

We're back interviewing Mrs. Ruth Lidawer. Before the close of our last segment, you were talking about trying to get over the border to get your visas, so you could go to Manila.

That was all. We were just told about it. But there was no possibility really at the time. What happened was I mean we knew that the papers were there. We were told about it, and that we have to leave shortly in order to this one, before the visas expire, before the end of the year of '41. In the meantime, when we got to Uzbekistan, there were absolutely no provisions for so many hundreds and hundreds of people brought out of the camps.

So we were standing just in the streets. We're sleeping on the streets, on the sidewalks, or on grass. Of course, it was a warm climate. So it was possible to do so. So we were living on the streets. And for any food or anything, we had to stay in line always. I mean, we're living on the street. There was no other provision for us. And then we were told when they would be starting lines for lunch, for food, for either bread or for meat or whatever they would serve from those cooperatives. Those are those cooperative stores in Russia.

And so while we were in this one, on the streets, that was the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of December that we got to Samarkand. And at one point, we saw in a line, my mother recognized her brother in a line, in a Polish uniform. And with this one, we ran of course. And he said that he just was released from Kamchatka, from Siberia. And that he joins, he was joining the Anders' Army, which was the Polish army.

And he told us that he will try to help us if he can, as long as he'd be there in that area. But when they sent him to the battlefield, he doesn't know where he will be. But anyhow, then what happened was that night, I don't think I'll ever in my life forget that night. On the 6th of December, like a few other nights before that, we slept on the street. My mother wasn't that night sleeping too close to me. She slept someplace farther on the sidewalk.

And in the morning, I woke up, which was December 7th, 1941, your Pearl Harbor Day. I woke up and I remember it was my mother's birthday, December 7. And we always-- I was taught at home, we always fussed over her birthday so much. People, all our friends and family would bring always flowers, roses, she loved roses. Our house was always full of roses on her birthday. And there was a friend of my father who always would come on her birthday and play the violin that evening when birthday dinner was served to quite a few people in our house.

And somehow, not seeing, knowing that there was no fuss, nothing, I couldn't make myself go up to my mother, even to wish her happy birthday on the street. I couldn't do it. And that I can't forgive myself to this day that I did not. I didn't have the courage. And then towards the middle of the day, she said to me, Ruth did you forget my birthday? There are no roses. But did you forget it?

And I told her I just couldn't do it. Then probably an hour later, all of a sudden, we hear that this one, that Pearl Harbor occurred that the American Post was attacked by the Japanese, and war starts. And the war would be declared.

Immediately that one man who notified us about our papers said, I don't think you'll have a chance to get out of here anymore now, that this now that the war started over there, now that the United States is in war with Japan.

And then of course, four days later or five days later, we were notified that a Manila was already, this one, that Manila was bombed by the Japanese. So our papers actually were destroyed there in the embassy, when the embassy was bombed. And we never got out of there. It was Pearl Harbor actually that caused my mother's death there and never being able to come to this country with us.

So Pearl Harbor hit us over there pretty badly too, just like it hit this country. Then of course, how much longer could we stay in the streets of Samarkand? So they told us, the only thing we can do is join a kolkhoz, which is the Russian version of a farm, but where you work only. And just whatever fruit or whatever vegetable you grow on that farm goes immediately to the government, to the cooperative. And they just pay you something for it, so you can buy back some food for yourself.

So they send us to one of those kolkhoz. And over there, we were picking corn, I mean picking potatoes. The work was

somewhat easier. But there was never an assurance of getting food for ourselves. And the food we picked from the ground, the potatoes, the corn, we were not allowed to touch. We had to immediately-- it was picked up, and then weighed, and immediately taken to the government supervised stores, the cooperative.

Once in a while, I would steal a corn from the field and hide it in my shirt. That would be this one. And the only thing we were able to always buy was bread in line. After work we had to stay in line to get some bread and water. While there, we could always get enough bread, we always had the limit of four-- what's the measurement?

Slices? Yes, not four slices. It's not 4 ounces, but something equivalent to it in Russian measures. They weighed on a scale in front of us when we came up to the line. And that's as much as we would get. Mother would get a little bit more because she worked. We children got always only a half of it, because we were not able to work yet. But then of course, they already made me work too. They allowed at that time they were allowing children to work at the age of 12 already.

