

RG: Good sir, I will ask you, please, for your name and date and place of birth to begin

JM S: Yes, then, Jean-Marc Salmon, I was born in Algiers on February 23, 1943

RG: And can you tell me something about your family?

JM S: Yes, of course. My father was in business, he managed to take over a company that did transit, that is to say to agree to clear the goods at the port. And then, from there, he set up a transport and removal company, and then he also set up a branch of a large French furniture chain in Algeria. He started doing a bit of real estate when the war came. So we left a year before the end of the Algerian war, we had to leave in '61

RG: Okay, we'll come back to that. Was your mother at home or she worked?

JM S: She was at home

RG: And you had siblings?

JM S: Of course, I had a brother who is a year younger than me, his name is Claude

RG: And how were your parents politically and religiously?

JM S: So this is an extremely complicated story, because we are in a colonial situation. My mother is Catholic, but her father is Kabyle and her mother is Spanish, and my father is Jewish. So I wasn't raised religiously

RG: So there was no religious life in your family

JM S: No, no. We celebrated Christmas, but like all children, here we are

RG: But not Jewish holidays or anything?

JM S: No, no

RG: Do you think it had a cultural, or social, or political significance?

JM S: In any case, in Algeria, which is nevertheless both a colonial environment and which was very marked by Vichy on the side of the French and the assimilated, it was very Vichy in Algiers. So anyway, with the name I have, I'm Jewish, there you go. So you know that it has a part in the construction of our identity

RG: Was there persecution of the Jews under Vichy during the war?

JM S: My father lost his business anyway, his business. There was a German administrator, but there was no ... His things were taken from him, but there was no deportation yet. But that's because the Americans and the British landed before

RG: And then politically, he was on which side?

JM S: My father read Le Monde, which was already a bit of a sign of being more

RG: In the center?

JM S: Yes, easily. He wasn't anti-socialist, no he was more

RG: Radical or?

JM S: I don't know what he voted for, he didn't talk about it at home, but already reading Le Monde in Algiers, it was a political sign, well ideological in any case

RG: Because the French population was more to the right in general?

JM S: Yes, yes, the center of gravity was very to the right. Finally, on the right, there was still Chevalier, there was nevertheless a liberal mayor in Algiers. Let's say it was a contrasting environment Algiers, there were even a large number of Communists in Algiers, a contrasting environment. But as soon as the war came, people swung very to the right. The Vichyists, the people of the extreme right have recovered, we have taken hegemony over the entire so-called French population.

RG: So how did the war hit your family?

JM S: She knocked on arrival, you are told, you read the newspapers, you are told that there have been attacks. It starts like that on November 1st, it doesn't strike, it comes bit by bit, it slowly rises in force, it gains in the territory and it ends up arriving in Algiers. How does it manifest itself? There are attacks, there are bombs, people are afraid of bombs, because there are bombs in the streets that kill civilians, in places where people gather. There is a curfew, we can no longer go out at night, you have to be careful, we no longer go anywhere, we feel an atmosphere like that when you are a child

RG: But was your family stuck between the French far-right and the Muslims?

JM S: No, my family was not stuck, insofar as my father is a notable in Algiers, he is someone. There is his name on all the streetcars, the advertisement, his house is known. I now know that for him the management of affairs was a bit complicated, because in a moving site, the people who do the removal are Algerians, so there is an FLN cell in his thing. His accountant is a communist, and in his office there are a whole bunch of people who are going to switch to the OS side gradually. So he has to manage all that and everyone at the same time stays together because it still has

to turn. And then there is the battle of Algiers, after all, which counts. That is to say that there are a lot of soldiers in the city, we know that

RG: Was it in '60?

JM S: Oh no, it was before the battle of Algiers, so it was in '56

RG: And at that time you were at school?

JM S: Yes, I was in high school already, at that time we were entering high school in sixth grade

RG: How was it in high school?

JM S: It was a high school where there were only French people, so how did it go, nothing was happening at the high school. No, in high school things will only start to happen when events go on, after May '58 and even after the putsch, and when there are Salan and Challe looking to take power in Algiers. So there yes, in high school, I'm probably already in second or first, there are people who are politically engaged, it stirs, it speaks. But we have to wait for the second so that there are things, before we talk about them. No, the kids before, on the contrary, have the attitude of trying to act as if nothing had happened. There are those who go to the surprises parties, there are those who start to have a story of a girl, there are the holidays, the cinema, the sport, we do not talk about the war

RG: But in what year did your family leave Algiers?

JM S: A year before the end of the war, so I don't know if the war ends in '61 or in '62

RG: '62 I think

JM S: So we left in the summer of '61. We did not live the year of control of Algiers not the OAS, we left before for Nice

RG: And for what reason?

JM S: Ah beh not to see the end! We could see that it was going to end, it was already difficult to leave, because there was already pressure from the OAS which had already been set up so that people did not leave. But anyway, as we were with the story of the move, and then we were leaving every year on vacation in France, so here we are, we said: 'It's the holidays, we're leaving'. And he put a retired officer he knew from Paris, a former resistance, to run his business in Algiers. Cause it was gonna be hard anyway

RG: So from a business point of view, he was able to restart in France?

JM S: Yes, because he had gradually transferred money to France. Obviously everything that was there was lost, but before that he had managed to transfer money to France. He had bought properties in the Dordogne and therefore he managed to restart his life in Nice

RG: So he took his things back to Nice. Without too many problems, without too many losses?

JM S: Oh yes, he lost a lot of money. He had a lot of money, he had built a big business in Algiers, and all that is lost, apart from the money, the profits that he was able to transfer to France, all was lost. But hey he had enough to restart. He tried the furniture a bit, since he was with guys from Barbès who were a big chain which gave him the concession in Nice, since he works with them all over Algeria. It doesn't work very well, and eventually he will manage to make a new career in real estate, he will embark on real estate development in Nice and after in Saint-Raphaël.

RG: Because it's a moment of expansion on the coast?

JM S: On the coast there is everything there is to do, or tourism, or real estate, there is just that as an activity. So either you set up a hotel, a campsite, a beach or else you build buildings and you sell apartments, or you become a real estate agent. There is only that as an activity

RG: And you, have you?

JM S: I am going to prepare for HEC

RG: Because you passed the baccalaureate in which year?

JM S: Already in Algiers, the last year, when I leave, I take the scientific baccalaureate, elementary mathematics at the time

RG: So you are preparing for HEC in Nice, it was still in high school?

JM S: Yes, at the Lycée Masséna, there were all the preparatory classes in Nice at the time

RG: So you had HEC?

JM S: Oh no, not at all, because I started to campaign. I am returning to UNEF in January. There are attacks in Paris

RG: January '62

JM S: January '62, there are the attacks in Paris, there is the demonstration of Charonne which is repressed in a rather savage way, there are deaths

RG: Yes, yes, I know

JM S: And so there I take the plunge, I find that all of this is in vain and has no meaning, it is the attacks on the OS and finally I think we must stop all that. So I go to the demonstration

RG: In Paris?

JM S: In Nice, there are protest demonstrations after Charonne throughout France, at the same time as in Paris, but nationally. And at that moment I return to UNEF

RG: And the UNEF policy was what? End of the war? Independence of Algeria?

JM S: Yes, UNEF is for, of course

RG: And there you have known people in particular?

JM S: I'm going to start, I know the people who take care of UNEF in the class, there is a guy called Chapira (?) Jean-Pierre, here I am gradually getting to know the people who run the school. 'A F. Especially since as I come from Algeria it is quite striking that I change sides what, because at the beginning I was not against French Algeria, I did not arrive from Algiers for independence

RG: What made you change sides?

JM S: The vanity of it all. To me, when you've lost, you have to say that you've lost, it's no use ... [his cell phone rings] Excuse me, I have to switch off. It's Cohn-Bendit, you see

RG: Is that Cohn-Bendit? Do you want me to take a break?

JM S: No, no, not at all, it doesn't matter (RG laughs). It's funny because it's ironic. So there you go, I'm at UNEF, and quickly I'm going to meetings, I'm going to join the UNEF office in Nice

RG: And so at the same time you are preparing for HEC

JM S: Well, the first year I miss, I start a second year again, and there during the summer I thought about it, and I come back and I go back to the communist students at the start of the school year.

RG: To the Union of Communist Students

JM S: Yes. There is a whole debate in UNEF, are we going to the Communists, are we not going? There is a whole debate because the Algerian war is ending, and finally these people, what are they going to do politically? So necessarily politics is in France, and what are we doing in France? So there is a whole reconversion which will take place, the UNEF is obliged to refocus on activities in France. She will enter a period, pushed by the people who campaigned for peace in Algeria and who will be critical of the university. We will seek to build a student union, to ensure that students are considered as workers, that they are employees. It's an old UNEF program that students get a study allowance. So we develop the idea that they must be employees, so they must be in solidarity with the workers. And at the same time, in the UNEF, he is mounting a critique of traditional left-wing policies which consisted in always asking for more money and there is the will to develop a critique of the university institution, to have a more qualitative critique. And through the criticism of the university you have a criticism of the society

RG: What percentage of UNEF have joined UEC?

JM S: Not a lot. I am all alone there. So suddenly I also take responsibilities in the direction of the communist students in Nice. We are in a period that is very open, because all the same in a class which is a preparatory HEC we have a newspaper at the time which is 'Clarté', which is a very beautiful newspaper.

RG: So which year were we?

