

1  
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,370

2  
00:00:01,370 --> 00:00:05,420  
This is a continuation of  
the United States Holocaust

3  
00:00:05,420 --> 00:00:09,890  
Memorial Museum interview  
with Mr. Robert Budway.

4  
00:00:09,890 --> 00:00:14,840  
And today's date is  
September 3rd, 2020.

5  
00:00:14,840 --> 00:00:19,580  
So, Mr. Budway, when we  
stopped speaking the other day,

6  
00:00:19,580 --> 00:00:26,690  
it was just about the time when  
you experienced liberation,

7  
00:00:26,690 --> 00:00:31,310  
first in Klatovy and  
then in your own home

8  
00:00:31,310 --> 00:00:33,050  
village of "Technovice."

9  
00:00:33,050 --> 00:00:34,400  
Is that correct?

10  
00:00:34,400 --> 00:00:35,210  
Yes, TÄ›chovice.

11  
00:00:35,210 --> 00:00:36,110  
Techonice.

12  
00:00:36,110 --> 00:00:39,000

13

00:00:39,000 --> 00:00:43,080  
And you mentioned something  
about how your mother's English

14

00:00:43,080 --> 00:00:45,930  
became something quite  
valuable at that time

15

00:00:45,930 --> 00:00:48,780  
because American  
soldiers appeared.

16

00:00:48,780 --> 00:00:53,280  
American soldiers were the  
ones of the Allied forces

17

00:00:53,280 --> 00:00:58,140  
who liberated that  
part of Czechoslovakia.

18

00:00:58,140 --> 00:01:01,770  
So can you tell me  
what happened next,

19

00:01:01,770 --> 00:01:06,090  
and how did this  
affect your family?

20

00:01:06,090 --> 00:01:10,940  
At that junction, of course,  
there was excitement,

21

00:01:10,940 --> 00:01:16,170  
there was hope, that life  
will entirely be different,

22

00:01:16,170 --> 00:01:21,180  
and we will revert back what  
it was like before the war.

23

00:01:21,180 --> 00:01:29,040  
That was a fiction, which was

quickly dissolving day by day.

24

00:01:29,040 --> 00:01:34,800

I knew that I could not stay  
in TÄ›chovice for too long,

25

00:01:34,800 --> 00:01:40,080

that I had to continue  
somehow my career as a waiter.

26

00:01:40,080 --> 00:01:46,010

So I left after all this  
excitement and after everything

27

00:01:46,010 --> 00:01:46,545

to Klatovy.

28

00:01:46,545 --> 00:01:50,140

29

00:01:50,140 --> 00:01:52,250

Yeah, I'm listening.

30

00:01:52,250 --> 00:01:54,570

I left for Klatovy.

31

00:01:54,570 --> 00:02:00,910

I quickly recognized that  
there will be not easy things

32

00:02:00,910 --> 00:02:09,180

as it was before because  
Hotel Central was at that time

33

00:02:09,180 --> 00:02:13,450

occupied by a German hospital.

34

00:02:13,450 --> 00:02:16,560

The hospital was  
cleared quickly.

35

00:02:16,560 --> 00:02:18,990

The Americans moved in.

36  
00:02:18,990 --> 00:02:24,370

The owner of the hotel  
was nowhere in sight.

37  
00:02:24,370 --> 00:02:27,270

The Germans were no  
longer in streets.

38  
00:02:27,270 --> 00:02:29,820

And they were now  
in assembly places,

39  
00:02:29,820 --> 00:02:34,780

in turn either in the  
public places and military.

40  
00:02:34,780 --> 00:02:36,240

They were not visible.

41  
00:02:36,240 --> 00:02:41,730

And, of course, I heard they  
were treated quite harsh.

42  
00:02:41,730 --> 00:02:47,450

But my problem was  
how to reconnect again

43  
00:02:47,450 --> 00:02:51,780

with life in Klatovy  
and do something useful.

44  
00:02:51,780 --> 00:02:55,950

Hotel Central was definitely  
out of the question

45  
00:02:55,950 --> 00:02:58,260

because it was devastated.

46  
00:02:58,260 --> 00:03:02,340

And the Americans finished  
it quite well even there,

47  
00:03:02,340 --> 00:03:05,160  
because they were  
short time only.

48  
00:03:05,160 --> 00:03:06,810  
And I hang around.

49  
00:03:06,810 --> 00:03:10,760  
And I make connection with them.

50  
00:03:10,760 --> 00:03:14,510  
I don't know if it  
is worth to talk

51  
00:03:14,510 --> 00:03:16,680  
about my experience  
of reconnecting

52  
00:03:16,680 --> 00:03:19,230  
with my countrymen?

53  
00:03:19,230 --> 00:03:21,600  
Tell me about it  
because did you let

54  
00:03:21,600 --> 00:03:24,930  
them know, for example, that  
you are an American citizen?

55  
00:03:24,930 --> 00:03:26,190  
Yeah.

56  
00:03:26,190 --> 00:03:31,290  
I didn't have to do that very  
much because I have a problem

57  
00:03:31,290 --> 00:03:34,470  
where to find a living space.

58  
00:03:34,470 --> 00:03:38,460  
I have to look for a room.

59

00:03:38,460 --> 00:03:42,630

That, of course, means that I  
have to go to the city hall.

60

00:03:42,630 --> 00:03:45,720

And, of course, the worst  
situation, then personnel

61

00:03:45,720 --> 00:03:50,160

in the city hall change  
in spite that Americans

62

00:03:50,160 --> 00:03:54,780

were real combat, open arms,  
and there was jubilation.

63

00:03:54,780 --> 00:04:03,440

There was a new  
constellation formed.

64

00:04:03,440 --> 00:04:08,890

And the city was  
no longer what it

65

00:04:08,890 --> 00:04:14,050

was when it was united  
against the German occupation.

66

00:04:14,050 --> 00:04:17,290

Now city began to be fragmented.

67

00:04:17,290 --> 00:04:22,700

Political situation  
began to be visible.

68

00:04:22,700 --> 00:04:27,670

The countries who had only  
four political parties, that

69

00:04:27,670 --> 00:04:31,120

was a definitely good  
development, instead

70  
00:04:31,120 --> 00:04:35,290  
of having 20 during  
first Republic.

71  
00:04:35,290 --> 00:04:38,890  
However, [INAUDIBLE]  
were visible in places

72  
00:04:38,890 --> 00:04:40,480  
like city hall.

73  
00:04:40,480 --> 00:04:45,760  
The city hall suddenly to be  
called the National Council.

74  
00:04:45,760 --> 00:04:48,520  
It was called "nÃ¼rodnÃ¼ vÃ¼½bor."

75  
00:04:48,520 --> 00:04:52,070  
I would translate it  
as a National Council.

76  
00:04:52,070 --> 00:04:56,890  
These councils where in every  
village, every little town

77  
00:04:56,890 --> 00:04:59,200  
suddenly.

78  
00:04:59,200 --> 00:05:03,400  
Somehow mostly even  
wherever I was,

79  
00:05:03,400 --> 00:05:07,150  
they were dominated by  
members of Communist Party.

80  
00:05:07,150 --> 00:05:14,320  
That became clear although their  
aims was not clear and visible.

81

00:05:14,320 --> 00:05:17,500  
But I was no longer--

82  
00:05:17,500 --> 00:05:23,170  
it wasn't easy to move  
in that city hall.

83  
00:05:23,170 --> 00:05:27,760  
When I requested that  
they find a room--

84  
00:05:27,760 --> 00:05:31,370  
and there should have been lots  
of spaces because Germans were

85  
00:05:31,370 --> 00:05:31,870  
out--

86  
00:05:31,870 --> 00:05:35,200

87  
00:05:35,200 --> 00:05:38,050  
the city definitely  
did have enough

88  
00:05:38,050 --> 00:05:42,566  
to accommodate one single guy.

89  
00:05:42,566 --> 00:05:47,980  
I find difficulty  
definitely and hostility.

90  
00:05:47,980 --> 00:05:52,600  
So as I walked out at  
city hall, on the corner

91  
00:05:52,600 --> 00:05:57,910  
was already military  
office which

92  
00:05:57,910 --> 00:05:59,355  
deals with civilian security.



93

00:05:59,355 --> 00:06:02,770

It was American military office.

94

00:06:02,770 --> 00:06:07,270

And, of course, I no longer  
was showing my Fremdenpass pass

95

00:06:07,270 --> 00:06:08,320

to anybody.

96

00:06:08,320 --> 00:06:14,840

But I did have my birth date  
certificate from Oak Park.

97

00:06:14,840 --> 00:06:18,040

So I walk into the  
place and somehow

98

00:06:18,040 --> 00:06:23,888

along, I manage to communicate  
what my problem was.

99

00:06:23,888 --> 00:06:24,805

And was your problem--

100

00:06:24,805 --> 00:06:25,305

And--

101

00:06:25,305 --> 00:06:28,930

--excuse me me-- was your  
problem that you couldn't find

102

00:06:28,930 --> 00:06:31,180

room, or was your  
problem that you

103

00:06:31,180 --> 00:06:34,270

didn't have  
identification papers that

104

00:06:34,270 --> 00:06:36,790

reflected who you really were?

105  
00:06:36,790 --> 00:06:41,320  
I was already more or less  
to be exploring around.

106  
00:06:41,320 --> 00:06:47,890  
I was already seeing I have a  
other problem than identity.

107  
00:06:47,890 --> 00:06:49,960  
It was my nationality.

108  
00:06:49,960 --> 00:06:54,610  
It was my state citizenship.

109  
00:06:54,610 --> 00:07:02,920  
From people I received  
nothing but good reception.

110  
00:07:02,920 --> 00:07:04,060  
I was welcome.

111  
00:07:04,060 --> 00:07:08,620  
But the official  
National Council office

112  
00:07:08,620 --> 00:07:12,910  
and few other places were  
certainly not receptive

113  
00:07:12,910 --> 00:07:16,270  
because they were  
in communist hands.

114  
00:07:16,270 --> 00:07:21,850  
That I did not fully understood  
and even could really

115  
00:07:21,850 --> 00:07:24,230  
operate as I could do today.

116  
00:07:24,230 --> 00:07:27,250

So I'd walk with  
my [? complain ?]..

117  
00:07:27,250 --> 00:07:30,550  
And apparently  
whatever I communicate,

118  
00:07:30,550 --> 00:07:35,830  
they did understand that as a  
citizen of the United States,

119  
00:07:35,830 --> 00:07:38,360  
just had some difficulty.

120  
00:07:38,360 --> 00:07:43,180  
So they look on my  
birth date certificate,

121  
00:07:43,180 --> 00:07:46,150  
and they wrote one  
of those little memo,

122  
00:07:46,150 --> 00:07:49,268  
to whom it might concern.

123  
00:07:49,268 --> 00:07:50,185  
This is the American--

124  
00:07:50,185 --> 00:07:50,685  
Which--

125  
00:07:50,685 --> 00:07:52,510  
--military authorities?

126  
00:07:52,510 --> 00:07:53,250  
Yes.

127  
00:07:53,250 --> 00:07:55,030  
That was US military  
authorities,

128  
00:07:55,030 --> 00:07:57,580

which was temporarily  
right on a corner

129  
00:07:57,580 --> 00:07:59,600  
not too far from a city hall.

130  
00:07:59,600 --> 00:08:03,610  
So it happened very fast.

131  
00:08:03,610 --> 00:08:06,510  
And I was received well.

132  
00:08:06,510 --> 00:08:10,540  
My certificate certainly  
caused some interest.

133  
00:08:10,540 --> 00:08:13,980  
And there was a quick response.

134  
00:08:13,980 --> 00:08:18,010  
A young soldier who must  
have been a corporal and must

135  
00:08:18,010 --> 00:08:22,000  
knew how to type, in fact,  
went to the commanding officers

136  
00:08:22,000 --> 00:08:24,660  
there, who were  
obviously next door.

137  
00:08:24,660 --> 00:08:26,170  
And it was very quick.

138  
00:08:26,170 --> 00:08:31,540  
And I had a little  
paper, which say who am I

139  
00:08:31,540 --> 00:08:33,250  
and how should they treat me.

140  
00:08:33,250 --> 00:08:35,620

At that particular  
time, I certainly

141  
00:08:35,620 --> 00:08:38,140  
could not translate  
what they wrote.

142  
00:08:38,140 --> 00:08:39,809  
But I know it today.

143  
00:08:39,809 --> 00:08:43,000  
And I have many copy  
of it to make sure

144  
00:08:43,000 --> 00:08:45,880  
that I don't lose anything.

145  
00:08:45,880 --> 00:08:47,920  
So that was my--

146  
00:08:47,920 --> 00:08:52,300  
finally I could  
use it as some sort

147  
00:08:52,300 --> 00:08:55,870  
of identification, who am I?

148  
00:08:55,870 --> 00:09:00,310  
And I went back  
to the city hall.

149  
00:09:00,310 --> 00:09:05,020  
And within that  
same couple hours,

150  
00:09:05,020 --> 00:09:06,610  
there was incredible change.

151  
00:09:06,610 --> 00:09:10,400  
The little note  
produced is resolved.

152

00:09:10,400 --> 00:09:13,400  
I was getting settled  
in a nice little room

153  
00:09:13,400 --> 00:09:17,230  
and not too far  
from Hotel Central.

154  
00:09:17,230 --> 00:09:18,060  
Unbelievable.

155  
00:09:18,060 --> 00:09:22,570  
And my new landlady was very  
nice, very accommodating,

156  
00:09:22,570 --> 00:09:26,160  
and therefore, I attach  
myself to Hotel Central,

157  
00:09:26,160 --> 00:09:31,150  
which I visited, where the  
Americans were already in.

158  
00:09:31,150 --> 00:09:33,100  
And out showing  
that little paper.

159  
00:09:33,100 --> 00:09:36,700  
And so I was sort  
of appendage to them

160  
00:09:36,700 --> 00:09:40,210  
and tolerated and,  
in fact, suddenly

161  
00:09:40,210 --> 00:09:43,840  
being consulted on a few things.

162  
00:09:43,840 --> 00:09:46,540  
So if I understand  
this, when you

163  
00:09:46,540 --> 00:09:50,860

went into the office of  
the US military authorities

164  
00:09:50,860 --> 00:09:54,520  
on the corner of the same  
street where there was the city

165  
00:09:54,520 --> 00:09:58,570  
hall with this  
National Council, they,

166  
00:09:58,570 --> 00:10:00,550  
based on your birth  
certificate, write

167  
00:10:00,550 --> 00:10:04,570  
a letter-- a short note that  
says, to whom it may concern.

168  
00:10:04,570 --> 00:10:08,830  
And that note says that  
you are a US citizen.

169  
00:10:08,830 --> 00:10:09,820  
Is that correct?

170  
00:10:09,820 --> 00:10:10,490  
It identifies--

171  
00:10:10,490 --> 00:10:14,080  
Yeah, and that I should  
be treated as such.

172  
00:10:14,080 --> 00:10:17,080  
And then you take that  
and go back to city hall,

173  
00:10:17,080 --> 00:10:20,560  
and their attitude  
changes In the sense

174  
00:10:20,560 --> 00:10:23,590  
that they find a room

for you all of a sudden.

175  
00:10:23,590 --> 00:10:25,150  
The landlady is nice.

176  
00:10:25,150 --> 00:10:27,520  
And it is very close  
to Hotel Central,

177  
00:10:27,520 --> 00:10:31,800  
which is where you had  
worked as a waiter before?

178  
00:10:31,800 --> 00:10:32,320  
But now--

179  
00:10:32,320 --> 00:10:32,820  
Yeah.

180  
00:10:32,820 --> 00:10:35,730  
--it's under American control.

181  
00:10:35,730 --> 00:10:41,430  
And you are somehow rather  
attached to the Americans

182  
00:10:41,430 --> 00:10:43,200  
who are running Hotel Central.

183  
00:10:43,200 --> 00:10:44,610  
Is that correct?

184  
00:10:44,610 --> 00:10:45,390  
Yes.

185  
00:10:45,390 --> 00:10:47,580  
They were not running the hotel.

186  
00:10:47,580 --> 00:10:51,480  
They just simply move in and  
had their headquarters there



187  
00:10:51,480 --> 00:10:56,860  
because it had room for  
the official deed offices

188  
00:10:56,860 --> 00:10:59,620  
in order to be--

189  
00:10:59,620 --> 00:11:01,620  
when they clear it out from--

190  
00:11:01,620 --> 00:11:05,970  
because prior to it, it was  
German military hospital,

191  
00:11:05,970 --> 00:11:10,480  
which was called "Lazarett"  
already for the casualties.

192  
00:11:10,480 --> 00:11:12,510  
And they established themselves.

193  
00:11:12,510 --> 00:11:18,210  
And I was very able--

194  
00:11:18,210 --> 00:11:21,990  
I knew what the  
hotel was all about.

195  
00:11:21,990 --> 00:11:26,440  
So you didn't speak any  
English at that point?

196  
00:11:26,440 --> 00:11:30,080  
I just have some vocabulary.

197  
00:11:30,080 --> 00:11:33,430  
I did have after all, a  
few lessons from Monsieur

198  
00:11:33,430 --> 00:11:35,640  
[? Argiacon ?] who  
once upon a time

199  
00:11:35,640 --> 00:11:38,580  
was also a guest in the hotel.

200  
00:11:38,580 --> 00:11:41,010  
That is during the  
German occupation.

201  
00:11:41,010 --> 00:11:44,440  
So the little  
English I did have--

202  
00:11:44,440 --> 00:11:48,550  
Excuse me, have you mentioned  
this person to me before?

203  
00:11:48,550 --> 00:11:49,330  
I beg your pardon?

204  
00:11:49,330 --> 00:11:52,360  
The person who you had  
a few lessons with,

205  
00:11:52,360 --> 00:11:54,340  
who was this again?

206  
00:11:54,340 --> 00:11:55,870  
I didn't hear the name of--

207  
00:11:55,870 --> 00:11:58,700  
That was the Frenchman,  
Monsieur [? Argiacon ?]..

