

I'm Reva Leizman. Today we're interviewing Mike Prayzer, a Holocaust survivor. This project is sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland Section.

Mike, as we go on with your interview, I'd like to go back a little bit. I really want you to stress to us just how normal your life as a young man in Bendzin, Poland was before the war. You have a photo, too, that I'd like you to go back to. But before you even go to the photo, tell us just what your life was like in Poland. Was it any different than what most young Polish children went through?

My life was a happy life. I had lots of friends. We played all kinds of sports till the Germans marched in and they giving us different orders. We have to wear the Star of David, like I'm showing here on this picture.

Is that on the armband that you're wearing?

That's an armband. It's a star over there, the Jewish star. If they would have found you without the star, you wind up in jail. Sometimes, you get shot.

Now you mentioned before that you went to the ghetto when you were about the same age that you are in that photo, about 17 years old.

17 years old.

From there, you went to various concentration camps. I'd like to get to the point when you left Nuremberg and you went to Gross-Rosen concentration camp. Because you said that life there was very difficult, and that that camp was somewhat different than the other camps.

Yes. Gross-Rosen was a camp. This was the main camp that had different small camps what belonged to Gross-Rosen. When I came in over there, there wasn't complete finish. We slept in the mud.

I saw lots of my friends coming in. Every day, new transports and new transports. One night I came home from work, over there I worked, we built some electric buildings for electric companies.

One night, we came home and I looked in through a window. I saw my oldest brother over there, just walking by.

At Gross-Rosen?

At Gross-Rosen. So they have to count us before they dismiss us. So they count us.

I brought with me, I had some carrots, I had some different what I can get out of the camps and brought it back with me. So I went in and I, we start crying, both of us. I handed to him. A few days later, he went some other place. I didn't know where he went.

So every day, you see people, what was your neighbors. They're coming in and they're not going out. They must have got killed or something.

Now were there crematoria at Gross-Rosen?

Oh, yeah.

Were you aware that there were crematoria there at the time? Did you know that Jews were being killed in mass numbers?

Oh, sure, I know. Because in the camps, what I went through so far, you know every move every camp had.

Because that's why they didn't leave you in one camp so long. They mixed you. They mixed you.

So a friend of yours, hey, I was there. Watch out, and so, and so. Like, over there, people was ready to be killed, they had a red circle on their back. See, they mark them with a red circle. So any day, they'd be going.

Over there, I went out to work. If you went out from Gross-Rosen to work, you were a lucky person. Music were playing. Coming back in, music were playing. Sometime they looked you through and sometime don't.

So in other words, if you were marked for selection to be killed--

A red circle on your back.

--then you went directly to the crematoria, to the gas chambers and the crematoria? Of course, the other prisoners conveyed this information.

That's right. I know a neighbor of mine from home, from Poland, he escaped one time from Klettendorf. All of a sudden, I see him marching over there with the guys with the red circles.

One time, you know, I ask him, hey, what are you doing here with the red circle? He says I was escaped and they caught me.

Like, in one camp, I forgot to mention to you, in the beginning, in Karvina two guys escaped. All of a sudden, in the morning, they took us out. Was one from my town. Took him out on the field and shot him where we see it. His brother, later after the war, was my brother-in-law. I told him about it.

Naturally, this made other prisoners and other people in the camps much less willing to try to escape.

You don't have nothing to lose. Sure, like you say, we catch you, you're dead. So what's the difference you go before? You don't have to suffer. Like, lots of people in the concentration camps, they grab the wires and they're a piece of coal in a couple of seconds from the suffering.

I don't know if you saw the book, the book from the concentration camp, the skeletons. See, when I was in Germany, and later on it's going to come up and I'm going to tell you about it.

Now you stayed in Gross-Rosen for about a year. From Gross-Rosen, you went to Buchenwald. Now Buchenwald is in Germany. Is that correct?

Yes.

And why did they move you from Gross-Rosen to Buchenwald?

Because it was already closed. We saw American planes coming in. They were afraid to be caught. So we walked for 17 days.

From Gross-Rosen to Buchenwald?

We were supposed to go-- we went to Buchenwald. Who couldn't make it, who fell down, goodbye. That's it. He never gets up.

I got hit with a bullet from a gun. I couldn't make it no more. I got a scar here. I don't know if you can see it.

