

I'm back with Leon Faigenbaum. We're talking about the camp Ebensee.

Ebensee, yeah. So Ebensee was a big just destroy camp, destroy just to kill people, destroy people. Like I told you before, this was made for 10,000 people. And they bring in a lot of people in the end of the war, 1945. And the people was working over there. And there was killing, over there, going on every day.

One day, they take me to work on a station, a railroad station. We come over there maybe about 300 people to work on this railroad station. I work over there on this railroad station. I look. Was railroad cars was bombed. Americans, they was bombed the station.

So the railroad cars were turned over. The roof was on the ground, and the wheels was on the top. So I went in, in one railroad car. And I look. I saw sugar, sacks with sugar, you know? Oh, I look, sugar? I open one bag sugar, and I start to eat sugar. And I bind my pants, here, around. And I put sugar in the pants, here. And I start to holler to the guys, oh, is sugar here. Everybody was hungry. We went in. Everybody take sugar.

Well, we come over there to work. We come with a little railroad, a little railroad not a big railroad station, little railroad cars. We came to the work. After we finished the work, we have to go back to the camp. We have to go to the railroad. When I come to the railroad cars, and I want to go up on the railroad car, I was not able to pick up my legs. I put in sugar in here. And it was very heavy. I not figured out that.

I cannot pick up the legs to jump in, in the railroad car. The Germans start to beat, with the rifles, the people. They want fast, schnell schnell, schnell, to go in the railroad car. I was not able to pick up my leg. So they beat me up, very bad. I was not able to go in, in the railroad car. So the people dropped me in, in the railroad car.

So when I come back to the camp, I was not able to walk on my legs. Was beaten. I was, anyway, skin and bones, already, at that time. So they decided they put me-- they say this in a Schonungsblock. Schonungsblock, that mean a barrack, before the people died, they put them in this block before death.

Because they have a lot dead. Was laying in the dead in the thousands. People died on the street. They no had time to burn them up. The crematorium was working day and night. Was so many dead bodies laying, but they beat them up to death, plus they hang them, and they shoot them. Because they bringing all the camps over there. And they was not able to burn up everything, together. So they bury a lot in the grave.

And they put me in. They put in, in this barrack, maybe about more than 100 people. We was waiting to die, over there, in this barrack. I was not able to walk already. The other people was hungry. So they cut one. One cut, from the other one, the meat. The people died over there. And this where I was laying, the people died. The dead people, the other people go and they cut pieces. They eat the meat.

From dead people?

From the dead people, they cut. I look. They cut. They eat the meat. The Germans they come in. They see, the bodies, they cut off the pieces. They ask, who did that? They start to beat everybody. Nobody say. Because if you tell them, he cut a piece off, they going to kill him. And not say nothing. Nobody say. We know care. Beat. Do what you want. Oh, they beat up. I no feel nothing, already, bones and skin and bones. I cannot walk. I'm laying around just to die.

OK. May 4, 1945, the Germans come in. And he say-- he walked, like this, on the bodies. It was so cold over there. The door was open. And this is in the Alps. And Ebensee, in Austria, this is in the Alps, in the hills around. It was cold. And he walked on the bodies, on the live bodies, the German, with the boots.

And he said to us, tomorrow morning, 10 o'clock and 11 minute, you going to Himmel kommando-- to the people who are still alive. Himmel kommando, this mean, when they burn you up, your body go through the chimney. In German, Himmel kommando, this means the smoke go to Himmel, to the sky. It is in German, Himmel kommando, you know, Himmel. So he say, tomorrow morning, 10 o'clock and 11 minutes, you going to be in the Himmel kommando.

Tomorrow morning, we are ready. We won't go to die. We won't go die. We cannot leave. I cannot walk anyway. I understood everything. My eyes-- I looked everything. I see. All the night, we hear noise, noise, like things, noise. The road was away from the camp maybe about two miles-- the road. Was all the night, noise. We don't know what's going on. We don't know nothing.

However, in the morning, we saw a white flag on the crematorium, on the chimney. We don't know what this mean. Because all the Germans were still around, and the crematorium was working, and the gas chamber was working. And the Germans were still around with the machine guns all over. We don't know nothing what's going on.

They was maked up in the mines. They put dynamite around, to put all the people in, to kill them, over there, in the mines, in the stone mines.

They were going to take the people and put them in the mines, and then blow them up.

They already put in dynamite over there. What happened? The big shots, the Germans, they run away. The Americans was already around over there by the camp. And the big shots ran away. And just the soldiers, they was in the camp watching us. And they now have an order to put us in to die over there.

However, the chimney was working. They put people to the gas chamber and to the crematorium till the last second.

They kept killing till the very last minute.