JM S: We are in '62, '63. I still sell it to a third of the class, there are twelve people who buy it in the class, the third of the class buys it. You see for an HEC preparation ... We are in an era like that, a time when young people seem to be radicalizing a lot, but in fact it is more a realization, a political distance from society. It's very noticeable, it's not a problem that I'm from the UEC in the class

RG: But quite quickly there is a moment of crisis within the UEC against the Party

JM S: Yes, yes, who will happen

RG: '66? '65 -'66

JM S: I think it's the year after. The following year we took the leadership of the UEC in Nice with people from the left opposition. I am more and more sensitive to Chinese criticism, to the revolution. There are people in the UEC who come from support networks for the Algerian war through La Voie communiste who also returned to the UEC, with a guy called Poujol, a Martinican.

RG: Because the UJC (ml) dates from that time?

JM S: It's after

RG: So before that there were pro-Chinese people inside the UEC?

JM S: Oh yes, the entire French far left is in the UEC. Kouchner was at UEC, everyone was at UEC, so I'm at UEC, that's it

RG: Who were your main comrades at that time?

JM S: Me, my comrades are mainly in Nice, so it's a guy called Poujol, with whom I set up the business in the UEC in Nice, and we take the UEC in Nice. By surprise, we bring people in, they don't realize, and then all of a sudden on the day of (inaudible 19:17) we say (inaudible 19:19), well it's a very political speech. The federation is amazed, obviously, the communist federation, and there are congresses, but ultimately it is the last congress. It is a congress that was at Massy-Palaiseau, it is in the congress where the leadership will remain in place, but it is already obliged to make compromises with the Communist Party and the following year we will be put at the door

RG: So that's when you joined UJC (ml)?

JM S: Yes, but in my political trajectory, what is most important is the union trajectory, because in fact I am returning to the direction of the UNEF in the spring of '64, to the national office. So I'm leaving Nice

RG: You go to Paris in '64

JM S: Ah yes, from the spring I am in Paris in '64. I'm not going to stay there long, because we're going to lose. There is a battle inside the far left in UNEF so I will lose. But I am going to become one of the trend leaders in the UNEF, there you are, I work at the direction of the AG of Rennes. I went to Rennes for a year

RG: What for? I did not understand

JM S: Because the president had fallen ill, there was nobody who had the stature to lead the GA in Rennes. And so it is in the trend in which I am, and therefore I am told: 'Jean-Marc ...' 'Yes, I take the GA in Rennes'. The Rennes GA is historically very important in the UNEF, it is symbolically very important, it is one of the provincial GAs which is on the left as they say, but ultimately which is on the far left. It was one of the places where there was support for the FLN, there were networks of assistance for the FLN in the GA. There were GAs in France like Rennes and Dijon, but also Paris, the FGEL and all, there were support structures for the FLN

camouflaged in the UNEF. So we can't let the Rennes GA go to hell, we have to go to Rennes

RG: And it's not curious that it is in Rennes, a fairly quiet provincial town?

JM S: No, because there are already all the Cathos who are in the process of radicalization, the Catholic students, of course. Because the GA of Rennes is precisely a GA which is a mixture of lay or very lay students, and at the same time Catholics who are very quickly warped.

RG: Christians of the left

JM S: Yes, yes, there are already. This is why the management of the GA also requires a little bit of, it is not easy, we have to manage to hold it all together

RG: Did you succeed?

JM S: Yes, without problems. Besides, the cathos who were at the university of Rennes will split the AJEC after in '67 and afterwards they will be Maoists. No, no, there are no problems

RG: Did you know any interesting Catholic students in Rennes?

JM S: Yes, of course. Roland Depierre, someone very interesting, he is now in Nantes. There was a whole group like that in Rennes who came from UNEF and who only half-completed their studies, they didn't want to pass the aggregation for example. And Depierre went to China to teach in '76 with his wife, they spent six years in China, Shanghai and Canton. They were very good friends with a guy called Guérin, who was very brilliant, who did not even pass a CAPES, whom I did not see again, but I know that he is an animator in structures linked to agricultural unionism. in Brittany

RG: What was his first name?

JM S: Guérin? I do not remember. Depierre is Roland, Depierre you are interested, we will find him, Depierre I have his cell phone and everything, no problem if that interests you

RG: Yes, absolutely. And so for studies, you stopped?

JM S: Yes, we are professional activists, we do just that. Our problem is to make the revolution, so yes, I do not study. But in Nice I still passed my exams. And then we will fail in the battle of UNEF to regain control of UNEF, and so I will return to Nice the following year. There I am going to study in accelerated mode, I will do a year and a half in a year

RG: So what year was this?

JM S: I don't know anymore, you know me, it's a bit complicated, my life is very complicated, it's not at all simple, it's a life that constantly moves like that. We said we were at the UNEF office in the spring of '64, so in '64 -'65 I am in Rennes. So in '65 -'66 I'm in Nice

RG: And you have prepared a bachelor's degree in history?

JM S: Yes, I have Max Gallo as a teacher among others. Things are going very well, mentioning 'Very good', he said to me: 'You have to pass the aggregation, we will take you as an assistant. Go to Paris to take the aggregate, you come back as an assistant. So I go in '66 -'67 to Paris. I still have half a year to do, and at the same time I'm going to do a DES, because my girlfriend is going to Paris to work, at Air France, otherwise I would have stayed another year in Nice. And so I go to Paris and in Paris I will quickly bond with the people who take care of the Sorbonne's security service. There are people who work with Goldman, Pierre Goldman, because Pierre Goldman was in charge of the Sorbonne's security service. Goldman was leaving, but I did stuff with Goldman anyway

RG: What are your memories of Goldman?

JM S: Ah, I knew Goldman from UEC already. Someone very violent politically, driven by an inner force, by an extremely strong inner violence

RG: And how do you explain that?

JM S: Afterwards, because all the same, we knew each other, but on the other hand some of my friends who joined the security service are people very close to him, so I know. How is that explained? Through his life, between his father and his mother, Polish Jews, there is one of the two who returned to Poland, it is nevertheless an extremely anti-Semitic place. It's very complicated to be Jewish, Communist, Polish

RG: But it's a question that interests me, because there are a lot of young people of Jewish origin in this movement.

JM S: Yes, a lot

RG: How do you explain that?

JM S: Because deep down, these people, this generation she wants, she would have wanted, she lives by proxy, she would have wanted to fight in the Spanish Civil War and the Resistance. And that is a phantasm which is particularly strong among children of Jewish background and rather on the left, whose parents themselves have flirted with Trotskyism, communism.

RG: And resistance fighters to prevent the Shoah, or for what? Just to have the revolution?

JM S: Yes, there is the idea that the Resistance was confiscated, but there is above all the idea that it was an exhilarating period to live, and basically, that the accounts of this period are not settled. . There are those two ideas. There is the idea that we

would have liked to live that, and there is the idea that the accounts of the period are not settled

RG: So we had to settle accounts with who mainly?

JM S: It wasn't clear, it wasn't formulated like that, that's a posteriori that I'm telling you that. We weren't aware of it at the time, but we have to settle accounts with the generation before, because they collaborated. We are perfectly aware that the resistance fighters were a narrow minority in the country, the people from before collaborated, so adults are suspect

RG: Not your parents, but

JM S: The police, the police sent the Jews to Auschwitz, there you have it, so the CRS are SS. Finally, everyone is surprised by this slogan, but it is a slogan that is extremely logical in this situation. I think Jewish students find it easier to anticipate, they are a little ahead of others. But it's very shared in the generation, you have to be careful about that. That is to say, in my opinion, I think that things like 'CRS / SS' or 'We are all German Jews', it does not come from revolutionary militants. It comes from the young people who are in the streets. There isn't an organization that said that. It was not the UJC (ml) who said that, it was not the JCR, there was not an organization which launched the slogan, it came like that. So all this generation is well aware that his parents did not behave well, and that de Gaulle saved the honor but ... there you go. So they have a score to settle. In other words, the Freudian thing that children assert themselves in relation to parents becomes a political affair, because the parents have failed politically.

RG: We often talk about a generational conflict, do you see it like that, there was a generational conflict?

JM S: Yes, but generational conflict is primarily political, it is expressed politically, it is politically verbalized. After that we can always think that it is only a dressing, that it is not the real spring. But in this case, it will give rise to a political problem in society, because it will take on a disproportionate scale

RG: You didn't have a personal conflict with your parents about your radicalism?

JM S: No, not at all. My dad was very, very, they never, they always gave money, they never pressured me to quit, no. There is no such thing as that for me. Well, there are others in whom there may have been pressure, etc. At home there was no pressure, no. But we also live in an imaginary world. I can see clearly when I start to return to the Communists, I read Malraux, the revolution, Canton, Shanghai, '27, all that is important in our minds. And then the Spanish Civil War, Hemingway, For whom the death knell tolls, it's important, more than Malraux's Hope, which is a little dry book

RG: So do novels, readings happen to you?

JM S: Yes, there is also in this generation, like many people, I am also marked by these readings. And then a book also which marked me a lot, but later, in the years UJC (ml), service order, it will be The Red Orchestra, the book of Trepper. So there are books like that, which mark. There are people who are on a more Sartre slope

RG: I was going to say, did you like Sartre at the time?