208  
00:11:58,700 --> 00:11:59,200  
Can you--

209  
00:11:59,200 --> 00:12:01,760  
--who was the temporary guest--

210  
00:12:01,760 --> 00:12:05,770  
who was a mystery  
guest and who I met

211  
00:12:05,770 --> 00:12:08,920  
before I went to labor camp.

212  
00:12:08,920 --> 00:12:11,290  
So can you spell his  
last name for me?

213  
00:12:11,290 --> 00:12:12,160  
Because it's not--

214  
00:12:12,160 --> 00:12:15,100  
That would be difficult  
because it was French.

215  
00:12:15,100 --> 00:12:19,060  
I only know the  
pronunciation, [? Argiacon ?]..

216  
00:12:19,060 --> 00:12:22,360  
[? Argiacon ?], OK.

217  
00:12:22,360 --> 00:12:26,470  
So Mr. [? Argiacon ?] gave  
you a few lessons in English?

218  
00:12:26,470 --> 00:12:28,450  
Yeah.

219  
00:12:28,450 --> 00:12:31,830  
And that's what you were  
using at this point?

220  
00:12:31,830 --> 00:12:33,290  
Yes.

221  
00:12:33,290 --> 00:12:36,570  
And, of course, those  
few days with Americans

222  
00:12:36,570 --> 00:12:39,750  
already, I was picking up

the words here and there.

223

00:12:39,750 --> 00:12:44,660

So I was able to communicate a few things because I must have

224

00:12:44,660 --> 00:12:47,790

communicated all right with that office, where they gave

225

00:12:47,790 --> 00:12:50,670

me there's a little piece of paper, which says,

226

00:12:50,670 --> 00:12:52,990

to whom it may concern.

227

00:12:52,990 --> 00:12:56,130

So they understood that I had some difficulties.

228

00:12:56,130 --> 00:12:58,960

229

00:12:58,960 --> 00:13:05,550

And what did you basically do for the Americans headquartered

230

00:13:05,550 --> 00:13:07,320

at Hotel Central?

231

00:13:07,320 --> 00:13:08,790

What were some of your functions?

232

00:13:08,790 --> 00:13:12,186

233

00:13:12,186 --> 00:13:14,840

There are a few little things I did.

234

00:13:14,840 --> 00:13:20,540  
But there was one, which  
was eye opener for me.

235  
00:13:20,540 --> 00:13:28,190  
They, for example, wanted  
to hire male dishwashers.

236  
00:13:28,190 --> 00:13:33,460  
And they asked me if I can  
help them to hire somebody.

237  
00:13:33,460 --> 00:13:37,840  
In fact, they gave me actually  
carte blanche hire someone.

238  
00:13:37,840 --> 00:13:40,400  
And I had to politely--

239  
00:13:40,400 --> 00:13:46,440  
I was shocked because that  
was a first confrontation how

240  
00:13:46,440 --> 00:13:50,210  
the culture in the United  
States and in Central Europe

241  
00:13:50,210 --> 00:13:56,390  
differ because no man in  
Klatovy inspired that he

242  
00:13:56,390 --> 00:14:00,680  
would love to be  
near America, would

243  
00:14:00,680 --> 00:14:02,840  
be employed as a dishwasher.

244  
00:14:02,840 --> 00:14:07,190  
I told them the  
impossibility for me to--

245  
00:14:07,190 --> 00:14:08,270

Why?

246

00:14:08,270 --> 00:14:11,240

Was it a demeaning  
or menial position?

247

00:14:11,240 --> 00:14:13,580

Is it one that  
women generally had?

248

00:14:13,580 --> 00:14:18,290

As far as I know at that  
time, that was a woman's job.

249

00:14:18,290 --> 00:14:19,970

I see.

250

00:14:19,970 --> 00:14:25,490

It was ingrained in every male,  
I believe, in that country,

251

00:14:25,490 --> 00:14:29,630

in that city, and  
as far even than me.

252

00:14:29,630 --> 00:14:31,490

I see.

253

00:14:31,490 --> 00:14:31,990

And--

254

00:14:31,990 --> 00:14:35,950

That's why I was ready to do  
it myself just to be near that.

255

00:14:35,950 --> 00:14:38,790

But I would not have  
been happy about it.

256

00:14:38,790 --> 00:14:43,570

So I communicate  
to the impossible.

257

00:14:43,570 --> 00:14:48,320

So that is an example of  
some of the things I did.

258

00:14:48,320 --> 00:14:52,810

But they also therefore  
solved the problem easily.

259

00:14:52,810 --> 00:14:58,570

They apparently went in to one  
of the German military detained

260

00:14:58,570 --> 00:15:05,800

place where the German  
soldier who surrender--

261

00:15:05,800 --> 00:15:09,380

POW, prisoner of war.

262

00:15:09,380 --> 00:15:15,300

And they find out about  
a dozen every morning.

263

00:15:15,300 --> 00:15:21,970

And I, of course, was  
useful because these Germans

264

00:15:21,970 --> 00:15:27,340

did just little menial  
works, which would

265

00:15:27,340 --> 00:15:31,070

have been considered demeaning.

266

00:15:31,070 --> 00:15:36,150

And I did have suddenly some  
sense I was supervising.

267

00:15:36,150 --> 00:15:38,530

Suddenly, my position--

268

00:15:38,530 --> 00:15:42,110

I was telling these German  
soldier, who I only a couple

269  
00:15:42,110 --> 00:15:45,040  
of months ago serve  
beer, I was telling

270  
00:15:45,040 --> 00:15:50,320  
them what to do for the  
American in the hotel.

271  
00:15:50,320 --> 00:15:55,060  
So my position was  
quite turned over.

272  
00:15:55,060 --> 00:15:55,630  
Of course.

273  
00:15:55,630 --> 00:15:57,220  
The roles changed.

274  
00:15:57,220 --> 00:16:01,420  
Some of them even had  
a skill as barbers.

275  
00:16:01,420 --> 00:16:08,520  
So they were-- there was  
plenty for these Germans.

276  
00:16:08,520 --> 00:16:11,830  
And they were willing  
and eager to do

277  
00:16:11,830 --> 00:16:19,320  
that because when the Americans  
had finished their lunch

278  
00:16:19,320 --> 00:16:23,620  
or dinner or whatever in the  
kitchen, which I knew only

279  
00:16:23,620 --> 00:16:28,480  
too well, whatever



is left, the German--

280

00:16:28,480 --> 00:16:33,270

I was directed to tell them  
that they can carry it off.

281

00:16:33,270 --> 00:16:35,560

And they were eating outside.

282

00:16:35,560 --> 00:16:41,970

So they obviously get that  
there were plenty things

283

00:16:41,970 --> 00:16:45,390

for them to acquire,  
which they did not

284

00:16:45,390 --> 00:16:47,820

have in the place  
of their detention.

285

00:16:47,820 --> 00:16:53,760

For example, the barber was  
getting his tips in cigarettes.

286

00:16:53,760 --> 00:16:55,390

That's a big currency.

287

00:16:55,390 --> 00:17:01,950

And that was a very priced item  
for anybody, and particularly

288

00:17:01,950 --> 00:17:05,329

for German POW.

289

00:17:05,329 --> 00:17:07,829

So that is what I did.

290

00:17:07,829 --> 00:17:14,150

Occasionally, I did  
find some temporary job

291

00:17:14,150 --> 00:17:18,780  
in some restaurant and hotel  
when they have something to do.

292  
00:17:18,780 --> 00:17:26,400  
But outlook for me to be fully  
employed was diminishing.

293  
00:17:26,400 --> 00:17:32,060  
And even I, not even I, could  
see that time is changing.

294  
00:17:32,060 --> 00:17:36,030  
Economics is changing  
because many people

295  
00:17:36,030 --> 00:17:42,660  
were leaving into a border  
region, the former Sudetenland.

296  
00:17:42,660 --> 00:17:47,520  
There were plenty of  
opportunities in Sudetenland.

297  
00:17:47,520 --> 00:17:48,950  
In the former Sudetenland?

298  
00:17:48,950 --> 00:17:49,450  
Now--

299  
00:17:49,450 --> 00:17:50,030  
Yes.

300  
00:17:50,030 --> 00:17:50,790  
--was the former--

301  
00:17:50,790 --> 00:17:54,680  
Because the Czech  
were occupying that.

302  
00:17:54,680 --> 00:18:00,790  
And Czech wanted to, of  
course, bring as more back

303  
00:18:00,790 --> 00:18:04,170  
the former border region.

304  
00:18:04,170 --> 00:18:06,720  
They did not call  
it Sudetenland.

305  
00:18:06,720 --> 00:18:08,780  
It was a border region.

306  
00:18:08,780 --> 00:18:11,460  
It was called  
"pohraniÄÄ" in Czech.

307  
00:18:11,460 --> 00:18:17,520  
And that's where the opportunity  
for somebody at my age were.

308  
00:18:17,520 --> 00:18:19,400  
So it didn't last long.

309  
00:18:19,400 --> 00:18:24,350  
I probably lasted in Klatovy  
a little over three months.

310  
00:18:24,350 --> 00:18:28,800  
Now was that such  
that the opportunity

311  
00:18:28,800 --> 00:18:32,120  
in the former  
Sudetenland was there

312  
00:18:32,120 --> 00:18:35,420  
because there were no  
more Sudeten Germans?

313  
00:18:35,420 --> 00:18:38,450  
Or were they still living there?

314  
00:18:38,450 --> 00:18:39,800

They were still there.

315

00:18:39,800 --> 00:18:45,660

But later on-- of course, when  
I finally get into job and post

316

00:18:45,660 --> 00:18:48,960

there, they were--

317

00:18:48,960 --> 00:18:51,680

in fact, the Czech  
administration

318

00:18:51,680 --> 00:18:54,830

and Czech new wave,  
which was coming in

319

00:18:54,830 --> 00:19:00,470

to take over not only the  
administrative situation there,

320

00:19:00,470 --> 00:19:04,370

but of properties  
were behaving exactly

321

00:19:04,370 --> 00:19:10,730

as the Germans were behaving  
against the Jewish population

322

00:19:10,730 --> 00:19:16,490

because all German did not  
have to wear a yellow star.

323

00:19:16,490 --> 00:19:21,770

But every German was marked  
with the white armband

324

00:19:21,770 --> 00:19:23,300

on their right hand.

325

00:19:23,300 --> 00:19:27,375

So they were marked  
exactly same type

326  
00:19:27,375 --> 00:19:31,590  
of restriction Jewish  
population faced during the war

327  
00:19:31,590 --> 00:19:33,710  
or during a time  
of protectorate,

328  
00:19:33,710 --> 00:19:36,470  
the Germans were facing  
same restrictions.

329  
00:19:36,470 --> 00:19:38,540  
They couldn't, for  
example, go shopping.

330  
00:19:38,540 --> 00:19:41,030  
Every time they  
went-- they could not

331  
00:19:41,030 --> 00:19:43,940  
go into any movie,  
any entertainment.

332  
00:19:43,940 --> 00:19:48,750  
They could not go to the  
hotels where I was working.

333  
00:19:48,750 --> 00:19:53,480  
We could clearly say when I  
know some of the restrictions

334  
00:19:53,480 --> 00:19:58,390  
Jewish population face at the  
beginning of German occupation

335  
00:19:58,390 --> 00:19:59,570  
in Bohemia.

336  
00:19:59,570 --> 00:20:04,940  
The Germans were treated  
exactly in Czech, Sudetenland,

337  
00:20:04,940 --> 00:20:10,250  
exactly as they were  
treating Jewish population

338  
00:20:10,250 --> 00:20:14,330  
in 1939 and 1940.

339  
00:20:14,330 --> 00:20:14,830  
And--

340  
00:20:14,830 --> 00:20:16,440  
That's it.

341  
00:20:16,440 --> 00:20:22,560  
And what opportunities in this  
area were available for you?

342  
00:20:22,560 --> 00:20:26,210  
What made it attractive  
for you to go there?

343  
00:20:26,210 --> 00:20:30,950  
I had heard, of course,  
about these opportunities.

344  
00:20:30,950 --> 00:20:35,780  
Nearby-- close, not  
too far from Klatovy,

345  
00:20:35,780 --> 00:20:39,500  
hardly more than hour by train--

346  
00:20:39,500 --> 00:20:46,220  
was a well-known tourist  
attraction called ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda.

347  
00:20:46,220 --> 00:20:49,840  
German called it  
Markt Eisenstein.

348  
00:20:49,840 --> 00:20:54,050

And it was located  
in beautiful spot,

349  
00:20:54,050 --> 00:20:57,310  
what Czech used to call Sumava.

350  
00:20:57,310 --> 00:21:03,190  
Sumava would be translated  
by German Bohmerwald.

351  
00:21:03,190 --> 00:21:07,490  
And I would translated in  
English, Bohemia Forest.

352  
00:21:07,490 --> 00:21:10,370

353  
00:21:10,370 --> 00:21:13,080  
That was a ski resort.

354  
00:21:13,080 --> 00:21:17,690  
It was a good ski resort,  
particularly wintertime,

355  
00:21:17,690 --> 00:21:20,300  
not so much during summertime.

356  
00:21:20,300 --> 00:21:22,070  
Of course.

357  
00:21:22,070 --> 00:21:26,890  
And were you able  
to find work here?

358  
00:21:26,890 --> 00:21:30,130  
Oh, soon as I arrived,  
I was immediately

359  
00:21:30,130 --> 00:21:33,550  
hired because there was  
only one hotel which

360

00:21:33,550 --> 00:21:37,150  
was open and accessible  
to anyone who

361  
00:21:37,150 --> 00:21:40,610  
was able to use this facility.

362  
00:21:40,610 --> 00:21:45,700  
After all, the German owner  
was still in the hotel,

363  
00:21:45,700 --> 00:21:50,500  
but new and so-called  
national caretaker,

364  
00:21:50,500 --> 00:21:53,680  
which in Czech was  
"nã;rodnã sprã;vce."

365  
00:21:53,680 --> 00:21:58,210  
All these places were  
to be nationalized.

366  
00:21:58,210 --> 00:21:59,830  
Legally, it wasn't done yet.

367  
00:21:59,830 --> 00:22:02,860  
The Czech government in  
Prague couldn't be so fast.

368  
00:22:02,860 --> 00:22:07,390  
But everything was  
already ahead of time.

369  
00:22:07,390 --> 00:22:14,890  
This new owner was Mr.  
Tomasek and his wife.

370  
00:22:14,890 --> 00:22:17,980  
The one who had been in Dachau?

371  
00:22:17,980 --> 00:22:21,660  
One who had been in Dachau,



former inmate in Dachau.

372

00:22:21,660 --> 00:22:27,700

And on top of which, his wife was a Russian Czech.

373

00:22:27,700 --> 00:22:31,810

She apparently was left as a child, Soviet Union

374

00:22:31,810 --> 00:22:36,430

after the revolution and knew perfect Russian.

375

00:22:36,430 --> 00:22:38,690

She was a nice lady.

376

00:22:38,690 --> 00:22:41,180

She was a lady, every inch of her,

377

00:22:41,180 --> 00:22:45,070

and treat everybody with courtesy and politeness.

378

00:22:45,070 --> 00:22:48,100

She was a wonderful new boss.

379

00:22:48,100 --> 00:22:53,080

She was a great replacement for Fraulein Pressmar.

380

00:22:53,080 --> 00:22:55,960

I was treated as a human being.

381

00:22:55,960 --> 00:23:06,610

And Mr. Tomasek because I think he was definitely--

382

00:23:06,610 --> 00:23:12,760

I think he spent more than four years in Dachau.

383

00:23:12,760 --> 00:23:14,820

So he was really survivor.

384

00:23:14,820 --> 00:23:20,920

And mentally he had moves  
where he did not act--

385

00:23:20,920 --> 00:23:25,120

where otherwise he  
was a very decent guy.

386

00:23:25,120 --> 00:23:26,950

But both of them,  
of course, were

387

00:23:26,950 --> 00:23:32,170

a member of the Communist party  
because they have priority.

388

00:23:32,170 --> 00:23:36,610

He not only had the priority  
to get this property because he

389

00:23:36,610 --> 00:23:38,820

was a political prisoner--

390

00:23:38,820 --> 00:23:41,950

a former inmate of the  
concentration-- but he

391

00:23:41,950 --> 00:23:45,610

was also a registered  
Communist Party member.

392

00:23:45,610 --> 00:23:47,800

This is how you get ahead.

393

00:23:47,800 --> 00:23:51,370

In that time, in  
former Sudetenland,

394

00:23:51,370 --> 00:23:57,605

if you're coming from inland  
and want to acquire property.

395  
00:23:57,605 --> 00:23:58,480  
So here's a question.

396  
00:23:58,480 --> 00:24:00,460  
If you were a communist,  
you had no difficulty

397  
00:24:00,460 --> 00:24:04,390  
to be assigned some  
enterprise and some control.

398  
00:24:04,390 --> 00:24:08,680  
And you were designated  
as "nĀ;rodnĀ sprĀ;vce."

399  
00:24:08,680 --> 00:24:12,100  
I would call it  
national caretaker.

400  
00:24:12,100 --> 00:24:18,650  
So here is-- a couple of  
thoughts run to my mind.

401  
00:24:18,650 --> 00:24:22,120  
Number one, are  
the Americans still

402  
00:24:22,120 --> 00:24:27,160  
in military control at this  
point of that territory

403  
00:24:27,160 --> 00:24:28,870  
that you are in?

404  
00:24:28,870 --> 00:24:30,080  
Yes and no.

405  
00:24:30,080 --> 00:24:34,030  
Americans present in  
West Bohemia were there.

406  
00:24:34,030 --> 00:24:38,890  
But they did not  
come as an occupier.

407  
00:24:38,890 --> 00:24:40,485  
The Czech have control.

408  
00:24:40,485 --> 00:24:43,840

409  
00:24:43,840 --> 00:24:47,760  
Americans were present  
was temporary there.

410  
00:24:47,760 --> 00:24:50,190  
Within four months,  
they'd be gone back

411  
00:24:50,190 --> 00:24:55,110  
into a zone of  
occupation of Germany.