Yes, I do see it. So two friends hold me up on my arm. She said, come on, come on. Little by little, I got back on my feet, and I started to walk slowly with them. If you're behind, you don't have a prayer.

We was walking. Sometime we came to a place, we rest overnight. We came in to Buchenwald.

We stayed a few days. They didn't have too much room for us. So another order, we're going to Dachau.

You also walk to Dachau?

Yes. They don't have any transportation for us.

How far was that?

Oh, Dachau? Dachau, that's about 20, 25 miles from Munich. See? So we came in over there.

On the way, walking, we saw planes bombing and digging into lots of places. We don't know what goes on.

Of course, this was in the spring of 1945.

Yeah. So after 8, 10 days we got there. So we saw why they were digging in and bombing over there. They had the tanks, and everything was there.

So they didn't bomb us. Just the soldiers, they give us the rifles to hold. They came in in the line. It looked like, see, the people from the concentration camps, too.

So in other words, when you were liberated, you were liberated from Dachau?

Yeah.

Did the Americans liberate you or the Russians?

No, the Americans.

The Americans did? Now this occurred when?

We were liberated 29 of April, 1945.

Would you say that the kapos, the guards who were over you, that their attitude changed any as liberation came closer?

Before I answer this, I never saw American tanks or something like this. In Europe, we always heard America is a good country and everything. We saw tanks coming in and everything. One guy shouted out, it's Americans.

Your mind works so fast. All of a sudden, what I'm going to do now? See, you became human all of a sudden. Lots of people, from happiness, they died.

Just I can say one thing, God bless the Americans. What they did for us, I never going to forget in my life. They helped us, day and night, to get back on their feet.

What was their reaction to seeing all of you?

You could see tears coming from their eyes, crying like babies. Because I think General Eisenhower was there. He saw all them bodies. You see?

Like, in other camps, you work. You want to do something. So we work ammunition factories. We did sabotage.

We go today. We go tomorrow. What's the difference? You go before, you're not going to suffer.

Because it's impossible you can go through this. Especially when your mind is just on food, you look like an animal. You come out. It's just something to find.

It's interesting that General Eisenhower entered many of the camps at liberation because he wanted it to be known that this really happened. He did not want to have it said in the future that this was not true. He has written many things concerning his entrance into the camps, which I think is very important.

Oh, I didn't believe, you know. Like soldiers, they're going through. We had them come in a couple of days before. They couldn't come in, you know?

At the end, the Germans put out white flags when Americans started to come in. They shot about eight or nine Americans.

Now how did the kapos react to you and to the other Jews in the camps as they knew that liberation was near? Did their attitude change?

Oh, they start to be like pussycat. It didn't help them. We got rid of them fast.

Why was it different? For example, when you had been in the other camps during the height of the war, how did the kapos react to the Jews in the camps for the most part?

Bad, very bad. You see, every person, if you're not Jewish, you know, you're different. You're Polish. You're Czechoslovakian. For Christmas, they got packages at home.

We have to sing the songs for them. They were good. When they got something from home, they give us a piece. They give us a piece.

That's all. They know we're hungry because they were hungry. We looked around. Look it, everybody's getting something from home.

What happened to us? Are we such a bad people because we're just Jewish? That's the difference?

You know, I spoke good Polish. I went to the school and everything. So some of them were good.

I remember lots of Americans was in different camps with me, too. They always says, wait a little longer. It's going to be over. America's coming.

But for the most part, these kapos really determined whether you would live or die sometimes.

Like I told you, one kapo, like, I asked-- it was in Klettendorf. I says my brother's only 13. Give him a chance.

We were carrying steel, unloading the car loads on the railroads. We were throwing the steel overhead. If one guy couldn't make it, a whole crew got killed. Catch you right underneath here.

I went over there to this guy. I says, please, he's a young boy. He took a shovel. He almost killed me.

I says you can kill me now or later be too late. I says, if I catch you after the war, if I live, I'm going to get even with you.

And it happened. One time in Germany in a restaurant, I go in with another friend, two friends of mine. This guy is sitting over there.

The same kapo?

And two other guys, they were kapos, too. They were good ones. They don't have to be bad. You see?

So I told the two guys, you stay here. I went over. I says, I want to take you to our president. We had a president and everything, you know, but the Jewish people.

After the war in Europe?

After the war, yeah. Oh, we were going to come, yeah, that's after the war. The president, he's in America here, too. I saw him last year, a guy who played soccer with me and everything.

