This is a United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mrs. Regina Plawner on March 2nd, 2017 in Aventura, Florida. Thank you very, very much, Mrs. Plawner for agreeing to speak with us today.

You're welcome.

I'm going to start our interview at the very beginning with the most basic questions and we'll develop your story from there. So my first question is, can you tell me the date of your birth?

9/5/31.

What does that mean? Does that mean September?

September, yeah.

September 5th, 1931. And what was your name at birth?

My name in Hebrew, Rivka.

All right, and your last name?

Rosenberg.

Rosenberg. And so you were known as Rivka Rosenberg. And when did you become Regina?

I became always Regina since I started school.

I see. OK. And where were you born?

I was born in Ulanov. This is a small town, a very nice town. And I have nice memories from childhood, but that's all I remember.

OK. We'll get to we'll get to talking about these things. Tell me a little bit about your immediate family. Did you have brothers and sisters?

I had three brothers and I had three sisters, and I was the youngest one.

You were the baby. Can you tell me their names by order of oldest to youngest?

Yes. Charles. Shia was his name.

Shia.

Yes. Leon.

Leo.

Mina. Mina.

Sudek.

Sudek.

Esther.

Esther.

And myself, Regina.

And when was the oldest one born?

The oldest one was born, I think, in 1920.

Oh, so within a decade? Just a little more than a decade, all the children were born?

Correct.

OK. Your mother and your father's name, can you tell me that?

My mother's name was Klara Rosenberg. Her maiden name was Graf.

OK.

And my father was Moshe, Moses Rosenberg.

OK. How did your parents make a living? How did they put food on the table?

Well, my father was in business. What I remember, they were in the wheat and fruit. In my time, what I remember, they had been delivering to the army or so in Poland.

So you say wheat and fruit?

Yes.

So they supplied food?

Yes.

OK. Did your father have customers outside of the Polish army? Did he supply--

This I don't know.

So you don't know if there was a store?

No, no.

There was no store?

No.

Do you know much about what your father's business involved, how he got his goods?

No, no. I would not remember that and I would not know.

OK. And did your mother help him in this business?

I think so. I think so.

OK. Did he have any other employees?

I don't think so. I think it was more of a family business.

OK. Had your parents lived in Ulanov their whole lives?

My father was born in Frampol. This is near Lublin. And my mother was born in Ulanov.

And their parents?

Their parents, I think my grandmother was born in Holoshitsa. This is quite a few kilometers away. And my grandfather, I don't know.

OK. By asking these questions, I'm trying to establish whether or not the families had been in the same place for generations.

Yes.

OK.

Yes. I was there since I was born and until the war started.

OK, and for generations back, so that they're not newcomers to the area.

No.

All right. Did your father serve in World War I?

I don't think so.

OK. And do you know what part-- Poland was divided before 1918, I believe. Do you know which force occupied?

Well, I know my mother was on the German, the Austrian side.

The Austrian-Hungarian.

My father was in Poland. I think more on the Russian side.

OK, so the Russians would have occupied it beforehand?

I don't know if they occupied, but I know-- maybe they did. You're asking me about separation. So I know my mother is from Galicia and my father is from Congress Poland. This means the eastern part of Poland.

Did your parents tell you many stories about their own childhoods?

Not really. They didn't have time, first of all. When the war started, we were the first one to be bombed.

We're talking about 1939?

1939.

I'm going to go before that. We'll hold on to that. When you're a little girl and life is normal, I want to dwell on that part.

Yes.

OK. So were they too busy? Was your father too busy making--

I'm sure they were busy having six children and then business. I'm sure they were very busy. I'm sure they couldn't give attention to everybody the same way.

OK. In your family, your brothers and sisters, did one of them look after you more than the others?

Yes. Older sister, Mina, when I went to school. She used to bring me lunch, and she was like my second mother.

OK. Was she a greater influence on you than your own parents?

No. I was very close with my parents. I was very close with my mother, with my father, and with my brothers and sisters. We had a very close family.

Tell me a little bit about your parents' personalities. For example, was your father somebody who was an extrovert? Was he somebody who laughed a lot? Or was he a more serious type of person?

I think he was genuine. When he had to live, he lived. But I wouldn't say that he was always--

Happy. Yeah.

And that's all I remember.

OK. What about your mother?

My mother was more. She was more talkative. She was more storytelling. And being the youngest, I was more leaning to my mother.

Yeah. Did your mother have help at home hired from the outside?

We had someone who came in once a week who did it, but not steady.

OK. And describe for me a little bit what your home looked like, from your own memory. That is, did you live in an apartment? Did you live in a house? And I'll ask more questions from there.

We lived in a house.

OK.

And as far as I remember-- I don't remember if it belonged to my parents. I think it belonged to German owners. When the war broke out, they came back from Germany to Portland.

Oh, to claim the house?

No, they didn't claim it. We were living together at that time.

OK.

And what kind of a house? Was it a stone house or a wooden one?

A stone house.

OK. And was it close to the center of Ulanov or in the district?

Yes, it was in the center.

It was in the center.

Yes.

Well then, maybe you can paint a picture for me a little bit about what Ulanov looked like and how modern or how not modern it might have been. Were many of the surrounding houses also from stone?

Yes, as far as I remember.

OK. Two stories? Three stories?

Well, it was mostly, that I remember, I think one stories. Maybe there were some with two stories, but I would not remember that. Because all I remember is every Shabbat, every Saturday, I used to go to my grandmother, which she didn't live too far away. As a matter of fact, I went by myself, so it was a safe place to walk.

To walk, yeah. Were the streets paved?

The street? I think so.

OK.

I think so.

Were there many cars?

I wouldn't say a lot of cars. There were cars, but not too many. There was mostly horse and buggy, but there were cars.

OK. Was Ulanov large enough to have public transportation?

I don't think so.

OK. OK. And in your own house, can you describe it for me, how many rooms it had?

Well, everybody didn't have a separate room. We had a nice size, but we were a big family. I think we were pretty comfortable, and that's all I can say.

OK, I'll be more specific than. Did you have, let's say, the girls slept in one bedroom and the boys slept in another?

I don't know if it was bedrooms. It was different arrangements. The homes were built differently than they are here.

In what way?

Everything was on one floor.

OK.

And the rooms, I remember I was with my sisters in one room and my brothers in another room.

All right. Was there a separate living area? Like a living room?

The living room I don't remember. I remember the kitchen.

Did you have running water?

I wouldn't remember. I wouldn't remember.

