

[MUSIC PLAYING] Good afternoon. My name is Bernard Weinstein I'm a member of the Kean College Oral Testimonies Project at the Holocaust Resource Center. We are affiliated with the Video Archives for Holocaust Testimonies at Yale University. Sharing the interview with me is Mr Ernest Bokor. A survivor presently living in Edison, New Jersey, who has generously volunteered to give testimony about his experiences before, during, and after the Holocaust. Welcome, Mr Bokor.

Thank you.

Mr. Bokor, I'd like to begin by asking you if you would tell us a little bit about the place you were born and your early life.

Really, I was born in August 21 in 1920 in Czechoslovakia, the town called Debrad. It was a very small town. And we moved from there in-- I know good-- in 1923, we moved on to another part in Slovakia, which is about 80 miles farther. It was also a small town, two Jewish family, all Roman Catholics.

When I arrived over there, sure, right away, they jumped on me. I was the only Jewish kid. The other family had also one, but he was more indoor, not outdoor kid. I was outdoor. They started to beat me up.

One time I came home with a little blood on my face from fight, crying. My father was a merchant. And he was also a butcher. He was a very strong guy. And he gave me through my behind, and he said, never again come home crying, fight back. And this made me a fighter and a hard kid.

Sooner or later, I became the leader of between the kids, like a small gang. We wasn't afraid of nobody. They respected me. I wasn't afraid even from older-- I was really always fighting back.

And this way I grew up. Even when I went to school, to high school, which was about 15 miles from the town-- we had to commute by train. And usually, we got our seats in first day of September. And that seat was for whole year in the railroad car.

One day I came in the car, and there was another guy on my sitting on my seat. And I thought, listen, that's my seat. You have to move away from there. He didn't want. He says, a dirty Jew isn't going to tell me where I have to sit. And I got really angry.

Was this someone you had known who knew you were Jewish?

Yes, he was from my class. And I have had very easy-- I was bleeding very easily from my nose. He jumped up on the seat, and he hit me on my nose. He know that. I was bleeding, and he started to holler, the Jewish blood is flowing. I got really angry. I jumped also up, and we started to fight.

And somehow I pushed him in the window, in the railroad car. Window vibrated. Sure, we got the next day in the school, both of us was punished. We had very strict schools over there. And this way I grew up. That was my life-- fight back or give up. And I never gave up.

Living in the kind of community you lived in, were you able to practice Judaism? Were you able to--

It was really hard because, we were far away from everything in that small town. And I went 40 years to a Roman Catholic school, because we had no other school in the town. My father had to pay because the town kept up. They paid for the teacher. And where I went, the first years, I learned lots of about Catholicism, even more than I learned from Judaism. It's hard to say, but the first alefbet I learned from the Catholic priest in the school.

And later on when I went to high school, we had to go to Hebrew house every twice, twice, I think, one hour, if I remember good. And when I was a bar mitzvah, that time my father died. And we got pretty broke. He had cancer. My grandmother took me to her. And over there I learned. And whatever, you know, we had [INAUDIBLE] kind of teacher,

schools. So I learned a little bit about Judaism. So religiously, I cannot say I learned too much. I know but I have what Jewish men have to know about you Judaism.

Was there a synagogue anywhere in the area where you lived?

No. In the town like I said, it was only two Jewish family, altogether about 160 houses. They nearest synagogue was about four miles away. But in high holy days, we used to go to the city, which was about 14 miles from us. And over there, we went. And like I said, we had to go to school and learn. So I knew a little, knew what had to be known, but no more.

Yeah. You mentioned that you have a brother and a sister-- had a brother and have a sister. Were their early experiences similar to yours regarding their being Jewish?

My sister, she was about six-year-old when my family saw that in that small town she has no future. She cannot become like a Jewish lady or a Jewish girl. So they took her to them. They had only one son. And she was living in the city.

My brother, he was much younger those days. And really, he didn't have the time to learn yet. Later on, he was more religiously-- he wanted to know always more about religion than I did. I became like here today like a Zionist. I know what Judaism mean to me, not religiously, but nationally. I was in Israel in army, in service, which I think is a pretty good background also.

Did you go to a high school, a regular--

Yes.

Was it a kind of Gymnasium?

In Europe, it's completely different than-- we learned in high school maybe more in four years than they learn over here in eight years. It was a very strict school system. If somebody had a failing point, he had to repeat it. He had to repeat the class. It was not like there passing. Over there, they had to repeat it.