So he says is this true, what? He says I couldn't be good to everybody. You know, people became unhuman.

Well, as the war ended then in Dachau, did the kapos expect you to try to save them or say that they had been better to you?

They wanted to pretend they were good. Some of them got sent away for 10, 20 years.

Did any of them get killed by the Americans or prisoners in the camp?

Prisoners in the camp, yeah.

Sometimes would kill them?

Most of them, most of them.

Now Mike, as you look back on your experiences in the camp, I want to ask you a couple of other questions. Do you remember any friends that you had that remained with you until the end? Was there anyone from Bendzin who was with you, who had been with you throughout all of your experiences and then been with you at the very end, too?

Quite a few, by the most, the end, like, the separated us. After the war, you see it. With one person, I was in Nuremberg. I remember.

See, we spoke good the language. If they were to find out I'm a Jew, I would have be gone. We had lots of German people in the concentration camp, too, because they were against Hitler.

Who weren't necessarily Jewish?

That's a story. It's really, I felt. So was a German couple. When the bombing, I found a box, a couple of boxes cigars. You know, and this was good.

So his name was Fritz, the last name I remember. So one day I come in, and I wasn't smoking. So I brought him in about 20 cigars.

I says Fritz, I found this. Here it is. He took the cigars and looks at me. I said, Fritz-- I had a feeling-- how come you're looking at me like this?

He just shook his head. I says I know why you're looking at me. He says why. I says you know I'm Jewish, even I speak good Polish and everything.

He says I know when I saw you here. I know you're Jewish. I said don't be afraid. I'm going to help you.

This was after the war?

This in Nuremberg in the war time.

During the war?

Yeah. You see, sometime you have a feeling. I did my work, and he treated me really nice. He says don't be afraid how long I'm kapo here.

But those instances were not too frequent, unfortunately.

No, no. Or this was a man, he didn't believe in Hitler, you know? He was against, and he was in concentration camp, too.

Yes, there were many political dissidents.

You know, in Nuremberg, them bombs, when they came down, I had a smile on my face. I felt sorry for some people, private people. I just thanks God for this. Go!

I said, take me with you, and it'll be over. Because you don't feel like living no more. You don't want to give up or you want to go on.

Well, let me ask you this, then. What do you think then helped you to survive, despite all of the hardships and the heartache that you went through, and the physical torture, deprivation of food, loss of your family, what do you think made you go on?

I tell you. What made me go on, I had some good angels over me. God want me to live. That's the one thing I can think of, is my time wasn't up. I suffered, I suffered, and I come out, thanks, God, alive.

Then you think it was purely by luck?

By luck, that's right. My time wasn't up.

During the time that you were in the camps, did you expect help from the United States or from any other country?

I worked for some people, when I was doing carpenter work in the camp. Once in a while, they get their papers. We saw they're helping other countries, giving trucks for the people, and other things.

Nobody mentioned we're going to help the Jews. Why? We wasn't such a bad people. Here, really, in America, I talked to some people after the war who didn't know nothing about it.

I know America knew about it. It was all over. I have a sister-in-law in Asbury Park is. We didn't-- we knew a little bit. Or we went out dancing. We had a good time.

Did you and other Jewish prisoners in the concentration camps, were you bitter about the world's turning its back on you?

You see, we figure it's war. It's going to be sooner or later, if we're alive, somebody's going to help us. Because by the end of it, the Germans, they start to treat us [INAUDIBLE] they were afraid for their own life. If we were freed, and we are alive, and they going to treat us bad, we're going to kill them.

Some of them even were good that turned into be bad. We had a guard, he says, everybody run away. I don't care. I don't see nothing.

He was a good man. Just we were brought in to belong to the SS. They call it the Schutzstaffel, SS. So this man was good.

Sometime we ask him, you're going to be demoted. He says, I don't care. Let me get out from this rat race.

Did you believe that you would survive? Or were there moments when you really felt you would not make it?

I never believed in my life I'm going to come out alive, if you start to lose so much weight the first three months. Day by day, you walk by in the morning, or you look in the windows, it's light. People sit in the houses, nice, warm. You could see the tears running, like, you lived before, everything comfortable, nice, and all of a sudden.

I met a person. He was a banker. He had about 8 or 10 banks. They dugged him up, from the fourth generation he was Jewish. That was in Gross-Rosen.