412  
00:24:55,110 --> 00:24:57,210  
That was one of my  
questions because what

413  
00:24:57,210 --> 00:24:59,880  
I had remembered  
reading is that they

414  
00:24:59,880 --> 00:25:02,730  
reached Pilsen and stopped.

415  
00:25:02,730 --> 00:25:10,740  
And then didn't go further, and  
then eventually retreated to--

416  
00:25:10,740 --> 00:25:14,850  
or went back to,  
as you say, being

417

00:25:14,850 --> 00:25:19,240  
the occupying force in  
Germany, in particular Bavaria,

418  
00:25:19,240 --> 00:25:20,790  
in the southern zone.

419  
00:25:20,790 --> 00:25:26,970  
So they did not interfere in  
any kind of civil administration

420  
00:25:26,970 --> 00:25:29,123  
or civil structures  
or authorities

421  
00:25:29,123 --> 00:25:30,040  
or anything like that?

422  
00:25:30,040 --> 00:25:31,990  
No, not at all.

423  
00:25:31,990 --> 00:25:35,770  
They were just  
temporarily there.

424  
00:25:35,770 --> 00:25:36,820  
They were not alone.

425  
00:25:36,820 --> 00:25:39,810  
Of course, most of  
the country was--

426  
00:25:39,810 --> 00:25:41,450  
I wouldn't call it occupation.

427  
00:25:41,450 --> 00:25:45,780  
They were liberated from  
Soviet Union Russia.

428  
00:25:45,780 --> 00:25:50,130  
You have to remember that  
Prague and much of the country

429

00:25:50,130 --> 00:25:52,410  
was liberated.

430

00:25:52,410 --> 00:25:58,560  
American presence in the  
West Bohemia was in line with

431

00:25:58,560 --> 00:26:03,730  
Karlovy Vary, going down all the  
way to Budákovice and Karlovy

432

00:26:03,730 --> 00:26:06,740  
Vary in Carlsbad  
and [PLACE NAME]..

433

00:26:06,740 --> 00:26:08,930  
Yeah, I know the area.

434

00:26:08,930 --> 00:26:13,200  
It's the really  
western part down to--

435

00:26:13,200 --> 00:26:16,290  
if you say "Eská Budákovice,  
then that means on the border

436

00:26:16,290 --> 00:26:18,900  
of Austria.

437

00:26:18,900 --> 00:26:19,500  
Correct.

438

00:26:19,500 --> 00:26:23,090  
That becomes  
important, that region.

439

00:26:23,090 --> 00:26:28,950  
American presence-- I know that  
by September, they were gone.

440

00:26:28,950 --> 00:26:32,070  
And when did the

expulsion of the Germans

441

00:26:32,070 --> 00:26:35,100

take place, after  
the Americans leave?

442

00:26:35,100 --> 00:26:39,430

That expulsion was, of  
course, already in a making.

443

00:26:39,430 --> 00:26:43,540

Some Germans, of course,  
left on their own initiative.

444

00:26:43,540 --> 00:26:46,550

They had probably  
those who left quickly.

445

00:26:46,550 --> 00:26:47,860

They didn't feel comfortable.

446

00:26:47,860 --> 00:26:49,960

And they probably know why.

447

00:26:49,960 --> 00:26:54,670

But it was after  
all decided finally

448

00:26:54,670 --> 00:27:01,910

in the Potsdam Conference,  
where the Allies met with--

449

00:27:01,910 --> 00:27:04,280

as you know, the  
Potsdam Conference.

450

00:27:04,280 --> 00:27:10,870

But it's important to clarify  
their position in Europe.

451

00:27:10,870 --> 00:27:13,970

And, of course, the  
German population,

452  
00:27:13,970 --> 00:27:18,130  
not only in Czechoslovakia,  
but even in Poland,

453  
00:27:18,130 --> 00:27:25,360  
was already isolated for it  
to be eventually resettled.

454  
00:27:25,360 --> 00:27:28,570  
They are words how to use--

455  
00:27:28,570 --> 00:27:31,750  
how it should be eventually--

456  
00:27:31,750 --> 00:27:34,210  
the Czech political scene.

457  
00:27:34,210 --> 00:27:37,690  
And it was  
understandable even to me

458  
00:27:37,690 --> 00:27:43,200  
that certain segment  
of Czech government

459  
00:27:43,200 --> 00:27:45,640  
do very well already in London.

460  
00:27:45,640 --> 00:27:54,700  
The future German-speaking  
Czech population,

461  
00:27:54,700 --> 00:28:00,520  
which was German but Czech,  
that their life together

462  
00:28:00,520 --> 00:28:04,240  
into that new  
resurrected country

463  
00:28:04,240 --> 00:28:09,280



will not be possible, that there  
is another political angle.

464

00:28:09,280 --> 00:28:13,420  
But I don't think so that is  
what you really wanted to know.

465

00:28:13,420 --> 00:28:16,970  
And I will not go into  
it unless you want me to.

466

00:28:16,970 --> 00:28:18,010  
No.

467

00:28:18,010 --> 00:28:20,380  
For me, it is simply--

468

00:28:20,380 --> 00:28:25,730  
again, the central part of this  
story is what you experienced.

469

00:28:25,730 --> 00:28:28,720  
So when I ask about  
this, it is usually

470

00:28:28,720 --> 00:28:31,930  
how you came across this.

471

00:28:31,930 --> 00:28:33,800  
Did you see it happen?

472

00:28:33,800 --> 00:28:34,300  
Did you--

473

00:28:34,300 --> 00:28:35,440  
I will stick to it.

474

00:28:35,440 --> 00:28:38,170

475

00:28:38,170 --> 00:28:40,720  
And since I know that's

something that happened,

476

00:28:40,720 --> 00:28:45,250

I wondered whether or not  
you being in that area,

477

00:28:45,250 --> 00:28:46,600

were a witness to it.

478

00:28:46,600 --> 00:28:50,470

479

00:28:50,470 --> 00:28:53,790

I find myself to  
observe all of this.

480

00:28:53,790 --> 00:28:57,700

And I find myself,  
to my surprise,

481

00:28:57,700 --> 00:29:03,790

in sympathy and empathy with the  
Germans what they are facing.

482

00:29:03,790 --> 00:29:08,750

I know that most Czechs  
were, good riddance,

483

00:29:08,750 --> 00:29:10,060

and they deserve it.

484

00:29:10,060 --> 00:29:13,000

Some did, but some did not.

485

00:29:13,000 --> 00:29:19,780

I no longer-- slowly and surely  
was not for collective guilt.

486

00:29:19,780 --> 00:29:24,010

I didn't see everybody  
deserve what I was seeing.

487

00:29:24,010 --> 00:29:25,690  
I see.

488  
00:29:25,690 --> 00:29:27,550  
And is this when you--

489  
00:29:27,550 --> 00:29:32,020  
what you were seeing is when you  
are based in this new hotel--

490  
00:29:32,020 --> 00:29:36,450  
or this hotel that Mr.  
Tomasek is running--

491  
00:29:36,450 --> 00:29:38,470  
and you're in ZeleznÁ; Ruda.

492  
00:29:38,470 --> 00:29:41,010  
And that's where you  
see things take place.

493  
00:29:41,010 --> 00:29:43,600  
Is that right?

494  
00:29:43,600 --> 00:29:44,100  
Right.

495  
00:29:44,100 --> 00:29:48,560  
And I think we can finish  
that story because there

496  
00:29:48,560 --> 00:29:54,360  
is, within a year, interesting  
encounter with refugee which

497  
00:29:54,360 --> 00:29:59,870  
running from all across  
Czechoslovakia into Germany.

498  
00:29:59,870 --> 00:30:03,860  
And I was then connected to  
this situation, which happened

499

00:30:03,860 --> 00:30:07,620  
in Poland, Kielce, in 1946.

500

00:30:07,620 --> 00:30:11,270  
But that is yet to come.

501

00:30:11,270 --> 00:30:16,790  
At this moment, I knew nothing  
about Poland and Kielce.

502

00:30:16,790 --> 00:30:19,460  
But I quickly learned  
in that region

503

00:30:19,460 --> 00:30:24,110  
because that the region was  
something because something was

504

00:30:24,110 --> 00:30:26,860  
happening there all the time.

505

00:30:26,860 --> 00:30:27,710  
[INAUDIBLE]

506

00:30:27,710 --> 00:30:31,410  
What was happening where  
all the time, Kielce?

507

00:30:31,410 --> 00:30:38,000  
I saw, for example,  
that little town--

508

00:30:38,000 --> 00:30:42,325  
that little resort-- was  
slowly being Bolshevized.

509

00:30:42,325 --> 00:30:45,590

510

00:30:45,590 --> 00:30:51,890  
The presence of ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda  
of Czech was mostly military

511  
00:30:51,890 --> 00:30:53,310  
and gendarme.

512  
00:30:53,310 --> 00:30:56,360  
A gendarme was the local.

513  
00:30:56,360 --> 00:30:59,530  
And then there was the  
what is called [CZECH],,

514  
00:30:59,530 --> 00:31:04,810  
which actually were guarding the  
border and crossing the border.

515  
00:31:04,810 --> 00:31:12,560  
It mainly elite group  
and their families.

516  
00:31:12,560 --> 00:31:16,430  
They were coming back to  
take control of that region.

517  
00:31:16,430 --> 00:31:19,080  
And the crossing border was--

518  
00:31:19,080 --> 00:31:21,950

519  
00:31:21,950 --> 00:31:24,850  
the border was hardly located.

520  
00:31:24,850 --> 00:31:29,790  
Within 20 minutes, I would be  
right standing on the border.

521  
00:31:29,790 --> 00:31:33,010  
And there was a lot of  
legal and illegal going.

522  
00:31:33,010 --> 00:31:38,120  
But it was the political

situation which was developing.

523

00:31:38,120 --> 00:31:43,670

I find out that we were the only  
hotel for almost a year which

524

00:31:43,670 --> 00:31:44,420

existed.

525

00:31:44,420 --> 00:31:49,760

Therefore, if I was during  
occupation, in Hotel Central,

526

00:31:49,760 --> 00:31:53,210

the Parteitag [INAUDIBLE]--

527

00:31:53,210 --> 00:31:57,520

I was watching Communistic  
Parteitag evenings

528

00:31:57,520 --> 00:32:00,800

because the Communist Party  
was forming and holding

529

00:32:00,800 --> 00:32:06,440

their meetings in the hotel  
where evening, I have to serve

530

00:32:06,440 --> 00:32:09,890

them beer and listen to them.

531

00:32:09,890 --> 00:32:14,870

So what was the name of  
the hotel in ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda?

532

00:32:14,870 --> 00:32:20,470

It was, first of  
all, much propaganda.

533

00:32:20,470 --> 00:32:24,170

It wasn't unreal  
to me because it

534

00:32:24,170 --> 00:32:28,730

was reminiscent of what I  
experienced in the Hotel

535

00:32:28,730 --> 00:32:29,300

Central.

536

00:32:29,300 --> 00:32:32,660

Symbolically, even  
it was practically,

537

00:32:32,660 --> 00:32:35,340

graphically happening  
same thing what

538

00:32:35,340 --> 00:32:37,758

I had seen in Hotel Central.

539

00:32:37,758 --> 00:32:38,300

I understand.

540

00:32:38,300 --> 00:32:41,410

A large dining  
room was decorated

541

00:32:41,410 --> 00:32:46,280

in the war, huge, big  
picture of Adolf Hitler.

542

00:32:46,280 --> 00:32:50,630

Underneath was a little  
stand about his [INAUDIBLE]..

543

00:32:50,630 --> 00:32:53,670

That was in gold.

544

00:32:53,670 --> 00:32:57,920

And here in the Hotel  
Slavie after the war,

545

00:32:57,920 --> 00:33:01,445

it was a huge big

job Joseph Stalin.

546  
00:33:01,445 --> 00:33:04,550  
And President, of course,  
Benes, was there too.

547  
00:33:04,550 --> 00:33:08,690  
But everything what  
I saw, it hit me,

548  
00:33:08,690 --> 00:33:11,920  
even that I was not even 17.

549  
00:33:11,920 --> 00:33:12,420  
So here's--

550  
00:33:12,420 --> 00:33:14,820  
I don't know why it hit me.

551  
00:33:14,820 --> 00:33:19,620  
I just was reacting--

552  
00:33:19,620 --> 00:33:23,850  
as a teenager, I was reacting.

553  
00:33:23,850 --> 00:33:28,110  
And I did not know how  
to control my feelings.

554  
00:33:28,110 --> 00:33:33,350  
So I showed it either facially  
or sometimes laughing,

555  
00:33:33,350 --> 00:33:35,130  
some of the things I heard.

556  
00:33:35,130 --> 00:33:38,790  
In no time, I was  
persona non grata.

557  
00:33:38,790 --> 00:33:46,710  
So I actually caused my



situation in ZeleznĀj Ruda to be

558  
00:33:46,710 --> 00:33:49,080  
hard and untenable.

559  
00:33:49,080 --> 00:33:49,580  
How long--

560  
00:33:49,580 --> 00:33:50,130  
I started--

561  
00:33:50,130 --> 00:33:53,670  
How long were you  
in ZeleznĀj Ruda for?

562  
00:33:53,670 --> 00:33:59,100  
I was left ZeleznĀj Ruda  
1947, early in spring.

563  
00:33:59,100 --> 00:34:02,010  
I will get to it,  
how did it happen.

564  
00:34:02,010 --> 00:34:06,120  
Yeah, but first I want to know,  
how long were you there for?

565  
00:34:06,120 --> 00:34:09,040  
So when did you arrive  
in ZeleznĀj Ruda?

566  
00:34:09,040 --> 00:34:14,070  
I arrived in ZeleznĀj Ruda  
probably at the end of August.

567  
00:34:14,070 --> 00:34:14,760  
1946?

568  
00:34:14,760 --> 00:34:16,440  
1945.

569  
00:34:16,440 --> 00:34:17,980

1945.

570

00:34:17,980 --> 00:34:18,480

So--

571

00:34:18,480 --> 00:34:23,520

I left definitely by-- in

1947 in May, I was gone.

572

00:34:23,520 --> 00:34:25,080

I know that.

573

00:34:25,080 --> 00:34:29,060

So it's less than two years

that you were ZeleznÄ; Ruda?

574

00:34:29,060 --> 00:34:29,820

Yes.

575

00:34:29,820 --> 00:34:32,489

And you see it change.

576

00:34:32,489 --> 00:34:39,300

You see it change and become

much more ideologically driven.

577

00:34:39,300 --> 00:34:43,239

And the ideology is

a Communist ideology.

578

00:34:43,239 --> 00:34:43,739

And you--

579

00:34:43,739 --> 00:34:45,030

That is accurate.

580

00:34:45,030 --> 00:34:49,770

And you mentioned that

local elites were part

581

00:34:49,770 --> 00:34:52,180

of these special gendarmes?

582  
00:34:52,180 --> 00:34:52,680  
Is that--

583  
00:34:52,680 --> 00:34:52,800  
Yes.

584  
00:34:52,800 --> 00:34:53,610  
--correct?

585  
00:34:53,610 --> 00:34:58,680  
So when they came  
back, it was not

586  
00:34:58,680 --> 00:35:02,520  
like outsiders  
coming into the area.

587  
00:35:02,520 --> 00:35:07,020  
What emerged was the local  
Communist Party sympathizers,

588  
00:35:07,020 --> 00:35:08,790  
who became prominent.

589  
00:35:08,790 --> 00:35:10,260  
Is that correct?

590  
00:35:10,260 --> 00:35:11,760  
Yes.

591  
00:35:11,760 --> 00:35:14,502  
But I'll add something to it.

592  
00:35:14,502 --> 00:35:17,655  
The people who were coming  
back to that region,

593  
00:35:17,655 --> 00:35:23,640  
into ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda, those who  
were driven by Germans during

594

00:35:23,640 --> 00:35:28,740  
the Munich Agreement, there  
were very few coming back.

595

00:35:28,740 --> 00:35:31,710  
Most of the people  
were newcomers.

596

00:35:31,710 --> 00:35:35,820  
And in fact, some of  
them were, in no time,

597

00:35:35,820 --> 00:35:40,320  
called gold diggers, Czech  
was called "zlatokop,"

598

00:35:40,320 --> 00:35:46,800  
looking for something to get  
hold on, mostly stealing.

599

00:35:46,800 --> 00:35:51,060  
But the military, they already  
the infrastructure which

600

00:35:51,060 --> 00:35:56,970  
control the city council,  
the national council,

601

00:35:56,970 --> 00:36:03,290  
the control of the  
border for a post office.

602

00:36:03,290 --> 00:36:07,980  
And very important was  
the railroad employee.

603

00:36:07,980 --> 00:36:11,130  
They were coming there--

604

00:36:11,130 --> 00:36:13,170  
they had jobs to do.

605

00:36:13,170 --> 00:36:16,020  
But other people  
were coming there

606  
00:36:16,020 --> 00:36:18,990  
for other purpose  
and other reasons.

607  
00:36:18,990 --> 00:36:19,770  
I see.

608  
00:36:19,770 --> 00:36:22,920  
And you're saying most of  
those reasons were to--

609  
00:36:22,920 --> 00:36:25,320  
They're no good.

610  
00:36:25,320 --> 00:36:28,620  
They were to benefit from the--

611  
00:36:28,620 --> 00:36:30,130  
They wanted to get benefits.

612  
00:36:30,130 --> 00:36:33,990  
And they have much to  
gain because as I say,

613  
00:36:33,990 --> 00:36:41,230  
civil rights for  
the German native

614  
00:36:41,230 --> 00:36:43,530  
were simply out of there.

615  
00:36:43,530 --> 00:36:49,600  
If they did have any,  
nobody really respect them.

616  
00:36:49,600 --> 00:36:52,650  
So it was that Czech  
who were running--

617

00:36:52,650 --> 00:36:56,270  
of course, in ZeleznĀ; Ruda  
later on, I find out I was not

618

00:36:56,270 --> 00:36:58,060  
the only foreigner.

