

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:17,180

2

00:00:17,180 --> 00:00:25,100

I urged the Polish  
officers on the border

3

00:00:25,100 --> 00:00:27,920

to let me go through.

4

00:00:27,920 --> 00:00:33,440

Because I explained the story  
of my sister's sickness.

5

00:00:33,440 --> 00:00:39,080

And they thought that they  
caught a big fish, because we

6

00:00:39,080 --> 00:00:41,240

had diplomatic passports.

7

00:00:41,240 --> 00:00:47,700

And I told him that I have done  
my work in the underground,

8

00:00:47,700 --> 00:00:52,390

that I have fought  
to liberate Poland,

9

00:00:52,390 --> 00:00:56,100

that I am not in politics.

10

00:00:56,100 --> 00:01:01,740

And whatever government  
will be in Poland,

11

00:01:01,740 --> 00:01:04,140

I'll obey the orders.

12

00:01:04,140 --> 00:01:10,350

And they have no right to

detain me here in any way.

13

00:01:10,350 --> 00:01:13,740

And somehow, in the course  
of pushing back and stuff

14

00:01:13,740 --> 00:01:19,740

like that, I managed to  
see a couple officers

15

00:01:19,740 --> 00:01:21,210

in different uniforms.

16

00:01:21,210 --> 00:01:23,730

And I pushed myself through.

17

00:01:23,730 --> 00:01:31,090

And luckily, for the  
first time in my life,

18

00:01:31,090 --> 00:01:35,620

I met American soldiers.

19

00:01:35,620 --> 00:01:38,670

And he was an  
officer, by the way.

20

00:01:38,670 --> 00:01:45,120

And I told him with  
my broken English.

21

00:01:45,120 --> 00:01:50,890

I tried to tell him who I  
am, and what happened here.

22

00:01:50,890 --> 00:01:52,680

And they understood me.

23

00:01:52,680 --> 00:01:57,080

And they started to ask  
all kinds of questions.

24

00:01:57,080 --> 00:02:00,910

And I said to them,  
that I came here

25

00:02:00,910 --> 00:02:04,300

with my sister, and with  
my mother, and my brother,

26

00:02:04,300 --> 00:02:07,930

and we are going to  
Italy to save her life.

27

00:02:07,930 --> 00:02:12,670

And they felt a little  
bit caught in a surprise.

28

00:02:12,670 --> 00:02:15,820

Why would the Poles  
not let us through.

29

00:02:15,820 --> 00:02:22,050

And they went over and they gave  
orders to the Polish officers,

30

00:02:22,050 --> 00:02:25,390

that they have to  
release us immediately.

31

00:02:25,390 --> 00:02:27,850

And they didn't do it gladly.

32

00:02:27,850 --> 00:02:28,900

They didn't willingly.

33

00:02:28,900 --> 00:02:32,670

But they somehow had to do it.

34

00:02:32,670 --> 00:02:38,770

35

00:02:38,770 --> 00:02:39,950

They let us through.

36

00:02:39,950 --> 00:02:46,930

And immediately, they  
started giving us some food.

37

00:02:46,930 --> 00:02:50,212

I remember that they  
called in the Italians.

38

00:02:50,212 --> 00:02:51,670

And the Italian  
soldiers where they

39

00:02:51,670 --> 00:02:55,510

saw that my sister  
who was blind,

40

00:02:55,510 --> 00:03:00,033

they felt obliged  
to be gentlemen.

41

00:03:00,033 --> 00:03:01,450

And they brought  
oranges, and they

42

00:03:01,450 --> 00:03:03,580

brought all kinds of things.

43

00:03:03,580 --> 00:03:08,950

And they say that the to  
Murano will go at four o'clock.

44

00:03:08,950 --> 00:03:13,060

And this was about afternoon.

45

00:03:13,060 --> 00:03:16,720

So we were brought to the train.

46

00:03:16,720 --> 00:03:19,780

And there weren't too  
many people traveling.

47

00:03:19,780 --> 00:03:21,250

I can tell you that.

48

00:03:21,250 --> 00:03:28,310

And we went up in Murano  
that same evening,

49

00:03:28,310 --> 00:03:30,340

because it took  
about three hours,

50

00:03:30,340 --> 00:03:33,610

I guess, three and a half  
hours to go from the border

51

00:03:33,610 --> 00:03:35,680

to Murano.

52

00:03:35,680 --> 00:03:38,680

So this episode finished for me.

53

00:03:38,680 --> 00:03:45,340

And my brother decided  
to return back home,

54

00:03:45,340 --> 00:03:49,330

because he didn't  
have a passport.

55

00:03:49,330 --> 00:03:53,740

And he promised his  
girlfriend who we met,

56

00:03:53,740 --> 00:03:55,710

that he's going to come back.

57

00:03:55,710 --> 00:04:00,650

So I guess that I was  
a little disappointed.

58

00:04:00,650 --> 00:04:05,900

But he went back to Poland,  
and we said goodbye to him.

59

00:04:05,900 --> 00:04:11,060

And we went up in Murano  
in a strange city in Italy

60

00:04:11,060 --> 00:04:12,310

for the first time in my life.

61

00:04:12,310 --> 00:04:16,230

62

00:04:16,230 --> 00:04:19,410

For the first time also  
in many, many years,

63

00:04:19,410 --> 00:04:22,580

I saw a different country,  
a more free country

64

00:04:22,580 --> 00:04:24,540

than Poland was.