They brought him in. He was a big man. They give him a short jacket.

He pushes food away to me. I was sitting here, and he was sitting here. I said what are you doing? He says I cannot eat this.

I says mister, I'm here four years already, in different camps. I said don't do this, because nothing else is coming. This is the food.

I can see the man with so many banks, he never thought he was Jewish. His tears started to come down. About two months later, he gave up. He died.

Do you think, then, that part of the reason you survived was because you were able to make yourself adjust in some ways to these terrible conditions?

That's a very good point. You come in the camp. You look around. If you're lucky enough to get outside to work, you can help yourself a little bit.

If you see a field with potatoes, you bring it home with you. You see corn, you bring it home. One time I worked, I helped build lots of-- I did most wood work for pigs, different things.

Over there was a farm. They had lots of potatoes. They cooked potatoes for us. So what you can bring in, you give this guy a few, you give this guy a few. You help each other. You try.

You worked just in the quarries like I worked in Gross-Rosen, what are you going to eat? Stones? You're sitting and just making from big stone, little ones. Just you fall down. That's it.

Did you find there were many instances when you helped others and others in the camp helped you, other Jews?

Oh, yeah. From my hometown, he was working in the kitchen, you see? So when I'd come to the window, he'd look at my face, he took it from underneath, heavy stuff, put it in my-- instead just water.

I worked on a good place. I brought home stuff. I give him a little bit.

Did you ever wish that you were dead when you were in the camp? Or did you ever think of committing suicide when you were in the camp?

You see to do suicide, you got to be strong. You got to have lots of guts, you know? I thought it's going to come sooner or later. Why should I kill myself?

When I laid down and begged the soldier to kill me, that was, like, suicidal, you know? He could have just pulled the trigger and goodbye. It wouldn't be a big loss.

I'll bet you he's dead now. I'm alive because I had a few less years to live, so I'm still living.

When you were free, when you were liberated, what did you do immediately after liberation? Were you able to leave Dachau?

No.

By the way, you have a document that's very important for people to see and know about because it is a document, a certification that you were liberated from Dachau. Would you explain that to us?

You see, this certificate, when I was freed, they didn't let you right away out. Because people were sick. They needed help to get back on their feet.

So I stood in the camp a couple months. After this, before I decided, they don't let you out, because they want to put you in some other camps, free camps. I got through the wires.

Before, I ask for this certificate, because I don't have no papers, no nothing. And in case something happened, you know, I was in camp, and in Dachau, and so on. So a camp leader over there, his name Mr. Domagala, he give me this paper.

The date on it is August 15, 1945. So you remained in the camp until then.

Yes, a little more than a couple of months.

Now where did you go after you finally left Dachau? Did you go back to Poland?

No, when I left Dachau, first I went into Munich. Over there was a place where you can find lots of people. Like, what they call it-- the UNRRA, you know. Over there you can find people and have a place where to stay for a while.

Now was that set up by the United Nations?

By the United-- you know, by the, I think, by the Jewish organizations here in America, the UNRRA. They start to send us packages and helping us get back on our feet.

Did the Hebrew Immigration Aid Society help you in any way? It was better known as HIAS.

Yeah, the HIAS helped a lot with packages and food. They make sure you come over there. They took your name and all the information you can give them.

They played a big role, very big role. In here, people from America, most I know, it's Jewish people or non-Jewish people. Most from the Jewish organizations, we got some help.

Now where did you live in Munich? Did you live in a youth hostel or in a building that was especially for people from concentration camps?

No. In Munich, in Dachau, I went to the mayor of the town. I says, I just got freed from the concentration camp. So I need an apartment. I need a place where to stay.

And he sent me to a place that had so many rooms they have to rent me a room. So I stood for a while, looked around. The HIAS and the UNRRA helped us survive in the beginning.

In other words, they gave you money to be able to live?

They paid the rent. They send us packages, and so on, and so on. They gave us clothes for a while.



Now did you meet any relatives from your hometown immediately after the war? Or did you try to get into contact with any members of your immediate family?

This was the place to get together in Munich. I saw some friends from my hometown. We were neighbors. And one mentioned, I saw your brother, David, the youngest one. Another one, I saw your other brother, the oldest one. He was in Bergen-Belsen.

So I had already a lead. I start to chase them. I don't know if you heard about a camp, Feldafing. You heard about it? So I was chasing and chasing.