What about indoor plumbing?

The plumbing. As a matter of fact, I was thinking about it, but I don't remember, really, if there was plumbing or not.

Of course. I know, these are, in some ways, unfair questions.

It's unfair and I can only answer what I remember.

That's fine. That's fine. And if you don't, it's fine, too.

That's OK.

It's OK. My attempt is to try and get a picture, through words, of what it looked like.

I understand.

So forgive me, I'll ask a few more like that. Do you remember how people took a bath? Did you have a separate bathroom or you had it in some other way?

I guess I wouldn't say a separate bathroom, but some other way there was a bathtub, I guess.

You don't remember?

No.

OK. Some other people have mentioned to us that they--

See, I left Ulanov when I was eight years old, or maybe a little more. And I was involved with my friends with school, and that's all I remember.

OK. What about electricity. Did you have electric lights?

I don't think so.

OK, did you have a radio?

I wouldn't say no or yes because I don't remember.

You don't know.

I don't know.

OK. The washing, do you remember how the washing was done at home?

That's a tough question, washing. I guess it was a different kind. There was no washing machines, but I'm sure it was a different way of washing clothes there.

OK. What about around your house? Did you have a garden?

Yes. We had, I wouldn't say garden, but we lived in the center of the city and there was like a little park. We lived in this area.

OK. And tell me a little bit about the population, as far as you remember. Was it all Jewish or was it mixed?

Mixed.

OK. Did you get a sense, were there many Jews in Ulanov?

I think there were many Jews in Ulanov, but I wasn't mingling too much because I was mostly with my friends at school. And they were. They were. I went to first grade. First grade I finished in Poland, and I had a mixture of friends. They were Polish and they were Jewish.

Polish Gentile and Polish Jewish, OK. What do you remember from school? You say you had one class.

I had only one, and the rest I'll tell you as we go along.

So what do you remember from your first year in Polish school?

Well, it was very nice. I enjoyed the school there. Although it was mixed, we got along really well. We had nice teachers.

Do you remember anything about the subjects you were being taught?

Not really. Not really. But what can you remember so many years ago?

If someone asked me, I wouldn't be able to answer that question. [LAUGHS]

Well, I try to remember.

What else did I want to ask about school? Can you describe the school building to me?

It was a pretty big building, and there were quite a bit of students.

Was it also stone?

Yes.

OK. And you said you could walk to it from home?

Yes.

OK. What kind of-- well, how shall I say this? The children that you played with, were they mostly school friends or in the neighborhood?

I had school friends and I had from the neighborhood.

OK, and were they both Polish and Jewish, or Gentile and Jewish?

I mostly mingled between the Jewish because I went to basiankov.

What is that?

A Hebrew school, a religious Hebrew school. And then when I started first grade, I went to the Polish school, and the

afternoon to a Hebrew school.

OK, so that's a lot of schooling for a little girl.

Yes, yes.

Yeah. Was your family very religious?

Yes.

OK. In what way? Describe it to me.

Well, my parents, they were very observant.

Were they orthodox?

Yes. Every Shabbat, we went to synagogue. And we observed the kosher thing, very much so, because both my parents come from religious homes.

OK. OK. And what language did you speak at home?

At home I spoke Yiddish, and outside, when I went to school, I spoke Polish.

And did both of them simultaneously or did you learn one after the other?

Well, I wouldn't remember when I was five, six years old. I'm sure I spoke Yiddish. But when I started school, I spoke Polish. When I started school, of course I had both friends and school friends, so we had to speak either English or Polish.

Excuse me, please, for a second. Can I cut?

[INAUDIBLE]

It's OK.

All right.

We're rolling. Tell me about not being Jewish, and certainly not knowing about traditions that were there in Poland at that time. I'm not as familiar as others would be about what some of them were. Off camera, someone said that your mother had a shagel?

Yes.

Can you tell me what that is?

Yes. This is a wig.

OK.

And my mother had the nice, blonde, long hair from the stories I know. And she was a religious woman, so she cut her hair and she made wigs out of it.

More than one?

I guess so.

I mean, I wonder how one would make a wig from human hair at that time, if it's your own hair.

Yes, yes. That's what I remember, I was told.

OK. Now when you know, and what you remember, you remember her always wearing a wig?

Yes.

OK. At home did she take it off?

Sometimes.

OK. And what was the purpose of wearing a wig?

A wig-- if you're religious, you are not allowed to have long hair because you have to do certain rituals, like bathing or-- this is a subject that I cannot talk about it, but this has a lot to do with the religion.

And was her dress a particular kind of dress? Did she dress in a certain way?

No, she dressed normally.

OK, and your father as well?

Yes. My father, he didn't have no payes. He had like a goatee, a little longer than that.

Just a little goatee?

Goatee sometimes he had, but not a very big beard.

OK. For those of us who don't know what payes are, could you explain?

No, he did not have. I know what payes are.

What are they?

Payes, you let grow some hair. If you go out, you put them behind the ear. If you're home or you're in the synagogue, you wear them normally.

And this is for men?

Men, just for men. But in my family, not my father, not my brothers had payes.

OK. Do you know how your parents met?

No.

Do you think it was an arranged marriage?

I think so.

OK. OK. Tell me a little bit about the values that they thought were important. What are the things that your father thought were important for his children to observe, to know about? Do you have a sense of that?

Well, my father comes from a very religious home and he married very young. At a young age, he had a big family. And of course, he tried to teach his children the same way, the same religion, and the same thing. That's what I remember.

OK. Same question applies for your mother.

Yes. My mother was more-- she was religious, but she was more modern religious.

Was she somebody who liked going to the theater or liked going to--

No. When my mother was young, she did. But when she married, as I understand, she had six children. But I remember going on shabbat. I went to the synagogue. Very nicely dressed, very nice. She observed it. We had a good time. I was always with my mother.

Would you say your family was well-to-do or not?

I wouldn't say. I'd say it's a middle class. I wouldn't say well-to-do.

OK.

But they made a nice living and they raised their children, and that's about it.

OK. And what kind of contact did your family have, if any as a family, with Gentile Poles?

Well, we had neighbors. We had some that were very friendly. And the rest I really don't know.

OK.

I wouldn't know who they mingled with.

In your family, was there talk of needing to be careful, that there could be people who would make fun of you because you're Jewish, of instances of anti-Semitism?

Not that I remember, but I was protected by my brothers. So when I went to school, nobody was--

Nobody picked on you.

