

I'm Sara Weinberger, and today we're interviewing Mr. Sam Teitelbaum, a Holocaust survivor. The project is sponsored by the National Council of Jewish Women, Cleveland Section. Mr. Teitelbaum, I'm going to start out by asking you some questions about yourself. First of all, could you tell us how old you are?

57.

Aha. Where do you live?

I live in Beachwood on East Salisbury Road.

Could you tell us a little bit about your family?

Sure. I have a wife, four children. Two of them are married. One of them is in college. One is working, and she also goes to college. She goes to Western Reserve, and my son goes to Cleveland State University, to law school.

Do you have any grandchildren?

Yes, I have two very lovely granddaughters.

How old are they?

Very nice little ones to have. One of them is Ricki and one is Danielle. I really love them. I'm crazy about them.

What kind of work do you do?

I have a drapery workshop in Cleveland for the last three years.

Does your wife work?

Yes. She is a registered nurse at Mount Sinai Hospital. She's been there for about 20 years. Her name is Eva.

OK. What we're going to do now is we're going to go back to before the war. Let's go back to, say, around 1939. Could you tell us where you lived at that time?

Yes, in 1939, actually, it was Czechoslovakia. But in 1939, we were occupied by the Hungarians. They took all of Czechoslovakia at that time. Then, at that time, right at that time, that's where our problem started. Our trouble started with the Jews.

Until the Hungarians came in, we were very, very happy there. Czechoslovakia was a very good country to live in. We never had any problems as Jews. In fact, the Jews had it very good in Czechoslovakia. But as soon as the Hungarians came in, that's when the trouble started. In fact, it started the same night.

That was right around 1939?

That was in '39. It was the same night they came in. The Hungarians, they came in, and they broke into houses. They beat up people. They killed people.

Then, until 1941--

Let's go back just a little bit to 1939. Could you tell us a little bit about your family?

My family, yes. My father, should he rest in peace, and my parents, they were very religious people. We had a candy factory at home. In fact, we sold candy all over Czechoslovakia and Hungary. We were nine children, of which four of

them survived from the war, from the Holocaust.

Where were you in the nine?

In the nine, I was the third. I had an older brother and older sister. Then there were six more after me. The four older ones survived.

Could you tell us a little bit about the town that you lived in?

Yes, the name of the town was called Bardejov in Czechoslovakia while it was Czech. After we were occupied by the Hungarians, it was called Beregszasz. So we were called Hungarians already at that time.

Was it a small town?

No, it happened to be a nice-sized town. In fact, it had a very big Jewish population.

About how large?

How large, I couldn't tell you, really. I was only about 12 years old when I left. At that time, at the age of 12, especially in the old country, you never thought of these things. But it was a very nice city.

In fact, we had a very large hospital, a new hospital where people came from other cities because the other cities did not have any hospitals. We had very good doctors there. We had a lot of Jewish temples there.

How would you describe your family economically?

Economically, we were very well. We were medium class people.

Did you live in a house or an apartment building?

We lived in a house. In fact, we occupied two apartments because of the size of the family. We took two apartments, and they made one of them. We didn't have many rooms from the two apartments, but we were comfortable.

How did you get along with all those brothers and sisters?

Fine, fine. There is nothing we wouldn't do for each other.

Did you live in a very Jewish area? I know you said there were a lot of Jews in the city itself.

Yes, it was a Jewish area. But over there, the people were really spread out. You can't say that the Jews lived all in one corner, you know. They were spread out all over the city.

But they did have the center of the city where we did live. We lived on the main street of the city. Most of the Jews did live up there.

How religious was your family?

What?

How religious was your family?

We were very religious. In fact, I'm nowhere as religious as I should be, but I happen to be Orthodox.

What kinds of things do you remember about the holidays and how you celebrated them?

About the holidays? Well, they were very nice, very nice. We used to enjoy, of course, especially when we were children, we didn't have to go to school. See, we went to two schools. We went to Jewish school, to Hebrew school. We also went to a Hungarian school, or Czech school, where we learned other things, other than Hebrew, history and math and the language.

OK. Did you belong to a synagogue?

Yes. It was called [NON-ENGLISH]. I don't know how to explain it. But that was the name of the synagogue. It was very Orthodox.