65

00:04:24,540 --> 00:04:28,740

66

00:04:28,740 --> 00:04:30,270

My feelings were torn, you know.

67

00:04:30,270 --> 00:04:33,960

I didn't know here I am in  
also an occupied country

68

00:04:33,960 --> 00:04:40,710

like Poland, but somehow, the  
people are so nice, so helpful.

69

00:04:40,710 --> 00:04:43,230

70

00:04:43,230 --> 00:04:47,520

And I located my sister.

71

00:04:47,520 --> 00:04:53,050

I stayed with them  
over the New Year.

72

00:04:53,050 --> 00:04:55,150

And the doctors gave us hope.

73

00:04:55,150 --> 00:04:57,730

74

00:04:57,730 --> 00:05:01,110

And back in January, I  
returned back to Poland.

75

00:05:01,110 --> 00:05:03,710

76

00:05:03,710 --> 00:05:06,650

I had a responsibility  
towards my job.

77

00:05:06,650 --> 00:05:13,020

I had a responsibility towards  
the people I worked with.

78

00:05:13,020 --> 00:05:20,250

And I hoped that that would be  
a good location for my sister.

79

00:05:20,250 --> 00:05:23,340

By the way, I would  
like to mention

80

00:05:23,340 --> 00:05:25,260

that the Polish  
government gave me

81

00:05:25,260 --> 00:05:33,390

the equivalent of 500 dollars  
to locate my sister in Italy.

82

00:05:33,390 --> 00:05:38,740

I thought that the gesture

of the government was great.

83

00:05:38,740 --> 00:05:44,920

And I told them, I promised that  
I give back the money to them,

84

00:05:44,920 --> 00:05:47,240

and everything  
will be all right.

85

00:05:47,240 --> 00:05:53,690

But not too many good things  
are being told about Poland.

86

00:05:53,690 --> 00:05:57,890

But somehow, I have to  
say, that after the war

87

00:05:57,890 --> 00:05:59,920

I was treated very good by them.

88

00:05:59,920 --> 00:06:02,680

89

00:06:02,680 --> 00:06:05,470

I went back to my work.

90

00:06:05,470 --> 00:06:09,100

I was assigned to  
go at that time,

91

00:06:09,100 --> 00:06:14,445

to Hungary and to  
Germany, and to France.

92

00:06:14,445 --> 00:06:17,070

93

00:06:17,070 --> 00:06:23,790

Because there were situations  
and rumors that a lot of SS,

94



00:06:23,790 --> 00:06:28,260  
big shots like this, were  
hiding under different names.

95  
00:06:28,260 --> 00:06:35,630  
And we have to find  
out things about them.

96  
00:06:35,630 --> 00:06:39,560  
Why they decided  
to send me is maybe

97  
00:06:39,560 --> 00:06:42,560  
to give me a chance  
maybe to stop and see

98  
00:06:42,560 --> 00:06:44,600  
my family at the same time.

99  
00:06:44,600 --> 00:06:47,320

100  
00:06:47,320 --> 00:06:51,310  
I remember I went to  
Budapest at the time.

101  
00:06:51,310 --> 00:06:54,700

102  
00:06:54,700 --> 00:06:56,380  
It was for the first  
time in my life

103  
00:06:56,380 --> 00:07:04,370  
that I was in Budapest,  
and to look for criminals.

104  
00:07:04,370 --> 00:07:06,000  
I spent a week.

105  
00:07:06,000 --> 00:07:10,830  
I met some people I knew that  
were still trying to find out

106  
00:07:10,830 --> 00:07:13,680  
about their relatives.

107  
00:07:13,680 --> 00:07:17,970  
We had accomplished our  
mission in Budapest,

108  
00:07:17,970 --> 00:07:26,020  
and then we went to Germany,  
and from Germany to France.

109  
00:07:26,020 --> 00:07:28,780  
The whole trip was not  
a tremendous success,

110  
00:07:28,780 --> 00:07:36,610  
because there were rumors  
and very different points,

111  
00:07:36,610 --> 00:07:38,140  
how do you say to--

112  
00:07:38,140 --> 00:07:42,480  
we search for clues,  
different clues.

113  
00:07:42,480 --> 00:07:45,750  
But we tried to help each other.

114  
00:07:45,750 --> 00:07:47,750  
I mean, all the  
governments like France,

115  
00:07:47,750 --> 00:07:52,080  
Germany, whatever, was  
looking for these criminals,

116  
00:07:52,080 --> 00:07:53,970  
tried to help each other.

117  
00:07:53,970 --> 00:07:58,140

But it was not a great success  
as far as I'm concerned.

118  
00:07:58,140 --> 00:08:02,960  
And from there, I went to Italy.

119  
00:08:02,960 --> 00:08:06,050  
As a matter of fact, I  
remember going to Italy

120  
00:08:06,050 --> 00:08:10,070  
through to the French  
Riviera, and meeting

121  
00:08:10,070 --> 00:08:14,480  
for the first time in my life  
with my Uncle [? Nind ?] who

122  
00:08:14,480 --> 00:08:16,130  
survived the war in France.

123  
00:08:16,130 --> 00:08:18,350  
Leon was an experience for me.

124  
00:08:18,350 --> 00:08:21,000

125  
00:08:21,000 --> 00:08:24,950  
I'm talking about 1946.

126  
00:08:24,950 --> 00:08:29,660  
I went back back to Italy to  
see how my sister is doing.

