas was ignorant.]

Q - Mm-hm. And during the war, was it closed as a school?

A - Uh, it was also open because the Don Luigi Re the owner of the school had uhm - he was a priest.

Q - Don Luigi ...

A - Don Luigi Re. His name is Re.

Q - Re.

A - R-E.

Q - R-E.

02:04

A - He's very, very well known person _____ [unintelligible], now is dead but ... *He was able to keep the place open and with the excuse that he had, uh, school going on for kids. He was helping a lot of Jewish people that ... and I was ... I had been at that school for many years when I [Lella paused/stopped and said nothing here], and was known as a good skier, so it was natural then if*

somebody had to go through and need some help, I was the only adult even being 17 years old, but the others were all kids, small kids.

[[This is untrue. LHad he lived at Casa Alpina, he'd have been familiar with Alberto Traversa, who led numerous instances of the hikes where some folks did not return (per Sandro Ambrosoli, who in fact did live at Casa Alpina during the war with Franco Isman). He'd've been familiar with Mr. Magri the relative of Father Re who was the cook, etc. He also does not mention OSCAR or even Father Barbareschi. (Note Mike Lella declared on GoodReads that his father couldn't stand Barbareschi and said "off the wall" things about Barbareschi that he would not share with us.) If Lella was familiar with the place at the time, he'd know that he was not the "only adult" around [Motta or vicinity] to help people just because he knew how to ski. (Never mind that the hikes were not ski trips.) Were Lella very familiar with Casa Alpina, he would convey authentic details to Sullivan about some of the people there during the war; instead, the only person he mentions at Motta/CA happens to be the famous Father Re; all others he names were at Isolato/Madesimo. It is unknown whether Lella lied and told Sullivan that Casa Alpina was a boarding school where he lived. However, in the book and at least one presentation, Sullivan refers to it as a "camp" (in Oct 2017 presentation at Wagner College, it was "camp for boys where wealthy Milanese families would send their boys to learn how to ski and hike and do this kind of thing".)]

Q - OK, so I just want to get this straight. So you, when you finished the duties with the general, you would go up there to stay.

A - Yes.

Q - Uh-huh. And then tell me what happened there. He **[[Re or the General??]]** would ask you to help?

A - Yeah. Uh ... well, it ... over there was a little organization very, very simple thing that was ... there was **this friend of mine Emilio** **[[Is Lella referring here to Emilio 'Chiarellotto' (keeping in mind how Sullivan alters names as a matter of course?)]** ... he had, **Emilio even uhm your friend Tony** as my [Q interruption: Oh yeah? [??]] _____ (unintelligible). **[[Search "Tony" - see area after time mark 49:12 below.]]** He had ... he has [had?] in Campodolcino a building very close to the German commandantura ... the Fascist commandantura in the headquarters. So anytime that ...

Q - Excuse me, in Campo- [trying to say 'Campodolcino'] ...

A - In commandantura was the headquarters ...

Q - Yeah, but the ...

A - Campoldocino. It's a little location ...

Q - Campodolcino.

A - Campo- the location at the feet of the Madesimo mountain area, to go from the valley up the mountain, you have to go by this one only road that is there. So he **[Emilio or ...?]** was a position there to see when the group of German or Fascists were out, because there were only two men controlling

the valley. When they're out, he tells you and that's the moment to go by you see, because if they are there you don't want to go by, so ... even so, if you're [the Germans or Fascists] there, I could go by because I had my pass.

But sometime if by any chance rather than having those usual fellow there's a new guy, new guy maybe has not been informed yet and he has to close an eye for, you know, for the good of everybody. Maybe you risk to send your things apart, so ... this friend of ours, he was able to tell us all the movements of the small German group there, and Fascists. So consideration of what he would have told us-he would have checked and then after we check, we know that we could go by. So these people could go through.

When the group was away from Campoldocino down toward the lake [\[\[WHAT LAKE?\]\]](#), that was the moment when we would have been sure we wouldn't have seen them cross the mountains, so that's the moment to take the Jewish across. [\[\[And why always this focus on 'the Jewish' as though no one else ever wanted or needed to leave? Jewish people would not comprise the majority of those wanting to leave Italy, legally or illegally.\]\]](#)

05:00

So this was a little, uh, a little, uh, self-made organization there to make sure that the ok was given and not to run into-into unusual problem.

Q - So you actually escorted them across then?

A - Escorted them across.

Q - And were they ...?

A - Then very few of those could ski. **I had to take them on my shoulders sometimes.**

Q - On your shoulders. Because I wouldn't imagine that ...

A - On the snow, you know, sometimes in snow but you have to go tonight or not at all. And so ...

Q - You had to what?

A - You had to go by tonight...

Q - Oh.

A - ... or-or God knows when.

Q - You would have somebody sitting on your shoulders?

A - Sometimes, well, and usually they-they wasn't that much. We had to climb the mountain with those people, and maybe they come there and have shoes, uh, city shoes and you had to be equipped for the snow. Sometimes it get 20 below.

05:50

Q - Put them on skis, or ... [unintelligible]?

A - No, no, but I-I'd just carry my skis and they carry their own things and we all always made it when we go up to the top and they know where to go down, and that ... [[This doesn't strike me as credible. It suggests that even though Lella wants to claim this supposedly occurred at night that people were not guided but instead 'know where to go down'.]] sometimes they were organized, a person [unintelligible] from the other side of the border would have come up to help them when-when they felt those people needed help, you see. [[No. I don't see.]] You know, sometimes there are ladies and children ... thing like this. [[In first 90-minute part of interview, he noted that children were not taken - at least not by him - and instead the children stayed in the mountains. This would be common knowledge after the war.]]

Q - So how many times did you do this?

A - Well, I did it, uh, several times. All [unintelligible - 'almost'?] ten-fifteen times. Ten times for sure.

Q - And how many people would be in each group?

A - Depending. You know sometime, the only time [person] I remember - a Mr. Didt [?] ... "D" - he was the only one, he was quite in a hurry and he could ski too a little bit. But I remember that I gave him a pair of my boots and then I took them back. [laughing] [unintelligible] Mr. Didt (sp?) [Bruno Ditz? The advertising guy from Milan that Lt. Cevoli got out of jail for a failed attempt to go to Switzerland?]. And he wasn't Italian though, he was [[he said nothing here to identify - in prior portion of interview]] That was the only one that I had one person.

7:10

Then sometime I had two-three persons, and very often a couple. Ah, ladies and -uh- a lady and the husband.

Q - Uh, were these always Italians?

A - Yes. I remember they were all Italian. [[So much for the downed pilots in the book, etc.]] Some Italians with an accent, so I ... but see they didn't also want to say too much and tell too much. Even so, they were grateful and, uh, and they would, you know, have done anything to just get out of there.

But the arrangements were made by Don Luigi Re ... priest.

Q - How did they arrive at the ...

A - Oh, with their own, uhm, some of those are the ones that I picked up in-in, uh, in, uh Colico. But several times, they were there already up to Don Luigi Re. [[Unclear if he's folding this in with the tale about the "general" asking

him to drive folks from a train station to meet with someone else that he asserts would help them leave the country. Search "Colico" for only other appearances.]]

Q - Hmm. So they got there by some other ...

A - Yes, they were waiting for me, because there was nobody could have ... they cannot go alone at night because only at night you could do this. [[That's not actually true. The whole point of the "little bit here and there" trips from Casa Alpina was that they'd have a large group go 'hiking' during the day and return with fewer people.]]

8:08

It took us all night to go up, and go up. we have to walk up and then walk down. I could ... with my skis, I don't ski I have to walk; they don't ski and then I have to walk back and ski down. So ...

Q - So how long did it take?

A - Uhm, it took me eight hours between going and coming back.

Q - Hm. You had a lot of sleepless nights then.

A - Oh yeah. Yeah, but it was rewarding, the fact then they could go on the other side.

Q - Uh, was there ever any problems with Don Luigi Re's uh system?

A - Mmm, no, because I realized [knew] that everytime that the Fascists come up - see, I knew ... [-I was, I became a very good friend - and this I thought was all arranged because I talked to Cenini], this _____ [unintelligible] of this gentleman. This gentleman the name, the Lieutenant Cenini was the chief of the-of the police in Madesimo [[later referred to as "Fascist police"]]. ... the kind of black shirt. But he was also he was organized like the general, and he was the one to give me the person - sometime he say 'OK, Pino, there is such and such person, remember come back'. He call me in Milano, you know, on the telephone to be sure that - he said 'When you come, come back - can you make it Tuesday instead of Friday.' Why? You know choose them in Thursday instead of Friday because uh they can't expect, because they made arrangement on the other side too, so they had to be ... And I did not know that Cenini was doing this for what reason, not certainly for money, nobody did anything for money at time. [[Well, this is nonsense ...]] 09:44 But he was Fascist, he was a-a ... and he risks his life if they get him, you see.

[[What happened to how he went to school with this guy? I think Lella misspoke about that and Lella meant to refer to "Emilio" as a friend from school. See time mark 12:14 below.]]

Q - And what was his name again?

A - Cenini. Cenini. Lieutenant Cenini. And with him there were two other fellows, and that - uh, one was a good friend of mine [Emilio??] - but two kids from very good family and they themselves like I had finished, I had wind up into this organization Todt [but] they had wind up with the Fascists, but [were] absolutely not Fascist. Being with the Fascists was the only way of being able to do anything. [Does he mean career/job?] Uhhh, I mean ...

Q - So the color of the shirt didn't always tell you ...

A - Didn't mean anything. That's why a lot of people got killed for nothing, you see.

Q - Hmm.

10:25

A - If you were not quick, you know ... Imagine, they stop me couple of times when I did not have my clothes and I had my papers, this partisan ... _____ [unintelligible] used to stick in-in sock like this my pass here, a German pass, and in the other I had my partisan [???], so I could make sure that I get the right-

Q - [laughing ... you got the right foot ...

A - ... get the right foot.

Q - But, no, if you ever were searched wouldn't they have found both?

A - They won't, because already was prepared you see. It was all great _____ [unintelligible - well?], you know?

Q - You mean ...

A - Emilio-Emilio inside [Chiarolletto?] would have said 'don't come - not today'. That's enough. We don't say why, can, you know. No. Then they know that this is somebody's risking their life. So that's-that's how it went.

11:21

Those two fellows, they also risk their lives because they knew, you know, you can't, you cannot ...

Q - Which-which two fellows?

A - Those two fellows were with Cenini. Cenini was an officer there, was his life, was his career, was his way of life. The other two fellows were there just temporarily, waiting for a few days [[misspoke?]] when is this war going-going-going to finish, you know. And just waiting day by day that everything will end and so they would be out of trouble because the situation was getting ...

Q - But they weren't in as deep as Cenini.

A - Right. And they were helping Cenini doing the things and they are certainly, you know, they didn't even knew that Cenini was doing work they were doing also.

Q - How do you spell 'Cenini' - with a 'c'?

A - C-E-N-I-N-I.

Q - OK. Hm.

12:14

A - He was a lieutenant. He was the chief ... the chief, the responsible of [for] the little station there that was in extreme north of the-of the confine ... at the border. So what I went to do too, if I ... after ... if Emilio is not there, I ask Cenini. Emilio was my friend, you know, he was there we went to school together. [[Sounds like Lella just mixed up Cenini in first tape when Lella said that Cenini and he went to school together. Lella probably meant to refer to this Emilio Chiarellotto. And if "there" is intended to mean Casa Alpina, it was reportedly a summer-only religious retreat before Sep 1943 when it opened full-time.]] He was lucky that he lived right there, you know across-across the carabinieri [[Madesimo?]] and he ...

Q - Didn't you feel that your life was in danger, too?

12:53

A - Only the time when the [laughing] ...

Q - When you were up against the wall?

A - ... against the wall! And that ... yes, the ... I'll tell you why, because then sometime when we had to move in the day time but on, you know, the time with the general that I felt that I was in danger of dying in the daytime because it ... where we used to go, we had airplane uh-uh machine gunning you know. [[Yes, there were planes patrolling and using guns on vehicles. Common knowledge.]]

13:15

So and if ... and then we had to go through those areas that were full of partisans, and you know being a German, he ... I myself ... I know that I'm not German, but do they know? [laughing] You know. And they DID know, that's the point, and that is why ... that's why the general was confident too, because ah-ah, if ... I was there as a-a-a obvious signal that we were untouchable because we were one of them. [[How so?? And why does he tell stories of being captured more than once by partisans? Having an Italian flag patch as Lella referred to earlier doesn't mean ... anything. An Italian with a German would be presumed to be Fascist. :)]]

Q - For you to ... there was always a possibility that somebody might not have known.

A - Also because among those partisans there were many that were not partisan, just thieves or just making, you know, the jails were all - all the people from jails were gone after this, and some of those they did not know what to do with, just -uh- going and stealing around, just like bandits in the old days. And there was no law.

Q - Right. It [?] all assault and disorder.

A - Yeah.

Q - Oh.

A - The only law was the - was the one we were against the law of, you know, the Fascists or the law of the Germans, which didn't count.

14:21

Q - OK, were there any other rescue stories that we should ... you want to tell?

14:24 [long pause]

14:31

A - Yeah, there is a _____ [unintelligible - 'settled'?]. It's only one I remember exactly what ... give me a little time and it will come back to me, but ... this thing going on, I mean ...? [\[\[Lella refers to tape recorder.\]\]](#)

Q - Yeah, it's ok. [paper shuffling]

14:50

Q - Uh, why don't I go onto questions and if you think of more stories...

A - OK.

14:54

Q - Look out. I've got another tape. [laughing] OK? All right. Uhm ... OK. Now on some of this you've already answered, but just something ... write it down again. These activities that you just told me, uh, what month and year did they start?

A - Uh, after the ... what exactly the day?

Q - Or the month.

A - Well, the month approximately so it was venti, cinque, Octo-bi-or. Ottobre, September ... Ottobre ... October, November - November '43.

Q - And they ended at the liberation?

A - They ended, uh, well, my story ended ten days after liberation when I finally, with this Colonel Knebel [pronounced K-nay-bel]. Because I - that's - I delivered this American fellow, this American

German to the American ... this German uh general ... was around the 5th or the 6th of April ... one of those two days ... of 1945. [[Lella is misspeaking. May mean May.]]

16:___

Q - OK, I don't think you've mentioned that though on this tape about ...

A - Knebel [pronounced 'ka-nay-bel']?

Q - ... about delivering ...

A - Oh, that's how ... well, that's ... No, I didn't mention it. Do you want me to say something about that?

Q - Mm-hmm.

A - Well, uh, well, this episode I told you about both ... about this one trip in Bolzano that I took this couple down to Trento and then back to pick up the general. Uhm, I think that this is one of the last happening of this routine I went through. Uh, so I maybe-maybe I'm talking about March, end of March, around March. So in, uh ...

Q - '45?

16:54

A - '45, yeah, that was '45. It, uh, at the beginning of April, uh my-my routine with the general became more intense. I had to stay with him, when before I had one, two days a week and then sometimes three and then the rest of the days it was free for me to stay in the mountain and had the occasion to be helpful with the Jewish like I said. This period I was a little too-too taken by this general [time consumed with], and yet to ... I could see there was a lot of going on ... going on ...

Q - Goings-on?