What was the main language that was spoken in your home?

Yiddish. In fact, we never spoke anything else other than Yiddish.

When you went to public school, then--

No, we went to public school, well, we spoke Hungarian.

But that was the only place that you spoke Hungarian?

Yes. Yes, otherwise we didn't. Well, we had a candy factory, like I said. We did have the candy factory.

If people came in, you know, not only Jews came to buy candy. We did speak Hungarian. But in the house, we never spoke anything other than Yiddish, Jewish.

Did you have any non-Jewish friends?

Friends? In school, yes. Yes.

How did the Jews and the non-Jews get along before 1939?

Well, frankly, until we were occupied by the Hungarians, we got along fine, very well. After we were occupied by the Hungarians, we had trouble already. Especially the Jews, they were marked by they used to have long hair, you know.

Payots.

Payots, what it's called. You couldn't miss a Jewish boy in school, especially. Sometimes, at times, we used to try to roll them up so they're not seen and hide them under a hat like this. We used to wear a hat like this in the old country.

But we did have problems after the Hungarians occupied our city. We used to get beaten up. They used to throw rocks at us. They used to throw rocks in the house, you know, break the windows.

The older Jews that had beards, a lot of times they just used to follow them. From behind, they grabbed their beards, and pulled their beards, knocked their hats off.

All that started after the Hungarians came in?

After we were occupied by the Hungarians, yes.

What kinds of things did your family do for fun together?

Fun? Well, frankly, there was no such thing. Well, we just enjoyed everyday living. But to say having fun, or go out, things like that, we never did.

Did your family take any vacations together?

Not really. They used to send me away in the summertime, like, to my aunt, to a different city. Especially, I was a very bad eater at home. They wanted I should put on some weight.

So they sent me away to a aunt, to a different city. They had a bakery. I loved fresh baked stuff, you know. So they used to send me away for the summer. They used to send us to our grandparents, to Slovakia, to different cities. But otherwise, we did not really take any vacations or anything like that.

Were you involved in any kind of Zionist or political organization?

No, I was too young.

Were any of your brothers and sisters involved in that?

No, no, they were all too young. In fact, my older brother was only about 14 at the time.

How old was the youngest at that time?

Pardon?

How old was the youngest at that time?

The youngest couldn't be more than about three years old.

What did you look like then? You said you didn't eat very much.

Well, should I be modest? I don't know. I guess I was an average little boy. I used to love to play with my friends. We used to love to play soccer. But that's about the only thing. Of course, in the winter time, we used to love to go sliding on the ice. We didn't have any ice skates. We used to have, like, brass buttons on the bottom of our shoes, on the sole that used to carry us further. Those things used to slide on the ice.

Did you have any plans for what you wanted to do in the future?

While I was at home, not really. Our future, especially the boys, was to go to yeshiva and try to grow up to be good, religious Jews. We used to go to synagogue. We used to go to yeshivas to learn.

We learned most of the day. In fact, we used to get up 5 o'clock in the morning. Our school started already. At a Hebrew school, we used to be at Hebrew school till 8:00. We used to go home to eat breakfast.

From there, we went to Hungarian school or Czech school. We were there till 3:00. Then we went back to Hebrew school till 7:00. So our day was pretty well occupied. We didn't have any time for anything else.

Did you have any thoughts about what you wanted to be when you were all done with your education?

Not at home, no, no, not really.

Did you have any plans for taking over your father's candy factory when you were old enough?

Not really. I was too young. See, even in 1939, I was only 12 years old.

How did when the Hungarians came in?

Oh, you couldn't miss them. They just marched in, soldiers, tanks. Thousands of soldiers came in, and they just took over the city. We were standing right there by the entrance of the house and watched them march.

Were you aware of what was going to happen when they came in?

Not really, no. No, we didn't have any idea that this is going to happen, not the slightest idea. We didn't know until the night they came in when they started to give us all the trouble.

Did they do things to you, particularly?

Well, not only to me, to everybody.

Can you remember some experiences that you had?

Well, the only experience I can remember is when they started to bother the whole family. We had the candy factory and they took away-- you see, over there you had to have permission. For any business you had, you had to have a permission, like a license.

Just a little time after they came in, they took away the permission from all the Jews. They wouldn't even let them work in their own places. If my father wanted to make candies, he had to do it illegal. He had to do it at night, hidden in the house.