127  
00:08:29,660 --> 00:08:39,230  
And I found out that she  
is not improving too much.

128  
00:08:39,230 --> 00:08:41,299  
I spoke to the doctor.

129  
00:08:41,299 --> 00:08:43,610

He gave me hope.

130

00:08:43,610 --> 00:08:46,520

So I went back to Poland.

131

00:08:46,520 --> 00:08:49,580

In Poland at that  
particular time,

132

00:08:49,580 --> 00:08:56,160

I was invited by the  
Polish government

133

00:08:56,160 --> 00:09:00,480

to change my position  
from Silesia to Warsaw,

134

00:09:00,480 --> 00:09:09,060

to go to Warsaw, and get a  
position of higher level yet.

135

00:09:09,060 --> 00:09:14,840

I accepted it.

136

00:09:14,840 --> 00:09:18,720

But I told them, frankly,  
that it would be a good idea

137

00:09:18,720 --> 00:09:21,720

that they should rather  
send me to a school

138

00:09:21,720 --> 00:09:24,000

that I can receive my education.

139

00:09:24,000 --> 00:09:31,230

I was longing for an education,  
for more than I had then.

140

00:09:31,230 --> 00:09:39,280

And somehow, life stayed in such  
a way that I could not do it.

141

00:09:39,280 --> 00:09:47,130

And later on, when I was  
all ready to go to Warsaw

142

00:09:47,130 --> 00:09:50,600

and take my position in the  
foreign ministry, which they

143

00:09:50,600 --> 00:09:56,950

gave me, I got a  
telegram from my mother

144

00:09:56,950 --> 00:10:02,500

that my sister is sinking, that  
the situation is getting worse.

145

00:10:02,500 --> 00:10:05,080

I should come as  
soon as possible.

146

00:10:05,080 --> 00:10:11,110

Naturally, I went as fast  
as I could to go to Italy.

147

00:10:11,110 --> 00:10:15,040

That time took much longer  
than the normal times.

148

00:10:15,040 --> 00:10:16,990

But I arrived there.

149

00:10:16,990 --> 00:10:22,640

And it was already  
summer time 1946.

150

00:10:22,640 --> 00:10:27,310

And my sister was  
getting worse and worse.

151

00:10:27,310 --> 00:10:30,190

At that time, I  
had decided being

152

00:10:30,190 --> 00:10:31,720

that I've been to  
other countries

153

00:10:31,720 --> 00:10:38,380

before, I decided that to  
continue my career in Poland

154

00:10:38,380 --> 00:10:47,110

would be not proper for me,  
that I'm still too young to give

155

00:10:47,110 --> 00:10:56,300

everything up in life to work  
with the government whom I was

156

00:10:56,300 --> 00:10:57,800

not really in love too much.

157

00:10:57,800 --> 00:11:01,960

Because communism was far  
fetched from my feeling.

158

00:11:01,960 --> 00:11:07,040

I was not I was not happy  
with a lot of things

159

00:11:07,040 --> 00:11:12,860

which happened later, arresting  
people, and sending them

160

00:11:12,860 --> 00:11:14,630

to prisons.

161

00:11:14,630 --> 00:11:17,390

And you yourself were still  
only in your 20s, weren't you?

162

00:11:17,390 --> 00:11:18,980

I was in my 20s, yeah.

163

00:11:18,980 --> 00:11:23,510

At that time, I was  
already 24 years old.

164  
00:11:23,510 --> 00:11:30,810

165  
00:11:30,810 --> 00:11:34,160  
And I was thinking  
while I was in Italy,

166  
00:11:34,160 --> 00:11:35,390  
I was thinking what to do.

167  
00:11:35,390 --> 00:11:39,110

168  
00:11:39,110 --> 00:11:45,440  
And I couldn't make the  
decision, because a career like

169  
00:11:45,440 --> 00:11:50,430  
I could make in Poland,  
or had at that time,

170  
00:11:50,430 --> 00:11:53,710  
was very difficult to achieve.

171  
00:11:53,710 --> 00:11:56,550  
It's not easy to become  
a big shot, you know,

172  
00:11:56,550 --> 00:12:02,280  
just because you deserve it.

173  
00:12:02,280 --> 00:12:04,075  
The circumstances,  
the war, everything

174  
00:12:04,075 --> 00:12:09,950  
that I've done to fight  
for survival of my people,

175

00:12:09,950 --> 00:12:14,160  
it took a tremendous  
toll on me, you know.

176  
00:12:14,160 --> 00:12:17,695  
And I wasn't sure what  
to do with myself.

177  
00:12:17,695 --> 00:12:20,460

178  
00:12:20,460 --> 00:12:29,680  
I remember I stood there, and  
it was a little improvement

179  
00:12:29,680 --> 00:12:32,040  
in my sister's health.

180  
00:12:32,040 --> 00:12:34,110  
And I couldn't take off so much.

181  
00:12:34,110 --> 00:12:37,560  
So I ran back to Poland.

182  
00:12:37,560 --> 00:12:44,330  
And in September,  
beginning of September,

183  
00:12:44,330 --> 00:12:49,660  
I got another telegram  
that it's getting worse.

184  
00:12:49,660 --> 00:12:53,570  
So I took again, the train.

185  
00:12:53,570 --> 00:12:55,460  
I was going again to Italy.

186  
00:12:55,460 --> 00:12:58,190  
I was experience already  
how to go to Italy.