And I was 11. So they let me work, so I was working with my mother together. This way we could get a little bit more bread. But also, it was a warmer climate. It wasn't as drastic. I mean we didn't have all the time. The guards, the Russian guards watch us. But it was just a typical kolkhoz life, where nothing belongs to you. You can't do anything. It was a nice area, and the Russian people were good. The simple Russian private people were very good to us.

I remember going a few times to them. They would invite us into their houses, which were really the places that we lived in those kolkhozes were just out of clay, very damp. And we slept on that clay ground, of course. It was pretty bad. I mean, we had nothing, no blankets nothing. I mean we didn't need blankets in daytime, because it was fairly warm. But we're living in those clay houses.

The Russians in the village lived also in, I mean their houses were at least painted. The clay houses were painted, or maybe there was a few bricks on the front of their houses. And the Russians, especially the older people, were very good to us. I mean if mother could make some money, she would pay them, and they would give us some food or invite us for a meal occasionally. They were good to us. But they were afraid to associate with us that they will be treated and put in a kolkhoz the way we were. They were afraid to have any contact with us.

So just once in a long while they would. And then shortly, we were there a very short time when my sister came down with-- with this one. With what's the disease? Kind of thing, anyhow, she came out with one of the children's-- smallpox. She came down with the smallpox. So of course, they had to take her out from the kolkhoz and took her to a hospital.

She was in the hospital for a while. We just at night, once in a while, my mother and I would run to that village, into the hospital, and see whether she was OK. Shortly afterwards, I came down with typhoid fever, no first I came down with scarlet fever. And I was in the hospital. And I remember there was a boy about my age, Jewish boy who lived in Kyiv. But when the war started, of course, they were evacuated to Samarkand. He was a nice boy and he spoke a little bit Hebrew even.

And this one, and he warned me. He says, don't think you'll survive here. They'll continue you. You won't be any better off than you were in camp. In camp, you were at least assured the three meals a day, whatever it was, whether it was just water, water or bread, but it was given to you three times a day. In a kolkhoz, you didn't get that.

Anyhow, I was with him for a while. And he had typhoid. And I had scarlet fever. Then I must have caught the typhoid from him. And he-- we were together in that room for about four or five days. On the fifth day, he died from this. I mean there was no penicillin yet. We were not getting really any care. They just took us away from the rest of the people in order not to have an epidemic, to have an epidemic start over there. So he died in the next bed, which didn't help.

So I went through all this. I wasn't much in the kolkhoz because I was always sick with one thing to another. Then finally, when I got over the typhoid, I was sent of course back to the kolkhoz. And found my mother quite sick. This one, she wasn't eating at all at that time. Whatever little food she got, she was pushing on us because we were so hungry. What we were doing, we used to go and pick grass, cut grass, the nice and green grass, not dirty yet. We would chop the grass, mix it with a little bit, with crumbled bread, and then make a little fire, and made like pancakes out of that grass

and ate that.

That was we had-- they were giving us over there sometimes, I mean mother could buy sometimes after she worked, she was able to buy was the regular also that small pita, like pita bread here, but just a single layer, very thin. It was the first time we had saw some white bread, just a circle like that. But it was very expensive. So she would buy one or two a day she could buy. But she never ate it. She always made us eat it instead, so we wouldn't be hungry. And she, poor woman, was starving herself.

We lived on that grass and those two patches of bread like. It was just thin dough really. It reminded us of Jews, during Passover. That's what it looked like.

Matzah.

But it was made-- that's matzah-- but it was made completely different. It just really a more like a pita, but just to have very thin. Just I would say in diameter, about 5 inches in diameter. So she, starving herself like that, she was going down very drastically without food, trying to work still. And then all of a sudden, I notice her neck was getting very fat. She had a ball on her neck.

So when they noticed that, they took her to a hospital. So I used to every once a week, I was able to run away from the kolkhoz where now I had to work full time, and my sister was allowed to help me in order to produce more. Because over there, we also had norms. We had to pick up so much corn, so much potatoes each day. And if that wasn't picked up, they didn't punish us like that anymore because we supposedly were free. But they didn't pay us anything, so we couldn't get any food.

The more we worked, the more food we were able to buy in return. So every other week, I would run. I found my way to that hospital somehow. It was a long, long run. It took me about two hours each way to get to that hospital. So I would take some bread too, some of that bread to my mother. We would save-- we would chop more grass, and save the bread for mother. But towards the end, she couldn't take that bread anymore. Her stomach was just completely couldn't take any food anymore.