A - Goings on, goings on. And, uh, so the 24th of April, uh, at midnight, I received the order, my uncle tells me. No, it wasn't my uncle. True, I call my uncle but somebody [else] was there and, uh, they tell me 'Pino, at 24 hours in the midnight of 24th, which is tomorrow' or the day after, I don't remember, one day before the day of delivery of this fellow ... 'you be in caserma de carabinieri [police station] via Carlo Poma', you know the address that's ... [unintelligible] my brain's open - and uh [via] Carlo Poma that's the address in Milano, 'with the Wehrmacht automobile, with the g- ... with your man' that was the general, and 'don't forget at midnight precisely'. I said 'why not before midnight?', you know there was a curfew so midnight or ten o'clock were the same thing - after ten o'clock, you cannot go out, you risk to be ... [Q - [unintelligible interruption]] the curfew.

18:43

So he say 'Don't worry, but you' - but look, I have some ... you know, that I wanted to know what's going on and I did not know who I was talking to, so you tell me something more. He say well 'tell your people in the house or tell your friends not to go out tomorrow' - why? - because it's D-day. And I knew the day-the day must be uh something partic-, something special.

19:07

So anyhow, I follow the order. At midnight, I go via Carlo Poma with the general, and the general I was supposed to pick up somewhere and he was very happy to come, so he knew also that that was the day. He knew that well, but evidently the person that told me thought that maybe this man [the general] would have ... some kind of reaction in following me to be the leader. Because in other words, 'He's your 'prisoner' and you will consign your 'prisoner' at midnight at this-at the carabinieri near Carlo Poma'. This was my order.

Q - The general was supposed to be your prisoner?

A - The general was my 'prisoner', and uh the general told me before that was a-this was at nine o'clock or ten o'clock when I saw him that evening and we have to spend two hours together until midnight, he-he said in Italiano "Io sono tu prigioniero. Andiamo en via Carlo Poma." He told me exactly what I had already been said [told], so I knew that it was all fake contact [?] - he wasn't my prisoner. He-he knew that, you know, he was my 'prisoner' but he didn't need to be guarded by anyone. [[At any rate, what Lella does not say is that it seems the "general" was supposedly to be taken to the carabinieri at via Carlo Poma for his supposed safety before being taken elsewhere.]]

20:17

So anyhow at midnight because that was the only way to save him. Because if I would have left somewhere alone, he would have gone through the partisans that were coming down and probably would be shot or God knows what. [[Even if we didn't know Leyers was miscast, Leyers was at the Como stadium at time of his surrender. So this makes little to no sense, and not just because one is left to assume this supposed safeguarding took place on CLN and Allied authority of some kind.]] But it was important for him for this one man to be in that place because the day after this place had contact with the Americans, they were supposed to go from there to the Ameri- and without interferences by anyone. Not the British, not the partisans of Italy, not the other uh forces - just the Americans. [[And the Americans were far closer than Bolzano - indeed in Milan - so why a need to go almost 300 km away to a place where there was no "American headquarters" (until after he says this occurred)??] So, you understand the reason. [Q - Mm-hm.] That's what, that's why I'd love you to find out what, the identity of this man and it's not [?] going to be difficult. Especially if you mention Knebel ... Colonel Knebel.

Q - I should write that down right now. So ... what was, do you know Knebel's first name?

21:10

A - Ah, used to know, but I don't remember now. But he was a newspaper man, a journalist and he was a colonel. [[Apparently, Knebel was a major, though he left the Army as a lieutenant colonel.]] He was in charge of the American press in Milano at that time, and there was ... and he was at the Diana Hotel - that's where my contact were in the past. [[Contacts for ... what?? Amazingly, the woman doesn't even ask. This and other remarks by Lella make me wonder how much they discussed before she ever started the recording.]]

Q - In charge of American press in Milano.

A - Yes.

21:38

Q - What was the last thing you said?

A - Diana Hotel – Di – D-i-a-n-a. Diana Hotel.

Q - In Milano.

A - Yeah, in the center of that [?]. And then, uh ... yeah, this is [unintelligible - my?].

Q - You don't know his first name?

A - Ah, it was ... you know, I never ... How can I remember things that happened ... ?

Q - So he was the one who sent you to get ... to send him to safety.

A - Yes, after ... he wasn't the man of that - of the conversation on the telephone, but he was the man ... then call me four or five days after ...

Q - Oh, to thank you.

A - ... to take him [garbled] to Germany.

Q - Right.

22:21

A - So that is, the thing was ... officialized let's say ... all my doings that would have any, uhm, let's say any proof of being sent in ... of need of help, but I got this ... I, this feeling ... exact this feeling not because my uncle was associated but because the Americans call me afterward, you see, and told me 'I think [thought] you're the person to take this general where he belongs to' - to the American headquarter in Innsbruck. [[To my knowledge, there was no American HQ in Innsbruck and that as late as May 1, the 7th Army had not reached Innsbruck. And to my knowledge, no American command post existed in Bolzano until May 5.]]

22:56

So I had to drive from Milano to, because that's-that's what you wanted to know about [Q - Right, right.] is correct?

Q - You have to drive him from Milan ...

A - From Milano to Ger- to the German, the German border, and I deliver them to the American ... there were American police and American big shot was a general or somebody else and ... then we were in the meeting place in, I do not remember - it was Bolzano on the other side of the country, but maybe my friend, my guard that came with me which had choose to come with me, my friend, which we want to call is Carlo Beltramini. Maybe he remembers.

23:40

Q - And you sa-, and you took him to Innsbruck?

A - No, eh, yes, I'm coming to that part. You want to take note of the ... of the name of my this fellow that came with me?

Q - Sure.

A - His name is Carlo - Carlo Beltramini. B-e-l-t-r-a-m-i-n-i. Beltramini.

Q - Beltramini.

24:09

A - Yeah. Now this fellow [Beltramini] has been ... was a student [unintelligible] a well to do young kid in Milano, and the reason why I took him because I trust him. [[Why would the much younger Carlo be connected to Lella? And why would the son of a supposed hard-working grocer whose kid helped out be 'well to do'? (Have yet to find info on what Beltramini did for a living, but he wasn't likely a "grocer".)]]

I did not know that this general had uh important documents with him. [[I don't believe Lella intended this to mean that the general DID have documents. See next.]] Maybe he had golden you know a bag full of Italian lire or the American dollars and one of the reason why those people were very shaky about moving with luggage is because there were many important person escaping like Mussolini was with the daughter ... the gold treasure of Italy, you see. [[Not exactly. It is said that the communist partisans stole quite a lot of that and used it for future election(s) ... in which the Church and the CIA and a few others made sure they didn't take control. :)] So, and uh, so I felt that I would have become a target to anyone that was you know in the confusion trying to make good.

25:02

Q - Right.

A - So I ask Beltramini to come with me ...

Q - Oh, to guard you ... [laughs]

A - To protect me, to keep my shoulder ...

Q - You were guarding the general and he was guarding you.

A - Right. Although, and uh but this was also suggested of [by] Knebel. Knebel told me 'Pino, you better keep an [sic] help with you because I know it's going to be a little difficult.' You see, and that was quite a mission because we had to go through-through this and they were, we were ... [[He never quite explains what the Hell Knebel would have to do with any of this. :) No reason why a journalist new to Milan with his own job would have anything to do with resistance or covert ops. I think Knebel was woven into the tale just because the two met. You'll notice that NOWHERE does Lella refer to the Esso station and Mussolini's mutilation and hanging. His big story about the chaos involved two actors (Ferida and Valenti) being executed by partisans.]]

Q - [unintelligible]

A - ... was quite a mission.

Q - Yeah, but how many days did you say?

A - Oh, I think we left the Milano in the morning of the 26th of April and we were there the day after.

Q - Oh.

A - So we had to stop, we had to go ... for instance, you go on routes but you have to go around because the bridge is gone and they were fighting, and then we'd take ... And then as I was going by, I remember having ... being reached by motorcycle person saying 'We were expecting you'. I say 'Well, how can they expect me, they don't know ...' See things were planned properly, oh yeah...

Q - You didn't know it then.

26:10

A - I did not know how they were doing things. And they say you go this way, you know they gave me a piece of paper with a little, with the route and the gen- **26:18** [sound cuts out until crackle **26:25**] with Carlo Beltramini to-to extent that he became [my emphasis] a very good friend of mine then, because he lost his father. [??] But then during [unintelligible] episode, they killed his best friend [to be clear, this is transcriber's emphasis, not Lella's]. They took some of the kids and among this kids there was his [Carlo Beltramini's] best friend which [was] also [a] friend of mine - Tullio Galimberti - and he was also killed in this ... along with some Jewish and other person that was taken in ... [[To my

knowledge, none of the men executed were Jewish. This would be notable in the ample historical record. And the notion that younger-than-Lella by almost-a-year Carlo was 'best friend' of almost-22-year-old Galimberti is nonsense. I wonder if Carlo was a friend of Mimmo, or maybe Carlo was advanced in school. Also: another reminder how elsewhere Lella has a bad habit of referring to brand-new acquaintances as 'good friend'.]] **26:48** So-so I was, you know, I loved this fellow because he was so disgraziato you know, so he was ... so much disgraced on him, so much ... that's not the English word ... so much tragedy.

Q - Mm-hm.

A - He loved his-his father and then to punish the killer, they kill another fellow [[referring German-Fascist executions on Aug 10 1944 that Sullivan materially altered for no good reason other than preference]], you know it's ridiculous and uh ... OK, so that is the square where they executed all those fellows, then two years later, they hang Mussolini to give an example of justice, you know. [His timeline is mixed up - the executions were 10 August 1944 and he's referring to Mussolini in April 1945]

27:25

But where the partisans then [were] killed ... Tullio Galimberti ... and Beltramini's [sounds like 'car' ... "are"?] ... not the German in this particular area. So we-we had to be very open in order to find the-the-the...the uh what's the word - our responsibilities.

Q - The real tr- **27:48** [sound cuts out] **27:51**

A - So anyhow, what-what am I say now that the story? Ah, the last my trip.

Q - Oh right.

A - So I put him back and Knebel was very friendly then on ... so that was the end of everything and from then on, 10th of April was ... [[Timeline still mixed up here (this time the month and day).]]

Q - So-so you got through all these dangers and this trans-[unintelligible] ... where did you deliver him to?

A - To Bolzano.

Q - Bolzano. And it was ...

A - To, eh, I don't remember if we take ... we were supposed to take him to Innsbruck, but the American[s?] had come down to Bolzano, so we met them at the headquarter in Bolzano, I deliver him then.

28:25

Q - And it was the uh ...

A - Bolzano is right on the border very close to the border.

Q - And it was the, uhm, American, uh, military headquarters?

A - That was the American, yes. The military police and then they ... So then when I came back, then only then Knebel had the occasion to explain to me that this man was supposed to be taken by the American not by anybody else because he would have been a very important uh personage for a process they had in mind, eh, mind of doing. I did not ... he did not mention Nuremberg or ... [[There would be no reason for anyone to mention Nuremberg in April 1945. May be a weird embellishment after the fact. ALSO: Lella tells this tale as though not only did Knebel - an actual press officer (vs. pretending to be a press officer) - arrive in Milan at some date well before the end of the war, but as though he'd be someone that the Intel people would use as a liaison with "resistance". It's all nonsense.]]

Q - But that was ...

A - But that must have been it because he mentioned that a couple of years later when I saw him in America.

Q - And did he indeed testify ...

A - No-no, wait a second. This was forty – 'sss '45. I saw Knebel in America in 1950, five years later.

Q - Mm-hmm. And did he ... did he have ...

A - He mention it.

Q - ... in Nuremberg?

A - I, oh, I ne-, you know, we never even ... I never went to talk to [about] this.

Q - I know ... because if he did testify, then it would be ...

A - No problem, yeah, it'd be easy.

Q - ... to find out his name, sure.

A - I'm curious now. But maybe, I don't know, it should have a book on process in Nuremberg [[here he goes again...]], go through and maybe, maybe the name comes to mind, yeah. But maybe not, you see. Maybe not.

Q - Be interesting to try and track it down and find out, yeah.

29:39

A - Yeah, it ... I think that's going to be easy for you in sort of any ...

Q - I'll try.

A - No, I can tell ... I mean go to a library and find out and get something on the process, or best thing to do is so you get something official about this ...

Q - Well, it'd be interesting to try and track down Knebel if he's still ...

A - Right. That's what I mean, because Knebel I think is Jewish. Knebel did do a lot of the netting for the organization. [[Not clear why he'd speculate about this, but maybe he thinks because Knebel (allegedly) told him "the general" was Jewish that Knebel must be Jewish. Who knows!]]

[[Note: Knebel died October 7, 1985/three months after this interview, not in 1973 as indicated by Sullivan. Interviewer [name withheld] never followed up w/ any of the people mentioned by Lella; it wasn't the institute's role. Contact of Anton-not-Tony- Knebel is a straggler research item.]]

Q - Networking? Yeah.

A - Networking, yes. And ... the net ...

Q - Well, establishing it ...

30:12

A - Yeah, establishing the-the-the system. [[This is very strange and it appears to be another poorly constructed fib. Knebel was not in Milan for weeks or months before the end of the war; he was not OSS nor seconded to OSS, and zero evidence he liaised with the CLN - which would be completely outside of any normal protocol, so ...]] [Q - Mm-hm.] And then he mentioned to me that-that general was Jewish.

Q - The general was Jewish?

A - Knebel mention it to me. But I did ...

Q - How could the general be Jewish? I mean, how could he be a general and be Jewish?

A - Yes.

Q - Wouldn't be possible.

A - Oh, no, it's ... there'd been people in the Nazi were of Jewish origin because they ...

Q - But they hid it. Hmm.

A - Yes. So it's possible.

Q - That'd be incredible if it was ...

A - I-I wouldn't be surprised of anything.

Q - Well, why don't we go on and if you think of more stories like that ...

A - Yes, I was ... something that came to my mind that I wanted to tell you then I haven't told you yet and I can't remember what was it. Because all of this is important and none important because ... it is important if we some-[unintelligible] with something and we can ... about this I'm telling you, we can ... you didn't all [unintelligible] ...

Q - [laughing]

A - Sure. But what I meant is ...

Q - Yeah, it would be interesting to have ...

A - It'd be interest to have some, to have some, uh, some, uh, some documentation about this.

31:23

Q - Yeah ... Uh, well anyway, if you think of it, just interrupt and ... OK?

A - Mm.

Q - Ok. Uhm, during the war, did you ever discuss this activity - meaning all these things you did - with members of your family?

A - Yes, during, ah, during ... yes.

Q - During the war?

A - Yes. Not when I was a kid anymore, we are talking about the ...

Q - During the war. In general, did these family members approve or disapprove of your activities?

31:51

A - Ah, they disapprove.

Q - Disapprove. Of course, not your uncle.

A - Not my uncle, no.

Q - But in general, they disapproved.

A - But, you know father and mother didn't want me to stick my neck out, so ...

Q - During the war, did you ever ...

A - Oh, excuse me, my brother and my uncle, they all approved so yes and no. No, don't say disapprove categorically.

Q - Well, I got one for ...

A - Both ...

Q - OK. Mother and father disapproved.

A - Well, simply because it was too risky.

Q - And your uncle and brother approved.

A - My brother was too small [[Lella means "young"]], but many, many ... yes, my fa- ...

Q - Your uncle, you said ...

A - My uncle, my uncle.

Q - And ... ok. During the war, did you ever discuss this activity with your close friends?

A - Yes.

Q - In general, did these friends approve or disapprove of your activity?

A - Ah, both. I had friends that were in one line [also - or?] in the other.