Yes, this was going on till the last second. We was laying, waiting to go, to go to die, already. We looked. I cannot walk, nothing. I understood. My eyes looked. My mind was-- mind good, the mind. However, I was not able to stay up on my leg.

Anyway, we look. We see tanks coming in. Tanks but we don't know what kind of tanks this is. Who knows? We think maybe, German tanks, because the Germans were still there with the machine gun. Americans coming in. They come in. They open the door, Americans. They look. They're looking at all this. Terrible. They see us, like this, they never. Who will see, yes, people skin and bone, like this, you know?

Oh, come in, I don't know, was a big major come in, American soldier. He had some back here. He take out a towel, a clean towel. And he start to clean up the faces. He cannot walk in. We was laying inside. He walked, and he just washed up the faces a little bit. He had little bottle. I give to smell. Ah. Everybody, oh, this was so good, the smell, something.

Did you realize what was happening at that point?

I didn't know. I see. They say, America, American. I don't understand English. They say, we Americans, American. Oh, we looked. We see the tanks. The Germans were still there with the machine guns. They take away the machine guns from them. And they pile it up. It was piled up high, this ammunition. And they take away the Germans.

There was people in the camp, strong people still, from our people, concentration camp people. They want to kill the Germans. They, right away, they start to jump on the Germans, just take a machine gun to kill them. They not let them do this, the American. They not let them do that.

What happened? When just they come in, the Americans, exactly to the second that we have to go to the gas chamber. Exactly to the second, 10 o'clock in the morning. I never, never forget that. Since my eyes could be open, I never forget. Exactly 10 o'clock, they come, the Americans in. We was laying. We cannot move nothing. Nobody was able to move from us, where we was there. Everybody was 95% dead.

So anyway, I was laying for two days, maybe more, maybe three days in this place. Lots of boys died. They not take us away, the American.

Were you happy when you realized that the Americans were there and you were going to be liberated? Or were you too sick to know?

I didn't know. I think I going die. I going to die. What happen? The Americans come in. From the beginning, they no had time, you know? Soldiers, you know? So anyway, we was laying, like this. And they give us in some food and drink. We cannot eat. I cannot.

So was a hospital in Ebensee, a big hospital. In this hospital was German soldiers. SS was laying over there. And the Americans, they not take us to the hospital. They no had time. I tell you the truth, they was busy. They was still going to fight. However, they was not fighting. In Austria, they opened, for him, the borders. They let them in, the Americans. They was keeping back the Russians, over there. And the Americans, they let in. The Germans, they let in the American.

So anyway, in the concentration camp, the people, our people, what they was there, they went in the hospital. They drop out the Germans from the windows. They kick them out. And they put us on trucks. Their people-- our people in the concentration camp. They put us on truck. And they carry us out, on the hand, and take us in, in the hospital.

Now, we come in the hospital, everybody clean up.

Were there doctors there?

Was doctors. We know one of the doctors, a German doctor. We was afraid for the German, they should kill. We had doctors, our doctor. In concentration camp was doctors, too. We ask, could they come over there? They take care for us, and we kick out these doctors, the Germans. They kick out, the people what they was able. They was able to work, to do something They kick them out. And they bring our doctors.

And our doctors come. They take us, everybody, put in the bed. And they say, the first thing, what they say, don't eat nothing. Don't touch food. What we going to give to you, then that you got to eat. If you going eat, you going to be dead. No stomach, nothing. So that was true.

When there come the sisters, they work in there. They bring some food. They eat for themselves. Or these guys, they was able, already, to walk from the bed down. And they go to steal some food. They eat. They die. They die. They put me in shot, the food with shot in my body. I were for six months in the hospital.

After six months, I go out from the hospital.

Where'd you go after you left the hospital?

After I leave the hospital? After I leave the hospital, I went in the camp. This were, in the hospital, I went in the camp. Was a DP, DP camp, they called it, DP camp. DP? You know, DP? They call us DP.

Oh, DP.

DP, all of the people, they was in the camp. They call us DP. And they make campfires over there. And they give us food, everything.

In the same place where the concentration camp had been or a new place?

No, in another place.

New place.

Another place. We had everything over there-- drink and eat and food and everything.

And who was running this DP?

DP, they was run, the American Army, I think the Joint something was together, already.

And you finished recuperating at the DP camp?

Yeah. Finished up recuperating. And after this, after I feel good, I--

How long did that take?

I don't know. I cannot remember, exactly, how long I was there. I want to just tell you. I just want to tell you, after this, I decided I go to Poland, to look with my eyes, with my hands, if somebody survive. I go look where I am born, in my country, in my city, where I drink the water. I want to go see over there.

So I go over there. I go to Poland. I come in a city, Radom, was a couple of Jewish people over there, not many, maybe 10 people over there. I no had money. I no had nothing. I come in this [NON-ENGLISH] over there. And they tell me.