619

00:36:58,060 --> 00:37:00,930  
I was really not work  
on because they want

620

00:37:00,930 --> 00:37:03,150  
to make it homogeneous Czech.

621

00:37:03,150 --> 00:37:05,940  
But you were also Czech?

622

00:37:05,940 --> 00:37:09,660  
Yes and no, because I didn't  
start to act like a Czech.

623

00:37:09,660 --> 00:37:13,030

624

00:37:13,030 --> 00:37:16,260  
There were a few  
Italian families there.

625

00:37:16,260 --> 00:37:18,330  
There were even Dutch families.

626

00:37:18,330 --> 00:37:20,200  
I happened to  
learn to know them.

627

00:37:20,200 --> 00:37:22,830  
I also know why they were there.

628

00:37:22,830 --> 00:37:25,200  
The Italian families  
were longstanding.

629

00:37:25,200 --> 00:37:28,170

They must have come  
there in the 19th century

630

00:37:28,170 --> 00:37:33,320

because this was a region,  
which was building the railroad

631

00:37:33,320 --> 00:37:35,100

at the end of 19th century.

632

00:37:35,100 --> 00:37:39,630

And Italians were pretty  
good on digging tunnels

633

00:37:39,630 --> 00:37:43,210

because there were a  
number of tunnels there.

634

00:37:43,210 --> 00:37:47,070

So I think Dutchmen  
was there because he

635

00:37:47,070 --> 00:37:52,480

have a hotel on a  
very nice location.

636

00:37:52,480 --> 00:37:55,270

However, he was  
not able to open.

637

00:37:55,270 --> 00:37:58,650

He was not exactly  
treated as a German.

638

00:37:58,650 --> 00:38:00,210

But that's a different story.

639

00:38:00,210 --> 00:38:02,930

Let's concentrate what--

640

00:38:02,930 --> 00:38:06,760

Yeah, let's concentrate on what is happening to you.

641  
00:38:06,760 --> 00:38:09,630  
Now I have a few questions.

642  
00:38:09,630 --> 00:38:11,730  
In that time that you're in ZeleznĀ; Ruda,

643  
00:38:11,730 --> 00:38:17,450  
is that far from your village of TĀ;chonice?

644  
00:38:17,450 --> 00:38:19,900  
It is far, yes.

645  
00:38:19,900 --> 00:38:23,670  
That was definitely already quite a distance.

646  
00:38:23,670 --> 00:38:28,830  
And I was happy to be in ZeleznĀ; Ruda because I liked

647  
00:38:28,830 --> 00:38:29,830  
the nature.

648  
00:38:29,830 --> 00:38:32,110  
I liked the history of it.

649  
00:38:32,110 --> 00:38:36,850  
It was a well-known place.

650  
00:38:36,850 --> 00:38:41,230  
Czech writers of 19th century wrote great many story,

651  
00:38:41,230 --> 00:38:44,450  
which I actually read as a kid.

652  
00:38:44,450 --> 00:38:49,270



So I was feeling very  
good to be where I was.

653  
00:38:49,270 --> 00:38:53,740  
But I was not happy about  
have things happening to me

654  
00:38:53,740 --> 00:38:57,080  
because I wasn't  
marching to the tune.

655  
00:38:57,080 --> 00:39:02,830  
It would have been easy to  
become a member of the labor

656  
00:39:02,830 --> 00:39:07,480  
union and this and this  
organization, which

657  
00:39:07,480 --> 00:39:12,580  
I was blessed to join in  
instead just become simply

658  
00:39:12,580 --> 00:39:14,770  
as one of them.

659  
00:39:14,770 --> 00:39:15,400  
But I was--

660  
00:39:15,400 --> 00:39:19,800  
What was it about this new  
system that you didn't like?

661  
00:39:19,800 --> 00:39:23,170

662  
00:39:23,170 --> 00:39:26,440  
For example, I already  
make my first contact

663  
00:39:26,440 --> 00:39:28,980  
with the United States Embassy.

664

00:39:28,980 --> 00:39:33,910

And I was already  
presenting my application

665

00:39:33,910 --> 00:39:39,470

for better ID, so I do not  
have this hate for Fremdenpass.

666

00:39:39,470 --> 00:39:42,010

And I presented my  
birth certificate,

667

00:39:42,010 --> 00:39:46,320

and I was acknowledged  
already by the embassy,

668

00:39:46,320 --> 00:39:50,350

that I have the  
right to a passport.

669

00:39:50,350 --> 00:39:52,150

So this is the  
embassy in Prague?

670

00:39:52,150 --> 00:39:52,870

You went--

671

00:39:52,870 --> 00:39:54,410

This is the embassy in Prague.

672

00:39:54,410 --> 00:39:55,980

So you went to Prague?

673

00:39:55,980 --> 00:39:56,720

OK.

674

00:39:56,720 --> 00:40:03,350

That gives me the confidence--  
and that gives me the attitude.

675

00:40:03,350 --> 00:40:06,110

I acted in ZeleznĀ; Ruda--

676  
00:40:06,110 --> 00:40:09,950  
I felt I would eventually  
have a proper ID.

677  
00:40:09,950 --> 00:40:14,420  
I had not requested that  
passport in the United States

678  
00:40:14,420 --> 00:40:17,390  
with the intention  
that I will leave.

679  
00:40:17,390 --> 00:40:22,510  
I just want to have  
some legitimate papers

680  
00:40:22,510 --> 00:40:23,900  
that I'm there.

681  
00:40:23,900 --> 00:40:25,410  
Now one of the reasons I--

682  
00:40:25,410 --> 00:40:28,410  
And I couldn't get Czech paper.

683  
00:40:28,410 --> 00:40:32,340  
One of the reasons I ask whether  
your home village was far away

684  
00:40:32,340 --> 00:40:35,460  
or not is that earlier  
in our interview,

685  
00:40:35,460 --> 00:40:39,090  
you mentioned that there  
was this grand uncle,

686  
00:40:39,090 --> 00:40:43,350  
your grandfather's brother,  
who visited you there.

687

00:40:43,350 --> 00:40:46,830

And when you told him you wanted  
to leave and go to America,

688

00:40:46,830 --> 00:40:50,310

he approved of your plans.

689

00:40:50,310 --> 00:40:54,390

Now this visit, this  
time when you met him,

690

00:40:54,390 --> 00:40:57,840

was during the time you were  
living and ZeleznĀ; Ruda?

691

00:40:57,840 --> 00:41:00,310

Or had you left there already?

692

00:41:00,310 --> 00:41:00,810

No.

693

00:41:00,810 --> 00:41:03,550

I met him already  
when I was ready to go

694

00:41:03,550 --> 00:41:08,730

to join the US Army, almost  
a year and half later.

695

00:41:08,730 --> 00:41:12,090

So this is after you  
leave ZeleznĀ; Ruda.

696

00:41:12,090 --> 00:41:16,930

You return to TĀ;chonice?

697

00:41:16,930 --> 00:41:17,430

Yes.

698

00:41:17,430 --> 00:41:19,710

At this time, I do  
not know anything

699

00:41:19,710 --> 00:41:24,480

about where about my uncle or my  
grandfather's younger brother.

700

00:41:24,480 --> 00:41:26,880

I did not know that.

701

00:41:26,880 --> 00:41:30,060

So let's talk now a  
little bit about when

702

00:41:30,060 --> 00:41:35,670

you're at that  
hotel, how you meet

703

00:41:35,670 --> 00:41:42,270

these two Jewish Polish  
students, who cross the border.

704

00:41:42,270 --> 00:41:44,720

Tell me about that incident.

705

00:41:44,720 --> 00:41:50,100

That would be-- by  
1946, I felt at ease.

706

00:41:50,100 --> 00:41:53,100

And I have a co-worker  
and good friend that

707

00:41:53,100 --> 00:41:54,740

would become a lifetime friend.

708

00:41:54,740 --> 00:41:59,260

His name was Jaroslav Rubac.

709

00:41:59,260 --> 00:42:01,310

He played an important role.

710

00:42:01,310 --> 00:42:03,300

We did it together.

711  
00:42:03,300 --> 00:42:04,710  
He was year younger.

712  
00:42:04,710 --> 00:42:09,700  
And we were the only waiters  
working in that hotel.

713  
00:42:09,700 --> 00:42:12,870  
And it was 1946.

714  
00:42:12,870 --> 00:42:17,970  
We did hear through the news  
and in paper and through radio

715  
00:42:17,970 --> 00:42:21,960  
that there was something  
going on in Poland.

716  
00:42:21,960 --> 00:42:24,880  
And when we read  
it, we just were

717  
00:42:24,880 --> 00:42:30,450  
shocked because we just suddenly  
get a new word, "pogrom."

718  
00:42:30,450 --> 00:42:36,430  
I did not know much about what  
the word "pogrom" meant at all.

719  
00:42:36,430 --> 00:42:41,070  
And Kielce was quite a  
distance from ZeleznÅ; Ruda.

720  
00:42:41,070 --> 00:42:44,570  
Neither did I know  
where Kielce were.

721  
00:42:44,570 --> 00:42:47,670  
How little did I  
know that very soon,

722

00:42:47,670 --> 00:42:51,300  
Kielce will come to  
me to ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda.

723  
00:42:51,300 --> 00:42:52,610  
Pure coincidence.

724  
00:42:52,610 --> 00:42:55,350

725  
00:42:55,350 --> 00:42:57,520  
So we knew something going on.

726  
00:42:57,520 --> 00:43:00,970  
But we also knew in  
August that there

727  
00:43:00,970 --> 00:43:06,570  
was a big international hoopla  
of international student

728  
00:43:06,570 --> 00:43:07,170  
union--

729  
00:43:07,170 --> 00:43:09,990  
it has a very fine  
fancy title, which I

730  
00:43:09,990 --> 00:43:11,430  
wouldn't be able to translate.

731  
00:43:11,430 --> 00:43:15,820  
It's sponsored, of course,  
by Moscow, by Communists,

732  
00:43:15,820 --> 00:43:18,990  
by politicians,  
to organize-- they

733  
00:43:18,990 --> 00:43:22,440  
were trying to catch young  
people, and particularly

734  
00:43:22,440 --> 00:43:23,700  
students.

735  
00:43:23,700 --> 00:43:26,710  
And they have a big  
international meeting.

736  
00:43:26,710 --> 00:43:29,220  
And Prague was very  
proud that they

737  
00:43:29,220 --> 00:43:32,760  
have a first great  
meeting of youth

738  
00:43:32,760 --> 00:43:37,200  
from all over Europe,  
which was not true.

739  
00:43:37,200 --> 00:43:41,990  
Only east was meeting there.

740  
00:43:41,990 --> 00:43:44,920  
Now that was what we knew.

741  
00:43:44,920 --> 00:43:49,140  
And we did not go  
anymore into it.

742  
00:43:49,140 --> 00:43:54,400  
But it was still going  
on because Czechoslovakia

743  
00:43:54,400 --> 00:43:58,710  
government have a difficult  
situation how to deal

744  
00:43:58,710 --> 00:44:00,810  
with the Jewish population.

745  
00:44:00,810 --> 00:44:03,580  
Whatever it was in



Poland were suddenly

746  
00:44:03,580 --> 00:44:06,330  
picking up and leaving Poland.

747  
00:44:06,330 --> 00:44:12,240  
And most of them choose  
crossing Czechoslovakia

748  
00:44:12,240 --> 00:44:13,690  
into West Germany.

749  
00:44:13,690 --> 00:44:18,030  
They didn't choose East Germany.

750  
00:44:18,030 --> 00:44:22,980  
So they started crossing the  
border in very places where I

751  
00:44:22,980 --> 00:44:28,857  
was on labor camp during  
the Germany, in Silesia,

752  
00:44:28,857 --> 00:44:32,640  
mostly in place, NĀĭchod.

753  
00:44:32,640 --> 00:44:35,610  
You're talking about Olomouc  
then, when you were in Olomouc?

754  
00:44:35,610 --> 00:44:37,030  
Yes, I was in Olomouc.

755  
00:44:37,030 --> 00:44:41,310  
But NĀĭchod was not very much  
because the Czechoslovakian

756  
00:44:41,310 --> 00:44:47,450  
government somehow did not want  
to let loose this population

757  
00:44:47,450 --> 00:44:51,570

at will and keep going  
across without some control.

758  
00:44:51,570 --> 00:44:54,480  
Apparently they must  
have been pressed

759  
00:44:54,480 --> 00:45:02,420  
either by Polish government,  
either by occupation authority

760  
00:45:02,420 --> 00:45:06,470  
in West Germany, because  
they were definitely

761  
00:45:06,470 --> 00:45:11,313  
threatened to be flood with  
a couple thousand refugees.

762  
00:45:11,313 --> 00:45:12,480  
So I'm going to stop there--

763  
00:45:12,480 --> 00:45:18,620  
So Czechoslovakian government  
created a camp in NÄchod.

764  
00:45:18,620 --> 00:45:26,600  
And they tried to hold on this  
Polish-Jewish diaspora which

765  
00:45:26,600 --> 00:45:28,610  
was pouring in.

766  
00:45:28,610 --> 00:45:34,310  
So they are not lose,  
completely crossing the--

767  
00:45:34,310 --> 00:45:38,490  
they tried to act as  
humanitarians to begin with.

768  
00:45:38,490 --> 00:45:40,945  
That's what press say.

769

00:45:40,945 --> 00:45:48,950

And they tried to always draw  
pacify Polish concern and also

770

00:45:48,950 --> 00:45:54,680

occupation of authority in  
West German, like the British

771

00:45:54,680 --> 00:45:59,020

and French and Americans  
in West Germany.

772

00:45:59,020 --> 00:46:02,400

They tried to control  
who won't get there

773

00:46:02,400 --> 00:46:05,420

and how do they get there.

774

00:46:05,420 --> 00:46:09,490

That was obvious even  
to me at that age.

775

00:46:09,490 --> 00:46:12,680

And at this time,  
as I'm talking,

776

00:46:12,680 --> 00:46:15,800

nobody up here yet  
in ZeleznÄ Ruda.

777

00:46:15,800 --> 00:46:23,810

But I know the Polish Jews were  
detained around city of NÄchod.

778

00:46:23,810 --> 00:46:26,750

And just to make it  
clear, because we're not

779

00:46:26,750 --> 00:46:29,090

talking about this  
in any detail,

780  
00:46:29,090 --> 00:46:35,780  
but the reason why there is  
this stream of Jewish refugees

781  
00:46:35,780 --> 00:46:40,250  
from Poland post-war in  
1946 is because there

782  
00:46:40,250 --> 00:46:47,970  
is a pogrom in Kielce, where  
several dozen Jews are killed?

783  
00:46:47,970 --> 00:46:48,470  
Yes.

784  
00:46:48,470 --> 00:46:54,560  
And that is what spurs this  
exodus from Kielce for sure

785  
00:46:54,560 --> 00:46:57,620  
and from other parts  
of Poland as well.

786  
00:46:57,620 --> 00:46:59,930  
And so they're coming  
into the Czech lands,

787  
00:46:59,930 --> 00:47:02,090  
wanting to get westwards.

788  
00:47:02,090 --> 00:47:08,160  
And the Czech government creates  
this holding place near Nãchod

789  
00:47:08,160 --> 00:47:09,580  
for them.

790  
00:47:09,580 --> 00:47:13,500  
And this is where at which point  
you are explaining to me how

791

00:47:13,500 --> 00:47:17,730  
those two Jewish students  
come to ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda.

792  
00:47:17,730 --> 00:47:18,880  
Is that correct?

793  
00:47:18,880 --> 00:47:19,380  
Correct.

794  
00:47:19,380 --> 00:47:20,950  
You have it absolutely right.

795  
00:47:20,950 --> 00:47:23,420  
I like the way you say holding.

796  
00:47:23,420 --> 00:47:26,370  
Yes, Czechs were  
creating holdings.

797  
00:47:26,370 --> 00:47:31,860  
And Czech work was very busy  
trying to act humanitarian.

798  
00:47:31,860 --> 00:47:35,040  
The Polish two students,  
which I'm going to talk,

799  
00:47:35,040 --> 00:47:36,390  
didn't come that way.

800  
00:47:36,390 --> 00:47:39,540  
They choose even better way.

801  
00:47:39,540 --> 00:47:43,230  
They apparently had  
opportunity in students

802  
00:47:43,230 --> 00:47:48,690  
to join that student  
international meeting, so

803

00:47:48,690 --> 00:47:53,790  
called, a European  
movement of young people.

804  
00:47:53,790 --> 00:47:58,470  
They apparently find an easy  
way to get right into Prague

805  
00:47:58,470 --> 00:48:05,190  
by join this Polish  
student organization

806  
00:48:05,190 --> 00:48:10,710  
and took part, apparently,  
in that Congress,

807  
00:48:10,710 --> 00:48:13,620  
which was held in Prague.

808  
00:48:13,620 --> 00:48:17,100  
And by that time they  
were orienting themselves

809  
00:48:17,100 --> 00:48:21,150  
in the country, and I assume  
this is how they find out

810  
00:48:21,150 --> 00:48:26,740  
ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda as a point  
to get into West Germany.

811  
00:48:26,740 --> 00:48:29,910  
So how do they cross your path?

812  
00:48:29,910 --> 00:48:32,190  
Tell me the specifics of how--

813  
00:48:32,190 --> 00:48:38,490  
And that I can be very  
specific because that

814  
00:48:38,490 --> 00:48:42,720  
was the biggest adventure

I have participated in.

815  
00:48:42,720 --> 00:48:46,155  
But I understood those two  
Polish students very easier.

816  
00:48:46,155 --> 00:48:49,110

817  
00:48:49,110 --> 00:48:52,800  
It was, I believe,  
beginning of September

818  
00:48:52,800 --> 00:48:55,290  
because we had no business.

819  
00:48:55,290 --> 00:48:57,330  
Vacation was over  
and everything.

820  
00:48:57,330 --> 00:49:00,070  
We have hardly few guests.