Q - During the war, did you ever discuss this activity with your neighbors?

A - No.

Q - [unintelligible] [laughing]

A - You were a little girl probably ...

Q - In '82?

A - Ah ... I thought it was maybe 50.

33:12

Q - Were you ever a member of a resistance group?

A - No, **not officially.**

Q - Overall, about how many people do you think you helped directly or indirectly during the war?

A - Well, I would say some in ... then ... to help, I can say if this is what ... they could be 20, but they could be many more. Twenty are the ones that I'm sure *because I took them personally.* *[[So he's considering folks that he did NOT take. Why?]]*

Q - Ok, 20 for sure.

A - Yeah.

34:03

Q - How many, if any, people ... well, this was probably what you ... that's a little confusing ... did you help directly during this period. That is, how many if any people did you personally help or have personal contact with?

A - Well, all of them because they were...

Q - That was the 20.

A - Yes.

Q - So the other question directly or indirectly would probably be more than 20.

A - Actually, my-my situation was such that if I could help, I only could help directly, you see, because I did not know ... **I didn't ... it wasn't part of the organization or a group that would perform in one, let's say, position and so the general, uh, general result is what count.** Here only the thing I can say is the one that I personally took. You understand that.

Q - How many if any of the people that you directly helped were close friends?

A - Close friends of mine?

Q - Yeah.

A - **Uh, two.** One was a ... two person, which I ... close friends - **we were close friends at the time because we had time to keep [spend] together for a few days.** *[[See? This is not the only time he converts*

new acquaintances into "close friends".]] Two of those ... but one is the girl I told you before that was albarazo pitsockaro lady [phonetic! Also see 37:48] [35:18] [interviewer writing] [35:20] And, uh, [long pause while she's writing] the other is a fellow that was staying at the hotel in Madesimo where I used to live most of the time when I was not up in [with?] Don Luigi Re. [35:35] [[FIB. Lella now leaves out the family home here, mentioned in Part 1. Anyway, Lella probably refers here to Mr. Didt/Ditz - but should refer to Didt/Ditz as a new acquaintance. NOTE: this is first and only time in the entire interview that I recall where Lella's story changes to imply/indicate he ever stayed at Casa Alpina.]]

I remember another friend-another friend of mine that was a good friend of his - of this other fellow which I took up [Mr. Didt/Ditz?] - but I don't remember the name of th-of the fellow that I took up, even so he was a close friend at the time. I don't [unintelligible] my memories. [[Lella already mentioned Mr. Didt/Ditz more than once.]] The man, a friend of his, was a Roberto Marti- uh-uh, **Guido Martini.**

[cross-talk]

Q - But these were people you became friends with.

A - **Guido Martini** and this [some]body [[Mr. Didt/Ditz or not?]] were two, the [some]body was Jewish, were living in Madesimo and stayed there. **Maybe Guido Martini too was Jewish** and he not want to be caught in Milan. He was there waiting for an occasion to go up. **But he never had to go.**

Q - Now were these close friends before, or did ...?

A - No, no, they became, they became friends. Oh, the question was, uh ...

Q - I think that the intention of the question was close friends before that you already knew.

A - Oh, no, no ...

Q - So, really, none.

A - No, but uh yes, there are some but they were close friends of [unintelligible] my family, my father and mother.

Q - There were some.

36:47

A - **Some were friends close of my father, yes, uh, Avvocato Di-ana, who was like ... but they were not Jewish, no.** They something ...

Q - ... but you helped them.

A - Oh, yeah, yeah

Q - So how many of these do you think?

37:01

A - Well, there was the family, this ... was the family of the **Avvocato Diana**, which I don't [sic] the name but they were friends of this very good family ... friend of my family ... the family is Avvocato Diana which became ... he was the Vice Prefecto ['prefetto'?] ... Vice uh ... Vice is also an English word, yes ... Vice uh Prefecto. Well, prefecto is like the governor ... he was vice governor in Milano during the Fascist time. Diana is his name. Avvocato Diana. [['Avvocato' = attorney-lawyer]] And he had friends, which were in ... were in this location up in the mountain because they were Jewish. [[It's very strange how Lella seems to presume/declare folks there were Jewish; elsewhere he frames as though it were knowledge that boils down to speculation based on "dark appearance".]] And I help them in a different way though, because they had ...

37:48

Those are all father, mother and daughter - there were three peo- three person I can think of. And then **Zabaraza** [phonetic] and brother and the mother of ... three ... six. I would say altogether seven or eight person which I knew, I knew beside the-the-the uh specific occasion.

Q - But they weren't really your close friends, that right? You just knew them.

A - No, close friends, remember I was 17 and I'm talking ... beside **Aborrazza** [phonetic - a previous use above sounded like "albarazo"] this one friend of a friend **Guido Martini**, which were a little older than I. All the other people were much older than I.

38:33

Q - This is a mess.

A - Is a mess? You understand.

Q - Yeah, no, but where I've have to keep changing this ...

A - I'm sorry.

38:39

Q - That's ok. Ok. Uh, about how many other people that ... oh, here [unintelligible] we go. Ok, these weren't really your close friends but ... Not counting your close friends, about how many of the people that you directly helped were acquaintances. This would be like so you'd say seven or eight.

A - [affirmative noise]

Q - Ok.

A - Yes, but this 20 I'm talking about, they were absolutely - absolute strangers. I did not know them.

Q - So these seven or eight were in addition to these 20?

A - Yes, yes, because you are talking about people **that I know personally. Yes, those are different. I didn't even count them because they were not Jewish.** Those were not all Jewish.

Q - So this wouldn't be really 28.

A - Twenty?

Q - Well, yeah, 20 before but now you say there's another seven or eight.

A - Yeah, but it's a different ... yeah, well that's what I wanted to ask, I didn't understand the question.

39:32

Q - It doesn't say [unintelligible], it's just how many people ...

A - Yeah.

NOTE all the detail in the below story.

Q - ... directly or indirectly.

A - Yeah, but **these are the people I did not take to Switzerland.** I didn't ... I helped in several way, for instance, there was an episode there, this friend of [Avvocato] Diana, one of the fellow ... **this friend of Diana**, this fellow had a little maid that was coming up from Milano, from a little village close to Milano, and the bus she was traveling ... **a young 17, 18 years old girl coming to work for the-for the people staying up in the mountains where I was staying at the time which is now Madesimo** [[By this is Lella suggesting the hotel was in what was known as Isolato or is this just a figure of speech for "at the time, Madesimo"??]]... **you know, the mountain ... and because the night before there was a sort of a skirmish between the partisan and the Fascists and because of the ... some of the partisan were killed, what the partisan did, they stopped the bus and in order to take one of the responsible of the preceding night's skirmish, they shoot and they kill this little girl.**

[[So this is the seed of what became the daughter of a close friend of Lella's mother and the idea to create an ongoing fighting at a cemetery when Lella arrived there.]]

Q - Oh.

A - So I was involved in going to-to take the body and, uh, at ... take the pa- to the old father and mother that were in Milano and travel down to Milano and take them back, and try ... that was the extent of my, of my help, but it was a ...

Q - So sad ...

A - It was a sad things. But the reason why I was there at the time was ... the reason why they asked me ... and I was there for another strange story, which is interesting but has nothing to do with your ... but I think it ... but I will tell you extra this.

Q - Go ahead.

41:19

A - Uh, well this was in uh always in Valtellina but not Madesimo they were staying. And during one of those things, there were ... a-a officer ... an American young pilot I don't know the name no but because all this the partisans were not using their names in this particular story. But I was there by ... I was there because my mother went to visit this friend ... his wife's family ... this friend is Mrs. Diana. Her husband is the vice-vice questura di Milano. [[Isn't "questura" police headquarters??]] Vice governor of Milano. And, uh, this family then is there, needs the help, this girl that has been working for them for a long time and now they want this girl up to that place in the mountain. Remember, they are in the mountains because the pressure in the city, because the bombing, because the partisans, because of the Fascists, because of German, so they are sort of ... we call it, uh-uhm, there's an Italian world which imagine if I know the English word ... where you leave a city and you go somewhere else because there-there is a state of danger, there is a word for it in English too. Like if you are refugee but is not [the] word. [['Evacuate'.]] Anyhow, those people were in the city just like my mother, then they are also ... my mother because of bombing of Milano was living [in] Parma. Then Parma was too close to the fighting lines, went up, then she went another little place where it was so far so-called peaceful, but it was difficult to find a peaceful place at that time.

43:06

So one of those places were right here, right at Bormio and where they have the world championship this last year ... skiing place. Ok. That's the location. Which is Valtellina; it's very close to Madesimo but on the other side of mountain. [[Bormio is not close to Madesimo ... unless you can fly.]]

So anyhow because of this situation of this little girl being killed and that's why we came to talk about this, I had ... I was there because the night before, they had this little fighting and the Fascists killed some partisan and hang the bodies for demonstration [[note the absence of dramatic and gruesome decapitation and heads on posts, and no mention of being there while there was fighting]], so everybody would - so it would be a lesson - right on the village there. And it took someone that had the authority to go and uh take the body out because it was a very uncivil things to do. And so the priest went there and Avvocato Diana which was the vice questor with _____ [unintelligible] party ... man _____ [unintelligible] had the guts of going and getting the bodies down. So they asked me and

I went there and I took out the body and there was an American fellow there killed too by mistake. [[Well, not really by 'mistake' as such if he was operating/hanging out with the partisans...]]

44:21

Q - Hm.

A - And this fellow was a pilot that had been missing his plane somewhere in the Alps and somehow had been living with those uh, with those uh partisans. See?

Q - And they killed him?

A - And they were killed during the skirmish, you know they were ... So ... So ... but being there a-a-a body with the [unintelligible] nobody would take him in any consideration. No ... no ... no regular routine to ... so I don't know how the things let, but the point is then I had to put the body of this poor fellow which was in a very bad situation because it was ... his head was badly ... and take it to the-to the little cemetery that is there. Next, along with this little girl ... well, this little girl is no little girl was 18 ... little girl to me now, right? At the time, it was the young-young girl ... looked to me like a ... Now thinking back, it was just like if it were my daughter ... mmm, but was about my age at the time.

45:39

So this the story, you know ... and I was there by accident.

Q - Hmm.

A - It was a, when you asked me if I was involved any helping, I helped this family in this way but, uh, and attached to this it came to my mind the-the-the episode of the American fellow. But the extent of my help then I had to go to the village there to ... and then they want to know I was so ... they stopped me a couple of times on the road ... why I was there, trying to do such a-such a pitiful thing. Why, what uh part I had ... did I have ... They wanted to know all those things when they stopped [me] on the road. And I was stopped by the Communist - by the Communists [repeats to himself as if a mistake to correct] ... by the Fascists ... and I was stopped by the partisans as usual. So I was lucky that I walked away from that.

46:38

Q - Ok, so ... at least seven or eight people that you helped ... were any of these people Jewish?

A - Yes, I think then that the friends of Avvocato Diana were all Jewish, was a Jewish family. But I don't know the name. [[This is likely Lella making assumptions, however. It isn't as though these people would've told him they were Jewish; many Jews kept this information secret even from actual close friends. However, with regard to the people that Lella asserts the "general" requested he drive from place A to place B, Lella in effect says that he could tell they were Jewish by the way they looked..."dark appearance".]]

Q - About how many people there?

A - The father, the mother and the beautiful daughter.

Q - So three. About how many other people that you directly helped were strangers to you?

A - The 20 ... approximate 20 I knew before. Those were not strangers because they were ... my mother knew them. Maybe of those three also.

Q - About how many of the strangers that you helped 47:18 [sound cut out] 47:29

[repeats prior recording - sounds like error in re-recording]

A - Yes, I think then that the friends of Avvocato Diana were all Jewish, was a Jewish family.

But I don't know the name.

Q - About how many people there?

A - The father, the mother and the beautiful daughter.

Q - So three. About how many other people that you directly helped were strangers to you?

A - The 20 ... approximate 20 I knew before. Those were not strangers because they were ... my mother knew them. Maybe of those three also.

47:57

Q - About how many of the strangers that you helped were Jews?

A - The 20 that I took out, they were all Jewish. [[Based on other remarks elsewhere along with reality, sounds like pure speculation, assumption ... or could be a fib. So many folks post-war began to declare they helped Jews.]]

Q - About how many of the people that you directly helped were children under twelve years of age?

[long pause]

A - Yeah, but I didn't come ... I took the father, and the children stayed up in the normal one [intelligible]. They-they came only from Madesimo up to Casa Alpina, then they didn't go on the other side. [[So ... he allegedly walked with them to Casa Alpina?]]

Q - Oh, they stayed there.

A - They stayed there at Casa Alpina. I don't know for how many days because I had to leave there. There were several children many times they were there. -uh- they would-they would have been at the hotel ... what's the name ... **Grand Albergo is the name, the Grand Hotel**, and then I would have take them ... thinking then they would have also to be taken on the other side, those little kids, but then somehow Don Luigi Re convinced them to stay, to leave the children there, which much safe[r] there. He ... probably I think this was the reason why. [[All other records and references refer to the hotel being the Cascata Hotel, so he may be referring to a different place...but in Madesimo?]]

Q - Mm.

49:12

A - Don Luigi Re, his home in, up in the mountains, now that's a place for you to take pictures because it ... were there many going-ons there ... for your documentation.

Q - Is this, uh, how far is it from here? [[This is first definitive evidence to indicate the interview is taking place in Italy.]]

A - Two hours or three hours, go and come back in one day we could go and come back.

Q - Is that **school still there**?

A - Oh, I think it's been you know business going [unintelligible] all this time. The big o- the bigger school is there still. We can ask ... We can ... **I can call Emilio** [[Emilio 'Chiarellotto' (sp?)?]] **lives around there**. So he can refresh my memories also, because we never discuss this thing. **[[This is a bit confusing - never discussed this topic - his story? ... so no corroborating witness even to the story, as usual?]]** And yet Emilio was here six months ago when uh Tony ["Tony ah"?] was here, **you met him, he's a nice fellow**. [[Tony mentioned elsewhere: "your friend Tony") - Ms. [interviewer] says the man is "Tony Grant" as far as she can recall...a photographer and teacher who lived in Santa Cruz, CA ...mutual acquaintance of hers and Lella's. This person may have also been an acquaintance of others, incl. Sam Oliner at TAPPBI, who ultimately would've been the decider of Lella (and Barbareschi) being among few exceptions to guidelines of the study (those recognized by Yad Vashem).] **He ... he is Swiss - and he helped them as a Swiss man** and when he was there, he ... very ... never recognition, never any ... not even ... when I say help, uh, if-if he had a loaf of bread he would have given his loaf of bread. Never ... like I **know the people that have made money by doing this, especially around there**.

[[Yes, Lella would know about smuggling. Search "cigarettes" to find his reference to comments that indicate he 'smuggled' rice in exchange for cigarettes, allegedly for "a friend" who smoked. But Lella smoked as a kid, but stopped. (See third answer under time mark **1:05:13** below.) And is the "Emilio" = Emilio Chiarellotto or ...?? I cannot think of anyone else. **Note**: in the Italian edition, Carlo Beltramini was swapped out in favor of Emilio 'Chiarellotto' for the revised Pan Am 103 tale, among other details.]]

Q - Hm. Now I'd like some specific questions about the very first time that you became involved in helping a Jewish person and perhaps I'm gonna go over some of the information you've already given me, but to ...

A - Sure.

50:33

Q - ... I want to get it right. Please describe briefly in one or two sentences what happened the very first time you became involved in helping a Jewish person.