I no have money. They give me money. They give me food, the Jewish community. They are maybe about 10 people I find. They ask me, where are you going? I tell them, I'm going to Gniewoszew, to my city. Oh, they say, don't go over there. They going to kill you over there. This was after the war. Don't go. They going to kill you, the Christian, the Polish people.

I say, why are they going to kill me? Because you're Jewish. The Jewish people told me. I no listen to them, anyway. I sit down on the railroad, on the train, and I go. I know every place over there, already, in Poland. I'm born there. I go. I come middle of the night to a station. The railroad no go through to our city, because it was a little place. It go. It stop, before, maybe about 10 kilometers.

So already on the railroad, where I travel, from Radom to our city, was already Polish people sitting over there. And they know me. They know my parents, my father, my mother, all of my family. I know them, too. They come to us, because we was working for them.

They say, ho, you still alive? Like this. Oh, you're still alive? They wondered why I survived. This the way they talked to me. It was so bad for me, I no say nothing. I ask them, somebody live in the city? I ask them, somebody alive over there? Oh, yes, they said, maybe about five, six Jewish people. I ask them where they are, who are their name? They not tell me exactly. They tell me but not exactly the name.

I cut my hair. I had no head hair on the head. They were stay, like this, on my head. In the night, I come. And I ask them, where they are, these people, the Jewish people. And they told me where they are. I go over there in the city. Was about 3 o'clock in the night.

And I come. I knock on the door. They was afraid to open the door. They was not afraid for German. Was not German there. They was afraid for the Polish people. So I knock on the door, I say-- I recognize, right away, a voice from a woman. I recognize. I say, oy, Sarah. And she recognized me, too. And they opened the door. I come in. Was crying all the night.

We take off the shoes, you know? Jewish people, they praying. They sitting shiva. We sitting shiva all the night. We crying all the night.

Now, Sarah was a friend?

She was a friend. No.

From your town?

Everybody in this small city was like one family. And she know my-- And I ask, who is alive from my family? Nobody. He say, one cousin, my cousin, he survived the war. And after the war, the Polish people, they kill him. They chop his head off with a ax after the war. Polish people, they kill him. He survived by the Polish people, other Polish people. He survived. And other people, they kill him.

I was in this city one day. In this city, I look around, I see everything is destroyed. I see the whole city was living. Christian living over there, Polish. I was afraid to go over there. I was afraid if I go there, they kill me. They think maybe I want to take the house away. I was afraid to go. I just looked everything.

One Polish guy, he was a good friend of me before the war. He was like a brother to me. He come to me. He say, come to my house. I go to his house. And he give me to eat, to drink. He show me he got a gun. And he say to me, he is the AK. AK, this was an organization, they hate Jews and communists. They killed Jews and communists. That was this organization, AK. That's what they was hating the Jewish people and killing.

And he tell me, this guy, he said, go away from here and tell the other Jewish people, too, the five, six of them over there, should they go away, too, because we going to kill them. He told me. Like a brother he was to me, you know. And I was sitting and talking to him and crying all the time. Because he know my brother.

He was working for us. He was also a shoemaker. He was working for us-- with us, together, before the war. In our house, he grew up. He eat and drink with us, together.

And now he hates Jews, that much, that he's in this organization.

However, he was in the organization, AK.

And he's in this organization?

He was in the organization. He showed me a gun. I was sitting with him. He show me ammunition, everything. He told me, we work against. And he asked me what I going to do. I told him. I no want to tell him, I go away. But I say, I come here. And I go make with you a business, together. We go run a business. And we going make. We going to be good. And we going to build up something. I say, you know, we run a business. You know what to do. Oh, he says, it's a good idea. He say, I go put my brothers in, too. I thought just, don't worry. I fix up everything.

However, anyway, he told me, tell the other people, should they go away. I go over there. And I told these people, go away from here. One lady, she had a passport to go to America. She was married to a guy before the war. He went to America. But she had no time. The war come out, and she no come to America. And she was survived by Polish people in the war. All of these six people were survived by Polish people.

You mean, Polish people had helped hide them.

Hide them, and they survived. Was good people, too, like I tell you. Was 36 million people, Polish people, and it was 3 and 1/2 million Jews in Poland. Was maybe, I will say, 90% good one, 10% was no good, antisemites. All over you got. So anyway, I told these people. I told them, go away, where you can. They going kill you here. And I say, goodbye. I go. I have to go to sleep, in the same day, to this guy. I was already afraid to sleep with these people over there, my Jewish people. I was already afraid. And I just told them, run away where you can. And they no listen to me. They give me money. They give me to eat.

And I go back to this guy, to sleep by him. I safer by him. I was afraid, too. I see I'm safe. I sleep on the roof, on hay, where the horses, the pigs are, you know? He put me. He was afraid, should not bring in the house, if the other guys come in. They have maybe a meeting, the AK. They come together. He no want should they see me in his house. He'd say, you sleep over there, on the roof, you know, where the hay is, where the pigs, the cows.