Were you happy in school when you went? Or did you have--

Like every kid, I was a pretty good student. But always, I envied a guy if I saw through the window of the school that he's outside and I had to sit the inside. But that's all what it meant.

When did you first start to feel that you were in real danger or in real difficulty as a Jew?

Really difficulty started when Hungary occupied. By then, they divided Czechoslovakia. In Czechoslovakia, the Jews had excellent life. We had very good and free life in 1938. It was our perfect democracy, if I can say. And that's what destroyed it-- too much freedom for every minority. And that's what destroyed it also. That was the fate of Czechoslovakia in 1938. After that, when the Hungarian occupied us, that was the first step, the Jewish laws they called it, in Hungarian, [NON-ENGLISH].

And first of all, most of these schools was forbidden for kids who still attended. A year or year later, everybody was thrown out from school. Many didn't graduate. And work, say, you couldn't be store helper. You couldn't be in an office. Just a hand labor was what you can do. And even that was scarce.

At home, in beginning, I remember I tried to make my living to chop wood, you know, cut with a saw and chop wood. But it was a very poor-- we made a very poor living from it. I saw that I cannot stay like that. And I had a widowed mother and two younger brother and sister. So I decided to go to Budapest right after, a very short time.

Over there I came to a place of milk store. They needed a delivery man to deliver milk to very rich people. But that was all hand work. No cars, no horses. You was the horse and you was the delivery man. Every day I had to deliver about

300 liters, which would be close to 300 quarts of milk in glass containers, or glass bottles, to houses with no elevators. And it was forbidden to go in main entrance. We had to take the side entrance for delivery entrances.

It was 1939, '39-40 winter, very big snow. I remember I had to push that cart, two wheel-- how they call that-- two wheel cart with 300 liter of milk in that deep snow. I went in with the milk in the staircases, where the stair was, came out, even with the snow, I came out all wet. Till I finished that up, I was completely wet. And also the same year, I was sick and I had to stop this work.

How old were you at this time?

18. But to my luck, I met over there another delivery boy. The job I got under one condition-- nobody should know that I'm a Jew, otherwise I couldn't get it. I couldn't say I am a Jew. So this way, I started to feel that I am not free no more. I had to hide something always.

So over there I met another guy, who was also delivering milk to certain houses. That was my competition. He was already that time the member of the Hungarian Nazi Party. We called this guy-- even till today I don't know why name of his-- just we called him Popeye.

And he always stopped me for a little talk when we had a little rest. He says, Ernie, what in the heck you are still not in our party. And it was very hard to hide and tell him that I cannot be. And we became really good friends.

What excuse did you give him?

Excuse me?

What excuse did you give him for not joining?

I gave him all kinds of excuses. It's too early for me. I don't know about Hungarian politics. It was just a few months after our so-called liberation. They called us that they liberated us from Czechs. That wasn't every day. He just tried to bring me in.

And later on, like I said, it was very hard work. And I was looking for other job. And I got a job in a printing shop through my friend. And over there, I had to deliver printing. And after that, I didn't see him ever again. I saw him in 1944. I will come back to this point.

In the printing shop, it was pretty good work, much better money. And through this I bought a small hand knitting machine for my brother. I sent it back home. He started to work with that. And we started to make a little living through this.

First, in 1940, I was called up for forced labor. My mother at home, she started to ask all kinds of permits that excuse me for forced labor because I was the only breadwinner. And she got it for one year, for one year extension.

After this year, I got even better work in that shop. It was a Social Democratic unionized shop, a lot leftist, a lot of-- in Hungary it was unusual. They helped me. And in 1943, I was called again in, if I remember, it was in April. I was called up for forced labor.

When I came to the place that I had to go, I was asking the people to go who is metal worker, who is textile worker, and who has no kind of profession, trade. I went first between no trade. My mother told me before I left go and always say that you are OK. I knew about a little bit in cooking. I didn't care. And I said I am a cook. So they put me over there.

But later on when I saw that some of the friends went to textile working, between textile workers, so I just sneaked out from there and went between textile workers. It was morning. In late afternoon from about 300 people, they asked for 10. Between the 10 textile workers was my name too.

I came back to Budapest. Where I was working, they took us to a military factory, where you was weaving material for uniform. And also they had the tailors was making the uniforms over there. And we was working-- I was like weaver. They told us in a very short time how to work with the weaving machines. And we was working from 6:00 in afternoon till 6:00 in the morning, 12 hours in a day at night.