One night, I stopped at Feldafing. I was tired already. Was playing a Jewish show called [NON-ENGLISH]. You understand that? No?

Let liv the Jews. [NON-ENGLISH] is Jewish, you know. So I figured I'd go in, sit down. The first act went by. The lights went up. I looked around. My brother sitting here, the youngest one.

You must have been overwhelmed.

So I looked it twice, three times. I says David. He said to me, I hear you were alive and I was chasing you. Where are you?

So that was a happy reunion. We got together. I stood with him. He had a place where to stay.

He was then-- he was 14-- he was about 19 years old.

You were how old at this time?

22.

22.

Yeah. We found a place. After the whole thing, on this hof. You know, it's on the [INAUDIBLE].

So I moved over there. He lived before over there. I came over there. Over there, we stood for a while, you know?

Now did you make contact with any other members of your immediate family?

Yes, we tried the Red Cross. I found one brother. He was sick when he was liberated. He was in Bergen-Belsen. They took a transport to Sweden.

Through the Red Cross, I got his address. So soon, he got better and everything, he came for a visit to Germany. He stood with us in Germany for a while.

One brother was in Russia when he ran away from Poland. He came back to Germany from Russia-- to Poland, and from Poland, he came to Germany. So we were three, four brothers, for a short time, together. He went back to Sweden after a certain time.

But your sister?

We try for our sister. We took [? trains ?] and different-- through the Red Cross for years. We couldn't--

Could not find her.

One brother we knew, friends told us, he couldn't make it. This was the second brother, not the oldest one, the second

one.

Now when did you meet your wife, whom you also said was a survivor? Where was she from?

Really, she was born in Romania. After the Hungarians took over, she lived in Hungary. See, 1944, they were taken away from Hungary to the camps. See, she was one time in the same camp where I was, Nuremberg. Just we didn't know each other.

Because, of course, the men and women were separated.

We was always separate, always separate. In one camp, we had the woman was in the kitchen, so most separate.

Now how did you meet your wife?

My youngest brother, he is in Israel, David, he introduced me to her. They lived about 10 miles away from us.

In Munich?

No. I lived in Hove, and she lived in Rehau. So we went someplace. She knew him. He introduced me. That's my brother, you know.

We start to get in touch with each other. We was together about nine months. We decided, I'm alone, she's alone.

She don't have no parents. She had three sisters more and a brother. There were four sisters and a brother. We decided we're going to get married.

Now were her sisters and brothers with her in Hove, or if she was alone there?

Yeah. We lived in the same town.

But her sisters and brothers also survived the war?

Yeah. They were in Auschwitz. Yeah.

How long would you say, about, after the war did you marry?

I married about a year after the war.

About a year after.

A little more than a year. I married in August 1946.

About how long after then was it until you came to this country?

In the meantime, '47, a baby was born, my oldest son. In 1949, people start to go. I didn't have all the papers, so I went through the UNRRA to go to Israel. All of a sudden, I had two sets of papers, one from Israel, one from America, from her brother.

What made you decide on the United States?

When I lived in Poland, we always said United States is a good country. So I said to my wife, what do you think? I said sit down. I want to talk to you.

So we sit down and we start to throwing over this discussion. I says what do you think? I says what you decide, that's

going to be. You know, European woman. They always let the men decide.

So I says to her, let's go to America. If we don't like it, we still got papers to go to Israel. I can tell you, for sure, we didn't make any mistake coming to America. It's the best country in the world.

It's nice to hear you say that.

Where a person got a chance to raise his kids. When I came here, no trade, no nothing, and I was willing to sacrifice to start a job with a dollar and a quarter just to be in a country where you walk out, you see everything, the best, God's country. So I didn't ask for no more.

How I wish other people could hear you say that.

They will. You're going to have on the tape. That's true. It's no brown-nosing or something like this. That was my feelings.

Now when you came here, you mentioned to me that you went to New Jersey because your wife had a sister and brother-in-law living there.

A brother.

Brother. Now you stayed in New Jersey for a year or so?

No, for 2 and 1/2 years.

Before you came to Lorain?

Yeah, because I wanted to learn a trade. I didn't have a trade. I had an idea on woodwork. I said if I get something in my hand, nobody's going to take it away from me.

So I sacrificed. Not really sacrificed, I want it. By 2 and 1/2, almost 3 years, I know what the wood. I can go out, make an extra dollar.