I sleep over there, but I cannot sleep. I was-- I think, what shall I do? I'm afraid. I survive. Now I going die here. 3 o'clock in the night, I went down. And I go away. I go away to the railroad station, 10 kilometers. I was lucky. Right

away come the railroad, and I go away. I go away to LA<sup>3</sup>dz. LA<sup>3</sup>dz, that's a big city in Poland. I stay over there, and I run away. I run away back to Austria.

Right away back to Austria. And I married over there. And I stay.

Where in Austria did you go?

I was staying, in Linz, in a DP camp. I was staying over there in DP camp. DP, you know what this is?

Right.

I was staying over there. I came back. I was-- I tell you, right away, I just wanted to figure out, to see. I figured out, maybe I go away someplace in the world. And I know what I have on my mind-- that I want to be sure I no find nobody. I want to be sure. You see, always could be in my mind, maybe somebody live, somebody alive, maybe somebody, over there, where I grow up. And I go there to make sure. To make my body clean, I looked over there, with my hands, and I look everything. And I go back to Austria.

And I was in-- and I stay in Austria. I went to-- and later, I could go to America, in 1945, right after the war. So I decided, I go to Palestine.

Had met your wife, yet, when you went to Palestine?

Oh, yeah, we was married already.

You met her where?

We married. I met her in Poland. We met. We know already, before, each other.

Oh, you knew her before the war?

Yeah. Yeah. Yeah.

And then you found her?

Yeah, find her. And we was together in Austria. We had two kids in Austria, 1947. And end of 1947, we went away to Palestine.

Was it difficult going to Palestine or did someone help you?

Oh, was very difficult then to go. You no go to Palestine like you go today, by plane or by ship. You have to go, from Austria, to the mountains, to the hills. And you do not go with papers. You go not legal. You have to go through the mountains, on your stomach, to go down, should nobody see you. Was the working from Israel, the Haganah, the Bricha, and the Jewish Joint, they was running this business, to hide, to take the people out from Europe to Palestine.

And we come from Austria, through the mountains, through the hills. I carry one baby, here. My wife carry another baby on her shoulder. We come to Italy. Italy was waiting a bus, already, a truck. We go on the truck. The truck take us to Geneva, Geneva to the-- this was the ships over there. Was already waiting a ship, a little ship, not like a big ship. And on this ship, maybe, can go maybe-- was a boat ship, what they catch fish.

And on this ship, maybe, can go, maybe, I don't know, maybe 40 people. We put in maybe 200 on this boat, babies and old and young people. And the England, that they was in Palestine then, they not let the Jewish in. And they catch the Jews, they put them to Cyprus-- when they catch them.

But this guy, he runs this boat. He was a Greece. He already take Jewish people to Palestine. So he had a telephone. He

talked all the time, with the Haganah from Israel, with the underground in Israel. They tell him where to go and where to stay and where to wait. He cannot go straight to Palestine. He have to wait maybe about 20 kilometers away on the ocean. And they come over there. He go away. You know, the England, they no catch him. They no catch him.

We come to the underground in Israel. They take us with little boats. And they take me, right away, away, in the underground. I was like a soldier. Take my wife and two babies. They put them in a camp, outside, in a camp. Was very bad. Was no food. Was nothing then. Nothing-- was very bad.

Why did you decide to go to Israel, rather than to the United States, when it was easy to go to the United States and hard to go to Israel?

I tell you why. Because, first of all, I saw, already, what they did with the Jewish people. And now I say, myself, if I survive, am I Jew? My father was a big patriot, you know, Zionist. And I say, I survived already. Why should I no go help? Shall we have a country, like everybody have a country? If we had a country before, this tragedy, Holocaust happen-- it would not happen to the Jewish people like this.

I say, like this, I said to my wife, I say, now I no want nothing. I no want to be a millionaire. I no want to go to no place. And they told me-- Americans, they told me, you can go. You no need any papers. We liberated you. You can go. I say, thank you. I appreciate, you liberated me. But I'm a Jew. My body Jewish, everything. I want to go help, over there, the people. That's what happened.

I go over there. I was in the army, 3 and 1/2 years in the Israeli army.

What was life like in Israel?

In the beginning, it was very bad. Because we had to fight with the Arabs and with the England. And then we had become a Jewish nation, the Arabs attack. The Jewish people was about 600,000 Jewish. And all the millions of Arabs-- seven Arab countries attack us. We no had nothing, just with the hand to fight. And we fight them.

So things got-- you see? We have a country. And I was. I'm very happy. I was in the army. And I survived. And I did my part. And I'm very proud of this. I did. I stay with the rifle. I stay with the machine gun. And I fight. And I did what I could. So I stay. I was in Israel. Later, after I come out from the army, I work. I was very good.