Who was changing, who was working in daytime, he was the-- how can I say it? He was a big functionary in Nazi party, in a certain section. He became very good friends. I didn't get anything for my production. So I used to leave him always a few thousand bits. He made extra money on it.

In long run, he made more money. And sure, he brought me sometimes some kind of cakes, some food, extra food. And in 1944, when the Germans in March 19 occupied Hungary, I knew that it is the end of it, that something very big will happen. He was very big hero that time, my Nazi friend. He says, no, it will be a good life over here. He didn't know that for us is a catastrophe. For him is something better for a short time.

And so I started bringing in false papers, which cost a lot of money, false papers, complete from grandfather till today. Just the picture had to be put on. But like I said, it was too expensive. I couldn't afford it.

And the day that we started with the star, to wear stars and all kind of regulations, still didn't feel it in that forced labor, because that was a very important part of the manufacturing of the uniforms. So we didn't have bad life comparing to the other ones. They stopped giving out the permits to go home, to go out, only in certain occasions. Many times it happened that the people didn't come back, because the Germans or the Hungarian Nazis caught them.

My mother before was taken to the ghetto, she sent me the last package. No food already in it. But she sent me two shirts. And I don't remember what else was in it. But they the shirts became very important. They probably was sometimes white. And she had kind of green dye. She dyed it for green, which was the official color of the Hungarian Nazis.

When I got the two shirts, my friend saw in the company that I have a green shirt. He says, he will wear it, and we will sneak out with that shirt. That was the first thing when I was thinking to became a Nazi. How I just day by day, you know, my mind was just concentrating on that part. My friends was using, like I said, my shirt.

And also, I found a taxi cab driver's cap. They had certain uniform caps, not like our drivers over here. It was dark blue cap. And I picked that up, because I didn't have another one. And my friends, like I said, they asked the shirt from me and that cap, and that one day just sneaked out. And they had more security, because the real Nazi thought that he's a Nazi too, so he didn't stop him.

And like I said, they were selling the papers. And I was thinking what to do, what I have to do. I had with me my birth certificate, which was written with ink, given out by a notary public, we call them over there, and two other papers, which was not as important as the birth certificate. In the birth certificate, it was written that father Ignaz Israelite, Malvina, brewer, Israelite Ernie, Ernest Israelite. I saw just in four places, I have the name Israelite. If I can do something, I can change it, it would be a pretty good step.

I was thinking how to do it. And we had over there, a friend of ours, he was a textile engineer and also chemical engineer, something he had to do with that. And I was telling him, I said, listen, what shall be done with these four places. I would like to take it out and put over there something else. He said, don't worry about it. Just give me the paper, and in the morning I will give you back.

And he says, what I shall do with it? I say, if you can, put the Roman Catholic. He took out the Israelite in the four places and put in-- in the morning, I got a beautiful first paper partly with everything was Roman Catholic. My mother became Catholic, my father and all of us and me too.

So I went back to in the factory. But in between, the Russian army was closing on Budapest, closer and closer. We could see here the artillery. The American air force, the English air force, the Russian air force, they was bombing every hour almost. The American went, came the English air force. The English went, the Russians came. That went day and

night.

The life was also for civilians very hard, a lot of bombed down housing. And scarce-- the food was every day less and less. More and more restrictions-- more was for sure and less for Christians. But anyway, it was no food already.

I went to this friend-- not friend-- who was working in daytime. And I told him, listen, you can see already the artillery lights at night. You can hear the artillery. They are coming closer and closer. You know we are in trouble. Help me.

He says, how can I help you? I say, I will tell you how to help me. But first, I want that if you want to help me, I will help you if the Russians come in. I will help you. I can speak their language, because I speak Czechoslovak. I will help you. And I will talk to them. And I will tell them that you save me, if you save me.

So it went day by day, when one day I felt the fruit is ripe enough to tell him that I have Christian papers. I showed him my birth certificate. And I had the two other papers when I just took out and it was with machine written. And over there, we put also that I'm Roman Catholic. And I showed him my birth certificate. He says, how you became a Catholic? I said, listen, don't ask, just if you are ready to help me.

So it went day by day. And we agreed that he will tell in the party that I ran away from the town I lived in [? Rimsobota, ?] Rimavska in Slovak. And I am like a refugee, a Nazi refugee, and I want to fight on. So I somehow press with him. And one of the days, he brought me the paper to fill up to the Nazi party. And he was guaranteeing the truth of it. And one of his friends signed for me. So this way I became a member of the Nazi party.