JM S: I am more Malraux than Sartre. In this generation there are people who are more Malraux and more Sartre. Everyone has read Malraux, Camus and Sartre, obviously, but I am more sensitive to the side of the confrontation, to the romantic, and to the confrontation and to the war, than to the more philosophical and more everyday version of Sartre. . Cohn-Bendit is more Sartrian, is more Sartre than Malraux, for example. There is an important divide in this generation, at least between those who are not Catho. What are the books that mark, it is an essential question in the construction of the imagination

RG: And so we come to '68. Are you still in the security service at the Sorbonne?

JM S: No, no, the security service of the Sorbonne has returned to the UJC (ml), we have returned to the UJC (ml). People to whom Goldman entrusts the order service of the Sorbonne, one goes up in the UJC (ml). So we're going to have big demonstrations, and the UJC (ml) will give us the task of organizing all the street stuff, because we know, they don't know

RG: From what I know UJC (ml) was having strategy issues in '68

JM S: Ah yes, of course there was a big strategy problem in '68, which happened in the week of the barricades. But I am not living it, I am very injured, I have twenty-three stitches. We attacked a few days before '68, there was an exhibition organized by the far right

RG: Rue de Rennes?

JM S: On Vietnam, yes. We're the ones who organize this, I'm one of the people in charge, and hey, me and another friend, we're not in a helmet, so we're injured. I am very wounded, I have 23 stitches, and therefore I am in Nice when the story of the barricades begins, when the student demonstrations. I'm going back to Paris right away. On the 3rd there are demonstrations in the street, because there are arrests at the Sorbonne on Friday 3. I'm in Paris on Sunday. But I don't go to the protests, I can't go into the things that are going to be at risk. So I'm going to spend the week in the neighborhood, because I'm still in charge of the UJC (ml) in the fifteenth arrondissement, I'm the one who runs the fifteenth. There are Citroën factories in the fifteenth at the time. Secondly I am responsible for the southern region of UJC (ml) and Vietnam committees, plus I am responsible for the street. But I don't take care of the street. It starts to be there right away, when I arrive, they start to be critical of the student movement, on its forms. They want people to go to the factory, and I don't want to go and give speeches to universities in the Latin Quarter that you have to do that. Because opposite there are friends, all that annoys me. So I am asked to do it, I say: 'No, no, I have a lot of things to do at home, hi!'. So I stay in my area. But it will become more and more strained, and in the night of the barricades, you know well, Robert Linhart goes wild, he goes mad, he wants to see the leadership of the Communist Party, which for us is anathema. I am not with him, I am not in Ulm and I am not with him. I have a friend of mine who is in the direction of the security services who is with him, I am not with him. Since I have not written the history of the UJC (ml) in Nanterre either when the fascists were to attack because I am injured, I am in the hospital and afterwards in Nice. So I don't see Linhart all this time. And when I come home, I don't want to see him, I prefer UJC (ml) in Nanterre when the fascists were to attack because I am injured, I am in the hospital and then in Nice. So I don't see Linhart all this time. And when I come home, I don't want to see him, I prefer UJC (ml) in Nanterre when the fascists were to attack because I am injured, I am in the hospital and then in Nice. So I don't see Linhart all this time. And when I come home, I don't want to see him, I prefer

RG: You wanted to make contact with workers, you say, at Citroën or elsewhere?

JM S: Yes, yes

RG: Did it work?

JM S: We distribute leaflets, all that. It works afterwards, that is to say, that is after May 13, when there is the occupation in Billancourt, that the factories begin to occupy. On Mondays there is a strike slogan for Citroën, there is a picket line at the entrance, and the CGT is very weak compared to the far-right unions that there are in Citroën. There is a big CSL union in Citroën

RG: CSL? What does it mean ?

JM S: Confederation of Free Trade Unions, at least at the head. And so we go on strike with the CGT. And without us, we couldn't hold out, if there weren't the Maos with them, the students couldn't hold out. So suddenly we bond with young workers. And there is a group that will immediately work with us in the factory

RG: Is it Citroën?

JM S: Yes, at Citroën. There are some of these people who are going to go to Renault afterwards, who are going to be linked to the business with Overney and all that, with the GP. But I see them little, because Nicole Linhart, who is Robert Linhart's wife, obviously comes to Citroën. Because obviously a group of workers like that in Citroën, which is nevertheless one of the biggest factories in Paris after Billancourt, so in Billancourt we don't have a group of workers, there is only one there that we have a group of workers. So she comes, and since she takes care of it and like me, I have plenty of things to do, and I manage the entire southern suburbs plus the street, because suddenly the new management with Benny Lévy is getting closer to the students. So suddenly we have to take care of the street again. As much in the week of the barricades there was nothing to do, as there it is necessary to take care of the street. So it's me who is going, I will take care, I will be agitated for the demonstration which leaves the Gare de Lyon on May 23, it is I who takes the procession which burns the Stock Exchange

RG: Oh yes, great! Was there any question of taking the Town Hall at one point?

JM S: Yes, the slogans of March 22, on which I was stuck, it was first of all, the first objective, it was to take the Town Hall, and if we could not take the Hôtel de Ville was to burn down the Stock Exchange. So as the demo is blocked, if you come back here, you will see quite easily, if you take the rue de la Gare de Lyon towards the Bastille, you will see here there is the old railway which arrives to the 'Opera, and therefore we can not pass. And the cops are there, just at the entrance to the boulevard. So from here to Gare de Lyon there are a hundred thousand people, and everyone is stuck. And it does not advance, it cannot move. After an hour and a half, I'm sick of it. And here there is a tunnel, we can go under the bridge here. And so I say there is enough I am leaving. I don't want to stay in a trap, because here, in addition, there is a canal, there is the Seine, so it's a business that can go wrong, I don't like being in a trap. And I decide that I am leaving. I tell the people of the 22, there are people of the 22 behind me, there is Guattari, I say to him: 'I'm going', he says to me: 'I'm staying', 'Very well, but you stay, I'm leaving '. So there is obviously a part of the people who go with me, because I am the first to go. People hadn't thought about it, but hey there are people who think like me, that we are not going to spend our life here. So I am leaving. I am in the idea of coming back from behind to clear the place so it's a business that can go wrong, I don't like being in a trap. And I decide that I am leaving. I tell the people of the 22, there are people of the 22 behind me, there is Guattari, I say to him: 'I'm going', he says to me: 'I'm staying', 'Very well, but you stay, I'm leaving '. So there is obviously a part of the people who go with me, because I am the first to go. People hadn't thought about it, but hey there are people who think like me, that we are not going to spend our life here. So I am leaving. I am in the idea of coming back from behind to clear the place so it's a business that can go wrong, I don't like being in a trap. And I decide that I am leaving. I tell the people of the 22, there are people of the 22 behind me, there is Guattari, I say to him: 'I'm going', he says to me: 'I'm staying', 'Very well, but you stay, I'm leaving '. So there is obviously a part of the people who go with me, because I am the first to go. People hadn't thought about it, but hey there are people who think like me, that we are not going to spend our life here. So I am leaving. I am in the idea of coming back from behind to clear the place he said to me: 'I am staying', 'Very well, but you are staying, I am leaving'. So there is obviously a part of the people who go with me, because I am the first to go. People hadn't thought about it, but hey there are people who think like me, that we are not going to spend our life here. So I am leaving. I am in the idea of coming back from behind to clear the place he said to me: 'I am staying', 'Very well, but you are staying, I am leaving'. So there is obviously a part of the people who go with me, because I am the first to go. People hadn't thought about it, but hey there are people who think like me, that we are not going to spend our life here. So I am leaving. I am in the idea of coming back from behind to clear the place

RG: Because you left with how many people?

JM S: I left with all, with the people from UJC (ml) that I had. There was not everyone, because after all the slogan was the factories, it is important, so there was only part of the militants of the UJC (ml) who were there. But we had a procession. And then there are a lot of people who join us, who come with us. It is often "you are maos, are you maos?" "People don't care" you are Trotskyites, you are Trotskyites ", people if you do something funny, they come with you. The processions are not at all closed, they are not like a procession (inaudible 41:52). So I want to do this. I obviously have with me two or three political leaders of the UJC (ml) who do not understand much, who tell me: 'Yes, very well'. And I believe Geismar. Geismar understood that he had to go. So he left, not with us, but coming behind us. When I go to fall back by Richard Lenoir on the Bastille, there is Geismar. So I say, for me Geismar is close to March 22, it is SNESup, it is the direction of the movement. Me, I don't like to decide for myself. So I said: 'The idea is to go to the square, blow up the lock - I say - there will be deaths', because we were convinced that there had been deaths in the week of barricades. I said: 'It's going to be violent, if we take the cops from behind, it will not be nice, we risk having, here in my opinion, that must be done'. He said to me: 'No, no, you mustn't do that, you have to go to the Stock Exchange'. I say good, very good, so I go to the stock market. We can't go to the Town Hall, there aren't enough of us, we have two thousand people. And the Town Hall is probably already guarded by the cops. In any case, after all, I might have been able to look to see if the Town Hall we could take it.

RG: Like the revolutions of the nineteenth

JM S: Today I regret not having been to see, I could have taken a procession and approached the Town Hall, see if he was free

RG: But for what? Because all the revolutions of the nineteenth century took the Town Hall, was it to do the same?

JM S: Yes, but it's more than that, it's the Municipality, it's the idea of the Municipality. And it is still a place of power. The problem that there is historically in '68 is that we did not take, apart from the universities, we occupied the workplaces, as in '36, so the university became a place of work , okay. But we did not occupy places of power. The situation would have changed symbolically if we had occupied places of power. So not having occupied the Town Hall was a big mistake. And if we could not occupy the Hôtel de Ville, we should have occupied town halls in Paris. We could have occupied the town hall of the eleventh for example

RG: So it was the 23, 24?