What kind of work did you do?

I was a shoemaker in Israel. I work.

And then you decided to come to the United States. How did you decide?

No. I'll tell you what happened. I never decided to go to the United. I like Israel very much, too. My wife, she have a brother and a sister in America. And she cried all the time. I no have nobody. Everybody is dead, too. They kill all the family, just she have a brother and a sister in the United States. And she say, she want to go to the United States, because she have a brother. I understand it.

Your wife is also a survivor.

Yeah, she also was a survivor. She was also survived the same thing what I survived, maybe not like this, different way. But I thought that I had to do. Or divorce with the wife or go to America. So I said, there's nothing wrong with America. I go. I did my part already for Israel. I was a soldier. I fight. I was in the army so many time. And I think, I did my part. And I go to America.

We come to America in 1959. And thanks God, I'm very happy, here, in this country. I have three daughters. And they happy, too.

Were her relatives located in Cleveland?

Whose?

Your wife's.

Yeah, they live in Cleveland. Yeah.

Did any agency help you when you got into to Cleveland?

Nothing. Nothing. When I came to Cleveland, I no had nothing. I had \$10 in my pocket. When I came to Cleveland, you see, in Israel, I already had my own house, a [NON-ENGLISH]. They have like a condominium, here. I had over there two rooms, a kitchen. This was my own paid. However, when I have to go to America, I no had money for the ship. I came with a ship to America not by plane. I no had money. I have to sell this house. I sell the house just to pay for the ship. And I also paid for the plane, in Israel, to come, from New York, to Cleveland, by the plane.

So when I come to Cleveland, I had \$10 in my pocket. I no had money, nothing. I have three kids, one was five years old. And the other girl, my Henia, she was already finished the public school in Israel. And the other one was in the school, Hanna, however, didn't understand English, nothing. Was very bad with the language.

And for me, I went to my brother-in-law. He take me to the Jewish Welfare, from the beginning, should they help me, something. Should they help me with work, with a job. So I went with him to the Jewish Welfare, Jewish Family Service, how you called it.

I come over there. They ask me questions. I told them. I come from Israel. I have three kids. They say to me this way, if you come from Israel, here, to America, you never no come here to us no more. You no walk in here for help. We no going to help you nothing. We help Israel. And we not going to help you, because you leave Israel. You are-- how you say this? Like I am a--

Traitor?

Like I am a traitor. You know, like I leave Israel. So I tried to explain to them. I said, look, I did my part. I was in the army. And I married. I'm not so young. So I did my part. I come to the United States. What is wrong with it? We no going to help you, nothing. They no help me. You know, but that is worth it. See, what that is worth?

And I never no go over there, today. Never ever went to them, should they help. I say, maybe they are right. I said to myself, maybe they're right. Why I left Israel? Why I should stay there?

Did you join a synagogue here?

Yes. I'm joining. I'm a member in Heights Jewish center. And I'm a member of the Yeshivath Adath to the synagogue. And I am a member of Kol Israel organization. So anyway, I no go no more to them.

But I went to a Jewish, what they give the jobs? What they call that?

Jewish Vocational Service. Jewish Vocational Service. I don't know. I no go myself. I find one man, an old man, Mr Rosenberg. He is already not here no more. And I talked to him. I told him the whole story. I cannot talk English. And I speak Yiddish. He speak Yiddish. He say to me this way, first thing, you need a Social Security card. I don't know nothing about Social Security card. He said to me, I take you. So he take me in downtown. He fill out the papers. They give me a Social Security card.

After the card, he go with me in the Jewish Vocation Service. It was in downtown on Ontario Street. I remember something like this. He went with me over there to the Jewish Vocation. I come in over there. The name was Mr. Cohen, his name. I come to him. He talked to me. No one talked to me Jewish. He understand Jewish. He no want to talk, just



English. I no understand English one word.

He said to me should I go to school to learn English. I say, you're right. I will go to school. I need a job. I got kids. I need a room. I have to-- give me a job, any job you give me, I take. He say, you go to school to learn English, then I go talk to you about a job. I

Say Mr. Cohen, I talk Yiddish, he talk English. The other guy, Mr. Rosenberg, he explained to me. I feel so bad, I tell you. Like he take a hammer, he give me with the head. That was better for me. Anyway, what can I do?

I go home. I sit down with my wife and the kids. We cry like babies. If I had money, big, in my pocket to go back to Israel, I would go, right away, back. What shall I do? What shall I do? Terrible. Somebody told me, Cleveland Coin Machine on Prospect. He no need people they can speak English. Go over there. Maybe you can get a job.