And after that, at night-- I was working in daytime-- many times I sneaked out. I had to go-- in the factory, we had where they made steam, a steam house. And over there was a hole here. Through that hole, I went up, and I jumped down from the walls. It was not too high. And the same way I used to come back at night that I will be in the factory.

For a short time, for a certain time, I lived two way of life. I was hiding my uniform, which was a shirt, a green shirt, with a tie emblem in it and an armband. And I had that time just a small 9 millimeter revolver and two hand grenades. This I used to hide in a small box under the hole. And I put down and at night I used to take-- I mean in daytime, I used to take out and go out.

One night, I went to the meeting in the Nazi party. Somehow they had information that one of the synagogues hiding five Slovak Jews. In Slovakia it was worse than it was in Hungary. It's a lot of Slovak Jews, which I had to know the geography of these two countries. They were pretty close. So they came to hide in Budapest. And they didn't have no papers. They didn't know the language, the Hungarian language. And the synagogues was already closed. It was forbidden.

It was an old couple, who caretakers. And these five kids was hiding there. And the Nazis from there I don't they. They knew about it that they are five Slovak Jews there.

I remember it was a rainy day. I think it was in November 1944. They gave our order to take out and just shoot them in the Danube. That was their style in those days. No trials, nothing. Just to shoot them.

Usually, I never wanted to be in the middle of the place, in the room. I always was standing by the door. If it's air raid or anything goes wrong, I have time to get out. Budapest was dark because of air raids. It was no light nowhere.

So when I knew they had to be executed, first, even they told me, how about you go? I said, I cannot go because I have to go to work yet. I have a night. I have to go in the factory.

So I sneaked out through the door before everything. And I was running like hell to the synagogue. I came there. I was hitting the doors, because-- I don't remember if it was-- many places they didn't have no electricity. It was bombed and no electricity. I was hitting the door. So the old man came out. And I told him, I came from the Nazi party, and I want to have these five Slovak Jews you are hiding over here. In beginning, he says, no, I have no Slovak Jews around here.

His wife came out, and they was just pouring on that they have nobody. And I know that if I don't take them out, the real one will come. So I took out my gun, and I told him, listen, I will shoot you over here, all you or the Slovaks. You have a choice. Both of you die or you give me the Slovak Jews. So the old lady started to cry, and they gave me the five kids. If I remember, it was three girls and two boys.

Sure, I was hollering at them, you're eating our Hungarian bread, you dirty Jews. I took them out. And it was in-- you have to know Buda and Pest. They are two cities like. The Danube is dividing it.

In the darkness, I started to walk. It was drizzling, like I remember it was very pitch dark. I came to a bridge, which was already mined. I had to cross the bridge with them. And before the bridge, I knew I had the feeling that it will be kind of guard. So one Hungarian military policeman or one German came over there to me. And he says-- I was hollering already. Before that I hear, whom you have over here. I said, I have five Slovak Jews. I have to take them to the Central Committee of the Nazi house. It was Pest side.

And I took out in the darkness, a piece of paper. I don't remember what it was. I was playing--

Bluffing--

Russian roulette.

Yeah.

I showed them the paper. OK, OK, just go with them. It was, like I said, drizzling then. Just go and do with them whatever you want. One of the nicest minute of my life, when we was on the middle of the bridge, when we came over I was just hollering at them all kind of dirty words, which I wouldn't like to repeat. But I had to hide.

I heard shooting. I didn't know then what is it. I saw the fire-- I mean, bullet, gunfire is. Just I wanted to know what is it. But anyway, we cross the river. In the darkness, I try to bring them over to the Jewish committee, which was still somehow working. I thought is in that house. I was afraid to come very close to the place.

But in the darkness, I told them in Slovak that I am also a Jew, and go the way you can. I didn't have those Wallenberg. Wallenberg came after that. I just told them, go the way you want. I was happy that I took them out from there.

I was curious what's going on by the Danube. I had to be almost in the work. It was winter, dark. I came to Danube when I was coming back. And I came to the place where the young kids-- believe me, I don't think they were older than 16, 17 years old or younger. They was tying-- they were tying together three people and shooting one in the head. And this one was falling in the water, take the other one with them to save bullets. Until one of them said, if you want to have fun, you can stay over here with us.