Nobody picked on me and nobody would say anything, because I guess my brothers were protecting me and they wouldn't dare.

Yeah. This is nice to have older brothers.

Yes.

And did anybody at home talk about politics at all, about what was going on in Poland?

Maybe they did, but I don't think I was involved in it and I don't think I was interested.

Did the name Pilsudski ever--

Yes.

OK, what did people think of Pilsudski?

Pilsudski, I don't know if he was a general or he was something, but he was very well liked by the Jews. I remember I learned in school, even the first grade, and he was very well liked.

OK. Yeah, he died in 1935.

Yes.

I believe.

Yes.

He had been an important leader.

Yes, very much so.

OK. What about new Polish history, since its independence? Was that taught in school, that is, trying to develop the country, trying to make it rise economically, or things like that?

Well, the first grade that I attended, I don't think the subjects weren't--

[LAUGHS] They weren't economic development.

I don't think the first graders, that they discussed those subjects.

Yes, I know. [LAUGHS] Yes, and I know. And what do you think of economic development? Yes.

Economic development, I cannot give an opinion because I don't remember and I don't know what went on. I only know salaries what I heard at home, what I heard.

Kind of that's what I'm after.

That's all. That's all.

Did you belong to any youth organizations?

No, I belonged to the Hebrew school. This was a Hebrew school.

And what did you learn in Hebrew school?

Hebrew, and we learned history, from Israel history, and general.

OK. Did you go to camps? Were there camps for children?

No.

No. OK. So in 1939, the summer of 1939, you are not yet eight years old, something like that?

Yes.

Not yet eight years old. And September 1st--

This I remember.

Tell me about that.

Well, I remember I was with my father. He went to the dentist and I went with him. And we heard some heavy planes. Now I understand they were bombers. And the first thing they wanted to bomb was our area, because there were armed storages there or depots or so, whatever, I don't know. So this was the first area they bombed. And the first bomb fell in our house.

No, really?

Yes. And as a matter of fact, there were a lot of injured people. My cousin, Manya, who my cousin will tell you, she was wounded that time. When the bombs came, the house was on fire and we ran to the woods. And we stayed in the woods I don't remember how long. And then when the bombing stopped, the house wasn't there anymore, so we went to the grandparents. And we stayed with the grandparents until we went to the Russian side.

OK.

We'll get to this.

Yeah, we'll get to this. We'll get to this. So was your house completely destroyed?

Yes.

Do you think the arms depots were very close by?

Yes. It was maybe a few kilometers, or maybe more. Maybe five, maybe 10, I don't know. But that's what I heard they were talking at home.

OK. So you lost all your goods, everything?

Yes, everything.

Wow. OK. And did the Germans march into Ulanov?

After a while. After a while. I don't remember how long it took them to march in.

Were they the first ones to come?

Yes.

Do you remember seeing German soldiers?

Yes.

What did they look like?

They looked like normal soldiers. But being at my grandparents' house, when we were sleeping there, at night we heard a lot of robbing and killing and people are screaming. I was very much afraid. I was hiding behind my sister.

Mina?

Yes. And the one incident that I remember, it was in the day time, when a soldier was beating a religious Jew with the payes. And he was beaten very badly, very badly. And this is the only incident I remember.

Did your grandparents live in a neighborhood that was predominantly Jewish?

Yes. It was also some Poles.

OK.

But mostly Jews, yeah.

OK. Did other things change in your life? Was your grandparents' home large enough to accommodate eight people?

No. No. Well, we were staying there for a short time. Then the Germans left and the Russians came in. said, It was like an exchanging. Russians went out and the Germans came in, and vice versa. But then the Russians came in, and then they had to disappear. So they said to the Jewish population that the Germans killed the men, not the women. They killed the men. So the men went with the Russians.

So the Russians told the Jewish population that the men are being killed by the--

That the Germans kill men. If you want to come with us, you can do so.

So in other words, Ulanov sounds like it passed through hands a couple of times.

Yes.

First Germans, then Russians, then Germans.

Correct. Correct.

OK. And did that affect your family at all?

Of course.

So when they heard this, what did they do?

Well, my father and my brothers went with the Russians, and my mother and my sisters remained in Ulanov at the grandparents.

OK. All right. And you remember this time, about just the women being there?

I remember this.

And your grandfather, did he go, too, or did he stay?

No, he was of age and I don't think he was able to travel that far, and he wouldn't leave his house.

And what about the others who did left? Did you know where they went? Were they able to tell you where they're going?

Well, they lived with the Russians. They went to a town. It was Szerzec near Lvov, a smaller town. At first they were in [? Rubatchov. ?] This is the smaller town before this. And most of the men stayed there with the children. But I had a brother, the second one, who just missed my mother and missed the family, and he did not want to stay on the Russian side until he reunites us.

What's his name?

Leon.

Leon. OK.

And one night, I think he had to smuggle himself through the border. And as a matter of fact, my uncle was there, and he couldn't come. He wasn't able to come across the border. And my brother, on the way, he hired a horse and buggy. He was blond. He didn't look Jewish. So he came with this man in the evening, and he gave us a couple hours and he said, I have to leave at 12 o'clock from here.

Midnight.

Midnight. So he said, but I have to take my aunt and the children because I promised my uncle. So my mother said, where are you going to put on this horse and buggy everybody? He said, I don't care. We'll make it, and that's what we did. We went on the horse and buggy.

How many of you?

How many? We were three, four. And they were, let's say, five.

Nine people?

Yes.

Nine people. So it was your own family, the women in your own family, and your uncle's family?

Yes.

OK, so it would have been the two of them, the two men. Your older brother and your uncle would have come together, one to take his family and your brother to take yours.

Yes. My uncle couldn't make it because they caught him once. And he tried a second time, but he couldn't make it.

So who caught him? Who was the one who was watching the border?

The Germans. There was a border between the Russians and the Germans.

And did you cross this border yourself?

No. My brother hired this guy. It was a very small, small-- it wasn't really a river. It was like a small-- I don't know how you call it. And he smuggled us early at dawn. He put like wood across, and he took one by one on the other side to the Russian side. And it had to be in a certain amount of time.

Was it like a plank that he put across?

Probably, a few.

A few planks.

And the guy took everyone. One by one, they crossed the river.

So in other words, the man who had the horse and buggy was also a guide to help get you across?

Correct.

There was a lot of trust that must have been put in this guy.

That's correct. Of course, he was paid.

Yeah. Yeah. Sometimes that didn't mean anything.

I know, but I think he did it for money.