She wasn't able to digest anything it was so shrunk. We all had our stomachs completely shrunk that any big amount of food hurt us, where we couldn't eat. So she was in that hospital. And then it was a week before Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, before our Jewish New Year. We did spend one Jewish New Year in this one, in camp in Siberia. We never, my mother never lived to see the following New Year's.

I was taken to the hospital a week before, because I had dysentery, very bad. I mean I was bleeding. Dysentery was the common illness over there. I mean, from all that green stuff or green tomatoes that we ate when we were hungry, naturally. I had a terrible dysentery. And that was they considered it also contagious of course. Only if you were sick only, but they wouldn't necessarily take you to a hospital. But the moment you came down with a contagious disease, they took you to a hospital in order to prevent an epidemic.

So I was taken to the hospital. I was in that hospital. And then one night, I was running very high fever over there. Because I remember that I was just, I couldn't see. I had a difficult time. So I ran to that night, that one night, I found out that it was Erev Yom Kippur. I ran out of that hospital. The nurses didn't catch up with me. They didn't see me. I disappeared. Of course, they found out afterwards that I was gone.

And I ran from that hospital to the hospital where my mother was. I entered the hospital. And she was covered with sheet. She died 10 minutes before. So the last time I saw her was the time when I went before I got sick. But I did see her still. She didn't see me anymore. And they evidently, I mean, sent an alarm to find me because they were afraid that I was going to go someplace and spread the disease, since I was contagious.

So I don't remember exactly how I ever got back to that hospital. That I don't recall. I recall only that I developed an ear infection. Behind my ear was completely swollen. I mean like sacs of pus in it. And then the next thing I remember, I must have lost my memory for about a month. My uncle afterwards told me it was from that infection in my ear.

For a month, my memory lapsed completely. And months later, I found myself in a kolkhoz with an aunt and an uncle and their four children. It was my father's sister. How I ever got there, I don't know, and my sister was already there. They brought me there and for quite a while, I mean, the first thing I remember that I got there, I must have gotten to this one. But I couldn't hear at all. I mean my hearing was completely gone.

It was the hearing that I didn't have for months. Lapse of memory was just, I guess for those two weeks. Because I don't remember at all how I got my aunt's little-- what you call a house or whatever-- clay hut in the kolkhoz. And that's all I remember really. I mean when I came there, my memory wasn't lapsed that long. It was just a few days evidently. But I lost my hearing on both ears for a whole month.

Then evidently, the hearing shortly came back. So we stayed, my sister and I stayed over there for a while. Actually, we stayed there-- I stayed there for a little while. And then of course, the parent, my aunt and uncle who I always loved before the war, they were very good to us, but having not enough food for themselves and for their children, they wouldn't give us the food. You couldn't blame them. They were hungry themselves. They were fighting for the food that they brought into the hut.

Those were really just clay huts that they lived in. So we continued starving over there. So finally, one man-- no it was that cousin that was in that uniform, my mother's brother, who we met when we first came to Samarkand. He made arrangements to put us into an orphan home, because we couldn't continue living with my aunt and uncle. They didn't have enough food. They were fighting for it. I mean, the family was just torn to pieces.

I mean they just didn't have it. I can't blame them. They to this day, blame themselves that they let us go hungry. But they really were not to be blamed. They didn't have it for themselves. So we stayed there for about two weeks I would say. And two weeks later, they made arrangements to get us into the orphanage.

I don't quite remember how we got to that orphan home. I was again very sick. And what happened there at first, the first week or two, I don't remember. And I found out just about four years ago what really happened. But that will be the end of my story. I leave that for the end.

Anyhow, after two weeks in that camp, I start feeling better. My hearing came back. And I was introduced, we were living-- those were long barracks and they just had wooden boards. And we just slept on those wooden boards all of us, of all the children who were supposedly orphaned either by the war, or by diseases, or something from their parents. There were very few Russian kids over there, mostly Jewish children from Czechoslovakia, Germany, and Poland-- from those three countries were there in that camp.

And of course that was run this one by sworn-in Russian communists. I mean you had to take a pledge. You had to take it. Every child admitted to that orphan home had to take a pledge that they will believe in the Communist government, in Stalin, this one will never not desert but--

Betray?