A - What-what happened?

Q - Yeah, in just a couple sentences.

A - To describe what? I don't ... [\[\[LOL.\]\]](#)

Q - What happened the very first time you became involved in helping a Jewish person.

A - Ah, what happened? What happened inside of me or ...? [\[\[LOL.\]\]](#)

Q - No, just what the circumstances ...

50:57

A - Oh, the circumstances were, uh, now let's see which is the very first - the very first time you said, which one is the very first time. [51:07] [pause] [51:14] I know there is a very first time if I ... if you give me the time to think about ... 'cause this thing [the recorder] is running, yeah?

51:18

Q - Oh, I'll stop it then ...

[stopped recording]

51:22

A - I was at Madesimo when the partisan came to the hotel. they took - they took all our shoes and gold and stuff and things, and the hotel was full of Jewish [who] were repairing [staying] there, you know, waiting for the right moment to go to Switzerland.

Q - Madesimo.

A - And that was in Madesimo. That was before ...

Q - Is that how you spell Madesimo?

A - Yes, M-a-d-e ...

Q - Oh, M-a-d-e, ok.

A - Mad-e-s-i-m-o, Madesimo. Madesimo. So-Sondrio is the ... S-O means Sondrio. S-o-n-d-r-i-o the province.

Q - Ok.

A - Ah. So I remember at the time ... that was before ... that was one person. [\[\[Mr. Didt/Ditz\]\]](#) When the partisan came one night-

[reacting to sounds nearby/outside]

A - Strange. Sounds like flag day on _____giono [unintelligible] some other kaiser [phonetic].

A - It's something that passes by ...

Q - On a truck or something ...

52:34

A - Now I remember this very well. This was my first, uh, the moment, the very first moment was, uhm, **the partisan came, it was about-around uh around the Christmas.**

Q - Of what year?

A - Christmas '43. [52:51] [long pause] [52:58] Ok, so ... Christmas '43 [unintelligible] ... '44. That I have to check with my memory now because it makes a difference for you, but ... to me never. Ok. Well, anyhow, they came. And they were some fellow - **one of the fellow that was there which was afraid of staying there when he was expecting - after the partisan had been there that one night - he was expecting the visit of the-of the Fascists or the German, you see.** [\[\[Same as story in first segment.\]\]](#) If, logically enough, if the partisan come, then you know that pretty soon the Fascists that come to try to get to apprehend the-the partisan or the German would come up. So this fellow didn't want to remain there, so he had to leave that one night. [\[\[Referred to as Mr. Didt at p. 64.\]\]](#) **And we were at the hotel, and Mr. Belloni, which was the owner of hotel said, 'Well the only person then that can help you is Pino' because I was assist skier ... I was an associate teacher ... it was a very young allievo you say, student-teacher student ... and I know my way around.** So th- we call **Scaramellini**, which was this man over there which I like to, now the name came to mind. Scaramellini was the teacher there. And he and myself for the first time went up to take this-this, uh, this-this Jewish [\[\[calls the man 'Mr. Didt' \(or](#)

Ditt - sp?) elsewhere]] and we took him down to Val di Lei, and then he left. And so he went to Switzerland, that was it.

54:27

And that was December ... the Christmas of '46 - oh pardon '46 - ah-ah '43 or '44, I don't know which year. [[It would have to be December 1943 if referring to the first alleged guiding.]] If I think then it comes to me, I mean it takes a little time to decide which one. [unintelligible] I don't remember.

Q - So this Jewish man was a partisan?

A - [cross-talking] No, this Jewish man was there, uh, in this hotel hiding there [Q - Oh, I see.] like most [Q - Oh, oh. Oh, I see] of the people that were there. [Q - And then when the partisan ... became dangerous.] And the partisans came, they took things but then they don't ... the partisans did not want to do anything with the Jewish probably actually they sort of, if they were real [[my emphasis, not his]] partisan they did sympathize with the Jewish people, no? But then because the Ger- ... the partisan were there in, uh, in the, and Cenini was there, this my friend the lieutenant. And Cenini did not want the authority [authorities] to come out ... and by authority [authorities] means the German gestapo.

Q - Who might be following ... the partisans.

A - Because ... That and because they were following the partisans and find out all of this, then he gets involved too. [Q - Ok.] So this man which was important but I didn't know who was or where was a Jewish fellow, he did not want to stay there. The others stayed there in hotel.

Q - Hmm.

55:41

A - Actually, Cenini was able to arrange things, so-so they call him and instead of the German coming up, they-left things to him and he settle everything. But this fellow went ... and I took him ... and the reason he wanted me instead [unintelligible] because he did not trust the other fellows, see? But they knew that I was a good kid there with the, you know, because Belloni ... because I knew he [Ditt-Ditt] had been there for a few days already, and that I was a guest of the hotel most of the time. [[Is this the 'Grand Hotel' he mentions later, or the Cascata Hotel that Mike Lella mentioned? (Franco Isman's mother was at the Cascata Hotel.) And did he have a room due to supposedly being an assistant-student ski instructor as he claims? Likely. At least Lella doesn't talk about how this was a "cover job" like he did in one television interview in late 2017 or early 2018 in relation the release of the Italian edition of the book (Jan 2018). 😊

<https://www.rsi.ch/news/ticino-e-grigioni-e-insubria/Pino-Lella-Ieroe-riscoperto-10060601.html>

56:08

So he trusted me but he doesn't, and uh when the-they ... when the guy came which was **Lorenzo Scaramellini**, I went with him because the man ["Ditt" or "Didt" aka Ditz?] said 'Please Pino, you do with you ... you go with Scaramellini. No, I feel more tranquil if you come with me.' And I was teaching him a little skiing besides, so-so I took him. He and we ski, we went up with the ski and ski down. That was the first time.

56:34

I wish I knew the name, because I'm sure he lives in America this fellow. [[Ditt-Ditt (sp?)(wonder if Lella means "Ditz" but failed to recall the "s"/"z"? - Lella had already said the name near the top of this Part 2/second 94-minute segment at p. 64.]]

Q - Hm. But did you know his name then?

A - Yeah, I know the name then. [Q - Hm.] I knew the name.

Q - So was this your first involvement of any kind in the helping or resistance activity?

A - Yeah. It was the first time.

56:53

Q - Yeah. [pause] [57:00] So you helped one person that [time].

A - That one, yes. From one person ... two of us. [[What happened to Lorenzo Scaramellini? Appears Lella edits him out of the story about "the first one"/Mr. Ditt. Lorenzo is back in the picture for the first trip (at 1:03:59) below.]] And I start on the certain risk to me that I think is dead. [[Sentence not easy to decipher, so this may be wrong ... "dead" = nonexistent risk"?.]]

Q - Uhm, now was this person a stranger to you? Or ... would you say ...

A - Yeah, he was a stranger before I met him in that hotel, uh, that was a week vacation ... it was Christmas vacation, you know ...

Q - Well, let me ask you the way it's written, because here it says 'Was he a relative, friend, neighbor, stranger or what' - just a person you met the week before?

A - He was a stranger.

Q - You-you met him the week before?

A - Yes. He was there for the ... I had the leave in, uh, now wait a second, October '43. Pardon, it's uh-it's uhm, it's December '44. [[This date is soon corrected back to '43.]]

Q - Ok. [writing]

A - Yeah, '44. [very softly to himself] Then I had to construct my ... because I was before all that, I was in, I was in the service before to get wound in my hand because I started with the general about ... I started with the general AFTER December. Gena [phonetic]. No, no! I had already started with the general. [[Yes, if you stick to the December '44 timeline...]] So that wasn't my first [unintelligible due to interviewer interjection/interruption].

58:27

Q - Uh-oh. [laugh] [unintelligible]

58:36

A - No, no!! It was it - it was, it was before [he means 'after'] the uh 8th of September, right. Yeah! The Jewish ... now it dawned on me ... It's correct the date ... December '43.

Q - '43. Ok. Then you start with the general in '44. [writing]

A - No, then I started with ... I started with the ... I started later with the general ... few months later.

Q - Mm-hm. Early '44.

A - Because I had to stay ... the only, the last six months...

Q - You said April of '44. [[If anything, would make sense that Lella hired on with Org Todt in April 1944 and started his "boot camp" (an anachronistic term, btw).]]

A - It was April '4-, yeah.

Q - Ok.

A - Yeah, meh-ah, yeah, April of '44, right.

Q - I thought you said ...

59:17

A - My activity was ... yes, my activity was just at the end of ... the real activity was the six months previous to the 25th of April [1945]. [Q - Ok.] but I was with the general, yes, I soon after my wound which was about one year before the end of war, yeah.

Q - So this first person that you helped over with the skis, you met him the week before at this hotel, is that what you said?

A - Yes. That was a, that was vacation time, yeah ... and I was ... I skied with him a couple of times.

Q - This first time, did you initiate it yourself or did someone ask you to help?

A - This one nobody asked me, no.

1:00:20

Q - Ok. How long did it take you to make your decision to help to do ... Did you make a decision in a few minutes or several hours, a few days when you were first asked to help?

A - Oh, no, I took decision right then and there.

Q - Ok. Did you consult with anyone before you made your decision?

A - My first one or ...? [unintelligible] [Q - This first one.] [unintelligible] No, because actually there's nobody [or 'somebody'] to have suggested that, you see, and then when it's the-the owner of the hotel suggested that.

Q - That you do ...

A - That I do that for this fellow.

1:01:12

Q - Ok. Had you or someone you cared about ever been unjustly treated by the Nazis before you became involved in this first activity?

A - Mm, no. At the time I did not, no ... absolutely.

Q - Had you witnessed or heard about mistreatment of Jews before you became involved in this first activity?

A - No. [\[\[Why not? Jews had been being mistreated by the Italian Fascists for years at that point in time.\]\]](#)

Q - Let's see, back to this booklet here. ... next page. [laugh] Uh ...

1:01:53

A - You should leave me some of this as [a] souvenir. Do you have copies?

Q - You can have this. [laugh]

A - And that?

Q - This I have to take. You want [unintelligible] ... I could ... when it's transcribed, I could send you a copy of the transcription.

A - Sure.

Q - And it'll be written out nicely.

A - Yeah, yeah.

Q - Uhm, let's see, where was I. Ok. How much risk did you think you would be taking at the time that you made your decision - did you think that you'd be taking extreme risk, moderate risk, slight risk or no risk at all.

A - Uh, my, I'm very positive in what I ... my answer is then I knew that it was extremely risk but I know that there was no risk at all because, uh, the way things were done. In other words, uh, going ... going to take the people up tonight is because I know there is no going to meet any German on my way there. Meaning that things were usually were organized in such a way that the risk would have eventually, uh, arrived afterwards because somebody ... how do you say, accusing you [Q - Mm-hmm.] but then-then we were living in such a risky way anyhow, because even if you were innocent somebody could have come by and say 'you are Fascist', so the risk was there. But in my helping, I don't think there were a lot of risk. Yeah, maybe it could've ... I could've broken a leg skiing back and I was alone on the mountain, that was a ... that would have been dangerous.

1:03:28

Q - At night besides.

A - Night.

Q - How much risk did you think you were putting members of your family in at the time that you made your decision to help: extreme risk, moderate risk, slight risk or none at all.

A - Extreme risk. That, we know, that was the risk of, ah, who gets caught. If I get caught and accused, then my family gets involving.

Q - Did you expect any payment or reward for this first activity?

A - No.

1:03:59

Q - Did you carry out your first activity alone or with others?

A - Ah, the very first time I did it, like I was saying, there were other persons with this, Lorenzo Scaramellini and other guys were doing this [unintelligible]. So there were others.

Q - How many others did you work with the first time?

A - Some of my friends there were, the very first time was Lorenzo Scaramellini. And ... I don't know if ... I do not know if there was another fellow, so uhm, he-he was there but then he didn't show up anyhow. Let's say only one person.

Q - Ok.

A - But of course the owner of the hotel knew Belloni, Cenini knew, Cenini was this fellow that [was] the lieutenant of the police, uh, the-the Fascist police there. So I felt quite safe in doing, was to me was I consider that just a ski-a ski trip.

Q - Well, Lorenzo, what was - he was ...

A - Lorenzo Scaramellini.

Q - Was ... he wasn't ... was he the hotel owner?

A - No, no - he was a ski instructor there.

Q - Ski instructor.

1:05:13

A - The owner-the owner was Mr. uh-uh, I have to ask Emilio Chiarello... mister ... very common name I bet come [sic] to my memory. [It did: "Belloni".]

Q - Were you ever given material assistance in carrying out your helping activities. For instance, did other people supply you with food, papers, false papers, ration coupons...

A - Don Luigi Re the priest did that. Every time then I, every time then we took somebody up, we used to stop at the Casa Alpina. [Lella was wealthy; why on Earth would he accept food from Casa Alpina?]

Q - That was for food, or ...?

A - They get us some food. Actually, they gave me ... you know what happened to me very often, I had a friend that smoked. I used to carry rice down there and take cigarettes back, so it was just like, but don't mention this - this is just being contrabbandiere you say, the smuggler. [We should all be able to agree that Lella is asking that this be kept 'off the record'. Strikes me as a classic shading of

truth/minimizing what was likely a commercial enterprise but reframed as a "favor for a friend". Otherwise, why tell/ask her not to mention it on the record.]]

Q - Mm. Right. During your first activity, were you or was anyone who helped you searched, detained or arrested - was any you helped ... who helped you executed the first time?

A - No, not that I know. Uh [long pause] no.

1:06:36

Q - Ok. Now, uh, here's a big one. Can you summarize for me the main reasons why you became involved in this first activity.

A - Tell you the main reason why? [Q - Mm-hm.] **1:06:47** [long pause] **1:06:56** See, at first I did not know what, uh, I did not know ... what being a Jewish man for [meant at?] the time, right. [[This makes no sense, given the common knowledge of 1938 Racial Laws and their impact during succeeding years...if indeed Lella's father and mother had plenty of Jewish friends, as Lella states]] [unintelligible] except that, uh, if ... actually, after ... at the time I did not know anything of the brutality and the [unintelligible - 'outcast' ??] and things like that. Even when they told me, I couldn't believe it. So the reason why I did this is because those people were, uh, in ... in need of doing that particular thing and for me-for me that was enough, you know. They-they had to go away to **1:07:37** when they-they never told me their private affairs, they didn't - they not even mention they were Jewish to me, you see, those are things that. It was sort of a mute agreement, a mute understanding of something that they [unintelligible - 'procure'] in circumstances like the one in ... of the particular moment. Words don't say anything, don't mean too much. [[It may well be that they were not Jewish and, like many folks post-war, all of a sudden everyone they helped was Jewish. :) It seems Lella did not consider - or chose to leave out - how many people needed to leave simply because they were on the wrong side politically or related to someone who was, or otherwise "wanted", in trouble, etc. He may have belatedly decided they were Jewish, if indeed he guided anyone.]]

1:08:06

So part of the reason I did it because I knew that I was-was ... was, um, helping somebody, I was saving someone, you see. Saving someone from exactly what at the time I didn't even know, but it was the feeling beneath [?] it. I don't know about a list of reasons, but I think that's the way I feel I was ... if you're asking me now.

Q - So you said it was because these people were in need at the time and because you knew you were saving someone.

A - Yeah, I was ... yes.

Q - Ok. Other reasons? Like [unintelligible].