JM S: Yes, it's the night of 23-24. We could occupy the town hall of the eleventh, we went three hundred meters away

RG: Were there other people like you who are thinking of occupying the Town Hall, or the town halls?

JM S: Oh yeah, all the people around March 22 were on that line. What counted, because it was still the spearhead of the movement, on March 22. For people like me, there is the opinion of the 22nd, like that. Yes, of course, I thought we had to do that, but here it is, the problem is that if we are stuck, if we had been a hundred thousand in Paris, I think he did not run the Hotel de City. Because it was the 22nd which was in front, at the head of the demonstration it was the 22nd March which led. And in any case, there would have been a hundred thousand people in Paris, we would have taken town halls. There, most of the people will be blocked here, and there will be only small processions who will do like me, who will start from behind. Krivine will do like me. But obviously Krivine will not go our way,

RG: Obviously?

JM S: Yes, the League is not on that line at all

RG: Which line is she on?

JM S: They think that we must not go too fast in the confrontation, that the PC is not ready to follow. There, they're not on that line. On this line, there is the 22 and there are the Mao who are in the process of switching to that side. In a way not clear, because I have no mandate from the management, there you are, you do what you want

RG: But there is no more direction. Was there Benny Lévy from a moment?

JM S: Yes, there is a direction right away with Benny. But Benny doesn't feel it. So he says to you: 'Well beh, you see'

RG: He doesn't feel things?

JM S: He does not feel things, because he is coming, he has not been number one in the organization. You have to change lines, correcting the line is not easy, I imagine, in direction. I'm not there, I don't know. What I know is what I obviously see in the demo. I know: there you go, firstly, you don't bring everyone, so I'm not bringing back all of our order service, all the people who are used to it, but those ... Second, you see. But it is rather on the side of March 22 people who are pushing, but it is not precise, it is not detailed. That's why I go back to Geismar too, easily. And I bring the demo back to the Stock Exchange, there you are, and I say to Geismar: 'You have a quarter of an hour, burn the Stock Exchange! There are two thousand of us, we can't stay long,

RG: What did you have to burn it?

JM S: Ah he's the one who took care of that, I kept people online. Because you have the Place de la Bourse like this: here you have the Stock Exchange, here you have the place, and so I have people like that, I arrived like that, I put people like that, and we have to keep people in procession to leave. Because the cops can come anytime, we're burning the stock market, I think the cops will come. So I want us to be in a procession, I don't want people to be just like that, in the process of ... So I tell everyone it's to stay in procession, don't move

RG: Is it easy to control people like that?

JM S: Yes, yes. Here, half of the people I have are black jackets, people from the suburbs, they are more militants. Gradually in the procession they arrived in front, they mingled with the people of the UJC security service (ml). And they are very disciplined, they are very good, they are without problems. Because it is complicated routes in street control, sometimes the street is narrow, sometimes wide, so you have to have the first line drawn up (?), Etc. The Place de la Bourse is very wide, you have to build a gigantic first line. No, no, I had no problem, I said we do this, we do this. It is without problems. You see, there are two thousand of us, I think that if the cops arrive anyway, we have to leave, or in any case we have to stand up to

them, so we have to stay in procession. So I said: 'There you have ten minutes, I keep the people in procession'. And it's a commando, twenty, thirty guys who go through all the gates and who are going to set the thing on fire. So how they do it, I don't know, you would have to ask Geismar, since he was the one who organized this

RG: I interviewed him, but I don't know if I asked him this question, I don't remember

JM S: And after people are tired, I bring people back to the Latin Quarter. There are people who say: 'Are we going to the town hall of the thirteenth, are we going to the town hall of the twentieth?'

RG: But do you feel like you've missed something?

JM S: No, because the objective of this coup was the Stock Exchange, we did it! The coordination order of March 22 was that: if we can't do the Town Hall, we do the Stock Exchange. There we have done the Stock Exchange. It was I who made the Stock Exchange. I don't blame myself. Today, thinking about it, I say to myself anyway I could have, to come from République to the Stock Exchange, I can take a route that brings me closer to the Town Hall, I can try to come by Rivoli. And then I would have seen if there were cops or not, if we could take or not. I don't. I think I was wrong. But it's today that I think so. At that moment, well, I don't think so, (inaudible 49:56), I did the job

RG: And from then on, in the last week of May

JM S: Then there is Flins

RG: There is Flins, but how come, in June or in May?

JM S: It's early June. But we prepare Flins very quickly. Because we realize that we are going into a difficult situation after the thing. So we are starting to prepare a minimum of illegal entry. That means that we have set up a very large organization of, we will say security services, we call that protection and self-defense groups. We

set up a very large organization of self-defense groups in the maos and with the Vietnam committee. I'm not going to tell you in detail, but we still organized one hundred and thirty, one hundred and fifty people in groups, who can be mobilized by telephone extremely quickly, that we have already run into violent clashes against the police before May. In February, we are the first to bring out helmets and pickaxes in the rue de Paris against the police on Vietnam. We already clashed with them

RG: That is to say the basic Vietnam committees

JM S: That's it. We systematically organize clashes. But it's the same organization. (Inaudible 51:31) on the phone of the basic Vietnam committees, it was the same for the MLs, the management is the same, the group is the same, there are no two organizations from this point of view -the. So we trained these people, we the workers at the Sorbonne, we trained them very quickly, from October. We put all this in free view from the story of the rue de Rennes and (inaudible 52:05). So all that went quickly, because the priority was the factories, etc. From (inaudible 52:17) we start to remind the group leaders, to prepare them, to tell them: be careful, you will have to function, we have to take people's addresses, people have to be ready, we can mobilize one hundred, one hundred and fifty, two hundred people like that very quickly. You have to have the equipment, you need the helmets, you need the stuff, if you are dissolved you need plans, meetings. We're putting it all together. So we're busy. And among others, in the management group of that, there are people from Saint-Cloud, from Normale sup to Saint-Cloud, they are the ones who manage Flins, they manage Nanterre and Flins in the UJ

RG: And why Flins?

JM S: Because it is the base of the OS, the strong base of the UJC (ml) is the OS and it is the École normale supérieure in Saint-Cloud

RG: Ah ok, it's near Saint-Cloud

JM S: Yes, we take the western highway, we are in Flins. And in Flins there are workbenches in the factory. So the people of Saint-Cloud, from the start, at the same time as they take care of the door in Billancourt and in the factories in Boulogne, because there is ITCM, there are several factories in Boulogne. But obviously from the start they have been paying attention to Flins since there is a workbench in Flins. So it's a priority in political work

RG: Because when did the establishment start?

JM S: The establishment started at UJC (ml) very early. When we come back to the UJC (ml), there are already established people. We ourselves were going to settle, I have (inaudible 53:56) at the establishment, I was not the only one, all the people who were in the core of the service of order, self-defense, basic Vietnam committees, we were going to go to the factory

RG: Wasn't there a sort of division of labor between the law enforcement department and then the workbenches?

J-M S : Non, non, ça devait être pareil. C'était pas un problème. Non, on s'est pas posé de questions comme ça. Évidemment si quelqu'un est établi, c'est comme à Citroën, il y a un groupe de jeunes qui travaillent, s'il y a un établi, c'est une priorité. Donc il faut constamment être à la porte de l'usine, faire les tracts avec lui, avoir des réunions, savoir ce qui se passe, c'est lui qui donne la une du travail qu'il fait à Flins. Mais il y a tout un travail à l'extérieur qui est fait en soutien de ce que lui il fait à l'intérieur. Parce que lui a évidemment pris des responsabilités dans l'occupation. Donc on suit l'affaire du montage de Flins de près. Et Flins c'est d'autant plus important que c'est la régie qui doit donner le signal de l'arrêt du travail. Si la régie arrête... Donc on sait que c'est un lieu stratégique, doublement stratégique. Parce que à Billancourt on a pas de groupes à l'intérieur et on a pas d'établis. Mais la deuxième usine après Billancourt, c'est Flins

RG: And in Flins you defend the factory against the police, right?

JM S: In Flins there is a reorganization of the return to work by management and we are going to block the return to work. We are going there, there is not only the UJ, there is already March 22, there is the UJ and the 22 going to Flins and the CGT is also against the resumption of work, and the CFDT. It is an operation to resume work against the unions. Because in fact I only understood that now while working on '68, the Union of Mining and Metallurgical Industries, you see, which we talk about a lot, it's run by Peugeot. What I began to understand, I have not verified it, I have to call the journalists of Le Monde at the time, but my hypothesis now is that it is run by Peugeot. And so Peugeot does not want to give up anything, nothing more than Grenelle.