OK. And how old was your brother at the time?

My brother, I don't know. It was '40. He could have been 16, 17, something like this. How old was he? Let's see, 1921 born.

Oh, if it's '21, he would have been like 17 or 18 years old.

17 years old, yes.

OK. And how many months had you lived in Ulanov, just the women?

The women, we lived maybe-- I know it started in 1939 in September.

Then your birthday.

I know by the end of the year, maybe a little earlier, we--

You were there.

We left.

OK, so you left before 1940? You left before January 1st, 1940?

Correct.

Do you remember whether it was very cold outside when you went there?

I don't remember, because when we left, I know it was rainy. It was bad weather.

Miserable.

Yes. I didn't see no snow that time, but I know it was cold.

OK. OK. Well, the weather in Eastern Europe in the fall can be very raw.

Yes.

Very raw.

It was raining. That's what I remember.

All right. How many things could you take with you, anything?

Very little. Very little.

And who did you leave behind? Was there anyone you left?

Yes, my grandparents and my aunt, because she was the youngest from my parents, a sister of my mother. And they

didn't want to leave the parents alone so she stayed with them.

And what was her name?

Rachel, Ruchl.

Ruchl. And your grandparents' names, do you remember?

My grandmother is Ilyeta.

Ilyeta.

And my grandfather's Rafael.

Rafael. And what happened to them?

They perished. They perished. I had stories at home that they died from hunger in the street or someplace, I don't know, and was taken probably to a concentration camp. That's what I remember from telling stories at home.

OK. So no one really knew?

No.

OK. When you got to the other side of the plank, what happened then on the Russian side?

Then the Russians came, and they took us because it was illegal to cross the border. So they came.

It was or was not illegal?

It was not legal.

It was not legal?

No.

OK.

So they came from the Russian side. The Russians came, and they counted one by one. And I was the youngest, and my aunt gave me a painting that she had, her favorite painting. She said, bring it with me. But I was young and little.

It was a hill that you had to climb up. So I was holding onto this painting. And then my brother, one habit he had. He counted how many people he had, and he saw one was missing.

Was that you?

I was the one who was missing. He came back and threw the paper in the water. And he grabbed me. There was only a certain time that you could do it. And then the Russians put us in jail for 24 hours.

When you say there was only a certain time, does that mean that you had to try and cross this place at nighttime before dawn?

No, at dawn.

At dawn.

Because you couldn't see at night.

OK. Did you enter a town or did you enter a forest? On the other side, what did it look like?

A forest.

A forest. How could the Russians find you in a forest?

Because they know. They were there they. They were on the border. This was their mission.

OK. So it was both the Germans and the Russians who had an agreement to keep people from crossing one way or the other?

Correct.

But you didn't see any Germans at the border on the other side?

If we would see Germans, we wouldn't do it.

OK. And was this far from Ulanov? Do you remember traveling far?

Yes. I don't remember exactly how long it took us to travel to, because we were staying overnight someplace there. I wouldn't know exactly. But it was a day or two.

OK. It took a day or two to get to the-- is this better?

Yeah, that's a little bit better. It was just like [INAUDIBLE].

Muffling. Muffling. OK.

So it's OK.

OK. Was this a day or two until you got to this border, or afterwards?

Yeah. I think it was a day or two after we got to this border, because we slept overnight in this guide's house because we couldn't do it at night. We had to do it very early in the morning, as I remember.

And this guide, did he have a family?

I think so.

Did you see them? Do you remember?

No. If I saw them, I didn't pay any attention.

OK. OK. Oh, I didn't realize that it wasn't right across from Ulanov. It took a while to get there.

Yes, yes, a couple of small towns.

OK. And you would travel at nighttime?

We left at midnight.

From your own house in Ulanov?

From our own house, through the night, I guess.

OK. OK. So after that 24 hours, you were in the jail that the Russians controlled. Do you have any memories of being in that jail?

No. I remember, but we didn't speak Russian. And they didn't speak Polish and they didn't speak Yiddish. But my brother knew a few words, so he said, I will work hard and I will do this, so they finally accepted us.

OK.

And he wanted to unite us with my father and the brothers and with my uncle. But in order to convince them, he took one of my cousins, and with him as a witness, that he did the job.

Did what kind of job?

That he smuggled us from the Germans. Otherwise, if he would come by himself, they wouldn't believe it, that he brought the family.

Oh, I see what you're saying. And do you remember their manner, whether or not they were frightening or whether or not they were just matter of fact? The Russian soldiers.

No. They did their job and they put us to jail. And then they had, of course-- I don't know who was there. They probably discussed the incident. And then they decided that they'd let us go.

Were there more people in jail or were you the only--

I have no idea.

Got it. OK. And then what happened?

And then another horse and buggy came, and they took all of us and united us in this town.

And again, tell me the name of it. I forgot.

It was Holoshitsa.

Holoshitsa.

Yes.

Or [? Szerzec ?] I don't really remember exactly.

OK.

One of those towns.

Where did you live, then, once you were reunited? What kind of accommodations?

At first we were like refugees. And then they let us go and we could go and rent an apartment or so, and that's what we did.

OK. Now, did you have any money with you?

I don't remember, to be honest with you.

OK. Do you remember going hungry at that time? I mean, how did they get food?

Well, at that time, I'm sure it wasn't that but. I wasn't hungry.

OK.

I know I wasn't hungry. I don't know what my parents did, but we were fed.

It sounds to me, because you were so young and because you were the baby, that in many ways you were protected.

Yes.

The older ones-- the less worry that you had, the better.

Yes. I was always looking up. As long as I was between my family, that's what matters.

OK. Was the only time, up until then, when you might have been frightened when you first heard the German soldiers beating others in the streets?

Of course I was frightened.

OK. Any time after that?

I was afraid to go out. We didn't go out too much in the street. We tried to wait and see what's going to happen.

OK. So there you are in this town, and you're able to eventually rent an apartment.

Near Lvov.

Near Lvov.

This was already the next town.

That's right. And how long were you able to stay there? How long did you stay there?

We stayed there-- I don't know how long it took, but I know that one of these days, the Russians said, if you want to go back, you can go back. If you want to go with us or stay here, you can stay. But my oldest brother, he wanted to go back. If you said you want to go back, they treated you as traitors.

[BOTH TALKING]

So one night, without even knowing anything, the Russians came. They always did come at midnight. And they took us, everybody, and they put us on a train with cattle.

Cattle cars.