A - Uh, as I mention, the ... that it's hard to - there was no need at the time to find a reason for doing the thing I did. It was not - you ... we lived in an atmosphere where we were not asking the reason why someone should behave in one way rather than another one. You know, it was ... You understand [unintelligible].

1:09:35

See I could find a thousand reason afterward, but at the time I did not know.

Q - Was there ever a time during the war when you were asked to help someone and had to say no?

A - Did ... every time they ask me, I was in a position of doing it and ...

Q - So the answer's 'no'.

A - Yeah.

Q - Ok.

[long pause - paper shuffling]

1:10:10

Q - Were there any times other than those you may have already told me about when you personally were mistreated by Nazis.

A - Uh ... no, by the Nazi, no. I was mistreated by the partisans. [laughing] It would be the other way around.

Q - I don't have a question like that here. [both laugh] Ok. Were there any times other than the ...

1:10:37

A - Oh, yes! They were ... they came, yeah. I was one [once?] there ... excuse me ... I remember when they came, my brother and I were in bed and the Nazis came and they made us jump out of the bed in the middle of the night in Milano, under ... because my Uncle Alberto was uh-was uh apprehended for prison [Q - Mm-hmm.] [unintelligible] ... they. And somehow someone must have mentioned my name [[not likely - seems to me that they'd have easy access to information on relatives thanks to the comprehensive census]], so they came to my house and I had a gun and then they took it. Because of that-because of that I could have been killed on the spot because I could not have the gun. But I had my-my documents and I was protected from up above. [[Either he did or didn't have a gun because of his work for Org Todt. It's reasonable to presume he meant the "protection" of having that job.]]

1:11:35

So they took me to ... they made me dress and they made me stand in my home ... in my awful home for one evening, and they asked me to put my uniform on, take my gun and stand guard on front of the-of my uncle's place, which is in the center of town of Milano, it was a big city, which was just across my-my house - which I did - and confused not knowing what ... thinking 'God, what's going on' if they got him, they ... And then is when I was suppose ... the night after to go and get the radio. Back ... maybe you remember that I went to pick up the radio, so ... evidently everything was done not to-not to make things bad for my uncle, not to con- he was jail for a few months, and he was also beaten, but always with a controlled situation. [[It makes ZERO sense for any official to have told a family member to "stand guard" at a relative's place. :) The record I looked at indicates 'Alberto Albanese' was on a list compiled of people arrested-imprisoned between March 1 and November 30 1944. Because Lella later/below indicates he was let go almost before war was done, can guess he was arrested ~November 1944. Apparently it was not for having an illegal communication device/radio, since Lella says that was still in Alberto's home and was moved from there to his parents' apartment..]]

1:12:41

Q - Someone was looking after him?

A - Looking after. And when this happened, they put me there with the-a proper [?] with a gun, *this is what we have reconstructed afterward but without putting too much time into this because we didn't ... we did not want to talk about those things, even my uncle and I ...* and he mentioned that this was done in such a way that the command would not send another guard or somebody else, so the telephone ... they could answer "everything is taken care of - the place is watched." "I" was there watching, you see? [[For what reason would Nazis-Fascists-whomever send any 'Org. Todt' much less a *family member* to "watch" Alberto's home? The story and its gaps are puzzling, as is Lella's seeming conjecture. Lella could be expected to fill this gap but doesn't.]]

Q - So you were set up to do that.

A - It was so that ... but I did not know until ...

1:13:17

Q - ... why you were there ... you stole the radio, is that ...?

A - When I was there the day, then, no - I didn't know anything, so nobody came, nobody visited the apartment.

Q - Nobody took the ... confiscated anything?

A - Nobody confiscated anything. They blocked the place from outside, then the night after, they told me to go there from ... without broke-breaking the thing through the ... from up above ... from the roof down from the face of the building, go into his apartment and fetch the radio and take the radio home,

which I did. [[Don't know who "they" are.]] That was dangerous. The danger was in the fact there was a curfew then. And that was, uh, immediately after that one day that I was sort of ... [Q - Now ...]

1:13:57

Then I would say that it was a-a form of mistreating this me - it was a form of actually helping ... helping me, no?

Q - But initially when you were roused from bed ...

A - I thought it was - the whole thing was probably a build-up thing [[“set up”?]], you see.

Q - And you took that radio ...

A - My brother was ... and my brother was little ... I was 17, my brother was 15. Or I was 18, he was 16. And then-then when I took the radio, what?

Q - You installed the radio in your house?

A - I didn't. I just left it there at my house, and then I moved away from there. And, but, I knew that nothing would have happened. Another fellow was there, his name was Recapito [or 'Ricapito'] - Mario Recapito - Mario [unintelligible] - no **Pasquale Recapito** [Ricapito Pasquale]. He-he was an agent - he had been, uh, parachute at night in Milano - and he was a-ah in my uncle's organization, or my uncle was in *his* organization. His name is Recapito. I know the name. And that could be checked.

1:15:01

Q - Hm. Uhm [recording cuts out]

[repeats previous audio]

A - ... my uncle was in his organization. His name is Ricapito [or Recapito]. I know the name. [[“Captain Leto” or “Laito”, real name Recapito Pasquale,]] And that could be checked. [[See snips and info from e-book re: testimony re: disappearance of Major Holohan at [2].]]

Q - Hm. Uhm, were there any times other than those you may have already told me about when you witnessed or heard about mistreatment of Jews by the Nazis?

A - At that time or before?

Q - No, during the war ... or, well, at any time.

A - Oh. If I heard of the Jewish being mistreated by the Nazis?

Q - When you witnessed or heard about mistreatment of Jews.

A - No, I heard ... **only thing I heard later, I - no, at the time not yet.**

1:15:47

Q - Ok.

A - **The only thing telling me those things, but they didn't talk because they didn't want for me to know that they were Jewish, yes, no they didn't.**

Q - Were there any times other than those you may have already told me about when you witnessed anyone else being mistreated by the Nazis?

1:16:05

A - No, I ...

Q - **So most of the terrible things you saw were done by the Fascists or the partisans ...**

A - Yeah. Of course, I heard of ... you mean seen or you say ...

Q - Witnessed.

A - Witnessed, no. Uhm, witnessed no, I don't ... and besides where I ... **the only time I witness something it was Fascists.** **[[I think he means heard about, based on the upcoming story.]]** **There was a place in Milano called Villa Faccio [phonetic] [[related blogspot article below mentions Villa Triste]] something ... the name similar to this ... and, uh, it was the worst place to get in my uncle went there too, but then he was out of there and went to San Vittore which is the common jail and this ... was there, as a chief of the liberazione. The Comitato di Liberazione [[Nationale aka CLN]].** **[[If he was, he'd be listed in the historical records as such.]]** And he told me then 'If you go in this place, you never come out from there alive.' There was a place, but it was run by the comune ... Italian Fascists that were against the Jewish and against the uhm-uhm the partisans. **And this it's very well known this place probably you never heard because two movie stars of that period - a couple and that had been very popular in the movies ... talking about the period between '35 and the war ... one I remember the names of those, I mean mostly other people of that time know about this. Mmm, she was [they were] Valenti e Ferida** the two names. **1:17:46** Uh, they were involved into all sorts of violence and, uhm, and they were very popular, very well respected artist.

Q - And they were ...

A - And they were the worst people, they enjoyed it and they were sadistic.

Q - Oh, they were the torturers?

1:18:06 [[Quite irrelevant story...]]

A - They were the **alleged** torturer[s]. And they run an organization done with Fascists, they worked for the Nazis they say - in fact they were-they were in collaboration with the SS, and uh this I think it's ... I think it's history now. You never heard ... you never read anything about this, uh, couple: **Luisa Ferida** is her name [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luisa_Ferida; <https://web.archive.org/web/20191108040743/http://valentiferida.blogspot.com/>; https://milano.corriere.it/milano/notizie/cronaca/12_aprile_24/villa-triste-torture-nazisti-partigiani-ferida-corbella-ko-ch-2004206878491.shtml]; also see <https://www.facebook.com/177575752286599/posts/luisa-ferida-e-osvaldo-valenti-collaboratori-e-propagandisti-de-l-regime-fascista/1023951140982385/> and <https://www.pane-rose.it/files/index.php?c3%3Ao11928&fbclid=IwAR04ByeuWNG9hKD8fhGFgaCTGdZxcXc0BYGqJwWUel-PzGR-WOdsqhaceY8>

] ... Luisa Ferida and **Osvaldo Valenti** **[who was a supposedly former member of X mas]**. And Osvaldo Valenti ... the place that they were [unintelligible] build up a beautiful villa ... they have taken a beautiful villa almost-almost in the heart of Milano, it was in the San Siro ... And the villa has a very, very well known name even today if one refers to that particular era [mispronounced]. It's a common ... everybody knows ... uh ... I'm trying to remember, the Villa **Triste** **[[according to the last article above, originally Villa Fossati, later called Villa Triste, on via Paolo Uccello in Milan]]** ... Well anyhow, those are the thing ... At that time, people won't believe. Some of the actual story came out, even then, but how can you believe things so mon- ... especially two persons just like say to you, imagine you and back in 1950 and say 'You know, Gary Cooper and uh-and uh Loretta Young were ... in fact they **Ferida and Valenti** were killed, both of them were executed right on the spot ... they are, uhm, they killed 200 children **[[rather, were accused of this, allegedly falsely ... but it was a bad idea of them to stay at that torture-murder hotel for however many (two?) weeks]]**. Would you believe a thing like this [unintelligible]? [laughing] You know, come on, you know, probably [?] in the United States. [laughing]

1:20:03

Q - Did-did your father ... Go ahead.

A - They ... yes, yes. No, no. So they were accused of having killed I don't know many person by-by what is the word again? [Q - Torture.] ... by tortur e, and they were having [unintelligible] scenes and things like this.

1:20:16

Q - Oh. **Did your father or mother or any of your brothers or sisters engage in any kind of helping or resistance activities during the war?**

A - Uh, yeah, very indirectly, yes. Not ... I'll tell you how. **My father and my mother, they kept in their house this-this officer; they kept in the house the radio** **[[NOTE: an illegal radio is not at all the same thing as a wireless transmitter]]** [laugh], and that was enough to kill them, you see.

Q - They kept a radio?

A - I don't know how long it stayed there, because I left and at the time, after I took the radio home, I was only worrying about the radio, see, but my uncle ... my uncle was in jail. When my uncle went out of the - out of jail, the first thing he did ... but he went [got] out of jail *almost when the war was finished*, so he could not do anything. [[so Alberto probably arrested in November '44 - see that beniculturali file re: Alberto Albanese that refers to list of names of folks at San Vittore dtd March 1 to November 30 1944]], but this friend of the organization did work, so probably with my brother[s] help the radio went. But they used it because I know that this Recapito, this guy then **Mario uhm Pasquale Recapito** he was using the radio. He was using the radio when he was in my-in my uncle place, then he kept on using the radio when it was in my house. And the reason why it was there, as I told you before, was simply because it was a very unsuspectable place. And when my uncle was taken, the fact then everything went ... went to tol'cio, you say, like oil. [[Naturally, beware whenever Lella declares "I know", but this reference to Ricapito/Recapito is notable because his name is meaningful. See file under Recapito/Ricapito because of dual spellings.]]

Q - [laugh]

A - You know it's because we had protection. Even if that cost me a little, you know, a little white hair because they **[Nazis allegedly]** got me up at night and I ... with my gun ... and ... but at the time I could prove my general, you know, I had ... I was doing already this [work] with the general, so I had my-my paper for all the German, for all the Fascists that I was ok. Which put me into doubt - what if instead then the - instead of the Fascists and the German, I am showing this to the partisans?

Q - Right.

1:22:21

A - You know, then it would be [Q - Then you're in big trouble.] picked up. But [anyhow], the thing was well organized.

Q - During the war, was there a leader or two that you particularly admired?

A - Leader or two? I admired them afterwards because I did not know anything about ... at that moment ... there were no leaders because they were all secret, you see.

Q - Now I'm about to ask you about other parts of your life during the war. First of all, where did you live for the longest period during the war - in which town? Which country?

A - During the war, in **Madesimo. Madesimo and Milano ... just about even**, but ...

Q - You were ... you divided your time between those two?

A - Yes. Then when I ...

Q - Is that right [spelling?] for Madesimo?

1:23:19

[audio glitch]

A - After the war, at the time there were a lot of people ... At that time there were a lot of people in Madesimo because Madesimo had become, em, I'm still looking for the ... searching for that word ... when you leave the city, you go in one place [Q - _____ [unintelligible] Exile.] No-no solo no. But anyhow, it had become a place for-for refugio [refuge] - for all those people. *So for instance if you are a well to do person, you have a cabin in the mountain and you are in Milano at the time, your cabin would have been in-in Madesimo because it was chic to have a-to have a mountain place.*

Q - A retreat maybe?

A - Ok retreat, but ... ah, anyhow, *it's a country house - [no, a] mountain house, because the country house somewhere else. [[LOL.]] So all the Milanese people that had a mountain house, they would've gone to Madesimo. In fact, there were a lot of people there.* More ... most the people ... the lot of people maybe two or three hundred. *[[In context of next sentence, I think he means full-time residents.]] But all the rest of the people were the people from Milano or from Lecco or from Como.* You were mentioning lake of Como before in fact - it's just above lake of Como.

Q - Did you have many neighbors living nearby, let's say in Milan?

A - In Milan?

Q - Mm-hm.

A - Well, in the center of town ... probably live in the big apartment building, but all the people in Milano at the time were out of Milano because they were afraid of the bombing. *[[Well, I suppose the people who could afford to be out]]*

1:24:50

A - See, so ...

Q - Ok, let's say that both places for now, did you have many neighbors?

A - In Milano?

Q - Yeah.

A - *But during the war as I said there were no neighbors. [Q - Yeah.] My building ... See, my family used to - they still have a-a shop at the center place right there in the-the building was literally the same building ... now we don't live there anymore because my father and mother are dead. But we lived there for-for 25 years.* *[[Mentions nothing about bombing of that residence/shop.]]*

Q - Hm.

A - And no neighbors because the very few ... they are office now ... it just like saying don't have a lot of neighbors in the center of el centro of Milan- or New York ...

Q - It was commercial [unintelligible] ...

A - It's become commercial ... become offices now [unintelligible].

Q - **And what about Madesimo - did you have many neighbors there?**

A - Yes, yes. The neighbors, well, that is something different. I know the import of neighbors in America, but in Italy, it's too vicino [?] neighbors is vicino - meaning for instance, neighbors in ____ would be the fellow that lives here or the fell- ... or anyone that I know in the vicinity. Is that what neighbors are?

Q - Mm-hmm.

A - **So I had plenty of neighbors, but I did not know them.**

Q - It doesn't matter.

A - Ah, ok. But ... I don't see the importance of the ...

Q - I think actually, I think at this point I'd have to decide whether we're gonna choose ... there's too many questions here ... Which ... where would you say the most spent the most time, Milano or Madesimo? Or is it really half and half?

1:26:23

A - Half and half. I would say half and half. Because Madesimo had ... **my family that lived in Madesimo during the war, the [family's mountain house] house in Madesimo was** ... the family they lived in Milano ... during the war, Milano was a risky place to live because of the bombing in summertime. And in wintertime, there was a school for me, you know, before the [war] period, and then ... and then I was in winter the world of snow and I was very, very ... it was very necessary for me to be on the snow because of my - for my, for my sport ... my ... and let's not call it sport. Because of my ... form of life. I was going to be a skier even then ... even when I could have gone to school, I wanted to become a skier, so when the war ended, where I end up would be in the United States. And I did exactly that [in early 1950].