821  
00:49:00,070 --> 00:49:03,030  
And suddenly, early,  
around 11:00--

822  
00:49:03,030 --> 00:49:08,110  
before noon-- and we would  
serve only few dinners to begin

823  
00:49:08,110 --> 00:49:08,610  
with--

824  
00:49:08,610 --> 00:49:10,260  
they came, two students.

825  
00:49:10,260 --> 00:49:13,320  
And they came and  
asked for breakfast.

826  
00:49:13,320 --> 00:49:16,650

And they came, and they  
were highly visible

827  
00:49:16,650 --> 00:49:22,600  
because they carry on their  
hats their student Polish hats

828  
00:49:22,600 --> 00:49:26,850  
or caps, which were  
so visible, nobody--

829  
00:49:26,850 --> 00:49:29,340  
they certainly went  
the wrong way about it

830  
00:49:29,340 --> 00:49:32,820  
to come to the border the  
way they were dressed.

831  
00:49:32,820 --> 00:49:36,520  
So they immediately  
attract our attention.

832  
00:49:36,520 --> 00:49:38,550  
They have some  
knowledge of Czech.

833  
00:49:38,550 --> 00:49:40,630  
But it was very bad.

834  
00:49:40,630 --> 00:49:44,970  
So we used  
communication of Czech,

835  
00:49:44,970 --> 00:49:47,920  
and whatever Polish  
we understood too.

836  
00:49:47,920 --> 00:49:48,420  
Were these--

837  
00:49:48,420 --> 00:49:49,590  
Then we just--



838  
00:49:49,590 --> 00:49:52,510  
Excuse me, let me ask a  
bunch of questions here.

839  
00:49:52,510 --> 00:49:56,100  
We are talking about two  
young men, is this correct?

840  
00:49:56,100 --> 00:49:57,120  
Not any girls?

841  
00:49:57,120 --> 00:50:01,890  
Yes, [INAUDIBLE] young men who  
arrived and ordered breakfast

842  
00:50:01,890 --> 00:50:03,520  
before noon.

843  
00:50:03,520 --> 00:50:07,020  
And they arrived with  
dressed as a student

844  
00:50:07,020 --> 00:50:11,247  
with a Polish  
insignia signs, which

845  
00:50:11,247 --> 00:50:14,890  
was odd, which was  
definitely something nobody

846  
00:50:14,890 --> 00:50:17,920  
saw ever before.

847  
00:50:17,920 --> 00:50:23,890  
And did they stand  
out in any other way,

848  
00:50:23,890 --> 00:50:26,320  
aside from the way  
they were dressed?

849

00:50:26,320 --> 00:50:29,470

No, they didn't--  
because they were decent,

850

00:50:29,470 --> 00:50:33,200

and they have light  
luggage, it was sort of a--

851

00:50:33,200 --> 00:50:35,920

in Czech they  
would call "taÅ½ka."

852

00:50:35,920 --> 00:50:38,660

They have very little with them.

853

00:50:38,660 --> 00:50:40,630

And they have their breakfast.

854

00:50:40,630 --> 00:50:43,130

And only when they  
[? start ask ?]

855

00:50:43,130 --> 00:50:49,030

[? for paying ?] then suddenly  
one of them ask me because I

856

00:50:49,030 --> 00:50:50,110

was their head waiter.

857

00:50:50,110 --> 00:50:52,310

I had to take the  
money from them.

858

00:50:52,310 --> 00:50:57,660

And they asked me which way they  
can cross into Germany, just

859

00:50:57,660 --> 00:50:58,900

like that.

860

00:50:58,900 --> 00:51:02,230

There was nobody in that  
restaurant at that moment

861  
00:51:02,230 --> 00:51:05,660  
but my friend and them.

862  
00:51:05,660 --> 00:51:06,680  
Wow.

863  
00:51:06,680 --> 00:51:07,550  
So they took a risk.

864  
00:51:07,550 --> 00:51:09,040  
And they asked that.

865  
00:51:09,040 --> 00:51:12,490  
So I assume that he's  
asking the legal way.

866  
00:51:12,490 --> 00:51:16,330  
So I assumed I will show to him,  
oh, you keep going this road.

867  
00:51:16,330 --> 00:51:19,060  
And you go get to the border.

868  
00:51:19,060 --> 00:51:22,240  
And then I realized he hesitate.

869  
00:51:22,240 --> 00:51:26,430  
And he say, no, I  
don't mean that way.

870  
00:51:26,430 --> 00:51:29,530  
And that way, which way?

871  
00:51:29,530 --> 00:51:32,900  
And he pointed out right  
there, out of the window,

872  
00:51:32,900 --> 00:51:36,650  
he could see the forest.

873

00:51:36,650 --> 00:51:41,080

And that was-- I  
never heard that.

874

00:51:41,080 --> 00:51:43,690

I was there already  
more than a year,

875

00:51:43,690 --> 00:51:46,060

but certainly nobody  
asked me that.

876

00:51:46,060 --> 00:51:48,770

Now, I say, that's  
something interesting.

877

00:51:48,770 --> 00:51:53,930

And I called my co-worker  
quickly to come in.

878

00:51:53,930 --> 00:51:57,680

We find out that to be  
sure that we understand it,

879

00:51:57,680 --> 00:52:01,670

we could not carry that in  
half-Czech, half-Polish,

880

00:52:01,670 --> 00:52:04,000

so we asked if they  
understood German.

881

00:52:04,000 --> 00:52:05,270

They did.

882

00:52:05,270 --> 00:52:12,830

So our communication start  
more or less in German.

883

00:52:12,830 --> 00:52:14,660

Their German was good.

884

00:52:14,660 --> 00:52:18,142

I believe ours was  
a little better.

885  
00:52:18,142 --> 00:52:18,850  
But at any rate--

886  
00:52:18,850 --> 00:52:19,350  
I start--

887  
00:52:19,350 --> 00:52:21,890  
--now you could  
talk to one another?

888  
00:52:21,890 --> 00:52:28,380  
So we start definitely-- all  
was done in German from then on.

889  
00:52:28,380 --> 00:52:32,310  
And we just recognize  
that this is--

890  
00:52:32,310 --> 00:52:36,150  
we did not recognize  
right away a reason.

891  
00:52:36,150 --> 00:52:37,560  
We didn't get it.

892  
00:52:37,560 --> 00:52:41,175  
But soon as we got it,  
when they say, we are Jew,

893  
00:52:41,175 --> 00:52:43,560  
and we are from Kielce--

894  
00:52:43,560 --> 00:52:45,780  
if they were from  
Kielce, I don't

895  
00:52:45,780 --> 00:52:50,650  
know because I don't know if  
they were students in Kielce.

896

00:52:50,650 --> 00:52:54,240

But certainly they  
say we are Jews.

897

00:52:54,240 --> 00:52:56,175

And we're running from Kielce.

898

00:52:56,175 --> 00:52:58,860

899

00:52:58,860 --> 00:53:02,550

And they explained why  
they came where they come.

900

00:53:02,550 --> 00:53:06,600

They come from Prague because  
they attend that Congress.

901

00:53:06,600 --> 00:53:11,040

That was their purpose  
they came into Prague.

902

00:53:11,040 --> 00:53:14,940

And their purpose coming in  
Zelezna Ruda was continue

903

00:53:14,940 --> 00:53:17,960

to go.

904

00:53:17,960 --> 00:53:21,840

There we were immediately  
at that age, and they were--

905

00:53:21,840 --> 00:53:24,450

I don't think so  
they were or over 20.

906

00:53:24,450 --> 00:53:28,050

I think they were  
all around 19, 20.

907

00:53:28,050 --> 00:53:29,700

And you at this age--

908  
00:53:29,700 --> 00:53:32,560  
at this point, how  
old are you, 17, 18?

909  
00:53:32,560 --> 00:53:35,580  
At that age, I'm going to be 17.

910  
00:53:35,580 --> 00:53:38,010  
So you are younger  
than they are?

911  
00:53:38,010 --> 00:53:41,430  
Yes, I was definitely younger.

912  
00:53:41,430 --> 00:53:47,130  
But I understood what they  
want because it was only

913  
00:53:47,130 --> 00:53:51,840  
a couple of months ago, I was  
on the run like they were.

914  
00:53:51,840 --> 00:53:57,630  
This probably was one of the  
response-- an impulse for me

915  
00:53:57,630 --> 00:53:59,505  
to be part of their scheme.

916  
00:53:59,505 --> 00:54:02,180

917  
00:54:02,180 --> 00:54:06,827  
I can identify with some of  
the things they were doing.

918  
00:54:06,827 --> 00:54:07,535  
So what happened?

919  
00:54:07,535 --> 00:54:11,540

I grasped quickly their reason.

920

00:54:11,540 --> 00:54:15,490

There was no more  
question about why for me.

921

00:54:15,490 --> 00:54:18,258

I was willing to help.

922

00:54:18,258 --> 00:54:19,050

So what did you do?

923

00:54:19,050 --> 00:54:22,040

So I reach-- can I talk?

924

00:54:22,040 --> 00:54:22,540

Absolutely.

925

00:54:22,540 --> 00:54:25,810

I'm saying, so what did you do?

926

00:54:25,810 --> 00:54:29,710

I consulted my friend,  
and we just decide that--

927

00:54:29,710 --> 00:54:32,830

we'd told them how to go about--

928

00:54:32,830 --> 00:54:37,480

exactly pointing to that  
hill and to that forest.

929

00:54:37,480 --> 00:54:43,960

Then we just realized--  
my friend and I--

930

00:54:43,960 --> 00:54:48,340

that that's not a really  
safe way, that we really

931

00:54:48,340 --> 00:54:51,550

don't know that was a say way.



932  
00:54:51,550 --> 00:54:53,830  
We knew that was the direction.

933  
00:54:53,830 --> 00:54:56,510  
But we didn't think it was safe.

934  
00:54:56,510 --> 00:54:59,480  
So then we decided on  
a different scheme,

935  
00:54:59,480 --> 00:55:02,770  
right open and daring.

936  
00:55:02,770 --> 00:55:12,060  
ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda have actually two  
railroad stations and one stop.

937  
00:55:12,060 --> 00:55:16,790  
The main radio station,  
which was very small,

938  
00:55:16,790 --> 00:55:22,240  
which visitors would arrive at  
the beginning of ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda,

939  
00:55:22,240 --> 00:55:26,332  
direction coming from Klatovy.

940  
00:55:26,332 --> 00:55:28,360  
And that was small.

941  
00:55:28,360 --> 00:55:31,585  
The final station  
was at the border.

942  
00:55:31,585 --> 00:55:35,100

943  
00:55:35,100 --> 00:55:40,790  
And there was a stop because  
from the arriving station,

944  
00:55:40,790 --> 00:55:44,070  
the train had to go  
through the tunnel.

945  
00:55:44,070 --> 00:55:46,740  
And when that train  
goes through the tunnel,

946  
00:55:46,740 --> 00:55:49,830  
it announced itself where it is.

947  
00:55:49,830 --> 00:55:51,480  
There was big whistle.

948  
00:55:51,480 --> 00:55:55,450  
And it usually took couple  
of minutes, the train

949  
00:55:55,450 --> 00:55:57,060  
to make that tunnel.

950  
00:55:57,060 --> 00:56:00,800  
Soon as it got out of a tunnel,  
there was a little stop.

951  
00:56:00,800 --> 00:56:05,755  
And it went right hardly  
100 yards from our hotel.

952  
00:56:05,755 --> 00:56:08,750

953  
00:56:08,750 --> 00:56:11,220  
And there was a little platform.

954  
00:56:11,220 --> 00:56:16,430  
And when the train arrived  
already out of the tunnel,

955  
00:56:16,430 --> 00:56:20,940  
it stopped at that platform.

956

00:56:20,940 --> 00:56:24,330

And usually some  
railroad employee

957

00:56:24,330 --> 00:56:27,510

would get out to [INAUDIBLE].

958

00:56:27,510 --> 00:56:30,240

There was simply  
no more any people

959

00:56:30,240 --> 00:56:34,530

in the train except  
some railroad employee

960

00:56:34,530 --> 00:56:37,710

or somebody who  
might like to go all

961

00:56:37,710 --> 00:56:40,040

the way to the  
border from the town,

962

00:56:40,040 --> 00:56:44,160

might board that train  
in those few minutes,

963

00:56:44,160 --> 00:56:46,530

had a free ride  
all the way down.

964

00:56:46,530 --> 00:56:51,000

And that was our point  
where we started to scheme

965

00:56:51,000 --> 00:56:54,990

how to get them  
across to the border

966

00:56:54,990 --> 00:57:01,090

because we knew exactly how it'd  
look at the big station, which

967  
00:57:01,090 --> 00:57:03,170  
was a big huge station.

968  
00:57:03,170 --> 00:57:06,050  
It was built during  
also Hungarian Empire.

969  
00:57:06,050 --> 00:57:08,630  
Half of it belonged to German.

970  
00:57:08,630 --> 00:57:10,730  
And half of it  
belongs to the Czech.

971  
00:57:10,730 --> 00:57:15,480  
And on the left side of the  
station was more forest.

972  
00:57:15,480 --> 00:57:20,650  
And that was only hop into  
German side, which was

973  
00:57:20,650 --> 00:57:23,810  
called Bayerisch Eisenstein.

974  
00:57:23,810 --> 00:57:27,200  
And if you arrive  
through that forest

975  
00:57:27,200 --> 00:57:32,760  
station on a train,  
which is almost empty,

976  
00:57:32,760 --> 00:57:38,140  
and exit the train on the left  
side, not on the right side,

977  
00:57:38,140 --> 00:57:47,170  
with some direction, you are  
in no time free into Germany.

978

00:57:47,170 --> 00:57:51,530  
The scheme was that as we were  
explaining to them where they

979  
00:57:51,530 --> 00:57:56,430  
came on board, this train on  
the platform, which is stopping,

980  
00:57:56,430 --> 00:57:59,860  
and what to do when they  
get in main station,

981  
00:57:59,860 --> 00:58:01,880  
they were hesitant.

982  
00:58:01,880 --> 00:58:04,790  
They did not get the scheme.

983  
00:58:04,790 --> 00:58:07,900  
So suddenly I say to John--

984  
00:58:07,900 --> 00:58:09,800  
I will call him John--

985  
00:58:09,800 --> 00:58:13,130  
at that time his  
name was Jaroslav.

986  
00:58:13,130 --> 00:58:16,770  
I would say, why  
don't we go with them?

987  
00:58:16,770 --> 00:58:20,350  
And it was [? instinctive ?].

988  
00:58:20,350 --> 00:58:21,880  
And it was fast.

989  
00:58:21,880 --> 00:58:23,005  
We go with you.

990  
00:58:23,005 --> 00:58:27,910

And we knew very well that we could only do it certain time.

991  
00:58:27,910 --> 00:58:30,550  
Train were leaving  
just like that.

992  
00:58:30,550 --> 00:58:33,700  
We knew the schedule  
of the train,

993  
00:58:33,700 --> 00:58:36,960  
that there'd be a  
scheduled train at 3:20,

994  
00:58:36,960 --> 00:58:40,510  
which would emerge  
from that tunnel,

995  
00:58:40,510 --> 00:58:43,060  
and we can board that train.

996  
00:58:43,060 --> 00:58:48,100  
So we devised the  
situation for them,

997  
00:58:48,100 --> 00:58:54,730  
that I and John will  
go first, and they

998  
00:58:54,730 --> 00:58:59,560  
will come a few minutes because  
they will have enough time.

999  
00:58:59,560 --> 00:59:03,490  
Train will announce  
itself by loud whistle.

1000  
00:59:03,490 --> 00:59:07,300  
That means it will take couple  
minutes before train really

1001  
00:59:07,300 --> 00:59:10,990

come to the platform,  
where we could board it,

1002  
00:59:10,990 --> 00:59:15,160  
that I and John will be  
the first one to get on.

1003  
00:59:15,160 --> 00:59:19,030  
And they will go on the end.

1004  
00:59:19,030 --> 00:59:20,680  
They choose  
different [INAUDIBLE]

1005  
00:59:20,680 --> 00:59:23,815  
same thing, that we  
don't go together,

1006  
00:59:23,815 --> 00:59:26,780  
and that they take  
Polish caps off,

1007  
00:59:26,780 --> 00:59:29,491  
which they get immediately.

1008  
00:59:29,491 --> 00:59:31,400  
So they don't have  
that [INAUDIBLE]..

1009  
00:59:31,400 --> 00:59:35,280  
And then we travel all  
the way to the station.

1010  
00:59:35,280 --> 00:59:39,970  
And at the end when it  
stops, and come to Poznan,

1011  
00:59:39,970 --> 00:59:43,550  
that station will be received  
by station master, which

1012  
00:59:43,550 --> 00:59:45,020  
is red cap.

1013  
00:59:45,020 --> 00:59:48,510  
And he may be the  
only one standing

1014  
00:59:48,510 --> 00:59:51,870  
on the right side of the train.

1015  
00:59:51,870 --> 00:59:54,410  
Then my friend will  
take a raincoat--

1016  
00:59:54,410 --> 00:59:56,720  
it was a little bit drizzly--

1017  
00:59:56,720 --> 00:59:58,530  
will take a raincoat.

1018  
00:59:58,530 --> 01:00:04,980  
And when he exits the train on  
the right side, somehow along,

1019  
01:00:04,980 --> 01:00:10,050  
he is going to have a difficulty  
with his raincoat and throw it

1020  
01:00:10,050 --> 01:00:15,570  
such a way that it shows that he  
is in trouble with his raincoat

1021  
01:00:15,570 --> 01:00:18,150  
and cannot quickly get out.

1022  
01:00:18,150 --> 01:00:21,370  
And I will be coming  
out same time,

1023  
01:00:21,370 --> 01:00:30,000  
except I'm facing into left  
side, which they will exit.

1024  
01:00:30,000 --> 01:00:32,085



Of course, the left  
side, where train

1025  
01:00:32,085 --> 01:00:35,820  
was already boarded, but  
for somebody at that age,

1026  
01:00:35,820 --> 01:00:37,770  
they have to hop over.

1027  
01:00:37,770 --> 01:00:41,160  
And I would-- it was a decoy.