And we didn't know where we were going, but later on we found out that we're going someplace, and we wound up in Siberia.

How long were you on those cattle cars?

It was quite a few days.

Were there are other people in them?

Of course.

OK. Do you remember what they looked like, those cattle cars?

They were the cattle cars, you know. It was a few families in each car. They had like sleeping on the top, sleeping on the-- it depends. It wasn't a pretty picture.

It sounds like everybody was taken by surprise.

Yes.

What was it like when they came into the house after coming at midnight, or whenever?

We didn't know. I don't know.

Did they say?

They didn't say anything. They said, you're going to go back home.

Oh, they said you're going back home?

Yes.

Huh. So that's how you knew to connect it to your brother, saying that he wants to go back. He wants to go back.

Yes.

All right. So that was the reason that they gave for coming? And then when you get on the train, when did people realize that they're not going back?

We saw we're not going the same direction. There were no windows, too many windows to look out of the cars. We weren't familiar with the surroundings, with nothing. We didn't know where we're going, but one day we wound up in Siberia.

And the other people who were on the train, were they also Jewish refugees?

Of course.

Were there any Poles on that train?

Not that I know of.

OK. OK. And can you describe the atmosphere a little bit on that train? It was a very tense atmosphere. I mean, we didn't get enough food, enough water. It was three days. Finally, when we arrived, you know how they treat refugees, like anybody else, until you settle down. And then we found out we're in Siberia.

And what time of year was it that you were taken by train?

I wouldn't know exactly.

Was it cold or hot?

I don't remember being warm there. Believe me, it was always cold. It was so cold in the winter that we didn't go out, because the snow was very deep. And in Siberia, there's very little summer.

What was the place in Siberia that you eventually were taken to?

To Novosibirsk.

Novosibirsk. And is Novosibirsk a town or a city?

Yeah, a very big, city but we weren't in the city. We were on the outskirts of the city, like a camp.

Was it a camp, yes?

Probably.

And what did it look like? Can you describe it for me?

It was like barracks. All the people were in the same barracks. I'm sure they were more there. And this was it.

Those barracks, about how large were they, and how many people in any one barrack?

Are a lot of people, and they were pretty large. I was always trying to be between my brothers and my sisters. I was always being--

Hiding, huh?

Hiding to be sheltered. So I really cannot tell you how many people, but I know it was a lot.

So it was more than one family per barrack?

Oh, yest.

OK. Was it like an army-looking type of balance?

It looks like. It looks like.

OK, and it was cold inside?

Very cold. Very cold. But I don't know what they did. In Siberia, there's a lot of wood, so they were making-- the heat was from the woods.

OK. Were there stoves inside the barracks?

I have no idea.

What was the food?

The food, we had rations, and every family got rations.

Such as?

A certain amount of bread, a certain amount of the other food. It wasn't enough.

Can you tell me, did anybody tell you why you had been taken there, rather than back home? Did any official ever come and say now you are here and you are going to be doing--

No, not that I know of.

OK. And did any part of your family have to work?

Yes. They all had to work in the woods.

And what were they doing?

They were cutting trees.

The whole family?

Not myself. My older sister and my brother, the three of my-- two brothers and one sister.

So there were four of you or three of you who could--

There was six of us, but just the older ones, because we weren't eligible to cut trees.

OK. And what did you do during the time they were all gone?

We were in the barracks.

Did you get rations, too?

Yes. Everybody got rations. Every child and every grown up, they got the rations. And how we survived is because my brothers were older, so my mother just maneuvered around to give the boys more than the girls. So that's how we survived.

I see.

They needed more food.

To work.

To work, and they were older.

Yeah. Let's see. Did you come in contact with any of the people who were minding the camp or in charge of the camp?

I have no idea. I have no idea. If my brothers would be here, maybe they would be able to tell you. I really don't know.

What kind of conversations were going on when everyone would come home and you were together?

Well, I guess everybody was miserable, you know. And everybody came home, probably they were tired and they were glad to go to sleep or something. I don't remember too many conversations that went on, what I know. I'm sure they did, but I don't know.

Were the children-- did you have any chance to go to school?

Not in Siberia.

Not in Siberia. So how did you spend your days?

Well, we weren't inside until they transferred us to the Urals.

Oh.

I don't know how long it was, a half a year, 3/4, I have no idea.

That's OK.

And they transferred us to the Urals.

As a whole family?

The whole family.

The whole camp?

I guess the whole camp. I still didn't go to school there because we were still in the woods. My peers still had to work.

Was it still cold?

Very cold, but not as cold as Siberia.

OK. Where in the Urals were you transfer to?

In Sverdlovsk. But we weren't in the city. We were outside.

Did you ever go to the city? I mean, did anyone from the family? No. Were they allowed out of the camp at all?

No, I don't think so.

OK. Some people you see, who had such experiences, would meet with locals, whether when they were in Novosibirsk or in Sverdlovs, and they would be able to exchange or barter some goods for more food. Did you know if anything like that--

I don't know.

You don't know. OK. You weren't in an environment then where you could learn Russian, because if you were at home all the time.

Yes. But here and there, you are familiar with the Russian words. Not too many.

What were the first ones you learned?

Pardon me?

The first Russian words you learned.

Hello.

OK, you don't remember any, in particular?

Thank you, spasiba. Spasiba and puzhalsta. Anyway, when we were liberated as Polish citizens, by General Sikorsky--

you're probably in familiar.

I may know, but tell the people who will be watching this who this is.

Anyway, from the Urals, we were Polish citizens still. This general, was in England, and he tried to liberate the citizens of Poland. And finally, we got liberated and we could travel, only in Russia, wherever we wanted.

Do you remember when you got liberated, when you got this news?

I wouldn't be able to tell you.

Like you remembered the day the war started, that you went to the dentist with your father.

Yes. This I remember, but that time was a different environment. It was completely different. My brothers and sisters, they went to work and they came home. I didn't see them. They came home late. They went out early. So it was a different situation.

In any of this time, did you see anybody die from the time--

Yes, yes. I saw, even close in my family. Not my immediate, but distant family.

What did they die of?

There was, I think, a lady, who she died probably from food poisoning or something. I don't know.

OK. All right. When you got this word, that General Sikorsky had arranged for this liberation, do you know how he was able to do it, why?

I don't know.

Were you liberated from the second place where you were sent, from the Urals?

Correct.

And so when that word came through, what happened with your family?

Well, my family, we always were together with my uncle and aunt and his family.

So all of you, not just one family.