Q - You had that plan, yeah..

1:27:20

A - And did I ... **if I wouldn't have taken advantage of the snow all the time, then I wouldn't have been able to get ...**

Q - Ok, let's-let's I think just for the sake of these ques- ...

A - Milano say then.

Q - Choose Milano.

A - Say Milano, yes.

Q - Ok. So in Milano. Uhm, you lived in a house or an apartment?

A - Apartment.

1:27:48

Q - How many rooms were in the apartment?

A - Eight.

Q - Not counting bathrooms.

A - Uh, rooms to [unintelligible], yes?

Q - No, just rooms altogether.

A - Oh. [counting] Six. Seven. Not counting the-the service [unintelligible] the two bathroom and ...

Q - Ok, not counting bathrooms. Was there ... there wouldn't be a cellar in an apartment. Is there a cellar?

A - No. There was a terrace though.

Q - Was there an attic?

A - No, we were in the last ... but we were on the last floor, so actually we could ... we could have ... **No, no attic.**
After the war, they build something like that.

Q - Ok. Uhm, now I'd like to make a list of the people who were living in the your house, let's just say Milano, at the time that you're helping activity first began, that being Christmas of '43.

A - Officially, my father, my mother. [Q - Ok.] My brother, my little sister. And two maids.

1:29:19

But then officially ... but then because of the-of the tension because of the war, in summer [?] nobody would have been there. In wintertime, uhm, yes, in wintertime they would stay there. Uhm, wintertime, no-no flyings you know all the time, no airplanes.

Q - Ok.

A - And then we have guests all the time, and the guests as I said before were for ... guests was this fellow that came, but that was late in the ... before the end of the war. And then another guy, then that was a general ... the general. See, the general is ... I have a cousin, of [in?] the air forces.

Q - This would be around '43 - winter '43.

A - Yeah, the first ... because in winter '45, we had two people, three people stay in the house beside us ... beside my family.

Q - What was your father's name?

A - My father? My father is Michele [Mick-ele].

Q - And how old was he in, say, this would be '43 ... winter '43.

**Quite Important reference to father
being a captain in the Army**

A - He was a captain in the army ... and he was [in] '43, he was 49. [[His father would be 47, I believe - born Sept 1896.]]

Q - And your mother, her name was?

A - My mother was name was Gemma. G-e-m-m-a.

Q - Gemma, uh-huh. And how old was she in that year?

A - And she was like my father, same age. They were born in '96 ... 1896.

Q - So ... '43. You were...

A - '43 and I was born in '26 - I was 17.

Q - Ok. And your brother?

A - Let's see, my brother was 15.

Q - And his name was

A - Domenico.

Q - Domenico. Ok.

1:31:05

A - And that Domenico Lella is ... that ... I think I told you that ... he was an hour and a crack [unintelligible] or what was the other one ... Montgomery [unintelligible]. [Q - All right.] [unintelligible] to him.

Q - Ok. And your sister, how old was she?

A - Oh, she was born in '38, so she was ... two ... five. [\[\[Records indicate Cicci was born October 1937.\]\]](#)

Q - And her name was ...?

A - Fran- Cicci. She is C-i-c-c-i. Cicci between quotations because her name is, everybody knows her as Cicci but her name is Francesca. Francesa Maria Theresa, you want to write everything? [laughing] Italian names.

Q - And the maids, do you know how old they were?

A - Ah, the maids were, ah, old. [There ... we had Maria and Elvira, and then we had Mary ... Ah, Mary, she was a young beautiful girl and that I remember exactly how old she was because I was \[unintelligible\] thinking about her being 25...24.](#)

[Q - And you were probably in love with her.](#)

[A - ... I'm almost in love with her.](#) And the oth- ... Maria and Mary and the other girl was a little older. Ah, [unintelligible] [my mother is dead otherwise I actually ... She had a memory like ...](#) You know how maids are. Mary has been in the house since she was 18 until she got married - 17 until she got married. And then, but we had two others for the ... she wasn't a maid, actually. [She was after my little sis ... she was a babysitter and she went to school and things.](#) The other two girls, they sometime ... they changed, always two of them ... [but there were four of them, actually. Two at the house, two at the time staying in the house, so](#) ... [Q - Mm-hm.] You want all the names of the [unintelligible] or too many?

Q - No. Just [unintelligible] the second one.

A - Because I could not even give you the ... [I could give you the families name \[family names\], which are important if we have to tra-](#) but is not ...

Q - We're not going to trace it. I don't know why they need the names, but ... The second one would be?

A - Allora - Mary is the wrong one, because Mary is not a maid, but it is in this case because of ... you know there was no difference ... was part of the ...

Q - Like a nurse, you mean?

A - Like, yeah, was a babysitter ... like a nurse. For my little ... my sister was very little ...

Q - [unintelligible]

A - Not maid and then in this case we have, we have ... at the time we had two sisters. They were about 27 and 25 the two sister. Uh, Maria and Elvira.

1:33:56

Q - Ok. And your father was the head of the house?

A - Yes. But my father was in the service also. But he had ulcers and thing like this, so ... he was such an actor that many times _____ talk of war he got very sick. [laughing] [[I wonder why interviewer didn't say or ask anything about this and the comment at ~ 1:30. It isn't as though Lella referred to World War I. He referred to 1943 when declaring his father was a "captain in the army".]]

Q - Oh. E70 During the war, was your household very well off financially, quite well off, neither rich nor poor, quite poor or very poor?

A - Ah, not-not poor. We are that ... the second, not very rich and what is the other?

Q - Quite well off?

A - Quite well off, yes.

Q - Ok.

~end~

PART 3

45 min

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=1n8U19m0PR1H3ppdHVL4isPhF8QiO5uYg> [starts mid-word]

00:04

Q - [unintelligible] [[reciting choices when it came to the question of the family's wealth ... the spectrum of choices from rich/very well off all the way to quite poor]] ... quite poor.

A - Uhm, not-not poor. We are that ... the second, not one of the real [rich] people - the second, not the real[ly] wealthy.

Q - Yeah.

A - Yes, I-I suppose that- not _____elli [citing name of a rich family - most likely **Agnelli** (Fiat)] - not part of the aristocracy, with owning banks in South America, but -uh- we were ... I had a good education and we had servants in the house, so I would say we were medium ... middle-middle class.

Q - **E71** Other than members of your family who were living with you during the war, were there any other relatives in your community or town in Milano.

A - Besides my ...?

Q - Were there other households of relatives living in your-in Milano.

00:55

A - My uncle Alberto, which was ... **is not married**, and uh ...

Q - **E71a** Well, let me ask it this way - how many different families of relatives lived in Milano?

A - Of relatives?

Q - Mm-hm.

A - My-my mother's brother had a-the full family, my cousins. Is that ... [unintelligible] want to know?

Q - Yeah, how many households were there?

A - Oh, my one family was my uncle Giovanni. Another family was my **uncle Alberto, but he did not have a family - he was not married**. Another ... that's what I want [unintelligible] - it counts too even if he's alone? [Q - Yeah.] Ok. Then - uh- my grandfather and grandmother. **Oh, wait a second, my grandfather and grandmother lived in Alberto['s] home.**

Q - Ok.

A - Ok. So there were - you want to know how many people in each family?

Q - Well, no, just how many households.

A - Ok, one, two... Giovanni, Alberto, and that's all, for ['cause] Marino [?] died before. There was - oh! My-my father's, my father's brothers. He had a couple of — couple of brother [sic] living in Milano, which I'd never met. [Q - [laugh]] We weren't so close.

Q - So maybe four - three or four.

A - Mmm. Altogether? Yeah, maybe three - three because my uncle, yes. My uncle and my grandfather with my uncle. Three. Oh! There's another uncle - Uncle-Uncle Antonio. Antonio, Giovanni, Alberto [[and "Marino" who "died before"]]. [[Mike Lella mentioned Antonio as being Gemma Albanese/mother's brother and someone who sold a Bugatti or Ducati (?) dealership in the 1920s to an Ascari, but I could find no info on either having dealerships for that time period.]] So that's four-four ... you can make five. Making sure ... I'm not making a mistake. Only the fifth I don't even know them [father's brothers] but they are relatives.

02:38 [Section F - p. 52 of questionnaire]

Q - Ok. **F1** Now we're getting up to the present. I'm about to ask you some questions about your life after the war, including your life today. First of all, were you involved in bringing Nazis or Nazi collaborators to justice after the war?

A - No.

Q - **F2a** Was your work after the war the same as or different from your work during the war.

A - Uhm, during the war I actually wasn't working because I was a s- ... I was learning how to become a-a-a good skier.

03:10

Q - Oh. That would be different.

A - Uh, would be different. I was too young then.

03:13

Q - So your work after the war was ski instructor?

A - Yes, I would say skiing. I even ... yeah. Skiing and I was associated with my family business in Italy, in America I was representing the Lella Sport. But it wasn't my job, you know. I shouldn't even care about [care to mention] - my brother and sister took care of that.

[[Well, it was a business registered by your brother in 1962 so ... and for once, the Aftermath mentioned this fact when it referred to Lella Sport being created by Mimmo. What it doesn't mention is what Mike had to say about a family dispute about business and Lella's parents *supposedly* asked Lella to return to Italy in ~1962. Mike also mentions a business his father opened then called La Palestra-The Gym, which evidently operated from 1962 to 1974.]]

Q - **F3** Was your wife's work after the war the same as ... well, you weren't married then or ...

A - My wife? My wife is American, my first wife is American, and she was a housewife.

03:54

Q - This isn't right because, uh, [questions not applicable]. You weren't married during the war.

A - No.

04:10

A - [unintelligible - See? ...]

Q - [unintelligible] Your wife - what was your wife's work after - when you - your first wife?

A - When I met her, or before to get married or otherwise?

Q - As a wife.

A - As a wife she was a housewife.

Q - **F4** And you have children, right?

A - I have from my first, uh, matrimony ...

Q - Altogether.

A - Altogether I have five children.

04:35

Q - How much do your children know about your life during the war? Do they know quite a bit, some, very little or nothing at all?

A - **Uh, very little.** They know about very little. [[Keep in mind that Mike claims to have known a lot from his father, Mimmo, his grandparents, though they'd be long dead by 1985.]] I ne-never told them because my three children which are big now, they-they always lived in the United States [[that's not accurate; they lived in Italy in the '60s at a minimum. Bruce went to American School there.]] and I didn't have the occasion of talking about those things. [[Untrue, if you count what Mike Lella has to say.]] My two little children - my-my second matrimony, they are so little I never want to tell those things. **05:02** Now I'm starting to tell-say to them.

Q - So they're ten and what was the other one?

A - Ten and five. Actually, eleven and thirteen now.

Q - So you have two whole families. [laugh] That's great. **F4b** Do you believe that your children have been influenced in any way by what they know about your life during the war?

A - My ... no, because I haven't spent too much time ... Maybe my big children, I don't know. I should ... I'd love to tell ... to ask them [unintelligible] those questions to them. I don't know. I don't ... uh ... first I tell them it's better not to say things, uhm, of this caliber you know ... of this type to my children, because I have contact [unintelligible] only when they were kids, the ones that are in the United States. I have divorced my wife 15 years ago. [[Hard to say who divorced whom, but it took place in Nevada in 1971, I believe.]]

Q - Yeah, that's quite a while.

A - So my children were little - not little but they were-they were in the United States and I was traveling and I married Yvonne, uh, in 1970, so time flies. [[Maybe Lella said "1970s", because he didn't marry her in 1970 - they married in July 1973. He may have meant they began living together as man and wife as of then...]]

Q - [laugh]

A - **And I divorce Yvonne [one?] now, you know, not married any longer.** [[So as of July 1985 - long before December 1986 Pan Am 103 crash - Lella and Yvonne were already broken up.]]

Q - Hm.

A - But she is, uh, we are good friends, she comes here, probably you meet her tomorrow over there.

06:22

Q - Oh, let's see. Let's try page 12 here. **F5** Uhm, overall do you think that your children strongly approve, somewhat approve, somewhat disapprove or strongly disapprove of your wartime activities ... what they know about it?

A - Strongly not because nothing is said [unintelligible] **strongly by those people now those little guys. They-they are always so soft.** [Lella reading the questionnaire] 'Somewhat approve - somewhat, uh, ... neither approve or [?] "disapprove. Somewhat disapprove, strongly disapprove.' No-no. I would say they somewhat approve - maybe, no - strongly approve my ... all of them. I'm sure if I explained ... it's my interpretation or you want to know the actual fact, because then I have to test them.

Q - It's what you think.

A - I think that they [would] strongly approve.

Q - Ok. What would you tell today's young people if a party with goals similar to those of the Nazis came to power today?

A - To the young people? Oh, that's tough. I, if they, you know, my ... I am ... I have a little sense of humor - if a party-if a party comes like that, the party ... Repeat the question, please, because, uh ...

Q - **F6** What would you tell today's young people if a party with goals similar to those of the Nazis came to power today?

07:49

A - If there were a party like that, I could not even say anything to my children, because the party would know my - with a party like that, I wouldn't be here in the first place, you know. It's not - it's, uh, I have to get into directly to your question there, but I ... it to me is so, is so absurd. The only thing I can tell to my children, it's ... with, uh, with, uh, with example and I wouldn't have any way of ... words would be unnecessary because if I had a party like the Nazi party coming to power, I mean I would be fighting so much again **[[but you didn't fight the Nazis, so ... does Lella mean "this time"?]]**, it wouldn't - they wouldn't ... no-no words would be needed. The only thing I can say just in a way of a paradox is say ... better to be d- die in a process of-of avoiding such a-such a ... if we are talking about party like that. [Q-Mm-hm.] Because, you know, this is ... you put it down in good English. [laughing]

08:57

At the only time [?] what I meant.

Q - I understand. **F7** Now I'd like to ask you some questions about things that you might have done to help or assist others since the war. First of all, after the war did you ever do anything unusual to help someone? **09:10**

09:15

A - Unusual. I did not have the occasion, but uh ... in a car accident or when the place took fire, things like this ... no, no, no. Yeah, all little small things that everyone would - everybody else would doing

[do] along with me. Nothing ... I think [unintelligible] jumping into ice river because I wasn't there when this happened, you know ... nothing.

Q - Nothing out of the ordinary.

A - Nothing out of the ordinary.

Q - **F8** Are you now or have you recently been involved in helping activities in your community, such as volunteer work with charities, schools, churches or anything of that sort? **09:56**

10:01

A - I volunteer here, there's not too much to, uh ... but, uh, I ... nnn- ... I volunteer for everything there is to do on, but there too much to do here. I love to be near ... I [unintelligible] to collaborate somehow, but here there is not too much to do. If, uh, I've done it in the past here ...

Q - **F9** What sort of things have you done?

A - Well, uh, one time I went to a hospital, mmm, to give my blood and thing like this once or twice. They insist that I get a steak. It was in America a couple of times. Here, here, there is, I suppose ... there is ... I don't know what to tell. I mean, I feeling bad because ... probably [unintelligible] I don't even remember. And if I have done there small things otherwise it would be ... Nothing heroic. **11:05**

11:10

Q - Uh, let's see ... page 15. Let's see. Uh, of the people listed here, what kinds of people have you given help to in the last year or so? Have you given help to a relative, friend, neighbor or a stranger ... during the past year? **11:32**

11:37

A - A relative ... neighbor ... what kind of ... yes, uhm, uh, ... Then my life is very, is very bland. I'm shocked if I don't ... if I haven't done any of those wonderful things. **11:51 11:56** I helped a lot of people in the snow - buh, broken legs and thing like this, in my position there was nothing real -uh- dramatic that I could do, you see, but I've ... they're not ... I'm not waiting for the accident to happen so I can be helpful, but -uh- ...