I didn't know what to do. Shall I start to kill? But I knew if I'm going to kill him, I would kill about three. But I wouldn't-- I have no result. So I decided not to do nothing. Blame my own father.

I came back. And in October 15, if I remember good, Székelyi took over the country. And I run away. I couldn't take longer. And I went out on the street. I ran away from forced labor.

One day I was walking on the street, when also the bomb destroyed the streetlight. And just two military policemen, a German and Hungarian, was directing the traffic. At that time, I had already my machine gun too. And what I see you on the other side of the street, I saw my commander. I thought that that's the end. I was prepared that he will do something. But I didn't want to give up. I was prepared to throw the two hand grenades between people. And I had the machine gun with 48 bullets and to shoot the nearest one. And I had my handgun in my pocket.

Had he seen you too?

He saw me. But he saw that I had my hands on the hand grenades. The German hand grenade is different than ours. It

had a handle. And on the end was a ring. You had to pull out the ring and throw it. So I was prepared to pull out the ring if it's anything-- I was waiting, and he was walking. I was walking. It was a very tense minutes.

So he was saluting me. And I was saluting him. And I looked back. He knew that what going to be. He saw what I want to do. He saw my will, what I going to do with.

And so we crossed. And he went his way. I went my way. But I was scared. I was scared to death.

After that one day, I was on the streets. My life was on the street and in beginning in the ruined houses, sleeping wherever I could find a place, until I found a friend of mine. And he was in the houses what was under the Swedish embassy-- not control, but you know about Wallenberg did-- under protection. It had a Swedish flag. It was a Red Cross flag, some Vatican flags and Portugal, not too many.

Neutral flags.

Yes.

That was already Wallenberg's work. And I met on the street a friend of mine from [NON-ENGLISH]. And he saw me in the Nazi uniform, and he was also. I said, what's going on? He said, Wallenberg put us in this uniform. So right away, we come together, and I told them what is with me. And I was very happy, because this way, we had certain information. I could take out all this information from the party. And we know how to behave.

One day, we got-- I think, I don't know if that is the picture in that paper, in that magazine-- we got order from Wallenberg to go in front of the houses which are under the Swedish protection. They were in Nazi uniform. We were in Nazi uniform. Went over there and said, if the real Nazis would come or they are there, you just go there and tell them that you have an order, that you are taking over this house. Usually, the event when we knew that they want to deport the people from those houses or do something.

We came to the house and like it was told us. We came and we told them, listen, you go to somewhere else. We will take care about these Jews. We will finish them up at night. Just you go out. Sure, whatever was that night, those houses disappeared people, went the way they could. We gave them-- already we had the so-called Schutzpasses, these papers. But after that, we didn't have no photographs, pictures. We had without pictures too. We got a lot of papers also from the Swiss consular, the Swiss embassy, and the Red Cross, which we used to go to that place too.

Once, in those days, we got-- I don't know from where. Till today I have no answer for it-- two trucks, which was very hard to get. Wallenberg told us to go to our block, cinder block factory. That was the concentration for the Jewish people, mostly girls, old people, and children. They have to walk. There was no transportation for them. They called it the death march. It was the concentration in that factory, the block factory. From there, they were going toward Vienna.

So we got two trucks to pick up people. We got a bunch of papers, these Schutzpasses, to come there and pick up as many people in those trucks as possible and bring them out. And on the way to give them the papers, bring them to what was our ruined quarter of Budapest, let them to go which way they can.

We came to the factory with these two trucks. And when they saw the people that we are coming with trucks, they thought that we're going to execute them. They didn't see us who we are. They didn't know. They just saw four Nazis. And the Nazis, who were there, we told them, listen, look over here is the paper. We need people to clean up the streets that the traffic can go. And it was a false paper.

And he says, just take as many as you want, pack them up, but don't bring them back. Kill them wherever you can. But don't bring them back. So we started to the open the side of the truck and we tried to put them in. But they was jumping out from the truck. They didn't want to go. All of a sudden everybody was screaming, don't go, because they will kill you. They take you to the Danube. They know about it that they are killing, what's going on.

And I told these guys over there, the real Nazis, I said, come on and help us, because we cannot take them. So they came

and surrounded the trucks and we pushed them in. I sat on the top of the cab with the machine gun, and I was hollering at them, Jews this and that, let's go.

So we took them out. When we went out from the factory, one of our friends-- because we had two guys on one truck and two guys on the other one-- he started to give everybody the Schutzpasses. And we told them, we are Jews. Don't be afraid. But be careful. You don't know nobody on the street.