Yeah. We always stayed together-- before the war, during the war, and after the war. So my uncle said-- we were cold so long-- how about going to warm climate?

So many said that.

Yes. So we wanted to go to Tajikistan.

Any reason why there?

Because it was warm.

OK.

You were free. You could maybe work or do something. So they took us on the train, also the same kind of cattle trains

and everything, and they went to Tashkent, Uzbekistan. But that time, the refugees were so overwhelmed that Tashkent couldn't absorb any more.

So there were so many coming to--

There were so many coming to them, so we went to Tajikistan, and that's where we settled down.

Where in Tajikistan?

Stanovat. It was a smaller town, Kaktash they call it. This was like a few miles from Stanovat, which was a big city.

And can you paint a picture for me, in words, what Stanovat looked like?

Like a normal big city.

So it could have been Ulanov.

No.

OK, what made it different from there?

Different, it was a big city.

And Unalov was town.

Yes, it was a big city. It was, I think, the capital of Tajikistan.

And where did you live in that big city?

Well, we had an apartment, not a very big one. We stayed in this small thing, and my brother started working, and my father, to be able to have food on the table.

What kind of work were they doing?

I wouldn't remember. My brother was working-- I know he was working in the factory. He was like a chauffeur for-- I don't know how they call it-- the lieutenant or captain. I don't know.

A Communist Party official?

Some kind of a party official.

OK.

And he was working there. And then through him, we moved to Staninabar. This was the biggest city of the [INAUDIBLE] There, in the smaller town, that's when I started going to school. Let's say I started in second grade. I skipped to the third, and from the third, I skipped to the fifth. Yes, so I was good in Russian. I was a learning type. I did OK in school.

Describe the school for me. Describe the school.

The school was normal. I didn't have enough bread as I wanted. I always waited for recess to get a rationing of bread. Of course, it wasn't easy to study when you're hungry.

No.

But that's how it was. And then the Polish government subsidized or something, like a camp for the children, that they could stay there and have enough food, and things like that. And from there, I went to school.

From this camp?

From this camp, which was in the city, the same city.

So you didn't live at home? You lived at this camp?

A certain time. A certain time. And when we moved to the biggest city, to Stanovat, then I did not go anymore to this camp.

OK. OK. So there was a supplementary food given?

Correct.

OK. Were there people who were leaving Tajikistan and leaving the Soviet Union, as well, when they got released from the labor camps?

They couldn't leave the Soviet Union.

You weren't able to leave.

The war was still going on.

Your family could not.

Nobody, not that I know of.

OK. No, there were some Polish people who were--

Maybe they did. Maybe they did. But not--

Not anyone you knew. OK. Was there any news at this time of what was going on in Poland, what kind of situation was there?

Well, we didn't know for a while. We didn't even know. For the time being, we didn't know that there were concentration camps. But when we heard that the Russians got closer to Berlin, or I don't know where it was. What was it? A very big city. And then they got closer to Berlin, that's when we started to get to know that they were concentration camps. But we couldn't imagine what kind of concentration camp.

Well, there were some Soviet journalists going with the troops.

Yes.

So as they were liberating, there was some news coming out.

Yes.

So as far back as Tajikistan, some of that news filtered through.

Possibly. Possibly.

That's when your family started to learn of these things?

We started to learn. This was already almost end of 1944, maybe beginning 1945. I don't know exactly the time. But during the war, what went on really, we did not know.

Now, after you were liberated and were able to leave the Urals, did your brothers, where they drafted? Or did they face any possibility or pressure to join the Soviet army?

No.

And do you know why that would have been?

I have no idea.

OK.

I'm sure there were plenty of people who could. Maybe they could. But my brother's weren't yet-- I think, at that age, they were older, the older ones. Maybe they did.

OK. Well, some of them sound like they could have been the age.

Yes, yes.

They could have been the age. When you were in Tajikistan, did your mother also go out to work, and your older sisters?

No.

OK.

My sister worked.

She did? What did she do?

My older sister. She worked in a kolkhoz.

What's a kolkhoz?

It's like a community. This is like a government community. This was very much known in the Muslim community.

A kolkhoz?

Yes. This is like a community that they grow food. It was a regular, like an administration. And my sister worked in the office.

Oh. So a kolkhoz, what I understand, is a farm, a Soviet farm.

Something like this.

Yeah, OK. And she worked in the office.

In the office.

That sounds like it could have been a good job, if you're in the office.

Yes. And she was the one who brought home food, a lot of food that she got there, and she brought it home always.

That helps.

Yes.

That helps. What were your living quarters like? Can you describe those to me, in Tajikistan?

Not very pleasant. It was very few rooms. We had to squeeze in one or two rooms.

OK.

Not too enjoyable.

All right. Let me ask this. Remember I asked all those questions about did you have electricity, did you have-- so over there in Tajikistan, was there electricity?

Not in the small. Not at first, but in Stanovat, we had.

OK. What about indoor plumbing?

I don't think so.

Do you remember how people bathed?

I don't know.

OK. OK. And how did you heat things? You said that when you were in the Gulags, then you there was wood.

Yes. Well, in Tajikistan, I don't think it was that cold. It wasn't that cold. The winter time, I wouldn't remember. I cannot tell you what they used.

OK. All right. In general, what was the-- OK, let me step back a little bit. When you were in the Gulags, and everybody went out to work and they came home and they're tired, did people, nevertheless, talk with one another about what was going on and what they felt about it all and how they ended up?

I'm sure they did, but I personally was not in the circle at this age.

And what about when you were already released and you were in Tajikistan? Did people watch their words then, too, or not?

Did what?

Did they talk freely about how you ended up in Poland-- how you ended up in the Soviet Union? Did people share their opinions?

Yes, I think so. I think so. Yes. I'm sure they were talking about it.

Did you ever have any kind of experience with the NKVD?

Not that I know of. I was always in school, and when I came home from school, I had to study. So I wasn't in this circle.

You were a child.

Yes. I was concentrating on my homework, on my studies, on my thing, because I lost many years. I wanted to catch up.

And what about the teachers? Do you have any memory of those teachers?

Yes, wonderful teachers in Russia.

Yeah?

Yes, very nice. I had Jewish teachers. I had non-Jewish teachers.

Were the Jewish teachers different than the Jews in Poland?

I don't know. I don't know. I think they were more maybe communist. Maybe they had to do what they were told to do. I don't know. But one thing I can tell you, they were very good teachers.

OK. OK.

And I learned a lot.

What were your favorite subjects?