Mr Rosenberg, he go with me over there. I don't know how to go. He go with me. I go over there. I come in. The boss, he eating lunch. I go straight to him. And I talk to him Yiddish. And he talk very good Yiddish to me. He was a very nice man, Mr. Gieser. He say to me, who are you?

I say, my name is Leon Faigenbaum. I come from Israel. I have three kids. I have a wife. I want a job. Give me a job. He say, you don't know English, nothing? I say, no, I don't know English. He say, you don't need to know any English. All the refugees here, from Hungary, from Poland, they talking all the different language. Just the one guy, he was talking English. He was electrician. Gay, he was. He's an American born here.

He say, OK. He asked me, you come from Israel. You work on Shabbos, Saturday? I say, never in my life. Up to today, I never work Saturday, just in the concentration camp, what I were. However, otherwise, in Poland, yo no work Saturday. My father was an Orthodox Jew. In Israel, I no work, never, Saturday.

He say, I'm sorry. I cannot hire you. Because, in my place, everybody work on Saturday. We work four hours, he say, from 8:00 to 12 o'clock. If you not going to work Saturday, the other people going go home. I cannot. I say, Mr. Gieser, should I say, if that's the case, I say, somebody swim in the ocean, if he got something, if he know he could save his life. He know if he cut his hand, he could catch. He cut his hand. He go catch anyway. He think could save the life.

If you no give me the job because this the reason, then I have to work Shabbos. What can I do? I take the job, because I was so. I take the job. So, OK, he say, I hire you at \$1 an hour. I no say nothing. I say, OK. But all I know, I got hired. Work overtime, he say. You can work overtime, work over. So I work over there.

I work Mr. Gieser, meet him. My wife became a job, too. She worked for Majestic. She was making, I don't know, \$0.80 or \$0.90 an hour, too. This was good. The kids go to school. And right away-- I had a golden watch, from Israel, what I bring with me. And I want to sell the watch to pay \$100.

This guy, Mr Rosenberg, he went away to Florida for six months, exactly when I came. And I no had where to go to live. He say, I give you the rooms. I give you the beds, everything. I see, he say to me, you very nice people. And I going away with my wife to Florida. You stay in my house. You pay me \$100 a month, everything. Was very good for me. See, for me, it was good. Maybe no good, maybe good.

It was good, because I never had nothing. But \$100 I have to pay. And I no have the money. I was not at the job yet-- before I catch the job. I take the golden watch I had. And I go. I want to sell to people. I say give me \$100. Was armband gold, everything. And the one guy take the watch, he say, here, give me back to watch. He already bring me back. He say this gold is red gold. If this is yellow gold, I will buy from you. What can I do?

Meantime, I start to work by Mr. Gieser. So I was still living by my brother-in-law. It's just one week I was in the country. So I come to work. I show to the guy the watch. I show it to Mr. Gieser, to the boss. Oh, he said, that's red gold. I cannot buy. If it's yellow, I will buy. One guy, a refugee, he take the watch. He bring me \$100. I take the \$100. I paid Mr Rosenberg for the rooms. Next morning, they went away to Florida, and I start to work. My wife start to work.

For \$1 an hour, I start to work. Every time I go, Mr. Gieser give me a raise. And the supervisor was very mad to me. Andre was his name. He said, why you go to the boss every time when he eat? I go lunchtime, because, if I go in the time from work, he going to be mad at me. He going to say, why you leave the job, you come to me to talk? So I went on my time, lunchtime. And he was eating lunch, too.

I went in. I say, Mr. Gieser, give me a raise. Oh, he said to me, the business is bad, like this and that. Sometime, he give me a nickel. I work for two years over there, maybe I make \$1.20. I looked in the papers. Meantime, I went to school. I was living on Pennington. And I went to school to John Hay High School. You know, on Kinsman, over there, John Hay School. In the night, I went over there. I start to learn a little bit English. I start to be a human being, understand a little bit.

And the guy, where I was working over there, by Cleveland Coin Machine, the American guy, he talk to me English. The other guy, they not talk English. And I not talk with them. And she say to me, Mr. Gay, who was very nice to me, so nice. He say, learn. Just talk. Don't be ashamed if it's no good. Just talk, talk English. If it's good, if it's not good, just keep talking. He talk to me, all the time, English. If it's not perfect, he say it going to be perfect. Talk. That I talk. And I went to school at night. And I learned.

The meantime, I start to look for another job. I look in The Plain Dealer, every day. I understood a little bit. I looked. One time, I look in the paper, in The Plain Dealer, I see Lyman Steel, they looking for-- no, that was before this.

Yeah, I had another job, by Bobbie Brooks. I went to Bobbie Brooks. They was looking for people. I went over there. They need a sweeper to sweep the floor. I say, OK, I take the job. They give me \$1.35 an hour. I make over there \$1.20. And \$1.35 is more money, so I start to work here. I start at 6 o'clock in the morning to work. I buy me. I had a car, a Plymouth.