187



00:12:58,190 --> 00:13:02,420  
And that time, things were  
better already, was traveling.

188  
00:13:02,420 --> 00:13:06,000  
Trains were going  
through all the way.

189  
00:13:06,000 --> 00:13:11,360  
And I arrived in Italy  
just before the holidays,

190  
00:13:11,360 --> 00:13:13,910  
the Jewish holidays.

191  
00:13:13,910 --> 00:13:20,220  
And the situation was--

192  
00:13:20,220 --> 00:13:23,130  
I did not believe that  
she is going to die.

193  
00:13:23,130 --> 00:13:25,050  
I didn't.

194  
00:13:25,050 --> 00:13:29,590  
No matter how bad it was from  
the medical point of view,

195  
00:13:29,590 --> 00:13:35,580  
I believed that perhaps,  
that God will help,

196  
00:13:35,580 --> 00:13:40,120  
that there's some hope that  
the whole thing would change.

197  
00:13:40,120 --> 00:13:48,520  
And I went to pray Saturday  
between Rosh Hashanah and Yom

198  
00:13:48,520 --> 00:13:50,380  
Kippur.

199  
00:13:50,380 --> 00:13:53,260  
And there was just at  
that particular time,

200  
00:13:53,260 --> 00:13:59,800  
they opened up a sanatorium,  
Joint Distribution Committee

201  
00:13:59,800 --> 00:14:04,420  
opened up a sanatorium in  
Murano Italy for survivors

202  
00:14:04,420 --> 00:14:06,130  
who contracted TB.

203  
00:14:06,130 --> 00:14:09,910  
And my sister was supposed  
to be the first patient

204  
00:14:09,910 --> 00:14:12,790  
to be transferred.

205  
00:14:12,790 --> 00:14:14,680  
And they had already--

206  
00:14:14,680 --> 00:14:16,880  
they renewed the little  
shul they had there.

207  
00:14:16,880 --> 00:14:18,730  
So we went there to pray.

208  
00:14:18,730 --> 00:14:21,880  
And I went there and  
I prayed, and I cried,

209  
00:14:21,880 --> 00:14:25,210  
and I thought that  
maybe God will help,

210  
00:14:25,210 --> 00:14:29,530

that things will be different,  
and that my sister will

211  
00:14:29,530 --> 00:14:31,550  
survive.

212  
00:14:31,550 --> 00:14:37,510  
And on the way back home, a  
nurse was running towards me.

213  
00:14:37,510 --> 00:14:47,490  
And she says in Italian,  
she says, Paulo--

214  
00:14:47,490 --> 00:14:48,770  
they called me Paulo.

215  
00:14:48,770 --> 00:14:52,110  
[SPEAKING ITALIAN]

216  
00:14:52,110 --> 00:14:55,450  
You understand?

217  
00:14:55,450 --> 00:14:58,630  
I took it very hard.

218  
00:14:58,630 --> 00:15:03,290  
I couldn't believe that there's  
all this struggle of my life

219  
00:15:03,290 --> 00:15:07,130  
I couldn't save a person  
who survive the Holocaust.

220  
00:15:07,130 --> 00:15:15,620

221  
00:15:15,620 --> 00:15:18,440  
And this was Saturday.

222  
00:15:18,440 --> 00:15:24,590  
We buried her Sunday

morning in Murano.

223

00:15:24,590 --> 00:15:38,350

In the cemetery were very great  
people, of poets and writers

224

00:15:38,350 --> 00:15:44,830

who died on consumption, because  
Murano was famous for the lungs

225

00:15:44,830 --> 00:15:46,780

to be healed.

226

00:15:46,780 --> 00:15:49,050

It was the alps, beautiful air.

227

00:15:49,050 --> 00:15:51,870

228

00:15:51,870 --> 00:15:58,050

And I remember that being that  
we didn't have too many people,

229

00:15:58,050 --> 00:16:06,390

that I had to sit with a person,  
one Jewish fellow lived there.

230

00:16:06,390 --> 00:16:09,920

He sat with her until  
11 o'clock at night.

231

00:16:09,920 --> 00:16:12,760

And I had to come at 11 o'clock  
at night until the morning.

232

00:16:12,760 --> 00:16:16,320

I had to sit there  
the body of my sister.

233

00:16:16,320 --> 00:16:18,390

I was not afraid.

234

00:16:18,390 --> 00:16:21,480  
I've seen this.

235  
00:16:21,480 --> 00:16:32,260  
The death of my sister changed  
the character of my life

236  
00:16:32,260 --> 00:16:35,670  
completely.

237  
00:16:35,670 --> 00:16:40,320  
Although I could have  
been a big man in Poland

238  
00:16:40,320 --> 00:16:44,920  
and maybe a chief, the  
status higher than I thought.

239  
00:16:44,920 --> 00:16:47,680

240  
00:16:47,680 --> 00:16:55,170  
But I decided at that time  
that I'm going back to Poland,

241  
00:16:55,170 --> 00:17:03,070  
and I'm going to resign  
from all my functions.

242  
00:17:03,070 --> 00:17:10,740  
I had done that  
after I said Shema.

243  
00:17:10,740 --> 00:17:14,650  
And I quieted down a little bit.