RG: No, I haven't seen it

JM S: Look at it, it's on sale on DVD or I'll play it to you, I'll lend it to you, some friends have lent it to me, if I lend it to you, it won't be lost. He tells it very well, Peugeot management in Sochaux will give nothing more than Grenelle. So all the metallurgy is blocked, and the metallurgy is obviously not at all happy, since it is them after Sud-Aviation. I don't know if Sud-Aviation is involved in metallurgy, because it is the first factory which occupies, but behind, it is the Renault factories behind Sud-Aviation which start the occupation. It's Sandouville, Cléon, Flins, Billancourt, in order. Obviously the people from Renault, the people from Peugeot, they want more than Grenelle. So it is in this context that the management of Renault is organizing the resumption of work at the control room. The unions are against, in any case the CGT and the CFDT. And so we go. And so we stop together. Finally, the buses arrive, the workers get out and we talk to them. They don't make a picket line in front of the factory, we don't have the strength I think, in any case the unions are against it. We talk to each other: between the time people get off the bus and the entrance to the factory, we have to walk a hundred meters. Well, the people are there, we talk to them, we tell them: 'But it's not possible, we must not go back'. And it's going well, it's going smoothly, people aren't going back to work! And then afterwards, around ten o'clock in the morning - then it is at six o'clock in the morning what I'm telling you, this is back to work, the first shift in the morning. After later, there are clashes with the police at ten, eleven o'clock. The CGT is trying to calm the clashes, I obviously try to push them as far as possible, that's it. But anyway, we have Molotov cocktails, I don't take out cocktails, I play it like that. And Flins is important, of course, Benny is very careful with Flins, we see him very often, every day

RG: On this issue of violence, I interviewed Roland Castro. He told me he left those people because Benny Lévy ordered him to shoot the cops. Do you think this is correct?

JM S: To shoot the cops? Where ?

RG: In front of Flins. To ambush

JM S: No, no. All the military stuff in France went through me. Castro, he does what I tell him. There it is. They were in charge, but in the field, we are responsible for the actions. When we say we do that, we do that, and when we say we don't do that, we

don't do that. If we say we take out helmets, we take out helmets. If we say we go out cocktails, we go out cocktails. We say we swing them, people swing them. It's very disciplined. There never was anything like that in Flins. But what is true is that Benny asked the question how far we would go in Flins. But like everyone else. That is to say that in Flins there is March 22, which is (inaudible 59:53), there are lots of students, revolutionary movements, it's not just us. I'm in Flins, I am based in the region, we are no longer in Paris, we are there. What is true is that there are meetings in Flins, there are people who arrive with weapons, workers from Toulouse. The atmosphere in Flins is somewhat reminiscent of the war in Algeria ten years ago, it is very striking. I walk in the housing estate in Flins next to the place where there are clashes and when everyone is gone, we go on foot like that with another friend who is one of the people in charge with me of the car groups -defense. We meet a guy, who is master, because he has a pavilion, he's not a worker, they tell us: 'It's war!'. There are the helicopters, the convoys of cops, he fought in the Algerian war. The (inaudible 1:00:54) are sweeps, the gendarmes are doing the sweeps. There is a pre-war atmosphere. So they don't understand because they haven't lived in Algeria, but the people who fought in the war, I just called them, they say to themselves: 'Where is all this going?'. And there are rumors that there are people arriving with weapons, it will shoot. So we have to decide. And what Benny wants to know, what is true, and we have discussions with Benny, he wants to know on the ground how it is going and how far it can go. It is clear that if things are going, if there are enough workers who are ready to go into violent confrontation and shoot, they shoot, it is not excluded. But I've been seeing (inaudible 1:01:45) with Benny since May 20. It's like when there is the demonstration on the 24th, he didn't tell me: ' You don't have to do that '. He said to me: 'You see'. It's the same in Flins, he told me: 'You see'

RG: Because you envisioned what kind of revolution?

JM S: We're not planning anything, we don't know where the movement is going. We are not yet convinced that we have lost, that it is the end of the movement in Flins. When we go to Flins, we are not convinced that this is the end of the movement. If the metallurgy holds, if work does not resume at Renault and Peugeot, everything remains possible

RG: And yet we are already preparing for the elections, right?

JM S: Yes, but yes. If Renault does not give in, if Peugeot does not give in, a lot is possible. And anyway at Peugeot it will shoot, it was not just the cops who shoot. Me what I understand in that, Peugeot it was camouflaged by (inaudible 1:02:43), on the other side they did not laugh the workers at Peugeot. Me, that's kind of what I

understood. But I did not have time, as I am very busy at the moment, to come back to this Peugeot affair unfortunately

RG: And that's when the Proletarian Left was formed?

JM S: Yes, yes, at that moment Benny Lévy understands well. In any case, for Maoists, the horizon of revolution is war. So for us it was that already before '68. That is to say when you already formed the self-defense groups in the UJC (ml), we found, in ten years, in five years, in fifteen years there will be civil war. Mao Tse Tung is all the same a strategy of war, it is revolution through war, it is not the capture of the Winter Palace. It is (inaudible 1:03:52) to say that, but the general rule is that, it is not debatable. The question is the rhythm: the management of the UJC (ml) has always been very sensitive to the fact that we should not go too fast (inaudible 1:04:10). But at the same time, they will go. What Benny wants to know in Flins is is spot on how far it can go. But not that there are three guys who (inaudible 1:04:22), but if there is a mass of people who are determined to toughen things up, yes, obviously you have to toughen things up. Now, if it's three crazy people, we're not going. This is what must be assessed in the situation. So I remember very well that I had discussions with him, after several times I said to him: 'This is what I see, this is what you feel'. It goes like this. There was never an order to shoot. Never you have to assess in the situation. So I remember very well that I had discussions with him, after several times I said to him: 'This is what I see, this is what you feel'. It goes like this. There was never an order to shoot. Never you have to assess in the situation. So I remember very well that I had discussions with him, after several times I said to him: 'This is what I see, this is what you feel'. It goes like this. There was never an order to shoot. Never

RG: Never

JM S: Never, I haven't even had an order to use Molotov cocktails. It was I who decided to make them do

RG: But if you had been shot what would have happened?

JM S: I don't know. But we have no weapons, we

RG: But do you have Molotov cocktails, batons?

JM S: Yes, that yes. That, the batons, already it is without problems. We have already used them. So Molotov cocktails are a step above. But it's me who decides to have them done, I have no instructions. And it's me and the friends, others who are in charge of the self-defense stuff group, so it's with Talbot that I decide to make cocktails, I have no instructions from Benny: 'He need cocktails', or I have no instructions on whether to use or not to use. It is I who thinks that it is necessary, it is a security because I do not know how far the violence of the police can go, and therefore what I need as a weapon, here is , that's all. It is a question after me on the ground to say: I do or I do not. As it happens, I said we don't. The car leaves under the tear gas canisters of the cops, it's loaded with cocktails, and it goes

RG: So otherwise there were no weapons?

JM S: No, no. There were never any weapons in Flins. Nowhere. I knew the people of the 22 who were there, and after we did things together, there were no weapons in Flins. No. I think on the other hand that in Sochaux there were some, but it's a feeling

RG: And so that is over after a few days in Flins, how did it end?

JM S: It's over, there's the death of Gilles Tautin

RG: But then there were demonstrations?

JM S: The death of Gilles Tautin I told it in Generation, you want me to tell you about the death of Gilles Tautin?

RG: No, no, is it the student who drowned?

JM S: Yes. He was with me, he is part of the self-defense group. Oh yes, he's part of the group, he's one of our photographers. Because we had photographers to photograph the fascists in Paris

RG: He's a high school student

JM S: Yes, but self-defense groups are half high school students

RG: And what happened?

JM S: What happened ... We decided to stay, so we send reinforcements, so we get a group that we have to brief, I'm there with Talbot who is the responsible for Saint-Cloud, who is responsible with me for self-defense groups, we are both because the others are taken elsewhere. And so we receive a group that will help us in the work to help the people of Flins. We set up a Mao group permanently, as done on the 22nd (inaudible 1:07:39) which will camp on the left and on the right, because things will have to be done: work has not resumed but risks resuming, you need people to brief, to argue, you have to do agitation work. So we receive this group at noon, we made an appointment in a place, in a park on the edge of a river, thinking that it will go a little unnoticed, and so we are doing the briefing. I'm the one doing the briefing. And in fact I was arrested on the day of the demonstration, when a lot of the left were arrested at six in the morning by the cops. Pretty stupid, because I was driving the car, instead of going home, looking for a place to eat, because we were hungry, we wanted to cross the Seine, there was a barrage of cops on the Seine . And after that it was still quite violent at the police station, and so obviously I regretted not having plunged into the Seine Pretty stupid, because I was driving the car, instead of going home, looking for a place to eat, because we were hungry, we wanted to cross the Seine, there was a barrage of cops on the Seine . And after that it was still quite violent at the police station, and so obviously I regretted not having plunged into the Seine Pretty stupid, because I was driving the car, instead of going home, looking for a place to eat, because we were hungry, we wanted to cross the Seine, there was a barrage of cops on the Seine . And after that it was still quite violent at the police station, and so obviously I regretted not having plunged into the Seine

RG: When is it?

JM S: It is the night of May 23 to 24 at six in the morning at Pont-Marie. They stop us at the roadblock, the cops, there are four guns, we (inaudible 1:08:52) in the Seine,

that's it. Okay, I didn't. And a posteriori I obviously regretted it. Because at the time we were treated well at the police station by the gendarmerie. So obviously I told myself that I would not do this again. So when I see the gendarmes arriving, as it is a park of (inaudible 1:09:21) I say: 'Very well, we throw ourselves in the river, we throw ourselves in the Seine and then we meet again. 'other side'. There you go, people are throwing themselves into the river, etc. People are destroying their papers, finally the political notes. I have a lot of them, because I am responsible, so I have plenty of papers, I am the last, the people in charge must leave the last, that we check that everyone is gone. I jump into the water, and there you go, we jump into the water. There is a bridge, we arose like this and there is a bridge. And in fact here there is another branch of the Seine. And so people are trying to do that. I'm the last one, when I'm up here there's a biker pulling out a gun, a cop, and wanting to shoot me. Finally, he wants (inaudible 1:10:22), he wants me to surrender. He got hooked by a worker, who (inaudible 1:10:31), who doesn't hesitate to speak loudly to him, and then (inaudible 1:10:35) that's enough. And so I run, I advance with the current, and Gilles, who is one of the last, is drowning, and we, I have to go there, and the current is strong, and I can't get back to him. He's drowning, that's it. Why he died, I don't know, he had a heart attack, it was noon, had he eaten a lot before, he hadn't slept, tired ... I don't know. The water is not particularly cold, it is June

RG: So it was after that that more or less ended the events in Flins?