So life was improving here.

Life improving. I buy me a car. I make my license till I am driving. I buy me a car for \$50, a Plymouth. Were holes around, all over. The guys, they was making jokes on me. They say, oh, you got an air conditioned car. The air coming in and going out. I say, so good. It's perfect for me.

Anyway, my wife started to work. And the kids, they start to talk English in the school, pick up a little bit. And was coming back to the life. And I worked for Bobbie Brooks. Same thing, I go over there, to Mr Rosenberg, who was my manager by Bobbie Brooks. And I go to Mr Rosenberg. I said, Mr Rosenberg, give me a raise. I have three kids.

He told me like this, Mr Rosenberg. You are a Jew. How much money you going make not going be enough for you. That's the way he talked to me. One time, I take the table. He was sitting. I turn over the table on him. It make me so mad, you know? He tell me like this. You are a Jew. And you make-- Oh, he go mad. They go mad. They come to me. Everybody do like I say. Look, if somebody going to do to you, how you going to feel?

I work over there, by Bobbie Brooks, till 1966.

And then you went?

1966 Bobbie Brooks, I sweep the floor. And I maked, over there, when I leave the place, by Bobbie Brooks, maybe I make \$1.50 an hour, \$1.45, \$1.50, something like that. I was working overtime. If they give me, I was happy. And I never take vacation. Always ask to work for the vacation. I want to work, so they give me the money.

But I start to save little bit money. And from this money, what we make, I used to go on the market to buy food, everything. We no go in the restaurants, never. Never, just my wife cook in the house. And just we buy food and we cook and we eat, the kids. We never no go to restaurants, no. So anyway, I work over there. And we saved some money.

And in the rent? So meantime, Mr Rosenberg come back from Florida. I have to give him back the rooms, or we look apartment. We go rent rooms. They no want to rent me rooms, because I have kids, three kids. Nobody want to rent me.

Finally, [PLACE NAME] Boulevard, in apartment, fine apartment over there. They give the rooms-- very good man, very good man.

He was very good to us. He say you got to pay him \$100. The other people pay him \$130. He say, you pay me \$100. And we start to save a little bit money. I live over there at first 1966. I live over there.

And the guy, the Jewish guy, he sold the house, the building. And a German guy, he buy the building from him. So he no want Jewish people, over there, in the building. So what he do? He no say he no want Jewish people. He cannot say that. What he did? He sent me in, he went to \$250 a month should I pay him-- more than double what I pay. I cannot. I cannot pay so much.

What to do? We go look for rooms? We come on Glenmont. You know, Glenmont, Mayfield and Coventry, Mayfield and Superior. I find a two-family over there. The guy lived downstairs. And upstairs, they rent me the room. And they tell me, they give us a day where to wash the clothes in the basement, to wash the clothes. I used to wash the clothes in the basement. My wife was tired. She come home with the kids, you know, and to cook. So I washed the clothes. I used to do that-- not today.

So anyway, these people, they make us miserable the life. If you walk, no good. If you stay, no good. I woke up every day, 5:30 in the morning. I start to work 6 o'clock. I walk with no shoes, so they no listen. Anything you do was no good. OK. And then they let me wash the clothes in the basement. They make miserable, the [INAUDIBLE].

I say to my wife, we have to buy a house. We cannot live. Other people no want to give us rent a house. We was already saved, in this time, about \$4,000. We have in the bank about \$4,000 saved. Every penny we could, we saved. So we started to look for a house. Take about six months. We looked. We looked. Too much money, all over. Find out, we come on Bushnell. I looked at a house. It said \$21,000 they want for the house. And make out the papers. He say, you have to pay \$1,000. Not a down payment, just when you make the papers?

A deposit.

Deposit. I had to go in the bank. And I had nothing-- checking, nothing, I didn't know nothing about this. I go in the bank, make a check, and give him \$1,000. He go to the man from the house. The man was in an old home, already, an old man. And I give an offer, \$18,000. They want \$21,000, and I \$18,000. We go over there. The guy want-- he go down to \$20,000.

He come back to me. And I think they no want. The lawyer already had the house. The old man, he give to the lawyer. And the lawyer say, that's it, \$20,000. You cannot buy less. So OK, no, buy the house.

I go to the bank. The bank no want to give me the money. I go to Cleveland Ross. I go to Shaker Savings. I go Ohio Savings. Of course, I no had credit, because I never bought nothing. I no had credit. And I no had-- and they say, how much money I make in that time is not enough. I will not be able to pay, because I have three kids. He go with me, the guy, Mr Levine. The real estate, he go with me to Central National Bank, on Coventry, I believe.