Q - Was there anything in the past that you helped anybody?

A - The mountain? No, because nothing ... but, uh, I went-I went for [unintelligible] I went in my profession, for the Mammoth in America tried to be helpful if ... which is nothing to be considered, you know, I don't feel that it is anything, uh, you mean, out of normality. Anyone in my shoes would do the same thing.

12:53

Q - Ok. [Unintelligible] to page 14?

A - Fourteen?

13:04

Q - Do you-

A - [cuts her off] If you are mentioning, uh, helping little kids with clubs and little social affairs like making them to race or taking them so they can swim and I ... like a master scout, those things I do all the time. [Q - You do? Ok.] Sure, but I don't mention...

Q - Oh, well ... [unintelligible] here. **F10** During the past year, how much if any have you done of the following activities. I'll read these things and then you tell me whether it's very often, often, a few times, once or never. **13:37** So ... led recreational activities for children or adults, like you just said. You do that?

A - Ah, yeah.

Q - How often would you say, very often ... often?

A - A few times.

Q - Ok. Well, this is during the past year. Uh ... helped feed the sick or aged or visited an ill person?

A - Mmmm. You know, here is not taken as a-as any beneficiary, uh, doing - it's only normal. I go to visit old person once in a while and I stop ... I ... let's not say this is not ... Repeat the question - see if I ...

Q - Well, helped feed a sick person or-or aged person or visited an ill person.

A - Oh, help-help feed to a ... No, no, no. Those are things that were are not organized to do, you see. You mean socially, eh?

Q - Mm-hm. Oh. Well, or somebody you might know. 14:35

14:40

A - I... there was a man here but now is dead or is gone ... [unintelligible] husband. I don't know if he's dead - he's not here anymore. He was the old gardener, I used to help him if I could. Uh, no. There's no [unintelligible] no occasion here to do it.

15:00

Q - Taught children or adults or counseled anyone about jobs or personal problems?

A - Yes, in a way of talking and you know ... mmm ... about jobs? Not officially - not for the purpose ... as-as-as a friend you mean? [Q - Mm-hm.] ... friendly suggestions? [Q - Mm-hm.] Oh yes.

Q - That's a few times? Often?

A - Often.

Q - Often? Made telephone calls on behalf of a group or cause or helped raise money for a group or a cause? **15:33**

15:38

A - Once or twice. This is always in the past year or generally speaking?

Q - Mm-hm, in the past year.

15:45

A - In the past year, a friend of mine and his associate of ... politics ... he wanted to know from me if it's possible to introduce him to some Americans for a cause...something like this. And I'm debating if I should do it, but ... you know ... I don't like to get involved with politics, so ... I have refused. But I ... I don't know. No, I would say ... get into a telephone for also?

16:21

Q - Mm-hm. Making calls to help [unintelligible] a cause.

A - Uh, I've been helping an organization that is developing, uh, for flying ... things like that you mean. For instance, the other day we had, uh, you know, George Chavez here - Chavez is the first man that came through the Alps flying.

Q - Uh.

A - Very romantic person, actually. And, uhm, and he died in the process of doing that. Actually very bad adventure because he was landing finally ... the feet of all these humans things ... situations ... and he was a hero, and just when he was landing or fifteen meters ... or fifteen yards above, his wing collapsed like that.

Q - Yeah.

A - This was back in 1980 ... 75 ... 1910 ... 75 years ago. And he crashed. When he crashed, his legs were mangled and he died four days after that and he was only 27 years old, a real hero ... because he managing going through the Alps and he went through the [unintelligible] where you went with the car, with his early plane and can barely stay twenty meters off ... and he went too [unintelligible] ... So he was a real hero.

So because of the 75th anniversary, we organizing, uh, meetings and, uh, there is a very important Peruvian - he was a Peruvian man living in Paris - a Peruvian flyer today is coming from ... has already been here because of that ... my help ... assistance here. Uh, I don't get paid for those things, but ... and, uh, my help in this matter consist of, mmm, making sure that I go to his ... to the ... to the station and take him, and take him various ... if he wants to stay, he stays here ... and then I-I, he is building an airplane just exactly a copy like that and is doing the same thing. I hope he can do it. And he's a very good artist. He's a ... painter and a sculptor and is also a pilot. So, in ... uh ... for the sake of airplanes, I do this, but it's not for the love of human beings, probably the love of flying something.

18:42

Q - [laughing] No, it says a group or a cause ... a group ...

[[OK, he went entirely off the rails from the topic...apparently anything for which he doesn't get paid falls under the heading of charitable/good works.]]

A - Or a group is a cause, yes. I, well, I wish that all the young kids could spend time in learning how to fly in safety rather go round and, you know, kidnapping or smoking ...

18:55

Q - [laughing] **F10e** Have you, uh, given speeches or lectures or written letters on behalf of an issue or cause during the past year?

A - Past ... in the past year? No.

Q - **F10f** Investigated, collected or prepared information on behalf of an issue or cause?

A - No. During this last year? No.

Q - **F10g** Contributed money or goods to some cause?

A - No.

19:25

Q - Ok. **F11** About how many hours a month did you, or do you or did you spend on the activities that you mentioned like the recreational activities for children? [\[\[He misinterprets this as activities with-for his own children and she does not correct him.\]\]](#)

A - Recently, because of my children's friends, always-almost every day. Uhm, and there let's say almost every day - many times they are not here, but I would say ... you want to know approximate during their ... during the span of a year? How many times?

Q - Mm-hm.

19:57

A - Oh, god, I think by taking them to tennis and skiing and bicycle and this and that and with the dogs, I ... it's a lot of time. [laughing] Hundreds of times if you want. I mean ...

20:22

Q - Now, uhm, not too much more. [unintelligible] [cross talk]

A - No, I ... I'm very curious of that.

Q - **F12** Uh, what is your religious affiliation today - are you, uh, Protestant, Catholic ... or do you belong to any religion today?

A - No, I am Catholic by-birth ... by birth, I mean, but I'm not coliche [phonetic] no osservante ... I'm not observant, is that an English word there?

Q - Mm-hm. So would you say no religion today, or ... Catholic but not observant.

A - What, I'm Catholic but not observant.

Q - Ok. **F12a** So, uh, the next question is do you consider yourself very religious, somewhat religious, not very religious or not at all religious.

A - Not very religious.

Q - How would you describe -

21:13

A - Actually, not at all religious anymore...

Q - Ok. How-

A - Don't have anything against it though.

Q - That's all right - I won't tell.

A - Don't tell. [joking]

Q - **F13** How would you describe your health today. Would you say you are excellent health, good health, fair health, poor health or very poor.

A - I'm in good health.

Q - Ok. Uhm, now I would like to ask you some questions about your feelings at the present time. We need page 15.

21:42

Q - **F14** So thinking about your feelings at the present time, please tell me which comes closest to the way you feel about each of the statements I will read to you. Do you strongly agree with the statement, do you just agree with it, do you disagree with it, or do you strongly disagree with it. I've got a whole long list of things, ok.

The first one is 'It's sad to see a lonely person in a group.'

A - It's sad to see in lonely ... [Q - Mm-hm.] what do you say. I agree. Not strongly because sometimes it's better off.

Q - Ok. 'Every person should give some time for the good of the town and country.'

A - I agree.

Q - 'I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others.'

A - I feel that I'm a person ...

Q - A person of worth.

A - Of worth.

Q - Of worth. I'm a worthwhile person.

A - Yeah.

Q - At least an equal with others.

A - Yes, I agree, but sometime I be really depending on the person. I-I ... it's myself.

Q - Mm-hm.

A - I am. Oh, I agree then.

Q - 'It is the duty of each person to do the best sh-he can. Do you agree with that statement?

A - Do the best, yes.

Q - Do you strongly agree or agree?

A - I agree.

Q - Ok. 'I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.'

A - Being fatalist, you mean? ... what-what, uh, fully dis-... I don't disagree because it is that sometimes it's true but ... say again, maybe I didn't hear you.

Q - 'I have often found that what is going to happen will happen.'

A - I am ... it's [unintelligible] in this world, and ... the reason ...

Q - You agree?

A - I agree.

Q - 'At times I think I'm no good at all.'

A - Oh, I agree with that ... sometimes I feel also.

Q - 'I can't feel good if people around me are sad.'

A - I don't feel ...?

Q - 'I can't feel good if people around me are sad.'

A - [repeating] I cannot feel good if people around me are sad. Right, I agree.

Q - 'The feelings of people in books affect me.'

A - Feelings of people in books inviting ... affect me? Depending on how I feel myself, yeah, I don't know. Sometime it makes me cry. [laughing] Sometime I just take the book and throw it away. Uh

Q - [laughing] In general, what would you say?

A - I agree, I agree, but slight - I don't disagree, but because it's true - there is a truth either way of that thing.

Q - 'I take a positive attitude about myself.'

A - I wish [laughing], I wish, I wish. I mean, eh, this is a tricky question - the sense that do you agree then you should always have a ... this attitude?

24:42

Q - No, it doesn't say should; it just says 'I take a positive attitude about myself.'

A - I take ... same atti- ... this is ... I don't know English that well to get into this. I-I agree, I agree ... positive thinking.

Q - Ok. 'I get very upset when I see an animal in pain.'

A - I don't get very upset, but I get upset, yes, I mean [Q - So you agree ...] I agree. I agree a bit [?].

Q - Ok. 'Public shows of affection annoy me.' People being affectionate in ...

A - Yeah, annoys me. Yes, those things should be a little private.

Q - You agree with that?

A - Yeah.

Q - 'It upsets me to see helpless people.'

A - It upsets me to see?

Q - Helpless people.

A - Helpless, helpless, yeah. But upsets?

Q - Upset.

A - Upset, yes - upset, agree.

25:35

Q - 'When I make plans, I'm almost certain that I can make them work.'

A - To me this is true because I never make plans. [laughing] I agree, but ...

Q - Do you strongly agree or disagree?

A - No, if I make plans, they must agree ... they must work for the ... I, sometimes doesn't work but I feel, I agree that it should ... if you make them, just as well make them work.

Q - Ok. 'It's no use worrying about current events or public affairs. I can't do anything about them anyway.'

A - Public works and ...?

Q - 'It's no use worrying about current events [A - Current events....] and things that are going on in the news or public affairs, uh ... politics ...

A - It's not views.

Q - '... I can't do anything about them anyway.'

A - You know, well things can be done, I mean it's ...

Q - So you disagree with ...?

A - I disagree with.

Q - 'When I work on a committee, I usually let other people do most of the planning.'

26:35

A - Well, I don't work on a committee, but ... hm.... When I used to work on a committee for skiing, then I get into the planning too, but this is ... it's something peculiar about my profession.

Q - So you would disagree with that.

A - I should ... I think the guy that makes plans should be the first person making plans. Doing them that's what ... that's the question.

Q - No, it's 'When I work on a committee with other people, I usually let other people do most of the ...'

A - Oh, yeah. I must let the other people do the work, otherwise ... No, if I worked ... Repeat again then I say yes or no.

Q - 'When I work on a committee, I usually let other people do most of the planning.'

27:30

A - I not have experience because I don't work on committee, so much to ... if ... it's ... You want my question even if I imagine myself being in-in a-in a comm- ...?

Q - No, because I've just [unintelligible].

A - Oh, well, you have another column, so ...

Q - [unintelligible] which is immense, I don't know. [laughing] 'Many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.'

A - 'Many times' ... [repeating]

Q - ... I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.

A - Yes and no, so many times that ... yeah, there are times I feel that we have done ... we are determinating our own, uh, doings, but sometime no, we don't. So this is also very sibilina these things I don't know. I feel that everything do have an influence ... Let me write ... let me little explain it. [reading] 'I feel that I ... many times I feel that I have little influence over the things that happen to me.' Sure, sometimes it-it ... things that this government's making that have-that I have little influence.

Q - So you agree?

A - I agree.

28:44

Q - Ok. 'I feel that I have a number of good qualities.'

A - I feel ... [Q - Agree.] Sure.

28:57

Q - I get nervous if others seem nervous.

A - Nervous?

Q - I get nervous if others seem nervous.

A - ... nervous. Mm, yeah, most of the time, yes.

Q - Children sometimes cry for no reason.

A - [laugh] In my opinion - I am a father, I should ... there's always a reason somewhere...

Q - So you disagree.

A - Disagree.

29:28

Q - 'All in all, I am able to do things as well as most other people.'

A - 'All in all', what does it mean? All -

Q - All together.

A - 'All in all', uh, altogether

Q - In general...

A - I'm able?

Q - ... 'to do things as well as other as most other people.'

A - Yes, in general, yeah. Many things that I cannot do.

29:50

Q - 'I get angry when I see someone hurt.'

A - Not in [unintelligible-sounded like 'india'] ... If I'm here and the guy gets hurt and I get ... I don't know [unintelligible] ...

Q - No, when I see someone hurt.

A - Ah, I see ... get angry. [repeating what she said] If I get hurt-if she gets [?] in hurt in a-in a stupid accident because they're just drying [driving?] driving like an aimless [?] ... uh, get hurt [unintelligible] that's good. I feel good, not bad. I disagree [Q - Ok.] because I see it ... these other particulars, eh?

[[I'm missing context here just because of the unintelligible bits.]]

30:27

Q - 'Letting people down is not so bad because you can't do good all the time for everybody.'

A - 'Letting people down is not so bad...?'

Q - Disappointing people is not so bad because you can't do good all the time for everybody.

A - I wish I was talking [?] to you so well [Q - Yeah] to get exactly the meaning of all this.

Q - It's, uh ...

A - Let me see. Now let me see again.

Q - 'Letting people down', meaning ...

A - 'Letting people down' meaning, meaning ...

Q - ... disappointing them.

A - Yeah, not taking care of them or -

30:56

Q - Not doing what's expected of you.

A - Ok. Ah. '... is not so bad because you can't do good all the time for everybody.' [reading from questionnaire] It's ... yes, I agree, it's all - it's all commonplace I think that there are interpretations for those things. You don't ... we have to go into the receptacle of the statement or just ...?

Q - Just in general.

A - Eh? I agree.

Q - Ok.

A - 'Cause I could disagree also, I don't know. [laughing]

Q - I think all [unintelligible] is possible to do.

A - Right. They are double-faced. I don't get upset just because my friend is [unintelligible-Italian] ... I agree.

Q - Ok.

31:47

Q - 'I wish I could have more respect for myself.'

A - That's very, very difficult. [Q - laugh] Self-respect is important. I mean, I think I have self-respect, but I wish I could have more? Sure I agree there. It would be ...

Q - You agree?

A - Sure.

32:11

Q - 'What happens to me is my own doing.'

A - 'What happens to me is my own doing. What happens to me...'

Q - I'm responsible for myself.

32:24

A - Well, in today's society it's becoming more and more like so but ... **32:27** [long pause] **32:38** I agree.

Q - Ok.

32:41

Q - Uh, 'The words of a song can move me deeply.'

A - 'The words ...' Strange, you know, because I was thinking, you know, I was listening to the words for the first time with a beautiful tune, I don't know if there are the words or the tune that move me, but the words, you know, they don't move me - the music does.