244  
00:17:14,650 --> 00:17:18,540  
I went back, and I told the  
authorities that I cannot

245  
00:17:18,540 --> 00:17:24,640  
function anymore, that I took  
the tragedy of the Jewish

246  
00:17:24,640 --> 00:17:30,640  
people too much to heart, that  
I wouldn't be any more good.

247  
00:17:30,640 --> 00:17:36,260  
They offered me a position  
as counsel general in Italy.

248  
00:17:36,260 --> 00:17:39,450  
And I refused to take it.

249  
00:17:39,450 --> 00:17:42,140

250  
00:17:42,140 --> 00:17:49,750  
I wanted to break  
everything with the past.

251  
00:17:49,750 --> 00:18:00,120  
I felt that to live in the  
country where I was born,

252  
00:18:00,120 --> 00:18:07,510  
and I went through so much would  
be unbearable for a long time.

253  
00:18:07,510 --> 00:18:13,330  
The time of my reign  
was just to forget, just

254  
00:18:13,330 --> 00:18:16,870  
to forget what really happened.

255  
00:18:16,870 --> 00:18:21,150  
And after all, I had  
my mother in Italy.

256  
00:18:21,150 --> 00:18:24,010  
What am I going to do with her?

257  
00:18:24,010 --> 00:18:28,060

And I discussed this  
with my brothers.

258  
00:18:28,060 --> 00:18:30,700  
And they all decided  
the best thing

259  
00:18:30,700 --> 00:18:33,350  
would be that we should  
all leave Poland.

260  
00:18:33,350 --> 00:18:37,125

261  
00:18:37,125 --> 00:18:39,080  
How did your mother take  
your sister's death?

262  
00:18:39,080 --> 00:18:43,100  
My mother took it very hard.

263  
00:18:43,100 --> 00:18:44,460  
We all did.

264  
00:18:44,460 --> 00:18:49,760  
She knew that we  
went through the war.

265  
00:18:49,760 --> 00:18:53,540  
She knew that a lot  
of people got killed.

266  
00:18:53,540 --> 00:18:56,180  
And that we were  
lucky that we survive.

267  
00:18:56,180 --> 00:19:01,940  
But to lose somebody  
after the war,

268  
00:19:01,940 --> 00:19:07,670  
and not be permitted to  
get medical treatment

269  
00:19:07,670 --> 00:19:12,990  
in any countries, and  
countries who could help her.

270  
00:19:12,990 --> 00:19:18,450  
So a matter of fact, at a time  
when my sister came to Italy,

271  
00:19:18,450 --> 00:19:24,640  
they discovered these medicines  
here in the United States,

272  
00:19:24,640 --> 00:19:27,260  
and they saved a lot of people.

273  
00:19:27,260 --> 00:19:29,390  
And if they would  
only permit my sister

274  
00:19:29,390 --> 00:19:33,950  
to go to the United States, she  
would have been alive today.

275  
00:19:33,950 --> 00:19:35,950  
She could have.

276  
00:19:35,950 --> 00:19:45,040  
However, I decided at  
that time to leave Poland,

277  
00:19:45,040 --> 00:19:46,190  
and I went back to Italy.

278  
00:19:46,190 --> 00:19:49,110

279  
00:19:49,110 --> 00:19:51,680  
They didn't accept  
my resignation.

280  
00:19:51,680 --> 00:19:55,890



They gave me a way out that  
any time I want my position

281  
00:19:55,890 --> 00:19:59,120  
and come back, it  
will be ready for me.

282  
00:19:59,120 --> 00:20:03,920  
I cannot say anything about  
that government after the war

283  
00:20:03,920 --> 00:20:09,560  
in Poland, because I would be  
a traitor to say something.

284  
00:20:09,560 --> 00:20:15,120  
I think that they had dealt  
with me in an honorable way.

285  
00:20:15,120 --> 00:20:18,190  
When I came back  
to Italy, I decided

286  
00:20:18,190 --> 00:20:22,980  
to do something  
for the survivors,

287  
00:20:22,980 --> 00:20:24,800  
for the Jewish people  
who lived there.

288  
00:20:24,800 --> 00:20:27,770

289  
00:20:27,770 --> 00:20:34,670  
I got the position with the  
Joint Distribution Committee,

290  
00:20:34,670 --> 00:20:36,140  
and also with the UNRRA.

291  
00:20:36,140 --> 00:20:39,250  
This was the refugee

organization.

292

00:20:39,250 --> 00:20:43,250

As a social worker  
at the beginning,

293

00:20:43,250 --> 00:20:50,550

I had made contacts with  
a lot of Italian officers

294

00:20:50,550 --> 00:20:54,660

on the border, being that I was  
traveling from Italy to Austria

295

00:20:54,660 --> 00:20:58,800

trying to make some  
connections for myself.

296

00:20:58,800 --> 00:21:01,740

I had no idea what it was  
going to be with me, where

297

00:21:01,740 --> 00:21:02,940

I'm going to go.

298

00:21:02,940 --> 00:21:08,570

I wanted to go to Israel,  
but it was closed for me.

299

00:21:08,570 --> 00:21:11,900

So first, I wanted to  
establish a situation, what

300

00:21:11,900 --> 00:21:16,520

to do with my mother, being  
that my sister was lucky enough

301

00:21:16,520 --> 00:21:21,360

to leave Poland in 1939,  
when the Germans were there

302

00:21:21,360 --> 00:21:24,680

already for a few

months, her husband

303

00:21:24,680 --> 00:21:30,360

had decided to try  
to get out of Poland.