JM S: Not only. On the one hand, he's dying, so obviously it creates a heavy atmosphere around it. In all (inaudible 1:11:28), all the people who have come to Flins, people understand that there are risks, that there are problems. It creates a heavy atmosphere, so you have to be very careful about security, where we meet, obviously (inaudible 1:11:43). Everything becomes very heavy, we are in a complicated underground. And then at the same time in the factory, it weakens, the people who occupy weaken. So we have meetings with Jean-Michel, a friend who is established, what do we do, what is possible to do, not to do. But at a given moment they stop, the control stops. Peugeot too. At some point the metallurgy stops

RG: So what are you going to do next?

JM S: Beh us, what do we plan to do afterwards, is to go on vacation, to rest, we are tired (laughs from RG)! We're exhausted. At the end in Flins we wait for the days

RG: But are there people who have left, who have gone to the people during the holidays, to the peasants?

JM S: No, I think the general watchword is to recover, the political debate in the organization in my opinion is becoming quite difficult. And so the management, we have no particular instructions. No, no, we are going to take a little vacation because we are both exhausted, and then we meet in Paris at the beginning of August. At the same time the GP, the organizations were dissolved, so we started to put, to see. It becomes very heavy, we need a system of plans, where we hold meetings, well what I told you earlier, it was all very hard to put in place, it's a lot of work

RG: Because when the GP started, it was underground from the start?

JM S: No, no, but the GP has not started, we are still in the UJ. The split in the UJ, the breakup of the UJ does not take place until the second half of August. So on the one hand Benny will do the GP and then Castro will launch Long Live Communism, which will become Long Live Revolution afterwards.

RG: And you joined the GP?

JM S: Yes. At the beginning, spontaneously, we are on Benny's side, because Benny, when he comes back from vacation, he went to Sochaux and he is still talking about it: in the factories we can move towards war, roughly speaking. For him Sochaux, Flins, it is very important. So we are fine with us. Most of the people from the self-defense committee, the executives, not just the management, but there are executives, group leaders and all that, you can go from the GP side of course if you are logical

RG: How did you think about starting the war in the factories?

JM S: We are not there, we are simply in the idea that there is a potential for violence, for the development of violence in the factories, and that this is what we must work on

RG: Is it primarily through the establishment?

JM S: There is not a very clear line yet. And I will be leaving Benny at that time, in October. Because I find that in the student movement the type of work that is being done is not movementist enough, it has remained as before. So we have militant groups now in the GP who are going, we have kept La Cause du Peuple, which is the UJ's newspaper and therefore we have groups of people who sell the newspaper, but finally, there is something else to do that sell the newspaper! There are universities to be occupied, there are demonstrations to be held, clashes to be considered, there is a mass movement to be organized. People come back from vacation, all students, and it's: what do we do?

RG: There was no more mass movement, right? It was over

JM S: Yes, but we can try to reactivate it. The question is still: what do we do? We can't just go and say: we're coming to sell newspapers! It seems to me, me who was a student unionist, it seems to me very beside the point, very below the truth, of the potential. So we tell Benny with Talbot, the friend with whom I was in Flins and who ran Normale sup in Saint-Cloud, Patrick Talbot, we tell him, and what he tells us does not convince us. And then I find that Benny, obviously, who is a Maoist, he places diagrams, he seeks to use diagrams, speeches, Mao's sentences, Mao's concepts, which Mao is saying at the moment in China because of the cultural revolution, here

RG: He's an intellectual. Finally, you are all intellectuals, but he, theoretical

JM S: Yes, but in this case I find that it does not work. The maos talk a lot about metabolism, there is in the blood what is stale, there is the oxygen which must come, it is the carbon. It is because we have to change the composition of the Communist Party in China, it clearly shows, with the Cultural Revolution, making room for new generations, I understand that. But when Lenin talks about metabolism, I think that doesn't mean much. I also find him too abstract, and he is not helped by the fact that being stateless he cannot go to the streets, which is a major handicap in a situation like that. How does he feel? He's intelligent, so he gets told about things, he tries to understand, but still. So all that makes me go,

RG: So where are you going?

JM S: In Vincennes. I'm going to do the action committee in Vincennes

RG: Because Vincennes had just opened?

JM S: No, Vincennes opens late. We take registrations for students, but in fact there are delays for the work, it will really open, the buildings in mid-December and the courses in early January

RG: And then there is the occupation of Vincennes in January?

JM S: Yes, yes

RG: But how did it go? Was it violent?

JM S: Oh yes, it was violent. It was very violent. Why ? Because there are things ... There must have been a beginning of occupation at Dauphine, I don't know what, I forgot a little, and so we obviously launch things, out of solidarity. But it's not us who, that's the story I told you earlier, there is potential. So we do a GA, we say: we occupy. The GA is full, there are five hundred people, there are teachers, there is Foucault, there is Daniel (?), There are teachers and students. We are busy, the cops arrive at half past two, ten o'clock, and there it is very very violent. They gas a lot. Ah yes, there is one side of the action committee that is going to have big problems in the eyes because of that. I will only see such quantities of gas in Genoa in 2001, Italians today it's crazy the amount of gas they use. Without a mask you do not turn, without glasses, in the street. But in '68 in France we did not use gas like that, not at saturation like that. The types of police engagement changed (inaudible 1:20:11) after '68. We are in a closed room, they use gas, there is great excitement, it's violent, yes it's very violent

RG: Are there people on the roof?

JM S: Yes, we are trying to go to the top floor, but hey at some point, we can do more. So we're going to Beaujon, that's it. And that they have already spared us. (inaudible 1:20:50) in the middle of Paris called Beaujon, (inaudible 1:20:55). Here we go to Beaujon

RG: And when did you stop activating?

JM S: After the first year we do at Vincennes, where we radicalize the movement, a lot, we are on a slogan that students must leave universities and all go to factories. So we want the university to be closed, we are for the destruction of the university and the abolition of wage labor. As we cannot convince the majority of the students, we decide to leave. We go to the factory, and so I am in the factory in the Rouen region the following year. So '69 -'70, we go to Rouen and we set up in the factory

RG: What kind of factory is it?

JM S: What we want is to penetrate Cléon, which is a key factory since it was the third factory to be occupied in France. So, since we are a student and do not want to be spotted, we enter a series of factories nearby where it is easy to get hired. Anyway, afterwards you can see Cléon to say, thing. And I am going into textiles in Elbeuf

RG: How long are you staying?

JM S: I only stay a few months, in fact isolation, the group like that, living in the provinces, it's quite difficult. So ultimately I'm more for us to get closer to the GP. So we get closer to the GP and we rework with them just before the dissolution. (inaudible 1:22:40) so I have to go to Lorraine, but I'm never going to go to Lorraine because it's dissolving and nothing is planned for dissolution. So it is (inaudible 1:22:59). So suddenly it was me who came to manage the dissolution in (inaudible 1:23:04). And at the same time I am in the factory. And then I'm going to be emptied of the factory because there is a strike in the women's workshop, there is a friend who is established. So the men are starting to say it's time to do something (inaudible 1:23:22), to strike and everything.

RG: We are in '70 here

JM S: Yes, summer '70. I got laid off somewhere in June '70. After we spend the summer underground, we are hunted down, the GP is dissolved. You have to find apartments, you have to escape the (inaudible 1:23:55) cops, you have to organize systems for the distribution of the newspaper: if you are arrested with more than three copies of the newspaper you are charged, you go to judgment, you are incarcerated, finally you are condemned. Up to three you have the right, it is the freedom of opinion. More than three is (inaudible 1:24:13) there you go. So the PSU helps us a lot, we have to find the network, the people who can help, the apartments. And at the same time the general rule is that the summer must be hot and violent

RG: Has the summer been hot?

JM S: A little, anyway. Finally I avoid any action on the casinos of the coast, since I find that the possibilities of withdrawal are very difficult. So finally we put on something around the Fourteenth of July ball in Saint-Étienne du Rouvray, which is a communist municipality. A young worker from our region who speaks, we are there. We create slogans, we obviously prepared Molotov cocktails, you never know

RG: Because balls were forbidden?