Q - So you disagree.

A - But, you see, that's what I don't know myself. If the words of a s- ... of a song can move me deeply. Yes, because that song moved me deeply. I don't know if it's the music yet, but ...

33:20

Q - Ok. 'All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.' [33:24]

33:32

A - 'A failure'. A failure is a strong, a strong thing ... 'failure' - you can't respect yourself if you feel that you are a fail[ure], but sometime you feeling a fail[ure] but then it goes away.

Q - Oh, I think it's in general ... 'I'm a failure', 'I'm allto-' ... for the most part.

A - No.

Q - So you disagree. Do you strongly disagree, or just ... ?

A - No, I disagree. Not strongly because I [it?] could happen.

33:53

Q - 'I feel very bad when I have failed to finish something I promised I would do.'

A - 'I feel very bad when I have failed to finish something I promised I will do.' I agree very ... agree ... I don't disagree but I agree mildly. So ... there are so many things I start doing and then I never finish, but ... if i ... I could bad all the time, I just kill myself.

34:20

Q - [laughing] 'I get very involved with my friends problems.'

A - Yes, I have little, uh, very few friends, but if they are in trouble, I get involved, yes.

Q - So you ...?

A - I agree.

Q - Ok.

34:33

A - A friend-friend you would [no word here] as-as a treasure. There're not too many friends like [unintelligible] ... and then you feel for-for them. Casual friends, you know, relations of-of a ... in surface do not make you feel that way, but good friendship is something much stronger.

Q - 'People would be a lot better off if they could live far away from other people and never have anything to do with them.'

A - 'People would be a lot better off if they could live for ... [Q - 'far away'] far away from other people and never have anything ...' [chuckle] No, disagree.

35:14

Q - Ok. Ok. 'I like to watch people open presents.'

A - Mm, yes, sometimes they enjoy it. I agree.

Q - 'In my case, getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck.'

A - '...has little or nothing to do with luck' in my case getting what I want [reading]. I don't believe in luck too much but sometimes there is luck [life?]. I strongly agree. I like to put that 'strongly' because I never use it, but uh [Q - No?] We are there. [Q - Ok.] In my case, 'getting what I want has little or nothing to do with luck'. [re-reading] 36:09 My life has sort of that experience. I have to work for it. Leave it like that.

36:16

Q - Ok. 'I feel I do not have much to be proud of.'

A - No, I disagree.

Q - 'I could stay calm even when others worry.'

A - Uh, sometimes yes, sometimes no, I don't know, I ...

Q - No? [unintelligible] over here.

A - But, you know, I just like the time when I'm ... while they are worrying, I worry for them if they are my friend, but if they are strangers I don't care. It's true but not in all cases.

36:53

Q - So ... what do you say, agree or disagree?

A - What is this? I don't know ...

Q - Don't know.

A - Let me see if I know. 'I can stay calm when other worry'.

Q - When other people worry.

A - ... other people worry.

Q - I mean, you must have had that experience when you helped those Jewish [garbled] people. I imagine they were pretty worried.

37:19

A - In that case, I was calm - very calm.

Q - Mm-hm.

A - It depends, you know, so ... I disagree - I think I stay calm. [\[\[Oy!\]\]](#)

Q - So you agree.

A - I agree that I ... I cannot or I can?

Q - No, can.

A - Oh! I can! Oh, I agree, I agree. [\[\[Finally!\]\]](#)

37:35

Q - Ok. 'If it is worth starting, it's worth finishing.' 37:38

37:44

A - I agree. [\[\[... but not in practice...\]\]](#)

Q - 'Seeing people cry upsets me.'

A - **Depends what kind of people they are.**

Q - In general.

A - Yes, if the cry is for some reason, but other people they cry for nothing and I don't care about those as a-as a rule if people are crying be- ... you know what-what ... how I feel. [\[\[Quite a contradiction as compared to the question-answer about children crying always have a reason.\]\]](#)

Q - So you would agree in general you would ...

A - [cross-talk unintelligible] ... in general I agree.

Q - Ok. [unintelligible - well/no?], at least, uh ...

A - Gi-given that they are crying because they are sol- because they are softening ...

Q - See you're a thoughtful person and any thoughtful person can say 'well, I can take an instance from such and such', but in general, these are measuring your attitudes in general.

38:29

Q - Uh, 'Bringing bad news to people upsets me.' 38:31

38:35

A - Yeah, well, sure.

Q - 'I get irritated rather than sympathetic when I see someone cry.'

A - Yes and no, you see, if it is a child it is different and ... there are women who cry for nothing.

Q - Well, in general what would you say.

38:56

A - Oh, sure, it's ... why-why cry and what's [unintelligible - that?] ... I agree.

Q - Agree?

39:03

Q - 'My decisions-

A - [interrupting] Well actually I agree, but no ... but just because I'm thinking that crying is, no, I disagree, some people has to be helping for the crying for reasons, you know.

39:15

Q - Uh [[apparently crossing out 'agree' and moving on...]] ... 'My decisions are not influenced by other people's feelings.'

A - 'My decisions are not influenced by people's feelings.' No, my decisions are influenced by other people.

Q - So, you disagree.

A - Disagree.

Q - 'I certainly feel useless at times.'

A - 'I certainly feel useless sometime.' Yes, sometimes that.

Q - 'My moods are affected by the people around me.'

A - 'My moods are affected by people around me.' In a gross [general] way, yes, correct.

Q - So agree.

40:01

A - But, you see, I know ... I don't know really. I do agree but then sometimes you have to forget, you know, forget completely about what you have around. I don't know ... Every single thing of this should be discussed to get into the subjects so we discuss ... It's silly, this [unintelligible], but I know that ...

Q - Everybody asked [unintelligible] this says the same thing and I agree, but ... I didn't write these questions.

A - Oh, I know but ... maybe they know according to the average what idea to-to form, or the person [unintelligible] answers [unintelligible].

Q - [unintelligible. It's a very [unintelligible] ... of measuring, uh, attitudes, rights.

A - Yeah, but I don't know if it works. [unintelligible] it works most of the time. Ok. [laughing]

Q - Uhm, right. [laughing] 'My moods are affected by the people around me.' So what did you say about that? Agree?

A - 'My moods are affected by the people around me.' Sometime yes. Sometime I feel that I shouldn't take care of any other judgment or things. It depends on the situation.

41:09

Q - 'On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.' 41:12

41:17

A - Yes, yes, on the whole, yes, I mean, when I think about what's going on in certain places like India or ... [laugh]

Q - Ok. Just a few more here. You're tired?

A - No.

Q - We're getting near the end.

A - No-no-no-no. I'm not tired at all actually. It's fun; it's just like a game.

Section R - Identified Rescuers Only
[[This apparently includes self-identified when it ought not.]]

R1

Q - [laughing] After the war, did your neighbors find out that you rescued Jewish people?

A - My neighbors, I don't have contact with my neighbors because I always been around. [??] The-my friends? Yes. My friends know.

42:00

R2

Q - Do your present neighbors here know that you rescued Jews during the war? 42:03

42:08

A - The people here? No. Because this is a little different of, uh, some of my friends, yes. But I don't call them neighbors, they are friends.

R3

Q - Ok. If they did know, these neighbors here, do you think they would approve or disapprove?

A - Oh, they would-would approve.

42:27

R4

Q - Have you received any compensation or public recognition for your rescue activities?

A - No.

Q - Have you spoken about your rescue activities in any public place?

A - No. [barely audible]

42:46

Q - About how many - oh, no, that's [unintelligible] [referring to question R5a on p. 61 of questionnaire] ...

R6

Did you have contact with any of the people you rescued after the war? 42:51

[long pause]

42:57

A - Uh, once in, uh, once in, uh, in uh, in uh **Isola d'Elba** [\[\[per Giovanni C.\]\]](#) [\[\[the number of utterances "uh" is notable\]\]](#) I went to vacation place, I had a couple of Jewish people coming to me and they [43:09] [pause] [43:11] and they knew and they tagged [stopped?] me, but, uh, I didn't even ... you know ... I wasn't sure that this was the ... I didn't even recognize them [\[\[and how did they recognize YOU - when was this? Lella physical appearance changed markedly from 17-18 to 22-26, so one presumes it was very soon after the war.\]\]](#), and I did not know if they were the one, but we came to discuss about these things and they had been in Madesimo and [43:27] ... [43:30] one of the two of of these [this?].

Q - So just two?

A - Yeah, once it happened. [Q - Uh, and-] And then, uh-uh, **[43:39]** Knebel was this officer in-of the American press, when he called me he wanted to thank me and ...

Q - But you didn't rescue him, but he knew what you were doing.

A - No, I didn't [cross-talk] ... He knew about **some of this**, uh ...

Q - Are you still in contact with this ...

A - Knebel?

Q - No, these other people.

A - No, no.

44:02

R7

Q - Uhm, do you - well, 'do you know the names and addresses of any of the people that you rescued'?

A - No.

[\[\[The 'No' is very quick. Why doesn't he mention 'Elena Napolitano' as he has apparently done in at least one interview related to the novel? Because she is a fictitious \(supposedly composite\) character ... one yet to be fashioned by Sullivan. Mike Lella avoided using this or any family name when he told the version of a tale that it](#)

was the *grand daughter of "the violinist" who "tracked him down" to interview him but he "refused to talk with her"*
- a story that made zero sense.]]

44:18

G1 [page 64 of questionnaire]

Q - Uhm, there anything else you want to tell me?

A - If, uh, see [should?] this come to a ... just like a surprise to me, I mean, today, you know. I know that you were coming but I ... but I like to, uh, how could we talk to those people, some of the people we have ... [unintelligible] like **Beltramini**, etc. Maybe some-maybe something, uh, ... something you do not know-remember comes up.

44:50

Q - Ok.

[recording ends 45:02]

G2	INT.: INTERVIEW ENDS. NOTE EXACT TIME HERE.	HOURS <u>6</u> (831-832)
		MINUTES <u>27</u> (833-834)

Interview began at 3:00, so three hours and 27 minutes elapsed noted but there is 3.86 hours or almost four hours of recording:

15. Exact time interview began	Hour <u>3</u> (110-111)
	Minutes <u>00</u> (112-113)

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### END NOTES:

Dec 5 (Thurs-took shopping leave): Due to lateness of hour, unable to proceed beyond 5:20P. Final time mark heard: ~approx 1:23 ... 10 minutes to go.

Recording segment ends at 1:33:11 [see below - turns out this was only first tape of three].

**Jan 9:** Learned there were two more recordings, one 94 minutes and the last 45 minutes. Received link to download and began transcribing part 2.

[1] What I want to know is whether Lella was a member of the PNF or rather its successor, the PFR. The interviewer never asks about political party affiliations when he was 17-18. If Lella was a member, as of **July 1 1944** Mussolini declared that the entire party membership would be used toward military ends and \*every\* man from 18 to 60 that isn't already a member of the RSI armed forces (such that it was) will become an "auxiliary" to the Blackshirts and form action squads.

On 1 June Mussolini issued the following statement that was not immediately made public: "Given the current situation that is dominated by only one supreme factor, of arms and of combat, before which all other considerations pale in importance, I have decided from 1 July to carry out a change in the party from the existing political and military structure to one that is exclusively military. From 1 July all regular members of the republican Fascist Party from eighteen to sixty years old who do not belong to the republican armed forces will constitute an auxiliary corps of the Blackshirts and consist of action squads. The other activities that the party has carried out to this point will be entrusted to competent entities, like assistance will be assigned to Fascist women, the communes, and other organizations; the propaganda to the national institute of Fascist culture. The party secretary will implement the transformation of the actual direction of the party in the auxiliary corps of the Blackshirt action squads. Given the nature of the organism and its purposes, the command will be entrusted to the local political heads. There will not be ranks but only command functions. The Corps will be subjected to military discipline and the military code in time of war. The Corps will be deployed at the orders of the provincial heads, who are responsible for public order and the security of citizens against the cutthroats and groups who are accomplices of the enemy."<sup>36</sup>

In advancing Pavolini's hard line,<sup>37</sup> Mussolini gave the militant action squads leeway to dial up anti-Semitism and anti-Communism by wiping out partisans, disciplining those engaged in *attentismo* (waiting to see which way the wind was blowing before deciding to act), assisting Nazis in running down Jews, and providing cover for the Wehrmacht in their search-and-destroy missions across the land. This was just the beginning. With Mussolini's blessing, the energetic Pavolini took measures

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[2] **Recapito reference:**

<https://play.google.com/books/reader?id=S91EAQAAMAAJ&hl=en&pg=GBS.PA14>

Georgi was put in charge of the security of Chrysler mission. A girl named Marina Duelli was assigned as the courier for Major Holohan and the mission. Along with Georgi, a certain Pasquale Ricapito, partisan name, Captain Laito, a former Italian officer who was also serving with OSS and whose radio operator had been captured and executed by the gestapo and who found himself more or less a lone wolf behind German lines, attached himself to the Chrysler mission. I will connect him later in the story.

Page 13 of the book: "It should be noted that Captain 'Laito' (aka Recapito) was part of a group in 1946 ... indicated for transmitting information on the growth of the Italian Army to Russia. ... Laito ... ordered out of the Chrysler mission area" by Holohan due to lack of confidence.

It should be explained that because Major Holohan spoke no Italian and because he dressed in an American uniform, which was part of the directive of OSS, he did not leave the headquarters of the Chrysler mission, nor for that matter did Sergeant Lo Dolce, who was always close to his receiver and sender. Hence, it was Icardi who spoke Italian in the idiom of the region because his family had come from there, who went on the outside missions. It should be noted that Captain Laito was part of a group in 1946, a part of a group of Italians who in 1946 in Italy was indicted for transmitting information on the growth of the Italian Army to Russia. I do not know what the outcome of the trial has been.

Captain Laito, in whom Major Holohan reposed little confidence, was ordered out of the Chrysler mission area.

Mr. COLE. By Holohan?

Mr. STERN. By Major Holohan. Major Holohan transmitted this order to Lieutenant Icardi. Lieutenant Icardi installed Captain Laito in another house near the headquarters of the Chrysler mission, and he continued to work with Lieutenant Icardi, serving principally as his liaison with Moscatelli.

Mr. COURTNEY. Now, that brings up the name of Moscatelli for the first time. Who is he?

Mr. COLE. At that time and now.

Mr. COURTNEY. And now.

Mr. STERN. Vincenzo Moscatelli, battle name, Captain Ciro, was the head of the Garibaldi brigades operating in that area. The composition of his followers ran the gamut of people of all political opinion, shades of political opinion. Moscatelli himself, who was born in 1908

Mr. STERN. It was known to OSS and to all members of OSS that he was one of the leading Communists in the partisan movement and that his group was one of the largest. The reason for his group being numerically superior was that when the Di Dio group, which was in his area and was a partisan outfit of general political sympathies but pretty generally anti-Communist, when they were attacked by the German forces, Moscatelli sat back with his forces and permitted them to be massacred without being any aid, so that when the massacre was completed he stepped forth as the largest single unit in that area.

Mr. COLE. You mean Moscatelli sat back and allowed the Di Dio group to be massacred?

Mr. STERN. That is right.

Mr. COLE. And when they were out of the way he moved in?

Mr. STERN. And then claimed American aid.

Mr. COURTNEY. As the leader of the only remaining partisan group?

Mr. STERN. As the strongest partisan group in the area. All this was common knowledge in the area at the time. Georgi said, "During