304

00:21:30,360 --> 00:21:32,120

And he had money.

305

00:21:32,120 --> 00:21:34,400

So he bought  
something out there,

306

00:21:34,400 --> 00:21:38,180

and he went to Italy, from  
Italy to Algiers, from Tangier

307

00:21:38,180 --> 00:21:40,280

to Portugal, and then  
to the United States.

308

00:21:40,280 --> 00:21:47,070

So she was here in the  
United States since 1941.

309

00:21:47,070 --> 00:21:52,080

And literally, we were  
in touch with my sister

310

00:21:52,080 --> 00:21:55,090

by writing letters.

311

00:21:55,090 --> 00:22:01,300

And I was lucky to meet a lot  
of Italian high ranking officers

312

00:22:01,300 --> 00:22:04,300

on the border, and  
in the area there.

313

00:22:04,300 --> 00:22:07,150

And they liked me.

314

00:22:07,150 --> 00:22:10,650

I conquered the  
Italian language.

315

00:22:10,650 --> 00:22:14,970

And I was very  
helpful in creating

316

00:22:14,970 --> 00:22:19,920

a situation that being that  
I was working for the refugee

317

00:22:19,920 --> 00:22:26,670

status, and supplies of food,  
and to all kinds of camps

318

00:22:26,670 --> 00:22:28,260

that they formed.

319

00:22:28,260 --> 00:22:30,270

At that time the  
Jewish people who

320

00:22:30,270 --> 00:22:34,260

lived in Germany in DP  
camps and in Austria,

321

00:22:34,260 --> 00:22:36,660

wanted to go to Israel.

322

00:22:36,660 --> 00:22:39,360

They wanted to cross  
the border to Italy,

323

00:22:39,360 --> 00:22:43,030

because they said that it was an  
illegal [? allie ?] to Israel.

324

00:22:43,030 --> 00:22:49,330

Certain boats were going from  
south of Italy to Israel.

325

00:22:49,330 --> 00:22:51,980  
So they were going through the  
mountains, through the Alps.

326  
00:22:51,980 --> 00:22:59,120  
And a lot of them got hurt.

327  
00:22:59,120 --> 00:23:03,870  
Some got heart attacks going  
to the Alps, through the snow.

328  
00:23:03,870 --> 00:23:10,070  
So I had an idea with the  
Americans and Italians

329  
00:23:10,070 --> 00:23:14,970  
to get some people  
through to Italy

330  
00:23:14,970 --> 00:23:19,130  
with convoys, military convoys.

331  
00:23:19,130 --> 00:23:22,307  
And believe me, that worked.

332  
00:23:22,307 --> 00:23:24,140  
I was in touch at that  
time with the Bricha,

333  
00:23:24,140 --> 00:23:31,470  
which was the illegal  
organization for transporting

334  
00:23:31,470 --> 00:23:36,460  
Jews from Europe to Israel.

335  
00:23:36,460 --> 00:23:41,710  
And I spoke to an  
American captain that

336  
00:23:41,710 --> 00:23:43,425  
was in charge of the convoy.

337

00:23:43,425 --> 00:23:44,800

And he said, there  
is no problem.

338

00:23:44,800 --> 00:23:51,400

We go back and forth  
from Austria to Italy.

339

00:23:51,400 --> 00:23:52,630

Let them prepare the people.

340

00:23:52,630 --> 00:23:55,300

And we put them on  
the food trucks.

341

00:23:55,300 --> 00:23:59,050

So be arranged like  
that, being that England

342

00:23:59,050 --> 00:24:05,650

was very against letting  
the Jews through to Italy

343

00:24:05,650 --> 00:24:09,160

in order to go to Israel.

344

00:24:09,160 --> 00:24:11,440

We arranged it in  
such a way that we

345

00:24:11,440 --> 00:24:15,220

put let's say, like eight  
or 10 people in a truck.

346

00:24:15,220 --> 00:24:22,360

And around them, we put  
food cans, stuff like this,

347

00:24:22,360 --> 00:24:23,100

all around.

348

00:24:23,100 --> 00:24:24,850

And they were sitting  
there, and they just

349  
00:24:24,850 --> 00:24:26,060  
had to go through the border.

350  
00:24:26,060 --> 00:24:27,477  
Once they went  
through the border,

351  
00:24:27,477 --> 00:24:31,150  
we had already  
our transportation

352  
00:24:31,150 --> 00:24:34,630  
arranged to bring them  
to camps near Murano,

353  
00:24:34,630 --> 00:24:39,110  
from Murano to  
Milano, and so far.

354  
00:24:39,110 --> 00:24:46,060  
And I was instrumental in  
organizing that in Italy

355  
00:24:46,060 --> 00:24:47,890  
for a while.

356  
00:24:47,890 --> 00:24:53,030  
And it was going good.

357  
00:24:53,030 --> 00:24:56,920  
So I was so busy with  
doing these things

358  
00:24:56,920 --> 00:25:00,280  
that I forgot about Poland.

359  
00:25:00,280 --> 00:25:03,550  
I forgot about my lost career.

360

00:25:03,550 --> 00:25:06,310

And I decided at  
that time, I was

361

00:25:06,310 --> 00:25:09,430

very ambitious to go to school.

362

00:25:09,430 --> 00:25:13,650

So I entered the  
University of Padua.

363

00:25:13,650 --> 00:25:19,030

And for examination, it was  
like six hours, seven hours,

364

00:25:19,030 --> 00:25:21,460

by car to go back and forth.