Betray the Communist government. And you had to swear it on the blood, and do this one on your scarf. I was made to do it until two or three weeks later, because I was too sick to do it. But shortly afterwards, of course, they lined us up, my sister and me. My sister throughout all the time when we were in kolkhoz and everything, she stayed in mostly in the hut that we were living, and was trying to figure out how to prepare some food, whatever I-- quite often, I forgot to mention I did go sometimes to the village market. And I had no money, of course.

I once remember stealing an egg and dropping it into my-- this one into my pocket of my coat. And I guess I was punished by God for stealing. And this egg, of course, cracked in my pocket. So we never got that egg really. But sometimes I was able to steal from the field some corn, or some grapes, or something. And I would take. I did steal about two or three times in my life at that time, and brought it home for my sister and for myself. That was already when mother was in the hospital.

So then we were put in that orphan home. And of course, shortly after I got well, they made us stand up in front of a picture of Stalin and Lenin, and goes through the regular oaths of honor, swear in that we will never betray the country. We will never try to be in touch with any capitalist country, and on and on. And we'll only try to speak Russian, forget our mother language.

And I was evidently the rebel over there. There was another boy over there about my age. And we caused trouble, and we paid dearly for it. We were put always in a cell, but not with water thanks goodness. It was not water. We were just put in a cell and had to stay at least for three days in seclusion completely. We were not able to get back to the barracks with the other children.

What did you do to get in trouble?

Some of the things, I would refuse to swear, you see. You had a swearing ceremony. I mean not a complete oath, but a swearing ceremony every morning. And I once got so angry, I don't know what got into me. I tore the scarf from my neck and stepped on it. That's how I ended up for three days in a cell. Then, of course, they found out that I had a father in the States. So that didn't help. I was a rebel because I was a daughter of a capitalist.

So I wasn't getting-- I was denied many meals. I would get only one meal a day, instead of the three meals a day. There were a lot of things I did. I was just rebelling against them, because as a kid I just blamed them for letting my mother die. I just lost my mother. And that's why I was a terrible rebel over there. It wouldn't have been so bad. I mean, the facilities were terrible. But we still were treated I mean, we went to class, to school for two hours in the morning.

And then in the afternoon, we went to work. We worked in the fields. That was fall by then. We had to turn the ground, and this one. We were working in the fields, sitting and this one. So we worked in the fields in the afternoon towards until sundown. And then sundown, they let us go back into our barracks.

We had our evenings free. But I usually get into some trouble. And I hardly ever was able to be with the rest of the kids. Even from the orphanage, a few times I ran out. And they of course caught up with me. The few times I guess just to scare me, they shot behind me three or four shots. I mean, I don't think they aimed to shoot me, but just to scare me. And then of course I gave in, and was put again in a cell.

They had just-- it was just a one or two cells in that whole orphanage for kids that wouldn't behave. And I evidently ended up there most of the time. But then we were there for 2 and 1/2 years in the orphanage during the war. And then--

What kind of food did you receive there?

Again the water soup. Occasionally, they would give us extra bread, never anything besides the soup and bread. Once and this was on a Russian holiday, I don't remember what holiday that was. Each kid got a small block of sugar. That was supposedly a reward in honor of the holiday. So we got just a block of sugar.

And then I think it was the raisins they gave us, was the first sweet stuff that we ate in a few years. And then in that orphanage, I mean in spite, I mean we were treated pretty-- if you were willing to follow the instructions and did whatever they did, you were treated just like I guess like an orphan. It wasn't too bad except the facilities and going hungry most of the time. But other than that, they didn't really beat us or anything. It wasn't like in camp.

In camp, I mean I got a beating quite a few times in camp. But they never beat us really in the orphan home. They were evidently afraid that if they start with children like that, that somehow someone might find out. So they never beat us in that camp. Just it was pretty tough over there.

So then about after 2 and 1/2 years in the camp, we were notified that my father arranged for us to go to leave Samarkand orphan home, and to go to first, we were supposed to go to this one, to Iran, Tehran. And then from there, some transportation would be provided for us to get to the United States.

Of course, he was by then told that mother died. So as children under age, I was by then 12 and 1/2, almost 13. My

sister was only 11. Yes, she was 11. That's right, not quite. So he made arrangements. So they picked us up from the orphan home in a black limousine, with this one with what's the name? With only Russian dignitaries in that limousine. They didn't handcuff us then at all.

And then in that limousine, we went to some small airport. Evidently, there was an airport, because there was a small Russian plane over there. And they put us on that Russian plane. There must have been at least 60 men on that plane wearing black. Of course, black caps, those Cossack caps like, and black long coats. And the pilot, of course, and there were few men in uniform, about six men in uniform. The rest of those men just sitting there and just us two kids got on it. And I got terribly scared of them.