Now did your wife's brother help you while you were in New Jersey?

No. We stood with them for about four weeks.

Then you found a job?

I went over-- it was a cabinet shop, really-- with my little boy, who was two years old. I go by on the street. People say hello, hello.

My little one says in German, father was [NON-ENGLISH]. Dad, what he say? I said, I don't know. I speak a few languages. But I says, I didn't learn any English.

So it was rough, double rough for me. When I saw a cabinet shop, I walked in. I wasn't bashful. The most he can say no. I showed him with my hands I want to work.

I said I just come from Europe. I told them I was in concentration camp. Just by hands, I couldn't speak a word.

So I remember he says to me come back after two weeks. We got vacation. I give you a job.

Was he a Jewish man?

No. His father was Jewish. He was an old man already. His name, I'm sorry to say, this guy got killed in an aeroplane crash. He flew his own aeroplane and, unfortunately, he crashed.

Did you work for him for a while?

I worked there 2 and 1/2 years. He gave me the chance. I remember one time he chose me. From the beginning, I was cleaning up. I wasn't. Ashamed I wanted to learn something.

And one time he showed me his ruler. I look. I said that's no good. I said throw it away.

He started laughing. He said here's America. Here we got inches. In Europe, we got centimeter, millimeter. It was really funny.

He was very, very patient with me, really. Thanks to this man, I learned a trade.

I made a beautiful living for my three kids. I was really fortunately to send them to school and get them educated.

When you went to Lorain and when you came to the United States, did you ever talk to anyone about what you had experienced in the concentration camps? You mentioned that you told the man you worked for that you had been in the camps.

Yeah.

But did you ever talk to him about it in great detail?

No, no. Because from the beginning, everything was still raw. You don't want to bring back the memories.

I remember my kids, Dad, where's my grandma? Where's my grandpa?

I says, when you get to be a little older, I sit down and I talk with you. Because I don't want to get their minds mixed up and tell them the Germans killed them, or this or this. I don't want to put any hate in their bodies.

So I said, when you get older, you come to me, we sit down. So they got older. They realized, they saw on television, and they saw on different shows. It was a show about the Holocaust.

One time I see one sitting and crying. I said, what's the matter? He says you was there. I says, yeah. That's what my grandma is, huh, in the gas chambers?

So you see, they found it out themselves.

Did you talk to them in great detail about what you had been through?

Most when we talked about lots of times you serve food, they don't want to eat. I said sometime, you know, I wish when I was in camp, I have half of that.

You don't have enough food over there? They didn't feed you? So when they come out with questions, when they're big already, so you start to tell them little by little.

You don't go through the whole detail. You don't them to wear hate. If they found out, they're going to find out.

See, my daughter says now, Dad, now they're going to have in Philadelphia for the Holocaust. I go with you. See, the second generation now has taken over. They're doing the right thing.

Are you a member of an organization of survivors in Lorain?

I belong to the B'nai B'rith, I belong to the temple, and I belong to the Holocaust. I send them donations and everything. I get the books and the thing. Sure.

Do you have many survivors in Lorain?

No, from my family, from our family alone, you got 3, 4, 5, 7. We got about 9, 10 people. Some of them moved away. They moved apart. We got about 10 now.

But in a city the size of Lorain, you have that many who are living there who also came because they had other relatives there, or--

Yeah. Some of them settled down here. Really, from the beginning, I wanted to go to New York. I like a big city.

My wife says my sisters live here. She was pulling me. After I learned my trade, I says now, where do you want to go.

Now when you came to Lorain, who did you work for and how did you get work in Lorain?

When I came to Lorain, I was already a veteran. I knew a little English. It was lots easy for me. So I worked from the beginning I worked in [NON-ENGLISH]. I built trailers. I wasn't lazy, anything I can, I did. And my trade helped me a lot

So in the wintertime, carpenter work is not so hot because it's outside. In the summertime? so in a few years working, helping build houses and cabinets. I hooked up. Somebody mentioned, my name to a big-- he started in business, Ontario. That's what it was, with Cook United. From the beginning, he was on his own.

I started to build, do different fixtures for him, and stands, and that and that. So after a certain time, I helped build 10 stores for him. So later, when he sold out to Cook United, they took me over.

Now, Mike, we're going to pause for a moment because there are some other questions I want to ask you about your reactions to the Holocaust in these years and the years after the war. So let's take another pause.

OK.