365

00:25:21,460 --> 00:25:23,950

And I went there.

366

00:25:23,950 --> 00:25:25,960

And I explained  
to the professors,

367

00:25:25,960 --> 00:25:31,150

I say, I don't know  
Italian very to the extent

368

00:25:31,150 --> 00:25:34,330

to be able to  
study, but I'll try.

369

00:25:34,330 --> 00:25:35,830

So they gave me an examination.

370

00:25:35,830 --> 00:25:44,000

I deeply believe today that  
they just let me go through.

371

00:25:44,000 --> 00:25:47,850

They gave me a test [LAUGHS]  
because they felt sorry for me.



372  
00:25:47,850 --> 00:25:51,320  
And they felt also happy  
that I wanted to do things.

373  
00:25:51,320 --> 00:25:54,770  
They were wonderful  
people, the Italian people.

374  
00:25:54,770 --> 00:25:59,970  
So I was traveling twice a week  
for college for instructions,

375  
00:25:59,970 --> 00:26:02,850  
and taking home,  
working for the UNRRA

376  
00:26:02,850 --> 00:26:06,770  
and for the Joint  
Distribution Committee, study.

377  
00:26:06,770 --> 00:26:12,530  
And I was lucky at  
that particular time

378  
00:26:12,530 --> 00:26:14,340  
to do all these things.

379  
00:26:14,340 --> 00:26:19,260  
I slept very little, four hours  
a night was enough for me.

380  
00:26:19,260 --> 00:26:24,420  
And at the same time,  
my mother got a visa

381  
00:26:24,420 --> 00:26:28,060  
to go to the United States.

382  
00:26:28,060 --> 00:26:33,070  
And I took her to Genova,  
which was the deport.

383

00:26:33,070 --> 00:26:37,490

And she went with the first  
immigration boat in 1947

384

00:26:37,490 --> 00:26:41,210

to go to the United States.

385

00:26:41,210 --> 00:26:44,840

And I remained in Italy  
by myself with my work.

386

00:26:44,840 --> 00:26:48,260

I had plenty of work, and I  
was not afraid to be there.

387

00:26:48,260 --> 00:26:52,140

My feeling was to go to Israel.

388

00:26:52,140 --> 00:26:56,980

I wanted to go to  
Israel very badly.

389

00:26:56,980 --> 00:27:03,810

Because I believed  
that Israel leaded me.

390

00:27:03,810 --> 00:27:07,040

You know, I was Zionistic.

391

00:27:07,040 --> 00:27:12,500

I felt that this eventually,  
will be our country, where

392

00:27:12,500 --> 00:27:14,950

Jews will be able to live.

393

00:27:14,950 --> 00:27:24,370

And I approached-- I went  
to the consulate in Rome,

394

00:27:24,370 --> 00:27:29,350

and spoke to the Jewish leaders.

395  
00:27:29,350 --> 00:27:32,560  
At that time, the war  
broke out, and I said,

396  
00:27:32,560 --> 00:27:35,720  
I must go to Israel.

397  
00:27:35,720 --> 00:27:37,780  
So they said, no, you're  
not going to Israel.

398  
00:27:37,780 --> 00:27:40,300  
First of all, you  
are not experienced

399  
00:27:40,300 --> 00:27:43,230  
in Middle East affairs.

400  
00:27:43,230 --> 00:27:48,080  
You're not experienced  
in fighting in Palestine.

401  
00:27:48,080 --> 00:27:49,870  
We need you here.

402  
00:27:49,870 --> 00:27:52,240  
I was important to  
them in Italy to be

403  
00:27:52,240 --> 00:27:58,190  
able to continue this mass  
immigration, or whatever.

404  
00:27:58,190 --> 00:28:10,560  
And I left beautiful memories  
in Italy, and bad memories.

405  
00:28:10,560 --> 00:28:16,410  
But it was a country gave me  
the first touch of freedom.

406

00:28:16,410 --> 00:28:25,514

In 1949, I went to  
the United States.

407

00:28:25,514 --> 00:28:33,250

I had a visa and I wanted to  
see my mother and my sister,

408

00:28:33,250 --> 00:28:36,650

and my nephew who  
was born in 42.

409

00:28:36,650 --> 00:28:38,860

I didn't see though.

410

00:28:38,860 --> 00:28:42,430

I was separated from my  
sister about 10 years.

411

00:28:42,430 --> 00:28:48,260

And this idea to go to  
Israel, I really wanted.

412

00:28:48,260 --> 00:28:57,420

So when I came to this  
country in November 21, 1949,

413

00:28:57,420 --> 00:29:00,790

and I remember Marine  
Jumper was the boat.

414

00:29:00,790 --> 00:29:03,150

And the Marine Jumper  
boat was a boat

415

00:29:03,150 --> 00:29:07,300

who looked like it  
sinking every minute.

416

00:29:07,300 --> 00:29:10,930

But exactly, I made it.

417

00:29:10,930 --> 00:29:20,170

And in this country,  
I met my wife.

418  
00:29:20,170 --> 00:29:24,520  
And we got married.

419  
00:29:24,520 --> 00:29:31,430  
We both had ideas to go to  
Israel with different feelings.

420  
00:29:31,430 --> 00:29:35,820  
But it took a year or two to  
consolidate all these things.

421  
00:29:35,820 --> 00:29:38,390  
So we decided to get married.