JM S: No, no, it's the town hall ball. But if you speak at the ball, the Communists are not happy. Young people start to move. It is enough that they call the police, that the police arrive, there is only one step. The police are coming, of course. The young people see the police coming, they hit the police. So you have violent clashes with the police in Saint-Étienne, and obviously there are plenty of young people arrested. And as the young workers are black jackets, they are guards, they are not used to it, we do not know him yet, we are coming. The policemen know how to work, the policemen do their job seriously, so they take them one after the other and they tell them that the other has denounced them. They give each other. So there are thirty arrests, and who are being kept, to be deferred in court, etc. So afterwards we have to organize all the support work, we have to bring back lawyers from Paris, we have to go see the families, they have to appoint the lawyers. We're stuck in it, plus the cops looking for us. We have to put it all together, that's what we do, we spend the summer doing it. And then I go back to Paris, because as the GP was not ready for dissolution ... So we know Geismar: Geismar goes to trial in November, something like that, so I am told: 'Jean-Marc, go back to Paris, you have to lend a hand, you have to help the students, there have to be people in the street ' you have to go see the families, they have to appoint the lawyers. We're stuck in it, plus the cops looking for us. We have to put it all together, that's what we do, we spend the summer doing it. And then I go back to Paris, because as the GP was not ready for dissolution ... So we know Geismar: Geismar goes to trial in November, something like that, so I am told: 'Jean-Marc, go back to Paris, you have to lend a hand, you have to help the

students, there have to be people in the street ' you have to go see the families, they have to appoint the lawyers. We're stuck in it, plus the cops looking for us. We have to put it all together, that's what we do, we spend the summer doing it. And then I go back to Paris, because as the GP was not ready for dissolution ... So we know Geismar: Geismar goes to trial in November, something like that, so I am told: 'Jean-Marc, go back to Paris, you have to lend a hand, you have to help the students, there have to be people in the street '

RG: Was there the Le Dantec and Le Bris trial? It was the following year, '71?

JM S: I don't know, I don't remember. I didn't take care of it. I took care of the demonstrations for the Geismar trial in Paris, it was in October, November

RG: And when did you drop all of that?

JM S: Right after. Two or three months later, in December. Because the person who runs all this, whom I know well, comes first from Nice, she was in Saint-Cloud, so I knew him from all our stories in Saint-Cloud. It's the one called Tarzan in the band

RG: Zancarini?

JM S: There you go, Zancarini. So it's Jean-Claude who organizes things in the street in Paris. So with Jean-Claude we've known each other ever since, and we've done lots of things in Saint-Cloud

RG: And he's from Nice

JM S: Yes, he's from Nice. And then he was one of the people in charge of the self-defense groups in Saint-Cloud, at Normale Sup. And I was often at Normale Sup, in May every other day I come back to Saint-Cloud. And he did Flins and all that, I know, so we trust. So we say: 'Jean-Marc ...', in my opinion it is he who brings me back to Paris, he is in the direction of the GP. So I think it was he who said: 'We have to get Jean-Marc in, things are going too badly, he has to come in'. So I'm going home, what do we do? We have a demonstration with a hundred people, a

hundred and fifty people, with Molotov cocktails, well it's ridiculous! We are a hundred and fifty people, the Latin Quarter is under siege, we confront the cops, we throw four things at them, we go out, very well ... The GP in Paris is completely disorganized, people were not ready for that, it is completely disorganized. I'm going to Nanterre to try to reconstruct something, we are occupying Nanterre. Finally, we put Nanterre on strike, for a very long time. There is a teacher, who is Foyer (?), Who is linked to the right, to the UNR, I don't know what he does in Chad, finally he sequesters the boss of the university. I know how to do that, I've already done that once in Vincennes, that's it. I know how to do that, it's mechanical, but there is nothing, there is nothing. So I see that there is nothing, so I stop. I too have realized, he had given me the feeling, and that's why we got closer to the GP, that there was no revolutionary potential in the working class. We are still in ten factories around Rouen, we are not in a factory, we already have a friend in Cléon, who has returned, who is established. We're in seven or eight factories, so we have a sense of what's going on. We don't feel any revolt, we don't feel anything

RG: Even among immigrant workers? Because they had problems

JM S: No, no. We're not in Billancourt. In Billancourt there is yes, there is not. And anyway, we're not going to make a revolution with immigrants! If around one of the first factories that started moving in France you can't move people, you don't feel anything ... This is what we found: we found young people, who work or who not working, who are ready to hit the cops, that's what we found, that's all we found! This is not how we are going to make the revolution. So I am already very, I have the feeling that it will be very long in any case in the factories, it is not at all the spark that will set fire to the full, as we said at that time , we are not in this situation. As I understand it, if there is something, it will be very long. And secondly, in Paris I find that in the student world there is still more, it's wind, it's appearance, compared to what there was, there is more. So I say to myself: this is all over, there is no potential. So i stop

RG: And what are you doing?

JM S: Nothing. I decompress. I've been in these stories of revolution, of something for eight years. After '68 we went very far in, to re-bury over time. I smoke a lot of joints, with my friends who are in the same situation as me, who quit. We found ourselves in a very comfortable place in Paris, but I won't give the names because the people were nice, the children of the house, heirs. Here we do what we want, we are there every night, we can smoke joints, there is food, drink, that's it. We tap, we discuss, we smoke, we decompress

RG: And do you leave France at some point?

JM S: Yes, I will be leaving France later. I start working on my thesis, after a few months I start to bond with Cohn-Bendit, so we go to Germany from time to time. So I look at what Danny's band in Frankfurt, RK, Revolutionärer Kampf is doing. It's not bad so Frankfurt is better than Paris! I vaguely think about going to Germany, to Frankfurt. I am progressing on my thesis, which is on the labor movement and the student movement, I am doing interviews

RG: On the movement of '68?

JM S: Yes, yes. I had interviews with the people of 22, but also with workers and unionists at Sud-Aviation. I'm interested in the trigger cover, so I (inaudible 1:33:15), I'm going to see people in Sud-Aviation, in Sandouville, in Cléon, in Flins

RG: Have you completed this thesis?

JM S: Oh yes, I returned it a year or two years later. It is not going very well, because my thesis director is Poulantzas, who has remained very Marxist, and therefore I do not have the congratulations of the jury because I am not enough Marxist. Lefebvre defends me, but Poulantzas doesn't want to. And Passeron walks away, he's a member of the jury, he's not coming home. Because Passeron was also at Vincennes, he understood that it was going to be complicated. He says he has broken down his car in the provinces

RG: So he's not coming?

JM S: No, he's not coming. So there is Lefebvre and Poulantzas, there are three teachers - it's a postgraduate doctorate, a postgraduate thesis - and so Poulantzas obviously wins (inaudible1: 34: 17) because at university (inaudible 1: 34:22) of the jury, so he wins. But that's fine, but

RG: What year is that?

JM S: It must be two years later. Poulantzas is not happy, because at the time of Vincennes, it is an idiotic settling of scores, in my opinion. It is true that my thesis is not very Marxist, obviously it is not like him, it is not Althusserian, social groups. It's still a thesis on the relations between the labor movement and the student movement in '68, you see. Lefebvre defends it, he says it's interesting, it's good. Okay, but Poulantzas has political scores to settle with me, because he had sought to compromise with the Communist Party at the time of the elections at the end of June. And we skipped the elections, we told you I imagine when we break the elections

RG: No

JM S: We throw them (inaudible 1:35:20) out the window, everywhere, etc. Poulantzas wanted to provoke a GA, to do something of compromise, so I went to the socio department, I said: 'There is no GA, it's not possible'. I'm the one telling him, I say, 'Look, actually, it's no'. And since we are very hegemonic in the university, it is not possible to have a GA against us. If I say no, it's no. Anyway at the GA people will say: 'Salmon is right', there you go, it's over. I think, guys think it's a settling of scores on this. But it is true that academically I am no longer in his line, that is also true. But the work I do in my opinion is interesting, because I have interviews, I have people,

RG: This is the immediate story

JM S: Nobody went to see the guys who were organizing the start-up strikes. It's still interesting to understand why they start to avoid (inaudible 1:36:30), it's a subject! He's not happy, well, he's not happy. Me, that didn't make me much, I already went on vacation in America, I lived in New Age community in Scotland ... Anyway, for me teaching at the university is not an obvious thing, I do the thesis to do the thesis. When we were, I have such a critical position at university, I was there with Glucksmann, it's a little embarrassing, you are not very comfortable saying I'm coming back, I want to be an academic

RG: So you didn't become an academic

JM S: No, no

RG: What did you do for a job, a career?

JM S: Me, I did a lot of things. But it's okay, time flies anyway

RG: Yes, time goes by, but essentially?

JM S: I hung out in the United States, I came back to the French Riviera, I worked a little, I sold apartments in the family business, from (inaudible 1:37:42 ). Someone who was with me at the head of the Union des Étudiants de France created Ipsos, a polling institute in Paris, which was very small at the time, he said to me: 'But why don't you come and work with us? '. So I returned to Paris in '81, in December '80 I was in Paris, at Ipsos, I became director of studies. Max Gallo, who was my director, my teacher in Nice, becomes minister. He said to me: 'Since you are familiar with polls, come and work with me'. I will work with Max Gallo

RG: In his office?

JM S: In his office. I did not vote Mitterand! Not even in the second round. Because of the Algerian war, because of the torture. But he is the boss of the left, of the government. Me, if I am asked to help, I am willing to help, I am not sectarian. I am not a saint but I am not a sectarian. So I work with him. Max is very quickly disappointed with Mitterand, because he sees him a lot, so he is quickly disappointed. It's completely private. We understand Mazarine, we know about Mazarine, as he is a spokesperson, we know a lot of things that the others don't know. So we know about Mazarine, we know that he takes helicopters to go to something, to bring his daughter, we know all that, us. So Max Gallo is very uncomfortable when he finds out about all this

RG: He resigned?

JM S: He leaves slowly, he gets elected MEP. And suddenly he leaves. So I am leaving. I'm not trying to stay in the system, I'm not looking for this. Well, I do things, I

give SOS Racisme a political hand, because there is Le Pen, but I understood that Mitterrand uses Le Pen, we also understood that when we work with Max

RG: He changed the electoral system?