Everyone. I liked history. I liked geography. I liked algebra, geometry, all these things.

So you have fond memories of it?

Yes, yes.

OK.

And I was thankful that I could go to school because it was very important.

And did you make friends?

Oh, yes. I had school friends.

OK.

And I also had neighborhood friends.

And do you have any particular memories of these friends and what their lives were and what their stories were?

I don't know what their lives were, but there was plenty of anti-Semitism. There were plenty in school. They used to call you yevrey. But I didn't pay attention. I wasn't afraid.

OK. More than in Poland?

I don't know. Poland was different because I was in the lower class and I didn't mingle between them.

I see.

Because I had the Jewish, I had the Hebrew school after school, and that's it.

It wasn't as much mingling?

No. No. Not for me, anyway.

And were most of your friends, were the Russians or were they Tajiks? Were they Muslim?

Mostly were Russians, the Russians. I'm sure there were Muslims, too, but they had to go to school. But mostly were Russians.

And now what about your family being very religious itself? Were they able to, once they were released, or even maybe before, practice any of the--

Well, my mother did the best she could, and my father, too. We didn't go to shul, to temple. We didn't go to religious gatherings because we were not allowed. And that's about it. And when it came Passover or so, we were invited to the Muslim-- were Muslim Jews, and they invited us for the Seder or for this, but it wasn't the same as normally.

Well, that's interesting. There were Jews who lived in Tajikistan themselves, who had been there for a long time?

Probably.

And what was different about this?

It was different. They were very friendly. They were very nice. They tried to help. And that's about it.

Was there a synagogue?

Not that I remember.

OK. Did they speak Hebrew or Yiddish?

I don't know. I don't know. Maybe Hebrew, I don't know. But not Yiddish, for sure.

OK. OK. And do you remember the year that you first came to Tajikistan? Was that 1942 or '43, do you remember?

Oh, before that. I wouldn't remember exactly the-- I wouldn't remember.

Well, Germany attacked the Soviet Union in June 1941.

Yes.

And it took a while sometimes for the news to get to the various places where people were imprisoned. And then after that, it took a while until people were finally settled in their final place. So I would assume that probably in the second half of 1941, beginning of 1942, might be about the time. But I'm assuming. I'm assuming. Do you have a sense of how many years you were in Tajikistan?

Tajikistan, well, we were we were from 1940 till about 1946, in the spring '46. I guess. I'm not sure. And that's how long we were in Russia.

OK. Your families started, everybody started, to get news, as the Soviet army was approaching Berlin, of what was going on in Europe. How did things progress from there for your family? How did things develop?

Well, we looked forward that the war should end and we should be able to go back.

Was that assumed that you'd be able to go back, you'd be allowed to go back?

This we didn't know, but everybody hoped.

OK. And do you remember where you were when the war ended?

We were still in Tajikistan. And then when the war ended, I don't exactly remember how it went. We wanted to go back to find out if anybody is alive or if anybody is there from the family. But when we came to Poland, in the town of Stettin--

OK, before we get to Stettin, I have a couple of questions. Aside from your grandparents and your aunt Rachel, Ruchl, was there anybody else from your family who had stayed?

Yes, from my father's side.

Who had stayed?

Pardon me?

Who had stayed in Ulanov?

Not in Ulanov. They were in Frampol.

In Frampol.

Yes.

Brothers and sisters of his?

Yes. They were my father's brothers and sisters and grandchildren and the parents.

So the larger part of the family?

Yes. They remained in Poland.

So it was only your uncle and your father's, I mean, the two of them where the families had gone east. Is that correct?

[PHONE RINGING]

Let's cut.

What do you mean by--

So from what I understand, when we spoke off camera-- excuse me, can we cut?

OK. So when we spoke off camera, it seems that there were some branches of the family that did go east and did end up in Uzbekistan or Tajikistan, and some who did not.

Yes.

You did not know until you got to Poland?

From my father's side.

From your father's side, OK.

And from my mother's side, there were not too many left in Ulanov.

OK. So when you left Tajikistan, do you remember the leaving? Do you remember what kind of documents you needed to have, how you traveled?

We traveled by the same thing, by train.

Cattle cars?

The same thing, in cattle cars. They didn't give us the regular train cars. And we traveled in those things until we got, I think, to Stettin.

OK, in Stettin, what did you learn there?

In Stettin, we came there because we wanted to find out if anybody's left in the family. We found out that from my father's side, nobody survived. And from my mother's side, the same thing. And we settled. We were in Stettin and we were waiting-- we wanted to emigrate to the United States.

Excuse me. You wanted to to the United States?

United States. In order to do so, you had to be in the American zone. When the war ended, there was the English, the Russians, and the Americans.

And the French.

And the French, yes.

But we--

You were in Poland.

We were in Poland. We saw nobody is there, so what we will do in Poland? We didn't want to stay in Poland.

Was it easy to leave Poland?

Well, we had to wait until the government-- not the Polish government. Maybe the Polish, or maybe the German government, arranged for us to come. We went to Berlin.

OK, what did you remember? From being in Berlin, do you have any--

We were also like in a DP camp, waiting for a quota, waiting to be able to go to the United States. But in the meantime, I had a cousin who was in Pocking by Passau. This was like a DP camp.

In Passau?

This was in Pocking, they call it.

Pocking.

Rhinestadt, Pocking, whatever. And he heard that we alive, so he started communicating with us. And he said, why don't you come over to stay in the meantime with us, this camp.

This would have been in Bavaria?

Yes.

So was this a cousin?

I don't know if it's Bavaria, but it is there some place.

Somewhere in the south.

Near the Austrian border, yeah.

So does this mean. This cousin had survived the Holocaust?

They were in Russia.

They also were in Russia?

They were in Russia. This was my aunt from another town. They went completely in a different direction. So they survived in Russia.

All right.

So this cousin, he started communicating with us. He said, why don't you come stay with us and see what happens? And we were staying there until the camp liquidated.

Oh, that's a long time.

Well, it wasn't that long. It wasn't that long. Maybe a year, maybe a year and a half.

So you got there in 1946 or '47?

But in '46, we came to Stettin first. Then we went to Berlin.

And how long were you in Berlin, do you think?

Berlin, I don't know how long. A couple of months, or a couple-- I don't remember.

OK, and your whole family's still together, the uncle's family and your own? OK. And then you all go to the--

We all went to Pocking by Passau.

Poking by Passau.

And there we were waiting, but the quota was very long to getting to the United States. It was very tough.