1028  
01:00:41,160 --> 01:00:45,270  
Major part-- we both  
play important part.

1029  
01:00:45,270 --> 01:00:50,680  
My part was simply to see  
before they jump that there

1030  
01:00:50,680 --> 01:00:53,500  
is nobody on that side.

1031  
01:00:53,500 --> 01:00:56,160  
And I can point to  
them the direction

1032  
01:00:56,160 --> 01:01:00,100  
because it was right from  
there nose, hardly 50 yards

1033  
01:01:00,100 --> 01:01:02,530  
the forest.

1034  
01:01:02,530 --> 01:01:03,030  
I see.

1035  
01:01:03,030 --> 01:01:06,590  
And my friend will  
struggle with his raincoat

1036

01:01:06,590 --> 01:01:12,360  
in case we are facing on the  
station platform somebody who

1037  
01:01:12,360 --> 01:01:14,610  
might observe this.

1038  
01:01:14,610 --> 01:01:15,476  
Did it work?

1039  
01:01:15,476 --> 01:01:21,140  
And, in fact, it was a  
possible and easy solution.

1040  
01:01:21,140 --> 01:01:24,720  
You must remember  
at that time, border

1041  
01:01:24,720 --> 01:01:30,000  
was not fortified as it  
would be a year later.

1042  
01:01:30,000 --> 01:01:34,455  
It was a different kind of  
border, different situation.

1043  
01:01:34,455 --> 01:01:37,500  
I'll describe what the  
border was later on.

1044  
01:01:37,500 --> 01:01:43,260  
Let's proceed with this  
scheme, which worked perfectly.

1045  
01:01:43,260 --> 01:01:48,390  
Station master was asking  
train for pass, station master.

1046  
01:01:48,390 --> 01:01:53,600  
So we didn't even have to  
pretend this great gymnastic we

1047  
01:01:53,600 --> 01:01:57,540

want to do with the raincoat.

1048

01:01:57,540 --> 01:02:01,860

We did not even have  
to worry about my job

1049

01:02:01,860 --> 01:02:05,180

because there was  
nobody on that side.

1050

01:02:05,180 --> 01:02:08,880

They could clearly  
jump and exit.

1051

01:02:08,880 --> 01:02:12,000

And I watched when they  
were practically hardly

1052

01:02:12,000 --> 01:02:16,330

a few yards at the  
forest entrance.

1053

01:02:16,330 --> 01:02:19,860

And I could turn to  
say, John, no need.

1054

01:02:19,860 --> 01:02:21,420

We can get out.

1055

01:02:21,420 --> 01:02:23,730

And it was over.

1056

01:02:23,730 --> 01:02:25,890

It was done fast.

1057

01:02:25,890 --> 01:02:29,100

And I think there were  
maybe two people who

1058

01:02:29,100 --> 01:02:35,800

may have exited the train  
besides the station master,

1059

01:02:35,800 --> 01:02:38,410  
standing there with his red cap.

1060

01:02:38,410 --> 01:02:43,720  
This was sort of a railroad  
yard where trains parked.

1061

01:02:43,720 --> 01:02:46,760  
It was like a parking  
lot for a train.

1062

01:02:46,760 --> 01:02:49,920  
And that was the final stop.

1063

01:02:49,920 --> 01:02:53,830  
And we exited the  
station very easily

1064

01:02:53,830 --> 01:02:57,310  
without being noticed  
because at this point,

1065

01:02:57,310 --> 01:03:02,860  
I and John was not thinking  
about how to cover ourselves.

1066

01:03:02,860 --> 01:03:08,750  
We just realized that we have no  
cover story and nothing in case

1067

01:03:08,750 --> 01:03:11,135  
we were stuck.

1068

01:03:11,135 --> 01:03:11,843  
Were you stopped?

1069

01:03:11,843 --> 01:03:16,000  
So we thought-- we would be  
stopped by somebody, boys,

1070

01:03:16,000 --> 01:03:17,320  
what are you doing?

1071  
01:03:17,320 --> 01:03:19,570  
Because we were known--

1072  
01:03:19,570 --> 01:03:23,110  
everybody in that  
region know each other

1073  
01:03:23,110 --> 01:03:28,840  
because it was still  
in flux of immigration.

1074  
01:03:28,840 --> 01:03:31,417  
And people moving in the region.

1075  
01:03:31,417 --> 01:03:32,250  
But my question is--

1076  
01:03:32,250 --> 01:03:36,090  
We are the two waiters  
of one hotel alone.

1077  
01:03:36,090 --> 01:03:38,590  
But my question is were you--

1078  
01:03:38,590 --> 01:03:39,830  
did anybody stop you?

1079  
01:03:39,830 --> 01:03:42,090  
And how did you get back?

1080  
01:03:42,090 --> 01:03:44,020  
No, that was easy already.

1081  
01:03:44,020 --> 01:03:47,260  
We get out of the station,  
and we took a road

1082  
01:03:47,260 --> 01:03:50,500  
because there was direct  
road, which we originally

1083

01:03:50,500 --> 01:03:52,840  
suggests to those students.

1084

01:03:52,840 --> 01:03:56,890  
But that would be for people  
who are legally traveling

1085

01:03:56,890 --> 01:03:58,590  
by car, by any means--

1086

01:03:58,590 --> 01:04:02,140  
foreigners-- that was  
the normal crossing over.

1087

01:04:02,140 --> 01:04:02,870  
I see.

1088

01:04:02,870 --> 01:04:07,490  
We send them into  
a legal situation.

1089

01:04:07,490 --> 01:04:08,740  
Yeah, because they--

1090

01:04:08,740 --> 01:04:10,450  
And we were able to walk--

1091

01:04:10,450 --> 01:04:14,350  
it might have take us 20  
minutes, half an hour walking.

1092

01:04:14,350 --> 01:04:17,890  
But during that walk  
back, we suddenly

1093

01:04:17,890 --> 01:04:21,730  
got a little bit cold  
feet, what did we do?

1094

01:04:21,730 --> 01:04:24,576  
What happens if they get caught?

1095

01:04:24,576 --> 01:04:30,640

And we were preparing  
story in case they talk.

1096

01:04:30,640 --> 01:04:35,050

But our story today  
right now [INAUDIBLE]..

1097

01:04:35,050 --> 01:04:39,430

Everybody would knew what  
we were doing if we late,

1098

01:04:39,430 --> 01:04:40,360

somebody.

1099

01:04:40,360 --> 01:04:43,120

But so far, nothing.

1100

01:04:43,120 --> 01:04:45,160

We arrived back to the hotel.

1101

01:04:45,160 --> 01:04:48,880

But we knew one way  
where we would be sure

1102

01:04:48,880 --> 01:04:52,830

that they were successful  
because being only hotel,

1103

01:04:52,830 --> 01:04:57,560

if somebody get, by  
the police patrol

1104

01:04:57,560 --> 01:05:00,990

or by the border  
patrol, caught, he

1105

01:05:00,990 --> 01:05:05,730

would be brought into this town,  
in the local village holding

1106

01:05:05,730 --> 01:05:07,890

jail.

1107

01:05:07,890 --> 01:05:11,120

And if it was evening,  
we in the hotel

1108

01:05:11,120 --> 01:05:14,070

would get a call  
from the gendarme

1109

01:05:14,070 --> 01:05:17,900

and he would request one  
meal, two, three meals,

1110

01:05:17,900 --> 01:05:20,400

and we would carry  
it to the jail.

1111

01:05:20,400 --> 01:05:24,566

So we knew that  
people did get caught.

1112

01:05:24,566 --> 01:05:27,720

And we knew that  
we could figure out

1113

01:05:27,720 --> 01:05:34,450

if our two Polish students of  
Jewish descent would be caught.

1114

01:05:34,450 --> 01:05:37,350

And we knew that  
between 6:00 and 7:00

1115

01:05:37,350 --> 01:05:40,740

would be the time  
that we would be

1116

01:05:40,740 --> 01:05:45,540

getting called because most of  
the time, we get to get called.

1117

01:05:45,540 --> 01:05:47,610



And then somebody  
carry the food.

1118  
01:05:47,610 --> 01:05:50,490  
And we did not, of  
course, see the prison.

1119  
01:05:50,490 --> 01:05:53,670  
So we were definitely  
not ourselves

1120  
01:05:53,670 --> 01:06:00,610  
during those couple hours as we  
were serving two later dinners.

1121  
01:06:00,610 --> 01:06:04,430  
We were waiting for  
that telephone to ring.

1122  
01:06:04,430 --> 01:06:10,120  
And we were certainly not  
alert to pay attention.

1123  
01:06:10,120 --> 01:06:12,870  
We were tense,  
I'm trying to say.

1124  
01:06:12,870 --> 01:06:17,280  
It was not fear, but tension.

1125  
01:06:17,280 --> 01:06:18,180  
So did they call?

1126  
01:06:18,180 --> 01:06:20,250  
Or did they make it?

1127  
01:06:20,250 --> 01:06:21,240  
No call.

1128  
01:06:21,240 --> 01:06:21,930  
No call?

1129

01:06:21,930 --> 01:06:24,960  
So by 8:00, we were smiling.

1130  
01:06:24,960 --> 01:06:28,475  
And yes, we were  
having little schnapps

1131  
01:06:28,475 --> 01:06:29,940  
ourselves-- we done it.

1132  
01:06:29,940 --> 01:06:33,300  
[LAUGHS]

1133  
01:06:33,300 --> 01:06:36,680  
We were successful.

1134  
01:06:36,680 --> 01:06:41,490  
And the only footnote  
to this, is irony,

1135  
01:06:41,490 --> 01:06:47,640  
that hardly within a year,  
I would be using same place

1136  
01:06:47,640 --> 01:06:50,070  
to leave Czechoslovakia.

1137  
01:06:50,070 --> 01:06:52,590  
I would, however,  
do it differently.

1138  
01:06:52,590 --> 01:06:55,530  
I would not exit the left side.

1139  
01:06:55,530 --> 01:06:59,550  
I would exit on the  
right side through hands

1140  
01:06:59,550 --> 01:07:05,550  
of the Czech control and be  
moved into the American part

1141

01:07:05,550 --> 01:07:11,190  
because Germans were not at  
time in control of the border.

1142  
01:07:11,190 --> 01:07:14,940  
And Americans were very lax.

1143  
01:07:14,940 --> 01:07:20,640  
I don't think so they  
passed the border check.

1144  
01:07:20,640 --> 01:07:25,060  
So obviously anybody who make  
it, as these Polish students

1145  
01:07:25,060 --> 01:07:28,005  
did, they were safe.

1146  
01:07:28,005 --> 01:07:28,650  
So here's--

1147  
01:07:28,650 --> 01:07:33,240  
And I did it only a couple  
months, about in May.

1148  
01:07:33,240 --> 01:07:35,580  
I remember it was in May.

1149  
01:07:35,580 --> 01:07:41,480  
And my friend John  
had to do it hardly

1150  
01:07:41,480 --> 01:07:43,440  
within seven months later.

1151  
01:07:43,440 --> 01:07:47,090  
But he has to do it  
the Polish-Jewish way.

1152  
01:07:47,090 --> 01:07:50,550  
He had to do it illegally  
because situation

1153

01:07:50,550 --> 01:07:54,990  
in Czechoslovakia was  
no longer what it was,

1154

01:07:54,990 --> 01:07:58,050  
what I described what we did.

1155

01:07:58,050 --> 01:08:02,310  
The border was tight  
under control with--

1156

01:08:02,310 --> 01:08:07,830  
controlled not only with  
dogs, wires, contraption--

1157

01:08:07,830 --> 01:08:10,530  
we are talking about  
a different situation.

1158

01:08:10,530 --> 01:08:13,770  
I am already in Germany.

1159

01:08:13,770 --> 01:08:16,830  
I'm already at  
that time stationed

1160

01:08:16,830 --> 01:08:18,870  
in an entirely different place.

1161

01:08:18,870 --> 01:08:22,140  
I am a soldier of the  
United States Army stationed

1162

01:08:22,140 --> 01:08:28,979  
in Oberusel, in [? Taunus ?],,  
and that is outside Frankfurt.

1163

01:08:28,979 --> 01:08:36,899  
So I want to wrap things up with  
your leaving Czechoslovakia.

1164

01:08:36,899 --> 01:08:42,090

And the last time you told me about what was going on with

1165  
01:08:42,090 --> 01:08:46,140  
you is when you say that you became a persona non grata

1166  
01:08:46,140 --> 01:08:50,819  
at this hotel, ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda, because you are showing

1167  
01:08:50,819 --> 01:08:55,710  
your feelings and your opinions of most of these Communist

1168  
01:08:55,710 --> 01:08:59,200  
Party activities that are going on there.

1169  
01:08:59,200 --> 01:09:01,680  
And what makes you decide that you

1170  
01:09:01,680 --> 01:09:04,120  
need to leave Czechoslovakia?

1171  
01:09:04,120 --> 01:09:06,870  
Because you say at the beginning-- you were telling me

1172  
01:09:06,870 --> 01:09:11,160  
earlier, when you wanted those papers from the United States,

1173  
01:09:11,160 --> 01:09:15,779  
originally it wasn't because you intended to leave the country.

1174  
01:09:15,779 --> 01:09:18,240  
What made you change your mind?

1175  
01:09:18,240 --> 01:09:19,840  
That is a good question.

1176  
01:09:19,840 --> 01:09:25,410  
And I forgot to point it  
out before this event.

1177  
01:09:25,410 --> 01:09:29,819  
I did have many difficulty  
on the city hall.

1178  
01:09:29,819 --> 01:09:35,029  
We call it at that time "nÃ¡rodnÃ¡  
vÃ½bor," or National Council.

1179  
01:09:35,029 --> 01:09:42,720  
I've become a definitely  
hard case for this one

1180  
01:09:42,720 --> 01:09:46,290  
Communist city hall  
because every time I

1181  
01:09:46,290 --> 01:09:52,450  
went there for something, like  
I needed ration card for winter

1182  
01:09:52,450 --> 01:09:53,819  
cold.

1183  
01:09:53,819 --> 01:09:59,640  
I would need to, let's  
say, call before winter

1184  
01:09:59,640 --> 01:10:02,250  
because I would  
need lots of things

1185  
01:10:02,250 --> 01:10:05,240  
that ration cards were,  
for example, exempt.

1186  
01:10:05,240 --> 01:10:10,990  
And I would encounter this  
cynical officials, who

1187  
01:10:10,990 --> 01:10:15,420  
just look on the little book  
and find out there, of course,

1188  
01:10:15,420 --> 01:10:16,620  
I was Americans.

1189  
01:10:16,620 --> 01:10:19,800  
And they did not need to  
look in the book already.

1190  
01:10:19,800 --> 01:10:24,200  
I was already well  
known for my outspoken

1191  
01:10:24,200 --> 01:10:27,250  
and for my abrasive conduct--

1192  
01:10:27,250 --> 01:10:31,560  
again, Bolshevization  
of this little town.

1193  
01:10:31,560 --> 01:10:37,260  
And I was already no longer  
serving beer on evening when

1194  
01:10:37,260 --> 01:10:43,560  
Communist Party of *Å½eleznÅ½i*  
Ruda met in the Hotel Slavie.

1195  
01:10:43,560 --> 01:10:47,850  
In fact, I no longer call  
Hotel Slavie Hotel Slavie.

1196  
01:10:47,850 --> 01:10:51,627  
I call it the Red House.

1197  
01:10:51,627 --> 01:10:52,835  
Were you still working there?

1198  
01:10:52,835 --> 01:10:53,640

So I obviously--

1199

01:10:53,640 --> 01:10:55,830

Were you working on there still?

1200

01:10:55,830 --> 01:10:56,430

What?

1201

01:10:56,430 --> 01:10:58,560

Were you still working there?

1202

01:10:58,560 --> 01:10:59,340

Oh, yes.

1203

01:10:59,340 --> 01:11:04,710

Mr. Tomasek was very--

1204

01:11:04,710 --> 01:11:07,800

in Czech is the word "trpÄ›livÄ›."

1205

01:11:07,800 --> 01:11:09,480

He was very tolerant.

1206

01:11:09,480 --> 01:11:12,240

He did have a patient with me.

1207

01:11:12,240 --> 01:11:16,890

Particularly, his wife, she  
was certainly on my right.

1208

01:11:16,890 --> 01:11:23,950

She was maybe amused by some of  
my outstanding act of defiance

1209

01:11:23,950 --> 01:11:25,660

and all of it. so--

1210

01:11:25,660 --> 01:11:28,380

Tell me, what were some  
of your acts of defiance?

1211



01:11:28,380 --> 01:11:31,560  
Because you just let me know  
that you didn't like it.

1212  
01:11:31,560 --> 01:11:33,920  
But you didn't tell me  
what you did that would

1213  
01:11:33,920 --> 01:11:37,230  
make you a persona non grata.

1214  
01:11:37,230 --> 01:11:42,780  
It was my conduct  
when I was told--

1215  
01:11:42,780 --> 01:11:47,820  
in plain, direct language  
number of times, look,

1216  
01:11:47,820 --> 01:11:49,540  
you need an overcoat.

1217  
01:11:49,540 --> 01:11:52,570  
Well I just only a couple  
yards the Americans

1218  
01:11:52,570 --> 01:11:53,610  
are across the border.

1219  
01:11:53,610 --> 01:11:56,350  
Why don't you get it from there?

1220  
01:11:56,350 --> 01:12:00,650  
Or if I wanted coal,  
fuel for heating

1221  
01:12:00,650 --> 01:12:03,990  
the place during winter,  
well, the British

1222  
01:12:03,990 --> 01:12:05,820  
are controlling the route.

1223

01:12:05,820 --> 01:12:07,840  
You can get it from the British.

1224

01:12:07,840 --> 01:12:13,600  
In fact, I was not welcome  
in ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda by certain

1225

01:12:13,600 --> 01:12:17,200  
populations, not all.

1226

01:12:17,200 --> 01:12:21,360  
Many I was actually  
a good symbol of how

1227

01:12:21,360 --> 01:12:25,080  
to stand against  
something what they saw

1228

01:12:25,080 --> 01:12:29,490  
was not right to begin  
with because Communist act

1229

01:12:29,490 --> 01:12:31,170  
obnoxious.