JM S: Ah, that's even before, he put Le Pen on the media. It is an authorization from the Élysée. At the time, Le Pen was on the air on Europe 1. There was a meeting ... I have no more than ten minutes, a quarter of an hour, but then we can meet again if you want. not a deal, if the Le Pen affair interests you ... Le Pen is on Europe 1, it is the first time that it is on Europe 1. So it happens that every Wednesday ... This day-there Max Gallo has an appointment with Mitterrand, every week Max Gallo has an appointment with Mitterrand, what day it is, I no longer remember, it is not Wednesday, since it is the Council of Ministers, but there is a day when Mitterrand has a fixed appointment, because he is a spokesperson. He sees it all morning we have breakfast in the cabinet and there are obviously Socialists in the cabinet, who return to the Élysée, and that Le Pen speaks loudly, and who say: 'Damn, what is Le Pen? talk to Europe 1, it's scandalous! '. I say: 'But after all, if Le Pen goes to Europe 1, there is obviously a power of the Élysée'. They look at me: 'Listen, anyway, it works like that!'. We know it works like that, it's fine! So I said: 'Good beh Max, you are talking to Mitterrand about it, you will see him later'. Obviously Mitterrand made a speech to him: 'But Le Pen is not a fascist, he is not of the extreme right, I know him, he was a deputy under the Fourth Republic ...'. Obviously, there is a green light. Le Pen wrote, we know, we have the letter,

So, I understood that, and when I understood that, there is the March of the Arabs that happens, we are still in the office when there is the March of the Beurs. Me, obviously, with my sensitivity, inevitably I already have contacts with people in immigration in Paris, so I have already seen that a radio which is made by immigrants can be well seen, subsidized, because this is the time of (1:42:13). So obviously when there is the Marche des Beurs, people come back to me, the Élysée comes back to me. Ségolène, who is Mitterrand's adviser, calls me (inaudible 1: 42: 21-25). So Ségolène calls me, she says: 'Jean-Marc, Georges (inaudible 1:42:32) of social affairs wants us to receive, that Mitterrand receives the walkers, what do you think? You have to go and see '. I say good, I will see. I will see them, I discuss. Delorme had done something crazy to me, well crazy, he hadn't realized, he knew very well what he had set up, but the support committee in Paris is a committee, it looks like today, left of the left. The call to support the marchers is the extreme left, the left of the PS. That is completely in Mitterrand's game: in Mitterrand's game, there is Le Pen, there must be others opposite Le Pen, and I will be in the middle. I don't want to, I say to Delorme: 'Listen - I don't know him, everything happens by phone - I say:' Listen, I agree that you are seen by the President, I agree to that you have the ten-year card ', but I say,' I don't want that call, I want a very broad appeal, I want all of French society to be with you, Le Pen must be isolated. He says okay. So I put up the call, we put Bernard (inaudible 1:43:55), a champion cyclist, we put

Simone Weil, there you go, we put up a call like that, we put everyone. I say to Ségolène: 'Here it is, it is sold, the President is going to see them', and she gives the green light. And the girl who takes care of, but who is not her, who is above Ségolène, there is someone else at the time, who will work afterwards with Chévènement, a woman, it is she who pleads in the whole of the social sector, it will be very good, because Mitterrand when he receives them, he says yes without saying yes while saying yes. And she, going out, she said: 'On the ten-year card, it's agreement'. That is how the ten-year card went. So I'm in Paris for the beurs' demo, obviously when I leave, SOS Racisme interests me, because Le Pen annoys me

RG: A stupid question: how do you earn your money?

JM S: Ah well, once I'm gone from there

RG: You are not at Ipsos?

JM S: First I was at Ipsos, when I am in the cabinet, I am paid by the government. After I go to work at Literary News for a few months, and then there is a change of power, Kahn takes power, I am laid off, and therefore I have unemployment benefits. At the time we were on redundancy, we had eighty percent for two years. I'm alright

RG: And what are you doing now? Did you take a class?

JM S: Yes, I'm doing a course on globalization, Europe in globalization, and I'm doing a second course there on internet issues

RG: Where is it over there?

JM S: It's called 'Management and Telecom Sud-Paris', it's a large school, the Telecom schools, which depend on France Telecom. As France Telecom was privatized, they went into the fold of the state, so it's one of those schools. It's in Ivry

RG: One last little question?

JM S: Yes, of course

RG: How do you see those moments, those hectic years, now? Do you have the feeling that this is a great moment, a moment of happiness, of revolution, of hope? Or are you always on the disappointment?

JM S: I am not on the disappointment, May '68 for people like us is a fantastic surprise! So we exaggerated the surprise, we thought it meant more than what it says. But we, six months before, would have told us: the general strike in France, we signed all the papers, I never thought that we would have a general strike six months later. So no, it's not a disappointment, but May '68 is for us at the same time, if happiness is for the people who are in the street, we are exhausted, the militants do not have the time to have happiness. We run even more than before. Already before we were in meetings all the time and all the time in the street, all the time doing, that's even more. So we come out of '68, we're washed up. It's years. I think that we had the luck and the misfortune of being alone in this affair, because usually in situations which are important social movements - after knowing whether it is a revolution, a revolutionary movement or not, it is very complicated - but usually people, there are elders, there are people who have experience with you. We, because of what the Communist Party is, because of the weakness of the left opposition groups in France, we are all alone. We're twenty-five, we have to decide, so I take the left, I don't take the left, we have to decide, we don't have the experience we have today, we are very young. So there is also that which explains why the potential of the situation was not drawn to the maximum, obviously. Today, I wouldn't make the same choices. It is clear that not having tried to occupy places of power in '68, we had to give ourselves the means to occupy town halls in Paris. The 22 was already working too much, was already downhill. He had become bureaucratized, was a bit downhill. It was not very difficult to take town halls on May 24. Frankly, there were thousands of people who could occupy the town halls, it was enough to prepare them and organize themselves a little. We missed things there. We saw things, that's what we had to do, we had to replay the Commune, because political imaginaries play, in the same way that by occupying the universities we played '36, we obviously had to play the Commune. But it had to be played well. We had two or three days, one day,

After that what happens if we rectify that, I don't know. Nobody knows. But this is where it goes wrong. Afterwards, there are those who think that we should have gone to the elections in '68. What Danny is saying today is another read. Considering what we had in the head, it was impossible in '68! By doing everything we could think of rationally organizing the taking of town halls. I would have been

told three days before: 'Jean-Marc, (inaudible 1:49:59)', I took three town halls! There were people like me, it was enough to organize a little, it was in our political logic. They tell me: 'Jean-Marc, we are going to vote, we are going to make lists for the elections', at the time for me it was unthinkable. I am not the only one. Danny can say historically, yes, but then that refers to the software we have before '68. So there it is even more work. But it is with old people maybe that they would have said before, all that, that's it. In any case, this is where things get lost. If there are possibilities to go further ... It's funny, I set up a small site on '68, I had a text from Canton which just arrived, which I haven't yet uploaded, but that's a lot of fun. It's an interesting diagnosis. They say: it's not a revolution, it's a movement in capitalism, they say. It's an interesting point of view. They say it's a cultural revolution, and it's a movement in capitalism. It could have been maybe more than that, that's what I'm saying but maybe not. Maybe we were on the front line and we get kicked out three days later, and just nothing and we go back to square zero, back to square one. But if there was a possibility that it would become something revolutionary, this is where it plays out.

The post-1968 is a gigantic failure, because we want to, the political groups are not in the right strategies and not in the right places. We had to see that we were in the factories, rather in the CFDT, we had to join the unions, which for us was obviously excluded. In the Lip strikes, behind it all, there was potential, there was potential in the factories from '90, '91, at New Galleries, and then when unemployment arrives. Because when unemployment will arrive in France from '74, it is no longer there, we are no longer there. And there, if we had been there, things could have been different in history, because there there is a political force that has been created. A socio-political force. And finally we only have a political expression, yes, we have Besancenot and Arlette who make ten percent in the elections today. This is also the result of '68. But we have that as a superstructure, that we don't have big worker roots

RG: And did Lip show you that workers can organize themselves and they don't need you?

JM S: It's not completely true. Because in the people I interviewed, there is a guy who organized the demonstrations for Lip. A worker, from the North, who was at the GOP, who did the Larzac and Lip, who does not have that feeling all the same. They brought in two, three people from outside. He was told: 'It's you who is organizing the demonstration in Besançon'. The people from the May Notebooks came and helped them learn the press anyway. But the people of Lip have a great capacity for autonomy. But that is very positive. What's interesting about the Lip movie - watch the Lip movie, did you see it?

RG: Yes, yes

JM S: You did notice when Charbonnier said: 'It was Giscard who said that everything must be covered, because unemployment is coming, we cannot have other Lip'. Things are played out there. The bourgeoisie will settle accounts, the dominant classes will settle accounts from '74. And already in '72 the creation of the fund of the UMM, it is to buy people in the factories so that there is no agitation. This is what I understand today. So you have to buy people anyway, you have to buy union officials. Today it has become a system, okay, but at the time it was not done like that, it was not made for the boss of the UMM to put his pockets full of it is done because you have to buy people. There is risk, there is a problem. So we buy people, and secondly we break Lip, two years later

RG: Well, maybe we should stop there. Thank you very much for your testimony

JM S: No, no, that's normal