At first, I almost refused to get on that plane. But then one spoke German. And he says to me in German, you better not refuse. Because you'll get right back to the orphanage if you'll try to pull something here. He warned me, which was right. So we did get on this one, and we they didn't have seats for us. So we sat on the lap of two of the men in those long black coats.

That flight was something to remember. It was a nightmare. We flew at night, of course. We couldn't see where we were or anything. They had no lights on the plane at all. We started out flying before sundown, before it got dark. We must have been on that plane for about two hours, and that took us. And then we arrived, and with that plane we arrived in Mashhad which was a border city between Russia and this one, and Iran, on the Russian side, of course.

So then we got to the Mashhad, and they took us to a Russian military camp, and took us immediately into a room, and made us sit over there. And we were brainwashed over there for over-- almost 36 hours. What were we going to say when we get there, when we get out of Russia? What were we going to tell the capitalist countries?

And of course, we tried to. You couldn't really lie. We just pretended that we didn't know what to say. And if we wouldn't answer some questions, there was always the belt. We were not completely undressed, but just in bare shirts. I mean, regular prisoners shirts they put on us when sitting there. They wouldn't let us go to sleep, and the only thing they gave us every four or five hours, was a little bit water. And we were to answer the questions. And if we didn't answer to their satisfaction, the belt was going.

We had strips on our backs, on our front. It was unbelievable. We were completely cut up from those belts, from that belting we got from them. If you think that that's just a story, I experienced that. It was I think one of the worst 30 hours that I lived through. And both my sister and I, my sister Janine and I survived it somehow. But we were so scared. One wrong word, and here we got it again. And that went on for 36 hours.

We were literally what I would consider now brainwashed. They scared us that if we say one wrong word once we cross that border, we'll be right back, not anymore in the orphanage. The orphanage wouldn't keep us anymore. But it will be back in Siberia, because they have a way to find out things. So that was our-- those were the last 36 hours in Russia.

And then around midnight, we got there the day before, and it was the next midnight that they finally let us get dressed into regular clothes, put again handcuffs on both our wrists and feet, until we crossed the border. And then across the border, there one family. I think there were some-- it was a family of guards, I guess, of the guards on the border, an Iranian guard.

And the rest of the night, I mean once we got into his house, the Russian soldier when they exchanged us, gave him the keys to our handcuffs. So once we got into his house, they took the handcuffs off and we were free at last. The next day, they drove us. They had a little-- it looked like a Jeep more or less. They drove us into Tehran. And there, we went. They drove us to the American embassy. We came there and the American people were just so wonderful.

We felt like we came home all of a sudden. They start inquiring whether there were any families living in Tehran, Polish or Czech families that would take us in until a ship would come to this one, either to Bombay or closer to Tehran, to an Iranian port an American ship. So we stayed. There was a family, a Polish family, that took us in, a man and a wife. And they were just wonderful to us. They fed us. They bought us clothes.

Of course, the American embassy paid for the upkeep, for the room and board that they gave us. But even so, they were so good to us that man adopted us as their daughters almost. And we spent six weeks we were waiting there. But those were six pretty nice weeks, because we were allowed to go around the city. We saw Tehran was a beautiful city.

Of course, it was scary the, Persian woman walking with the cloth over the face. We never had to wear it, thanks God. It wasn't imposed on us. And every week we were allowed to go back to the American embassy. He would take us, and of course get paid for the room and board. And they were very good to us. They realized that we couldn't eat too much. We ate like birds. I mean a spoon of decent soup that was all we could really keep.

And then they fed us fairly at intervals, every two hours or every hour, to get used to eating again. That was the first time I saw a glass of milk after 5 and 1/2 years, or actually more than 5 and 1/2 years. Anyhow, so we stayed in Tehran for six weeks, which was a pretty wonderful six weeks. And then the ship came. They drove us, and we drove in an American Jeep, which was great, with those American soldiers.

When we saw those American soldiers, we just tuck in. They hugged us and kissed us. We could hardly-- there was one who spoke a little bit German. That they were able to commute with us. But they were just great. This first experience in this one in, one experience when we got to the American embassy. The American-- it wasn't the ambassador but one of the officers over there. What capacity I don't remember. And I didn't understand really at the time.

