

**Arrival of Pechersky and the Escape Plan, Oral history interview with Thomas Blatt
(Credit: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection, 6th September 1990,
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jail. But it wasn't until a transport from the Soviet Union arrived. When the Eastern Front was coming nearer, the Germans eliminated the ghettos, Minsk and so on. And that time they took all the Jews from Minsk, and from Lida and they brought them to Sobibór. I mean not all of them. A lot were killed on the spot, but a lot of...some transports come to Sobibór. And in that...in this particular transport they included quite a few Jewish prisoners of war. Soviet prisoners of war, Jewish. Because they recognized as a Jew. In that time we had a lot of work and the Germans picked up another 80 people to help us from this particular transport from Minsk. Unfortunately, for them they picked up a few former POWs trained in the art of fighting. Former soldiers. And they picked up a man called Pechersky. He was an officer in the Soviet Army, and ...to work with us.

Pretty soon, Leon Feldhandler recognized this potential material and he contacted, Leon Feldhandler, and Leon Feldhandler contacted Sasha Pechersky and...uh...again, I don't want to dwell much on it, they formed an organization. From that time on some concrete things happened. I find out about a week before about the revolt. Uh...That time I was working as a Feuermann. How did I come to be...to get this job? Feuermann is like firemeister...master. All the documents, heaps of documents, passports, pictures, books, soiled clothing was burned. While they were burning it, when I was sorting, I put the papers in a big blanket. Later with the blanket was still full, I put it on my shoulder and take it to the fire. Taking it to the fire, I started to get familiar with the guy working over there. Did bring him some. And slowly by slowly, I start to helping him; and later, when they built a bigger oven, I was working over there as a steady personnel. My idea was to work in a...to be enclosed. out of the view from the Germans. I could see them. They can't see me. From the window, I was able to see. But once I wasn't able and there was a terrible beating. But anyway, so...they planned to kill a German in my place. So this way...but I did need to be contacted. Otherwise, I would...some stranger comes into this place, I would chase him out, being afraid myself. So he calls me in the evening and tells me, "Toivi, I must tell you something. I know you. I know your father. I will tell you something, but keep your mouth shut. We need your place to kill a German." I was shocked. Later, I find out about what's happened. And I was informed on the purpose. I...I understood that something is going on, and I was informed about Sasha. Especially I was a guy...I was a guy in Sobibór which always did run around. You know, I didn't keep in a place. I was always hyper and would just run. I did want to know everything like I would be...go out and I'd write book, which I've done, actually. (laughing) I was always a very...boy who...I want to know everything. So in this way I did become, I was involved in it.