So we took them to these ruined places and let them to go. Till today, I don't know. Some of them survived. Some of them not, I found, survived.

What do you think would have happened if perhaps one real Nazi had gotten on the truck with you and gone along?

We was prepared for every dirty work. You couldn't talk. The word didn't have no value. Only strength had the value.

You had the weapons.

We had the weapons, the same like they had. We had the same strength. Except you had to have the guts and the dirty-- not the mind, but you had to put on your scale, if you don't do it, they will finish you. So it didn't happen. So that was our luck. We didn't come to this point.

One of the stories also in those days, I was walking one of the main streets in Budapest. They call it AndrÅssy Ut. Those days, they made a big mass grave of Jews, one of these squares. They call it [NON-ENGLISH]. And I went over there that maybe we can do something there.

On the way we went, and all of a sudden I saw three guys in leather coats, elegantly dressed up in Nazi uniform, you know, real Nazi uniform not like we were, coming toward us. And one is smiling from far away on me. And at first, I had a very bad feeling, like, God, something over here will happen. And he is smiling more and more.

Well, we came close. All of a sudden, he came to me and he embraced me and says, Ernie, you don't remember me? Oh, after all of a sudden, it went through my mind. It was my friend Popeye from the early, early days who wanted to push me in the party. And, you see, I told you that you have to be with us.

I told him, you see, sooner or later I became you like you are. All right, you know I am-- it was the center. I don't know how they call it. They call it AndrÅssy Ut. I don't remember the number already where the big Nazis were. Come on in. Don't worry. Just ask for me. They will invite you to come in. I was scared to go. But twice I had to go. And we got very good information through him. I figured out what house will be deported.

Did you go alone or did the others go with you?

I went by myself. Friends of mine were waiting outside. We were never been by-- usually we were always in groups, because that's the way we figured out that the strength is. Have to be shooting. So we are four of us will shoot. If I am by myself, they can take care about me. But this way, at least we can fight back.

And, like I said through him, I got some good information which we can use. And what happened-- it was just last year back in Passaic-- friends came together to get our house in Saturday night. That's a group that we keep together. Most of them are also survivors. And I was telling a story to one of my wife's girlfriends what happened. Sometimes we got-- I have to go back.

In Budapest those days, it was many-- how they call it? They made a circle around the streets, around the corner, and everybody had to show his papers. That was like catching a fish, catch Jews. How they call it? The soldiers didn't want to serve no more.

Deserters.



Deserters, yeah. So I knew that it will be on that day. So they gave the information. And they told us, be around. If anything goes wrong, if any possibility, save people. So you were standing on one of these corners where we was waiting the check. And all of a sudden, I see a girl, a young girl. I used to stand always on the edge of the sidewalk. I went on the decide. If there's anything, I can run. I have more freedom than on the sidewalk. It would be a massacre. So I was standing on the side of the--

Separating yourself the crowd.

Yes, on the edge of the sidewalk. And I saw a young girl is going-- I saw that something is wrong over there. She's afraid. And I smelled out that she's a Jewish girl. And I said, I go after her. And I told my friends, I'm going behind this girl, if anything happens that I will be there. I told them wait where they were.

I was following her. She saw me that I am going behind her. I mean, I'm on the sidewalk, and she's going in this on the sidewalk. She started to go faster. I went faster too. And I was following her.

And on one of the streets, she turned in. And she went in a Christian house, not marked with the Star of David. I was happy. I say, whatever, I don't know who she is, what she is, but she's safe.

I came back. And I was telling this story about a year ago between our friends. And I will never forget these girl was watching me. And she says, Ernie, do you remember the name of the street where that girl turned in? I says, yeah, excellently I remember it. And I told it was the name of the street, Dohány Utca. She said, Ernie, that girl was me. After so many years, and she's married to one of my best friends.

And you had not seen her before or since?

Every day we saw almost each other, almost every week, every-- very often. But, you know, faces changed.

Yeah.

She didn't see me-- probably she wouldn't remember me. She just remembered that somebody was following her. She didn't know why, what. But she told me she was so hungry that she didn't care. She gave up everything. She says, she had to go out and find kind of food.

So she went out to these Christian people to ask for food. They used to have the delicatessen store in Clifton, a kosher delicatessen, village delicatessen. That was their store. Now they sold already. And he's retired too. But this kind of stories you get after so many years still come out something.

We're going to take a short break.

OK.

And we'll continue right after that.