And he started asking us some questions. And we tried to explain that we do not speak English at all. And I asked him whether he speaks German. So he understood a little bit German. And then all of a sudden a British soldier walked in the room. And they couldn't understand each other. And the British were sort of laughing. And we couldn't understand. It was the accent. It was so different. They couldn't understand. I mean, after a while, they did.

But so I felt sort of better that it wasn't only I couldn't understand them. And the British kept on saying that he speaks only American. He doesn't speak English. He speaks American. That's not the English language really. But anyhow, they were very good to us. And then finally, so we were at first they thought they will have to take us to this one, to Bombay, India, and take a ship from there. But then a ship did arrive in one of the ports of Iran.

It was a strictly, this one, it was a warship. There were 6,000 GIs on that ship. And we found out later there were two other little boys whose parents were in this one in the United States. And then there were a few, this one, GI brides on that ship, five brides. There was two boys, and the two of us. Those were the only civilians on that ship. So we were on that ship. The whole trip from Iran to the United States took altogether five weeks.

But that was because we landed first. It took about a week to get, a week and a half to get to Naples, Italy. So we got to Naples. And there they at first we thought they were-- I mean those were all GIs, all uniforms, they were just being transferred to a different front. And at first, we thought we were going to be taken to the GI boot camps over there in Italy. But they didn't. They made us stay in an officer's hotel. We had a room for ourselves even in that hotel. That hotel was completely occupied by American and British army.

And we stayed. We waited for another ship to come that would be going to the United States. For two weeks we were in this one, in Italy, Naples. Naples of course, was torn by the war. I mean people were afraid to walk the streets. There were stones throwing. There was a lot of shootings. So they wouldn't let us really walk Naples streets. I did get to see the clothes hanging from one building to another across. But they would take us wherever where it was safe to go and tour the country.

They took us to Pompeii. They took us to old Pompeii, even the new Pompeii. Always with the GIs we went, the officers. They took us everywhere where they were going visiting. They took us along. They treated us beautifully. I mean it was just like we were their children almost. So we went. We got to see quite a bit of Italy, not much of Naples where we stayed, but quite a bit. We went to Florence, Italy. We didn't get to go on those-- what do they call those boats on the river? We didn't get to this. They were afraid that it was taking a chance, taking chances. I mean Italy was at war on the wrong side, and on the right side at times.

But still so we didn't go on that. But we did see Florence. And then the following day, for the following day it was on

the 14th day in Italy, that they got tickets for the Italian Royal Opera in Rome. And we were supposed to go to Rome the next day. But in the meantime, that night, a ship arrived. So that's one thing I missed. I didn't get to go to Rome. Of course, as much as I did see over there, I did see a lot. But it was under such wartime conditions that I don't think it was a true picture of Italy that I got to see.

I mean the beauty of the museums and beauty of the art galleries, we did get to see. But part of them usually were bombed. There was a hole in a building here, a hole there. So just the remaining of this thing, the remainder of the things, we did get to see. And that night, before we were supposed to go to Rome, the ship arrived. And of course, the only way to leave a torn country like that was at night.

So before we left that hotel though, a few days before it, I had an unpleasant incident happen to me. We were on the third floor of that hotel. We had a room. And every day, of course, the American GIs were picking us up to go someplace. And that one day when we were supposed to go I think to Florence, there was an elevator. But they were not allowed to use the elevator. It was during war time, war days. They were not using the elevators. There was a large staircase, I mean just narrow stairs, narrow staircase.

Narrow staircase from the upper floors. But from the second floor, there was a large, beautiful, like an entrance large stairways to the lobby of the hotel. And we got there to those. We were on top of that beautiful staircase. And evidently I noticed in the lobby, I spotted a Russian uniform. And I passed out on the steps. They didn't know what happened to me. They revived me with some salt, with water, I was out for two or three minutes they claim.

They got terribly scared what happened to me, rushed me right away to the Red Cross, over the nearby Red Cross. And all I could tell them was that I saw a Russian uniform. Evidently, I got scared that they came after me and my sister. And that's what happened. I passed out. So from then on, they were making sure before we came down the stairs that there were no Russians. See, Russians were over there just the same in Italy.

But luckily, being always with the American army, that was the only time that I faced, not faced one just spotted from the distance. So they always made sure that there was no Russian soldier in the lobby when we were coming down, which wasn't easy to prevent. But they tried. Is that over?

We'll take another break now.