1230

01:12:31,170 --> 01:12:32,940  
I will tell one simple--

1231

01:12:32,940 --> 01:12:37,890  
I was already told  
in the US Embassy

1232

01:12:37,890 --> 01:12:41,610  
about how should I behave,  
that I should not, for example,

1233

01:12:41,610 --> 01:12:45,390  
join any organization.

1234

01:12:45,390 --> 01:12:48,840  
So obviously, here  
come [INAUDIBLE] trying

1235  
01:12:48,840 --> 01:12:52,260  
to enlist me into labor union.

1236  
01:12:52,260 --> 01:12:58,230  
At that time, Czechoslovakia  
was only one union and member

1237  
01:12:58,230 --> 01:13:02,760  
of the-- chairman of the  
union were AntonĚn Zapotocky,

1238  
01:13:02,760 --> 01:13:05,190  
hard Communist.

1239  
01:13:05,190 --> 01:13:09,720  
And AntonĚn Zapotocky will  
become a president one day

1240  
01:13:09,720 --> 01:13:13,200  
of the socialist country,  
which at that time,

1241  
01:13:13,200 --> 01:13:16,470  
he was only chairman  
of the labor union.

1242  
01:13:16,470 --> 01:13:19,620  
Once in desperation,  
I want to get rid

1243  
01:13:19,620 --> 01:13:26,220  
of this agitator who just  
bring me the papers to join.

1244  
01:13:26,220 --> 01:13:28,560  
I throw 50 korunas  
in his direction,

1245  
01:13:28,560 --> 01:13:35,130  
and I say, if this a question of  
money, then here's your money.

1246

01:13:35,130 --> 01:13:41,960

And to my horror, next  
day, he wrote me a letter

1247

01:13:41,960 --> 01:13:46,320

that I am a member of the  
labor union in good standing.

1248

01:13:46,320 --> 01:13:47,890

Apparently I had already--

1249

01:13:47,890 --> 01:13:50,650

in those two years I  
had, [? the stamps ?]

1250

01:13:50,650 --> 01:13:51,940

were all three years I had.

1251

01:13:51,940 --> 01:13:54,930

1252

01:13:54,930 --> 01:14:02,890

Mr. Budway, I want  
to summarize things.

1253

01:14:02,890 --> 01:14:05,850

There are a couple  
questions I have.

1254

01:14:05,850 --> 01:14:09,540

Can you tell me why  
the US Embassy did not

1255

01:14:09,540 --> 01:14:11,940

give you a passport?

1256

01:14:11,940 --> 01:14:13,640

They couldn't do it right away.

1257

01:14:13,640 --> 01:14:15,930

They did have [INAUDIBLE].

1258

01:14:15,930 --> 01:14:19,680

At that time, embassy was  
not issuing passports.

1259

01:14:19,680 --> 01:14:23,850

My birth certificate had to  
get to the State Department.

1260

01:14:23,850 --> 01:14:28,540

And from then on, they  
have to verify it.

1261

01:14:28,540 --> 01:14:31,240

They had to verify even my--

1262

01:14:31,240 --> 01:14:35,370

even I gave them my address of  
one of my relatives in Chicago.

1263

01:14:35,370 --> 01:14:37,770

They have to verify it.

1264

01:14:37,770 --> 01:14:38,760

So that's number one.

1265

01:14:38,760 --> 01:14:41,640

It took some time to do it.

1266

01:14:41,640 --> 01:14:45,240

And then one other  
point I wanted

1267

01:14:45,240 --> 01:14:49,350

to ask you is that during  
the German occupation,

1268

01:14:49,350 --> 01:14:53,850

you learned very quickly that it  
was very dangerous to show what

1269

01:14:53,850 --> 01:15:00,690

you thought and what you felt

because you could be paying

1270  
01:15:00,690 --> 01:15:06,120  
with your life for it, like  
those ladies who were shot

1271  
01:15:06,120 --> 01:15:11,240  
because they talked about the  
positive way of Heydrich's

1272  
01:15:11,240 --> 01:15:13,030  
assassination.

1273  
01:15:13,030 --> 01:15:15,150  
So you learned that  
that's dangerous.

1274  
01:15:15,150 --> 01:15:20,070  
But you let yourself react  
during this Soviet or this more

1275  
01:15:20,070 --> 01:15:25,890  
Communist kind of  
atmosph. and control.

1276  
01:15:25,890 --> 01:15:27,690  
Didn't you feel afraid?

1277  
01:15:27,690 --> 01:15:32,970  
Didn't you feel that maybe  
it's not safe to do this?

1278  
01:15:32,970 --> 01:15:36,420  
I knew that it was  
really obnoxious.

1279  
01:15:36,420 --> 01:15:40,740  
And perhaps as a  
teenager, I did not

1280  
01:15:40,740 --> 01:15:46,765  
have yet the skill to control  
what I do and how I think

1281  
01:15:46,765 --> 01:15:47,530  
and [INAUDIBLE].

1282  
01:15:47,530 --> 01:15:48,180  
Excuse me.

1283  
01:15:48,180 --> 01:15:51,720  
But however, it  
was after the war,

1284  
01:15:51,720 --> 01:15:55,380  
I had a new sense of confidence.

1285  
01:15:55,380 --> 01:15:57,630  
I was no longer [INAUDIBLE].

1286  
01:15:57,630 --> 01:16:00,390  
Mr. Budway, something is  
happening with the noise.

1287  
01:16:00,390 --> 01:16:02,530  
I don't hear you very well.

1288  
01:16:02,530 --> 01:16:07,440  
So is something moving  
at your location?

1289  
01:16:07,440 --> 01:16:12,690  
My fingers because my hand  
is getting a little numb

1290  
01:16:12,690 --> 01:16:14,550  
holding the receiver.

1291  
01:16:14,550 --> 01:16:15,690  
I see.

1292  
01:16:15,690 --> 01:16:16,470  
I'm so sorry.

1293

01:16:16,470 --> 01:16:19,020  
So I will stop.

1294  
01:16:19,020 --> 01:16:19,830  
I'm so sorry.

1295  
01:16:19,830 --> 01:16:21,360  
I know it's a long time.

1296  
01:16:21,360 --> 01:16:27,510  
But we are coming close to  
the end of my questions.

1297  
01:16:27,510 --> 01:16:31,790  
So your understanding that  
is it's not wartime anymore.

1298  
01:16:31,790 --> 01:16:33,300  
It's post-war.

1299  
01:16:33,300 --> 01:16:35,730  
And so you feel somewhat safer?

1300  
01:16:35,730 --> 01:16:40,030  
You feel that there's not  
going to be the same high price

1301  
01:16:40,030 --> 01:16:46,060  
for any kind of honest  
reaction that you

1302  
01:16:46,060 --> 01:16:50,150  
would have had to pay had  
this still been the Nazi time?

1303  
01:16:50,150 --> 01:16:50,770  
Correct.

1304  
01:16:50,770 --> 01:16:52,660  
And I have protection.

1305  
01:16:52,660 --> 01:16:57,190



After all, yes, I will  
say, I was somebody.

1306  
01:16:57,190 --> 01:16:59,200  
I was American citizen.

1307  
01:16:59,200 --> 01:17:01,060  
That meant a difference?

1308  
01:17:01,060 --> 01:17:02,350  
That made the difference.

1309  
01:17:02,350 --> 01:17:05,380  
I was outspoken.

1310  
01:17:05,380 --> 01:17:08,150  
And I acted that way.

1311  
01:17:08,150 --> 01:17:11,530  
In fact, those who  
were anti-Communists,

1312  
01:17:11,530 --> 01:17:16,300  
they expected Americans  
to behave that way.

1313  
01:17:16,300 --> 01:17:20,340  
And I behaved that  
way to be daring.

1314  
01:17:20,340 --> 01:17:21,501  
I see.

1315  
01:17:21,501 --> 01:17:23,660  
Fearless.

1316  
01:17:23,660 --> 01:17:28,870  
And I had enough  
to be starting off.

1317  
01:17:28,870 --> 01:17:31,500  
You were tired of

it, tired of being--

1318  
01:17:31,500 --> 01:17:32,790  
Yeah, I was tired of it.

1319  
01:17:32,790 --> 01:17:36,870  
And I knew slowly and  
surely, that as much

1320  
01:17:36,870 --> 01:17:40,870  
as you like the country,  
as much I felt tired

1321  
01:17:40,870 --> 01:17:44,340  
because I'd experienced  
all the humiliation,

1322  
01:17:44,340 --> 01:17:46,560  
all the upside  
down with the rest

1323  
01:17:46,560 --> 01:17:51,660  
of the people in the country,  
I did not feel suddenly

1324  
01:17:51,660 --> 01:17:54,750  
that I have any future there.

1325  
01:17:54,750 --> 01:17:55,830  
I recognized it.

1326  
01:17:55,830 --> 01:18:00,650

1327  
01:18:00,650 --> 01:18:05,140  
And it sounds like there  
was enough people who

1328  
01:18:05,140 --> 01:18:08,800  
treated you like an outsider?

1329  
01:18:08,800 --> 01:18:09,360

Yes.

1330  
01:18:09,360 --> 01:18:09,860  
That--

1331  
01:18:09,860 --> 01:18:11,200  
They were.

1332  
01:18:11,200 --> 01:18:16,060  
And particularly those in  
power or in some power,

1333  
01:18:16,060 --> 01:18:18,130  
be it in any office--

1334  
01:18:18,130 --> 01:18:20,670  
the only office which  
was friendly to me

1335  
01:18:20,670 --> 01:18:26,690  
was post office, where  
I received everything.

1336  
01:18:26,690 --> 01:18:32,430  
And it was in hands of somebody  
else completely, in opposition.

1337  
01:18:32,430 --> 01:18:33,340  
Now, railroad?

1338  
01:18:33,340 --> 01:18:35,156  
No.

1339  
01:18:35,156 --> 01:18:36,130  
Police?

1340  
01:18:36,130 --> 01:18:38,450  
No.

1341  
01:18:38,450 --> 01:18:39,440  
City council?

1342

01:18:39,440 --> 01:18:41,120

No.

1343

01:18:41,120 --> 01:18:45,100

I was safe, of course, in hotel  
and Mrs. Tomaskova and Mr.

1344

01:18:45,100 --> 01:18:46,190

Tomasek.

1345

01:18:46,190 --> 01:18:48,860

I could afford to  
act the way I act.

1346

01:18:48,860 --> 01:18:52,410

They already accept  
me for what I was.

1347

01:18:52,410 --> 01:18:55,490

1348

01:18:55,490 --> 01:19:01,520

So did you leave Czechoslovakia  
directly from ZeleznÄ; Ruda?

1349

01:19:01,520 --> 01:19:05,290

Yes, because I  
knew the situation.

1350

01:19:05,290 --> 01:19:08,680

And when I finally  
got my passport,

1351

01:19:08,680 --> 01:19:14,180

and of course it wasn't easy to  
leave because at the embassy,

1352

01:19:14,180 --> 01:19:15,860

they did not expect--

1353

01:19:15,860 --> 01:19:19,820

they just issue a

passport, and here you are.

1354

01:19:19,820 --> 01:19:23,670

How to get to United States, that was my problem.

1355

01:19:23,670 --> 01:19:30,610

But there was a perceptive clerk-- he was a vice-consul--

1356

01:19:30,610 --> 01:19:34,810

who suggested-- and he called military attachÃ©--

1357

01:19:34,810 --> 01:19:37,150

that I could join the US Army.

1358

01:19:37,150 --> 01:19:40,770

There was a replacement depot in the city of Marburg,

1359

01:19:40,770 --> 01:19:45,400

when Americans of my type were all around in Europe.

1360

01:19:45,400 --> 01:19:47,660

I was not the only American.

1361

01:19:47,660 --> 01:19:49,680

I might have been the only American

1362

01:19:49,680 --> 01:19:52,930

in the west part of Bohemia, in that situation.

1363

01:19:52,930 --> 01:19:57,310

But there were lots of Americans, kids of my age,

1364

01:19:57,310 --> 01:20:03,070

in places like Denmark, Norway, Holland, and, of course,

1365

01:20:03,070 --> 01:20:10,130  
England and Scotland, and big  
amount of them were in Germany.

1366

01:20:10,130 --> 01:20:14,530  
So the US Army did  
have replacement depot,

1367

01:20:14,530 --> 01:20:21,690  
where they train American  
born who were in Europe.

1368

01:20:21,690 --> 01:20:23,880  
We were volunteers.

1369

01:20:23,880 --> 01:20:25,410  
And we were welcome.

1370

01:20:25,410 --> 01:20:29,970  
The reason is because the rest  
of the soldiers who spent war

1371

01:20:29,970 --> 01:20:32,280  
in Europe want to go home.

1372

01:20:32,280 --> 01:20:35,070  
So we will welcome  
as a replacement.

1373

01:20:35,070 --> 01:20:40,200  
So this is the idea you get from  
the military attache at the US

1374

01:20:40,200 --> 01:20:42,480  
Embassy in Prague,  
that that should

1375

01:20:42,480 --> 01:20:44,900  
be the place that you go?

1376

01:20:44,900 --> 01:20:45,510

Yes.

1377

01:20:45,510 --> 01:20:48,000

Did you have a chance to  
say goodbye to your mother

1378

01:20:48,000 --> 01:20:48,550

and to your--

1379

01:20:48,550 --> 01:20:49,050

Oh, yes.

1380

01:20:49,050 --> 01:20:50,620

That was done properly.

1381

01:20:50,620 --> 01:20:56,790

I have actually [INAUDIBLE]  
who was high-ranking officer.

1382

01:20:56,790 --> 01:20:58,710

He knew where I was going.

1383

01:20:58,710 --> 01:21:02,500

I now have his blessing to go.

1384

01:21:02,500 --> 01:21:04,930

The only thing I  
have got baggage.

1385

01:21:04,930 --> 01:21:06,460

Å½eleznÄ Ruda.

1386

01:21:06,460 --> 01:21:11,320

The baggage is a  
figure of speech.

1387

01:21:11,320 --> 01:21:14,550

When I find myself in  
Germany, in training,

1388

01:21:14,550 --> 01:21:17,130

that is under the

episode which I

1389

01:21:17,130 --> 01:21:24,840  
felt I experience what I would  
call antisemitic situations.

1390

01:21:24,840 --> 01:21:27,520  
But I'm not going  
to talk about it.

1391

01:21:27,520 --> 01:21:29,760  
The only thing that--

1392

01:21:29,760 --> 01:21:34,500  
because I knew few languages  
and slightly even Russian,

1393

01:21:34,500 --> 01:21:37,680  
on my resume when I  
finished basic training,

1394

01:21:37,680 --> 01:21:39,900  
I was sent to Oberursel.

1395

01:21:39,900 --> 01:21:44,475  
And Oberursel was  
headquarters of ECIC.

1396

01:21:44,475 --> 01:21:53,200  
It stands for European Command  
of Center Intelligent Army--

1397

01:21:53,200 --> 01:21:57,960  
I wasn't doing any  
intelligence work there.

1398

01:21:57,960 --> 01:22:00,690  
Because of my  
profession as a waiter,

1399

01:22:00,690 --> 01:22:06,510  
I was helping to run offices,  
dining room, and club,



1400  
01:22:06,510 --> 01:22:10,350  
and I was in charge of  
German personnel there.

1401  
01:22:10,350 --> 01:22:15,420  
However, I communicate with  
my friends in ZeleznÃ¡ Ruda

1402  
01:22:15,420 --> 01:22:17,460  
everywhere.

1403  
01:22:17,460 --> 01:22:22,290  
And I, of course,  
wrote where I am.

1404  
01:22:22,290 --> 01:22:26,100  
I did not say what ECIC meant.

1405  
01:22:26,100 --> 01:22:32,940  
But I was being watched by  
Czech Communist country in power

1406  
01:22:32,940 --> 01:22:34,680  
in 1948.

1407  
01:22:34,680 --> 01:22:37,230  
And they watched my movement.

1408  
01:22:37,230 --> 01:22:42,510  
And they knew with  
who I was in contact.

1409  
01:22:42,510 --> 01:22:47,030  
And obviously, I was also the  
cause that my friend John with

1410  
01:22:47,030 --> 01:22:52,820  
two other friends illegally  
left when Communists came

1411  
01:22:52,820 --> 01:22:57,960

into Zelezný Ruda and  
make it a forbidden zone,

1412  
01:22:57,960 --> 01:23:01,140  
where nobody could come  
because they control--

1413  
01:23:01,140 --> 01:23:04,050  
now the Czech were fleeing.

1414  
01:23:04,050 --> 01:23:07,470  
It was not the Polish  
Jews who were fleeing.

1415  
01:23:07,470 --> 01:23:10,860  
Did your mother ever  
experience, or your grandfather,

1416  
01:23:10,860 --> 01:23:14,730  
any kind of repercussions?

1417  
01:23:14,730 --> 01:23:16,800  
Grandfather no longer lived.

1418  
01:23:16,800 --> 01:23:21,090  
Mother, yes, of course,  
that is another thing

1419  
01:23:21,090 --> 01:23:23,520  
because I was reckless.

1420  
01:23:23,520 --> 01:23:26,700  
I wrote about anything  
and everything I saw.

1421  
01:23:26,700 --> 01:23:29,550  
I was drunk with freedom.

1422  
01:23:29,550 --> 01:23:32,550  
Not only I could  
do whatever I want,

1423

01:23:32,550 --> 01:23:38,070  
I was having a nice uniform,  
great meal, I could travel,

1424  
01:23:38,070 --> 01:23:43,970  
I have almost \$80 every month,  
I could travel, and I did.

1425  
01:23:43,970 --> 01:23:49,740  
And when Czech Communists  
took over and did all that,

1426  
01:23:49,740 --> 01:23:55,440  
I suddenly was visiting with  
number young people from

1427  
01:23:55,440 --> 01:24:02,350  
Zelezni Ruda who knocked on the  
gate of my army base in which I

1428  
01:24:02,350 --> 01:24:06,060  
work because they knew.