One time they caught him. They beat him up so bad that he was bedridden for a long time. He did not go to the hospital. They wouldn't even let a Jew go to the hospital. But after that, he still had to go on. We had to survive.

But in '41, I don't know. This was till about 1941. That's when I ran away from home, and I went to Budapest.

When the Hungarians came in, did any of the Czechoslovakian non-Jews help you?

Well, they were afraid. See, they were afraid that if they going to help us, they'll be beaten up, too. They didn't like the Gentiles to help the Jews. They were scared.

Us, nobody help. I couldn't say that anybody helped us. If you didn't have any money, you were in bad shape. If you had money, sometimes you can bribe the people to let you go. If they started to beat you, you gave them some money to let you go. But if you didn't have any money, they just beat you and tortured you.

What happened during the two years before you decided to run away, from the time that--

Between what?

Between 1939 and 1941, before you ran away?

Well, we were suffering these all this time. In 1941, I couldn't take it anymore. In fact, my father had a hard time making a living to support a family.

So I took off to Budapest. I figured I'll go to work, and I'll send back some money to the house.

Did you go by yourself?

By myself, yes.

All your other brothers and sisters stayed home?

They stayed home, yes. I did go to work in Budapest. I earned money. I tried to send home as much as possible to help

the family. But things got worse as we went along.

What kind of work were you doing?

I was driving what they call a tricycle. You see, they had tricycles, and we made deliveries with the tricycle. It had, like, a big platform. I was making deliveries.

I tried to use as little money as possible so I can send home, the more, the better. I knew it was very rough at home. There wasn't enough to support a family like that. But then, later on, my older brother came up to Budapest, too.

Where did you live in Budapest?

I lived in a Jewish neighborhood. It was called the Dob Utca. It was a Jewish neighborhood. There were a lot of temples there, a very big Jewish population there.

I lived with people. I rented a room. This way it didn't cost me too much. At times, I even ate at their house. Later on, I moved into a place where I was eating at a restaurant for the rest of the time that I was there, until things got very bad over there.

They took my brother into hard labor. I got myself Gentile papers. I started to act as a Gentile. Because they just started to take Jews in the ghetto already. I did not want to go into the ghetto.

How were you able to get those papers?

Those papers, you could have buy them. If you had money, you could have buy them from a Gentile person. If you didn't have any money, now, in Budapest, I did belong to the Zionist organization. The Zionist organization, they provided you those papers.

At that time already, in fact, instead of being Teitelbaum, my name was Kuzmik. It was a strictly Hungarian name. They picked strict Hungarian names, you know, so they wouldn't recognize that you are Jewish. I had an identification. You see, people were stopped on the street very frequently.

How old were you at that time?

I was about 13 and a half, 14 years old. If they stopped you on the street and you didn't have any identification that you're Gentile, they took you into the ghetto. But my identification showed that I'm not Jewish. So they let me go. Now this happened many times every day.

It was very dangerous to act as a Gentile. Now of course I did not have my long hair anymore. I cut that off. I was lucky. I was a young kid. I was a young fellow. So I wasn't bothered as much.

But I did try to stay around the ghetto neighborhood. I used to go in there every day to carry food in there for the people in the ghetto because the food that they gave them wasn't enough to survive. They were dying there. They were starving to death in there. In fact, when you went in there, people were just lying dead on the ground, like flies.

You were able to go in and out of the ghetto?

Yes, I was able to go in because later on, I had an armband. That armband said that I am free to go in. With that armband, you could go into the ghetto, in and out, free.

How were you able to get the armband?

I got it also from the Zionist organization. Couple of times, I even got some people out of there.

Could you tell us about that?

Pardon?

Could you tell us about that, how you were able to do that?

Yeah, well, that was very, very dangerous, like I said. I was walking in and out. I was running around on the street just like any other Gentile.

You see, other than the ghetto, there were houses. They were Jewish houses, they were called. They were marked with a yellow star. They had a yellow star on them.

Now those houses, they used to come in, the Nazis used to come in every day to those houses, beat the hell out of people, kill people, shoot people for no good reason at all. A lot of times I was standing there, like, on a main street. They'll come with a little cannon, and they'll shoot bombs into the house.