He go with me to the manager. He was a very good guy. He say. He explained to him. He say, look, he paying rent where he live. He going pay you, too. Why he no going to pay? He asked me how much money I can pay? I say, I got \$4,000. He say, you need \$5,000 to make a down payment. And you can get a mortgage, \$15,000, for 20 years. \$4,000? What to do? I need \$1,000.

I explained to one good friend of mine. I told him. I tell him. I now go to my one friend. Never going to forget him. And I tell him the story. I want buy a house. And the bank say, I have to pay \$5,000. And I no got. I got \$4,000. Next morning, he bring me \$1,000 cash in the house, his wife. No papers, no nothing. No ask me nothing. He give me the \$1,000. I make the down payment for the house. And I moved in the house.

Yes. And it's a lovely house.

You see, I moved in the house. But I want to tell you, nobody helped me, nothing. I had help from nobody just this man what he--

This friend.

But I pay him back the money. I paying debts, you know I don't make him a favor, I pay him back. He make me a favor. He give me the money. But he was good for me. The other way, nobody helped me nothing.

No one helped you?

Nobody, no family, no Jewish Welfare, not one cent, nothing, myself, my hands, but I was working. That's are the hand, my hand.

Do you ever talk about the Holocaust, now, to people? Do you find that you tell them your experiences?

I tell you the true, I no got the who to talk about this. And people, they no want to listen about this. If I come together, they're survivors, too. Sometime, if I come together-- I have, in Cleveland, people, we was together in the camp. We come. In this week, one guy come to my house. We start to mention. We were sitting over there. And we looked.

The guy was die. He was talking over there. And other people were dying, sit and die. Sit and die. And the graves was open. We was dropping the bodies in the graves, like this, every time. That's what we talking, when we come together, like this. We still talking like this, the survivors. We still talking about it.

Did you talk to your family about it?

I talk all the time to my family. All the time, I talk. When I come together with my kids, I talking all the time. I mention. I never going forget one minute. I cannot sleep in the night. And I have one night since I survive, from the labor camp, from the concentration camp, so I can sleep through the night. Every night, I'm fighting with the Germans. Every night, I see that the machine guns from my eyes. I seeing how they killing the people, how the people fall in the graves, how they shoot them in the head. I got from my eye.

And when I go eat or when I go sleep or when I go to a wedding or when I go to party, all the time I got this in my eyes, from my mind. It's never going away from my mind. And when I sleep or when I eat or when I talk to you or when I talk to my wife, to my kids, that's, all the time, in my mind. Never going away from my mind. You will never know how I could be alive. How can you forget it? Can you forget what I saw, in all of those years, in all of this time, what they did to people, to babies, just because they were Jewish people? Just one reason why-- they was Jews.

And I am a Jew. What I saw, who can you tell? Nobody going to believe you. And see lots of people, today, they say, no happen, never, no happen.

Is that why you've decided to tell your story?

That's what I try. I will be happy to tell more in other places. If people want to listen, I'll go all over to say, should people know what happened. If I not going be here, should people know what happened to our Jewish people. Why they kill them? Why? Because they were Jews. That's the one reason. Not other reason, no other reason, just they going to liquidate all the Jewish people. That was the reason. That's the reason why I'm ready to go to tell any place, all over the world, no matter different. Should people know what happened. Plenty graves that I saw, where they buried. Nobody survived. I know.

How do you feel, as a Jew, in this country?

I feel very good. I'm very happy in this country as a Jew. It's a free country. You can go in any temple you want. You can send your kids and any Jew. My kids, they was in Jewish school. They grow up in the Hebrew Academy and other Jewish school. My kids, there are Jewish teachers, there are English teacher. My daughter finished John Kennedy

University. She finished the Orthodox Hebrew Academy, Yavne teacher seminar-- no matter.

In this country, not like Russia. Russia, you cannot send your kids in a Jewish school. Here, in America, you are a free man. A Jew is free, can go anywhere you want. You can send your kids. They can grow up. They can be rabbis. They can be doctors. They can be engineers, professors, everything. I feel very happy, here, in this country. I like this country. I'm very proud of this country.

I thank, every day, this country, what they give me my life, they liberated me, and all the Jewish people what they liberated from the concentration camp. But this America, should God bless this country. And Israel, should God bless them.

I want to thank you so much for sharing your story with us. I know it's not an easy thing to talk about. And we really appreciate it.

I have to. It's not easy for me. I go home. I going lay down all day. I mean, I have a headache. But I have to say this, for the future, so people know what happened. Somebody have to say this.

Thank you.

And everybody, all the people what they survived, they should say what happened. It's not easy. It's very, very difficult. That's what I told you, just like one drop in the ocean. It's nothing yeah.

Thank you. We've been talking with Mr Leon Faigenbaum

I thank you very much, that you listen to me and that you ask me the question. I'm very happy that you listen to me.

Thank you.

Thank you.