422  
00:29:38,390 --> 00:29:49,260  
We were married  
in 1952, April 6.

423  
00:29:49,260 --> 00:29:50,930  
I love this country very much.

424  
00:29:50,930 --> 00:29:54,150  
The United States  
has been good to me.

425  
00:29:54,150 --> 00:30:05,320  
I have certain feelings about  
this country that at that time

426  
00:30:05,320 --> 00:30:10,500  
when we needed them, they  
weren't there to help us.

427  
00:30:10,500 --> 00:30:16,490  
And it comes back to  
[? episode ?] that we tried

428  
00:30:16,490 --> 00:30:19,530  
to our organization, and the  
[? government ?] organization

429  
00:30:19,530 --> 00:30:26,210  
to notify England to bomb  
the concentration camps,

430  
00:30:26,210 --> 00:30:29,990  
and relieve the suffering  
of the Jewish people.

431  
00:30:29,990 --> 00:30:35,150  
And we got back and then said  
that for humanitarian purposes,

432  
00:30:35,150 --> 00:30:39,110  
they cannot bomb the camps.

433  
00:30:39,110 --> 00:30:42,410  
I was very disappointed  
years later.

434  
00:30:42,410 --> 00:30:47,720  
Then when I found out  
that Roosevelt was not

435  
00:30:47,720 --> 00:30:50,045  
very willing to help  
the Jewish people.

436  
00:30:50,045 --> 00:30:54,620  
That they did do that because  
of politics, or because

437  
00:30:54,620 --> 00:30:56,330  
of the congress.

438  
00:30:56,330 --> 00:31:02,540  
I am not in a position  
to be a judge of that.

439  
00:31:02,540 --> 00:31:07,360  
But I still believe  
that they could

440

00:31:07,360 --> 00:31:11,470

have done a little  
bit more in order

441

00:31:11,470 --> 00:31:13,640

to help us people at the time.

442

00:31:13,640 --> 00:31:19,017

443

00:31:19,017 --> 00:31:19,850

I love this country.

444

00:31:19,850 --> 00:31:25,380

Because it is a unique  
country in the world,

445

00:31:25,380 --> 00:31:33,860

especially in the last 30 years,  
or 40 years, where freedom

446

00:31:33,860 --> 00:31:36,350

is giving the people  
the opportunity

447

00:31:36,350 --> 00:31:44,120

to become what you want  
is a priority, to help

448

00:31:44,120 --> 00:31:49,670

the extent to many countries  
the burden they have with it.

449

00:31:49,670 --> 00:31:54,550

450

00:31:54,550 --> 00:31:59,990

And the freedom of expression,  
of expressing yourself.

451

00:31:59,990 --> 00:32:02,770

You can say anything you want.

452  
00:32:02,770 --> 00:32:06,120  
You can contradict  
the government,

453  
00:32:06,120 --> 00:32:08,500  
as long you are not  
sabotaging them.

454  
00:32:08,500 --> 00:32:11,810

455  
00:32:11,810 --> 00:32:13,600  
You are a person.

456  
00:32:13,600 --> 00:32:15,340  
You are a human being.

457  
00:32:15,340 --> 00:32:19,540  
Look what's happening  
in the world around us.

458  
00:32:19,540 --> 00:32:26,390

459  
00:32:26,390 --> 00:32:30,440  
Unless you have any questions  
to ask me what to say,

460  
00:32:30,440 --> 00:32:38,360  
I would like to say that  
having three children here

461  
00:32:38,360 --> 00:32:42,320  
in this country,  
whom we educated.

462  
00:32:42,320 --> 00:32:45,985  
They know about all  
of your experiences.

463  
00:32:45,985 --> 00:32:48,470



And they know all  
about our experiences.

464  
00:32:48,470 --> 00:32:51,500  
I remember years  
ago, when I became

465  
00:32:51,500 --> 00:32:54,890  
the president of the  
[? Lakhour ?] Jewish Center,

466  
00:32:54,890 --> 00:32:58,300  
and I started expressing  
myself about the Holocaust,

467  
00:32:58,300 --> 00:33:00,380  
and about my life.

468  
00:33:00,380 --> 00:33:03,570  
And they were in the audience.

469  
00:33:03,570 --> 00:33:05,560  
They were sitting there.

470  
00:33:05,560 --> 00:33:10,640  
And I saw the tears  
in their eyes.

471  
00:33:10,640 --> 00:33:13,410  
We did not talk to them  
when they were very young.

472  
00:33:13,410 --> 00:33:16,600  
But we started when they  
started going to school.

473  
00:33:16,600 --> 00:33:20,160  
We started telling them  
what we went through.

474  
00:33:20,160 --> 00:33:27,970  
And the I only can say  
one thing, that I hope

475  
00:33:27,970 --> 00:33:33,120  
and pray that they will  
be good human beings,

476  
00:33:33,120 --> 00:33:36,340  
and that they will treat  
their families the way

477  
00:33:36,340 --> 00:33:38,325  
we treated them.

478  
00:33:38,325 --> 00:33:39,700  
And that they will  
take advantage

479  
00:33:39,700 --> 00:33:45,965  
of this beautiful life here in  
this United States of America.

480  
00:33:45,965 --> 00:33:47,560  
Paul, thank you very much.

481  
00:33:47,560 --> 00:33:50,010  
Thank you very much.

482  
00:33:50,010 --> 00:33:58,000