Were you under the Polish quota?

I think so. I think they joined in the HIAS. They were involved that time. And they helped people to relocate, also if you're going to the United States or so. But it was a long wait anyway. And this camp was liquidated in 1947 or beginning '48. My sister got engaged to someone in Nuremberg, by Nuremberg, so we went there and my parents went there, and we stayed there.

In a camp? In another camp?

This wasn't really a camp. This was a little more private. But my father's dream was always to go to Israel. And Israel

wasn't born at that time yet, and we were still in Nuremberg. And the minute Israel was recognized, it was a country or a state, then my father went to Israel with my mother.

So here's a question. Before the war, I didn't know whether or not-- were your parents Zionists?

Yeah. They always had a love of Israel.

OK. And the search to be able to go to Palestine, as it was at that point.

Before the war, I don't know, but after the war. But my brothers, they were in organizations, like Bet Tah or the other ones.

Haganah?

Not the Haganah. This was still in Poland, normal times.

Oh, I see, in normal times.

We were always educated about Israel, my father always wanted to go to Israel.

It was a question I had earlier, but I thought, maybe if it was a very religious family, then--

Yes. Well, you do the best you can.

Of course. Of course.

That's all. If there's anything you can't do, you don't do.

Tell me about life in the DP camp in Bavaria. Did you go to school there?

I didn't go. I went only to Hebrew school.

OK. Did you learn German?

Yes. I knew German four years.

OK. So that is you spoke from it before or you learned it there?

I learned German in Germany. I came late to the United States. I married in between and I came in 1956.

Oh, really?

Yes. I came to the United States.

So you stayed in Germany after the war?

Yes, because when I married my husband, he had some business there.

How did you meet your husband? In the camps? Did you meet them in the DP camp?

Well, through a friend. It's a long story.

Was he also from Poland?

Yes.

From the same area?

No, he was from Bedzin.

Bedzin.

And you are probably familiar.

Where?

Bedzin.

Bedzin. I've heard of it. Yeah. But is that on the western part of Poland? I don't know the geography.

I guess so. It's close to Germany, near Kopilvitsa.

So in other words, he survived the Holocaust itself.

He survived, but not his parents, not his family. Only two brothers. He survived, the two brothers. They were five children before the war.

And when your camp was liquidated your DP camp, did you then already live in Nuremberg with your parents?

No no. When it was liquidated, we went to Furth. You know Furth. It's before Nuremberg. Nice sized town, and that's where we stayed. And then when Israel became a state, my parents went to Israel and I remained in Germany.

And you remained because you were married by then?

I wasn't married. I got married.

And your other brothers and sisters, what happened?

Well, my oldest brother, he came to the United States because his wife had a lot of relatives in the United States, so they sponsored them. Anyway, it's also a long story. So he could emigrate in 1948, I think, or '49.

And when your family left Russia, were all of the siblings still single?

Yes.

OK. So all of the marriages happened--

In Germany.

--in Germany. OK. And where in Germany did you stay?

I stayed in Nuremberg.

In Nuremberg. And what was your husband's name?

Carl Plawner.

Carl Plawner. And what was his business that kept him there?

He was in the toy business.

Really?

Spielzeuger

Szpielzeug. Yeah. Sprechen ze Deutsch?

En bisen.

[LAUGHS]

That's a very nice business to be in after the horrors of war.

Well, by coincidence.

Yeah.

Yes.

And what was it like for him, and for you, to live in a country that had almost annihilated the Jewish people?

Well, our plan was always to go either to Israel or to the United States.

So it was temporary?

Temporary. I could have stayed and had it easier, because starting all over again was much harder, but we always wanted to leave Germany.

OK.

My daughter was born in Germany. We did not want the children to grow up there.

Yeah. And yet you stayed until 1956.

Yes.

And why so long?

Because we couldn't get to United States. We waited for a visa.

So you didn't have anybody sponsor you?

We had somebody sponsored, but it took years.

Wow.

Yes. That's a really long time.

It's not like now that they cross the border.

Yeah. How many children do you have?

I have two, a son and a daughter.

And was your son also born in Germany?

No. I was a year in the States and my son was born in the States.

What are your children's names?

Jacob and Renee.

Jacob and Renee. And where did you settle in the United States?

First in Brooklyn.

OK. And did your husband continue in the toy business?

Well, when we came here, he didn't speak the language. So he continued in his profession, not selling toys, but he went to work at night in order to go the daytime to school. So he went to school to learn the language.

OK. Tough.

Yes. Yes. But he made it.

Did you ever go back Unalov?

No, and I have no desire. If I would have family, of course I would. But bad memories. I wouldn't be interested.

What about the Soviet Union? Did you ever visit there again?

No. No.

Yours is an unusual destiny. I mean, it's not unusual for all those people who experienced it, but you were caught between two great powers. How did that shape you as a person? What kind of effect did it have? Because you were experiencing this through some of the most vulnerable years that a child has, that is starting out as a child and ending up as a young teenager, and those are very impressionable years.

Well, first of all, when my children were growing up, we never talked about it, especially my husband. He never talked about the concentration camp, and we didn't talk. We wanted the children to grow up normal without fear. And when they got, let's say, 14, 15 years, they started learning in school. That's when we started discussing all this and they got to know everything. And they grew up normal, the way children should.

Without the fear.

Without the fear, but you know. They also have a love for Israel the way I did.

OK. I take it you have gone to Israel. Did you ever live there?

Yeah. I didn't live, but my parents did and I went many, many times. I still have a sister there, my older sister. I love Israel, but it's getting harder to travel now.

Yeah. We're coming to the end of our interview. Can you tell me, first of all, is there anything that we missed that you would like to share from what we've talked about today?

No, not really. I think within this period of time, with the two hours, I think we covered a lot of things. Of course, there's

many more stories that can be told, but I think we covered most.

OK. And are there any thoughts that you'd like to share with others who do not know much about the experience of the Jews, who ran east and then ended up being caught in the Soviet Union and forcibly deported there? What would you like them to know about your experience?

Well, my experience is that no place is safe. Nobody knows what's tomorrow, and we have to make the best of every day. And of course, the whole Israel will be strong and safe, and the same thing, the United States, because I love the United States. And to raise their children in a more Jewish way and to know what war can do to them.

OK. Thank you. Thank you very much.

You're welcome.

And I will say this concludes the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum interview with Mrs. Regina Plawner on March 2nd, 2017 in Aventura, Florida. Thank you.

Thank you.