1429  
01:24:06,060 --> 01:24:08,160  
And they came.

1430  
01:24:08,160 --> 01:24:10,980  
And then even my  
fellow soldiers who

1431  
01:24:10,980 --> 01:24:16,410  
were guarding the  
entrance to the army base,

1432  
01:24:16,410 --> 01:24:17,460  
they keep laughing.

1433  
01:24:17,460 --> 01:24:18,990  
And they keep calling me.

1434  
01:24:18,990 --> 01:24:24,510  
And they say, Budway, your  
Czech cousins are here again.

1435  
01:24:24,510 --> 01:24:25,440  
And they laugh.

1436  
01:24:25,440 --> 01:24:29,250  
They say, you must have many  
cousins in that country.

1437  
01:24:29,250 --> 01:24:31,200  
[LAUGHS] Yes.

1438  
01:24:31,200 --> 01:24:33,150  
But my question is,  
did your mother,

1439  
01:24:33,150 --> 01:24:40,470  
who stayed in TÄ>chonice, did she  
experience any unpleasantness

1440  
01:24:40,470 --> 01:24:45,210  
because of what you were doing  
and the fact that you had left?

1441  
01:24:45,210 --> 01:24:46,976  
Obviously, yes.

1442  
01:24:46,976 --> 01:24:51,030  
And she had other idea  
because she more or less--

1443  
01:24:51,030 --> 01:24:59,950  
I might have inherited my  
sassiness or my belligerence

1444  
01:24:59,950 --> 01:25:04,720  
from her because even  
in that little village,

1445  
01:25:04,720 --> 01:25:09,880  
she was acting as daring.

1446  
01:25:09,880 --> 01:25:14,380

So she was on a Communist list immediately.

1447  
01:25:14,380 --> 01:25:16,400  
She did have difficulty.

1448  
01:25:16,400 --> 01:25:21,400  
And eventually, years later when I was already a civilian

1449  
01:25:21,400 --> 01:25:26,050  
and wanted to invite her to visit the United States again

1450  
01:25:26,050 --> 01:25:32,410  
and visit Chicago and to come and say hello to her younger

1451  
01:25:32,410 --> 01:25:34,810  
generation, which she know in Chicago,

1452  
01:25:34,810 --> 01:25:38,570  
she received very quick answer, absolutely--

1453  
01:25:38,570 --> 01:25:40,960  
it was in two sentences--

1454  
01:25:40,960 --> 01:25:42,030  
she had no chance.

1455  
01:25:42,030 --> 01:25:46,430

1456  
01:25:46,430 --> 01:25:48,940  
That is another story.

1457  
01:25:48,940 --> 01:25:51,610  
And it's a long and complex story.

1458

01:25:51,610 --> 01:25:53,830  
But she did not--

1459  
01:25:53,830 --> 01:26:00,730  
and she, of course, was  
unwillingly, unknowingly

1460  
01:26:00,730 --> 01:26:07,540  
a part of what would it  
be like a subversive war

1461  
01:26:07,540 --> 01:26:12,070  
because these Czech friends--

1462  
01:26:12,070 --> 01:26:18,340  
of course, I help them  
financially and many ways--

1463  
01:26:18,340 --> 01:26:22,460  
and finding places to live and  
going, and things like that.

1464  
01:26:22,460 --> 01:26:26,620  
But one problem they have  
to communicate with home,

1465  
01:26:26,620 --> 01:26:31,730  
to let their people know at home  
where they are if they're safe.

1466  
01:26:31,730 --> 01:26:36,490  
And there was no direct  
mail communication--

1467  
01:26:36,490 --> 01:26:37,448  
civilian mail.

1468  
01:26:37,448 --> 01:26:38,990  
You're talking when  
you're still in--

1469  
01:26:38,990 --> 01:26:41,440  
While deep in Germany.

1470  
01:26:41,440 --> 01:26:45,490  
Yeah, when you are still in  
Germany in 1947 and so on,

1471  
01:26:45,490 --> 01:26:47,750  
that they have no--

1472  
01:26:47,750 --> 01:26:48,340  
Yes.

1473  
01:26:48,340 --> 01:26:52,180  
I was using my Army--

1474  
01:26:52,180 --> 01:26:55,610  
APO, Army postal organization--

1475  
01:26:55,610 --> 01:27:00,640  
I'm using any communication to  
Czechoslovakia-- at that time

1476  
01:27:00,640 --> 01:27:04,840  
Communist Czechoslovakia--  
by, of course, my letters

1477  
01:27:04,840 --> 01:27:08,300  
arrived with US Army stamps.

1478  
01:27:08,300 --> 01:27:12,690  
My mail would be going  
to England and London

1479  
01:27:12,690 --> 01:27:17,535  
being flew back  
to Czechoslovakia.

1480  
01:27:17,535 --> 01:27:23,560  
And, of course, I was a mailman  
for all these Czech refugees.

1481  
01:27:23,560 --> 01:27:24,900  
I took their mail.

1482  
01:27:24,900 --> 01:27:27,330  
I mailed it to my mother.

1483  
01:27:27,330 --> 01:27:31,720  
And my mother was the mailman.

1484  
01:27:31,720 --> 01:27:33,880  
She was the one  
who delivered it.

1485  
01:27:33,880 --> 01:27:35,310  
I see.

1486  
01:27:35,310 --> 01:27:40,030  
So she unknowing was doing  
something would become--

1487  
01:27:40,030 --> 01:27:43,120  
or her pride-- because  
before they were--

1488  
01:27:43,120 --> 01:27:48,300  
and because of that,  
people in the countryside

1489  
01:27:48,300 --> 01:27:53,110  
have learned to know if they  
have somebody in their family

1490  
01:27:53,110 --> 01:27:57,955  
who left the country, how  
do you try to trace them?

1491  
01:27:57,955 --> 01:28:07,980  
And this was what incriminate  
me in 1962, a spy, placed to be,

1492  
01:28:07,980 --> 01:28:12,540  
explained to them that  
time that I was only

1493



01:28:12,540 --> 01:28:19,770  
a corporal who was in charge  
of offices, dining room

1494  
01:28:19,770 --> 01:28:24,038  
and probably I was in  
charge of German personnel,

1495  
01:28:24,038 --> 01:28:25,080  
they wouldn't believe it.

1496  
01:28:25,080 --> 01:28:27,750

1497  
01:28:27,750 --> 01:28:31,830  
Thank you for answering  
that because you mentioned

1498  
01:28:31,830 --> 01:28:34,140  
in the early part  
of our interview

1499  
01:28:34,140 --> 01:28:37,530  
that when you returned  
to visit in 1962,

1500  
01:28:37,530 --> 01:28:39,840  
you were arrested as a spy.

1501  
01:28:39,840 --> 01:28:42,840  
And this provides some  
of the explanation

1502  
01:28:42,840 --> 01:28:47,340  
for whatever rationale they  
might have had to do so.

1503  
01:28:47,340 --> 01:28:52,170  
And I'd say that with  
this, we are probably

1504  
01:28:52,170 --> 01:28:54,840  
at the end of our interview.

1505  
01:28:54,840 --> 01:29:01,710  
And you've covered a  
really wide range of events

1506  
01:29:01,710 --> 01:29:07,110  
and provided us a picture  
that is both complex

1507  
01:29:07,110 --> 01:29:08,610  
and very detailed.

1508  
01:29:08,610 --> 01:29:13,710  
And I thank you for that  
because it is unusual to be able

1509  
01:29:13,710 --> 01:29:20,580  
to hear such a story, where you  
start from Oak Park, Illinois,

1510  
01:29:20,580 --> 01:29:25,110  
and then are in the small  
village of TÄ›chonice.

1511  
01:29:25,110 --> 01:29:30,900  
And talk about what happens to  
your friend, VÄ›clav Florian,

1512  
01:29:30,900 --> 01:29:36,910  
and other Jews that you see  
during the Nazi occupation,

1513  
01:29:36,910 --> 01:29:41,040  
your own experiences there, and  
then give us at least a little

1514  
01:29:41,040 --> 01:29:46,920  
sense of what happened after  
the war ended in those post-war

1515  
01:29:46,920 --> 01:29:49,890  
years, and that although  
it had been liberation,

1516  
01:29:49,890 --> 01:29:52,430  
it was not necessarily freedom.

1517  
01:29:52,430 --> 01:29:52,930  
And--

1518  
01:29:52,930 --> 01:29:54,700  
That is true.

1519  
01:29:54,700 --> 01:29:57,700  
And so is there  
anything else you

1520  
01:29:57,700 --> 01:30:04,660  
would like to add to this  
interview before I conclude it?

1521  
01:30:04,660 --> 01:30:11,220  
Only that-- very quickly  
because in Zelezná Ruda,

1522  
01:30:11,220 --> 01:30:16,272  
I encountered one gentleman  
whose name was Arnost Zajic.

1523  
01:30:16,272 --> 01:30:19,140  
And he had a pastry shop.

1524  
01:30:19,140 --> 01:30:21,520  
Before we coming  
to Zelezná Ruda,

1525  
01:30:21,520 --> 01:30:26,560  
he has a pastry shop into  
little town of Velhartice.

1526  
01:30:26,560 --> 01:30:32,070  
Little did I know this  
gentleman was a true good soul

1527  
01:30:32,070 --> 01:30:34,480

and good Samaritan.

1528  
01:30:34,480 --> 01:30:37,150  
I have learned  
just only recently

1529  
01:30:37,150 --> 01:30:45,790  
what work he did in Velhartice,  
helping three Jewish families

1530  
01:30:45,790 --> 01:30:50,320  
during the early days of  
antisemitic enforcement

1531  
01:30:50,320 --> 01:30:54,010  
of the rules, which were--

1532  
01:30:54,010 --> 01:30:59,540  
they eventually  
ended in TerezÃn.

1533  
01:30:59,540 --> 01:31:06,480  
Mr. Zajic and his family find  
a way how to send packages.

1534  
01:31:06,480 --> 01:31:14,310  
He developed even a recipe  
of certain gingerbread,

1535  
01:31:14,310 --> 01:31:15,420  
which was--

1536  
01:31:15,420 --> 01:31:22,180  
I just on my last visit  
in today's Czech Republic

1537  
01:31:22,180 --> 01:31:23,790  
learned more--

1538  
01:31:23,790 --> 01:31:25,920  
because I was given  
the little booklet--

1539

01:31:25,920 --> 01:31:30,690

learned a little more  
about Mr. Zajic's activity.

1540

01:31:30,690 --> 01:31:34,010

All of the three families  
which he supported,

1541

01:31:34,010 --> 01:31:41,270

with his gingerbread, during  
almost five years in TerezÃn

1542

01:31:41,270 --> 01:31:45,030

survived to come to  
tell him thank you.

1543

01:31:45,030 --> 01:31:51,540

And Mr. Zajic, of course,  
did survive the Nazi

1544

01:31:51,540 --> 01:31:54,390

and doing what he was  
doing, but he did not

1545

01:31:54,390 --> 01:31:59,010

survive Communist regime.

1546

01:31:59,010 --> 01:32:04,050

That injustice was a pain  
I just learned a year ago

1547

01:32:04,050 --> 01:32:12,340

because there was local writer  
who write about his story.

1548

01:32:12,340 --> 01:32:16,950

And to my surprise in  
that little book, which

1549

01:32:16,950 --> 01:32:21,180

was given to me, my  
name is also named

1550

01:32:21,180 --> 01:32:25,660  
by the family of Mr. Zajic,  
that my name is fully

1551

01:32:25,660 --> 01:32:28,860  
and properly spelled  
in that book.

1552

01:32:28,860 --> 01:32:32,460  
I feel that Mr.  
Zajic at that time

1553

01:32:32,460 --> 01:32:36,740  
already showed himself  
if I was showing it

1554

01:32:36,740 --> 01:32:40,560  
abrasive and teenage  
way, Mr. Zajic

1555

01:32:40,560 --> 01:32:44,400  
was showing it  
humane and nice way.

1556

01:32:44,400 --> 01:32:49,860  
He was truly a good Samaritan.

1557

01:32:49,860 --> 01:32:53,370  
So he help during the war.

1558

01:32:53,370 --> 01:32:55,590  
And how did I find about it?

1559

01:32:55,590 --> 01:32:58,970  
That is another story  
because I find it

1560

01:32:58,970 --> 01:33:03,450  
by visiting Czech embassy  
about 10 years ago, where

1561

01:33:03,450 --> 01:33:06,110

there was a special exhibit.

1562

01:33:06,110 --> 01:33:11,460

The exhibit is called People  
Who are No Longer With Us.

1563

01:33:11,460 --> 01:33:17,000

And one panel have a story  
of Mr. Zajic [INAUDIBLE]..

1564

01:33:17,000 --> 01:33:20,990

It had that Mr.  
Zajic did not respect

1565

01:33:20,990 --> 01:33:23,420

any Nazi antisemitic law.

1566

01:33:23,420 --> 01:33:30,010

He conduct himself how he always  
did to all of these customers,

1567

01:33:30,010 --> 01:33:33,230

and never mind if  
they were Jewish.

1568

01:33:33,230 --> 01:33:38,090

And do we spell  
his name Z-E-I-T-Z?

1569

01:33:38,090 --> 01:33:48,100

Zajic is Z-A-J-I-C. And Arnost.

1570

01:33:48,100 --> 01:33:49,700

Arnost Zajic.

1571

01:33:49,700 --> 01:33:50,200

And--

1572

01:33:50,200 --> 01:33:52,990

A real person who helped.

1573

01:33:52,990 --> 01:33:57,900

If I only helped two Jewish students, it was different.

1574  
01:33:57,900 --> 01:34:00,860  
This man really helped people.

1575  
01:34:00,860 --> 01:34:03,200  
Did you know him personally?

1576  
01:34:03,200 --> 01:34:04,640  
I know him personally.

1577  
01:34:04,640 --> 01:34:07,210  
Family knows him personally.

1578  
01:34:07,210 --> 01:34:12,170  
I even received his son,  
who was studying medicine,

1579  
01:34:12,170 --> 01:34:15,610  
in Oberursel.

1580  
01:34:15,610 --> 01:34:19,390  
But I did not know that  
there was a writer now

1581  
01:34:19,390 --> 01:34:25,860  
who is collecting information  
about people like Mr. Zajic,

1582  
01:34:25,860 --> 01:34:30,610  
and that are children in  
today's Czech Republic

1583  
01:34:30,610 --> 01:34:38,510  
who are actually finding Mr.  
Zajic's story by being given

1584  
01:34:38,510 --> 01:34:44,180  
a task by a teacher to go  
and investigate about people

1585



01:34:44,180 --> 01:34:46,860  
who are no longer among us.

1586  
01:34:46,860 --> 01:34:49,910  
And I believe it was  
a ninth grader, who

1587  
01:34:49,910 --> 01:34:56,370  
must have visited today's  
mayor's office in Velhartice

1588  
01:34:56,370 --> 01:34:58,880  
and apparently  
went into archives

1589  
01:34:58,880 --> 01:35:01,980  
and get a number  
of documentation.

1590  
01:35:01,980 --> 01:35:05,300  
And one was, of  
course, during wartime,

1591  
01:35:05,300 --> 01:35:13,520  
when Mr. Zajic is clearly  
incriminated by his refusal

1592  
01:35:13,520 --> 01:35:17,810  
not to share his Jewish custom,  
and particularly children.

1593  
01:35:17,810 --> 01:35:19,880  
They could come  
any time, anywhere.

1594  
01:35:19,880 --> 01:35:23,690  
Mr. Zajic simply would not obey.

1595  
01:35:23,690 --> 01:35:27,260  
Thank you for bringing  
his name to my attention.

1596  
01:35:27,260 --> 01:35:33,650

And thank you again for  
what you have shared with me

1597  
01:35:33,650 --> 01:35:37,730  
over these past few days.

1598  
01:35:37,730 --> 01:35:40,880  
In the name of the museum,  
we're very grateful.

1599  
01:35:40,880 --> 01:35:43,520  
I very much appreciate it.

1600  
01:35:43,520 --> 01:35:47,630  
And I will say now that this  
concludes the United States

1601  
01:35:47,630 --> 01:35:52,210  
Holocaust Memorial Museum  
interview with Mr. Robert

1602  
01:35:52,210 --> 01:35:57,770  
Budway on September 3rd, 2020.

1603  
01:35:57,770 --> 01:36:01,430  
And you are in  
Washington DC, and I

1604  
01:36:01,430 --> 01:36:03,350  
in Falls Church, Virginia.

1605  
01:36:03,350 --> 01:36:06,080  
Thank you again.

1606  
01:36:06,080 --> 01:36:06,580  
Yes.

1607  
01:36:06,580 --> 01:36:09,000  
It was pleasure to do it.

1608  
01:36:09,000 --> 01:36:12,860  
I only apologize that I

get sometimes emotional--

1609  
01:36:12,860 --> 01:36:14,040  
Oh, that's not a problem.

1610  
01:36:14,040 --> 01:36:14,623  
--and intense.

1611  
01:36:14,623 --> 01:36:16,410  
I apologize for it.

1612  
01:36:16,410 --> 01:36:21,390  
The person who cries to  
me in heaven for justice

1613  
01:36:21,390 --> 01:36:23,000  
is Mr. Zajic.

1614  
01:36:23,000 --> 01:36:28,200  
And Václav Florian, who I am  
very happy to say is living

1615  
01:36:28,200 --> 01:36:35,010  
a long life and living it among  
his grandchildren and among his

1616  
01:36:35,010 --> 01:36:35,860  
family.

1617  
01:36:35,860 --> 01:36:39,570  
He's alone now, but  
he's doing well.

1618  
01:36:39,570 --> 01:36:41,340  
That is good news.

1619  
01:36:41,340 --> 01:36:43,170  
That is very good news.

1620  
01:36:43,170 --> 01:36:47,270  
And thank you for bringing  
this to that conclusion.

Contact [reference@ushmm.org](mailto:reference@ushmm.org) for further information about this collection