They had an excuse that the people were shooting out at the Gentiles with pistols and with guns, just for an excuse. It wasn't really true at all. But just an excuse to tell the Gentiles in the street that, see the Jews? They are shooting at people, the Gentiles.

So they were throwing hand grenades in there. I was standing right there as they were doing it. A bunch of Gentiles were standing around there.

All of a sudden, this one guy says let me look around. Maybe I'll see some Jews. Maybe I'll recognize some Jews around, standing.

We were not allowed. Jews were not allowed on the street. If a Jew was on the street, he had to have a yellow star on him. If he did not have a yellow star, it meant he's not Jewish. But a lot of people did take a chance and they went out without a yellow star from their Jewish houses.

So this guy says-- in fact, Jews, even with the yellow star, even they were allowed to go out, they wouldn't dare go out because they'll beat them up. They'll kill them. So this guy says let me look around. Maybe I'll recognize one of the Jews hiding out or something.

There I was, standing right behind him. I was so scared that it's undescrivable. See, a lot of times, there was a restaurant right by the ghetto. In that restaurant, a lot of Jewish that were acting as Gentiles used to come into that restaurant. We knew each other.

This was for a long time, going on for a long time. In fact, that's where we used to pick up the food to take in to the Jewish people in the ghetto. Until later on, the Nazis and the Hungarian soldiers, they find out that a lot of Jews are hanging out in that restaurant as Gentiles.

One day, I was going out. I was taking some food into the ghetto. As I walked out, I didn't-- it was kind of a-- how do you say? I noticed on the street that these people, a lot of soldiers are ready to go in there, and detectives, but I didn't really see them go in because I just took off.

So after I took in the food to the Jews, when I came back out of there from the ghetto, and I was going back to the restaurant, as I walked into the restaurant, as I opened the door, I saw him in trouble because I noticed already that they did get in there, the soldiers and the Nazis. You see, they used to call this an inspection. It happened very often.

But at that restaurant, it never happened before. It happened for the first time. They inspected everybody that was in there if they were Jewish or not. In fact, the papers, the identification was not enough.

They took the males into the bathroom. They made them drop their pants to see if they are Jewish. You see, the Jews in

Europe were all circumcised. But the Gentiles, very-- over in this country, they are, also. The most of them are circumcised.

But over there, they were not circumcised. Very, very small percent of the Gentiles, maybe, 1 or 2% were circumcised. The rest of them were not circumcised.

So they made them drop their pants to see if they're circumcised. If they were circumcised, their identification didn't mean a thing. They just put them in a line there. When I walked in there, there was about 40 or 45 guys there already in a line that they caught. They admitted they were Jews.

Those guys were all taken and they shot them. They were all killed out. Now I got in there, I saw him in trouble. I tried to walk out.

But the man said, go in. You cannot go out. I already saw that I'm in trouble. The guy says to me right away are you Jewish? I said no.

He says to me would you come into the bathroom with me? I said yes. You see, it was very important that you don't lose your-- what they call here-- your cool.

You don't lose yourself. Because if you lost yourself, they knew right away that you're Jewish. You had to be calm.

But it wasn't easy to be calm. Because you knew if they find out that you're not Jewish, I mean, that you're Jewish, they'd kill you right there. They didn't care whether you were on the main street or whether you're in a restaurant or a movie. They shot you on the spot, just like killing a fly, you know?

So he says to me, come on into the bathroom with me. I went into the bathroom with him. He says to me, drop your pants.

I did not drop my pants. I opened my zipper instead of dropping my pants. I happen to think of an idea. As you take out your organ, there is a little bit of skin left there. You can pull that skin forward and if you hold on to it, you don't look circumcised. That's what I did.

He says to me, you're not Jewish. Get the hell out of here. That's just exactly what I'd thought happen.

This was a Nazi?

The rest of the guys-- pardon?

This was a Nazi that had done it?

I can't hear you.

Was this a Nazi or a Hungarian?

This was a Nazi. Yes. It was called-- well, yeah, they were Nazis. Well, you see, the Hungarian Nazis and the German Nazis, they worked together. It didn't matter whether it was a German or a Hungarian. They were all the same. The rest of my friends I never saw again, not a one.

By then I had other problems. I was caught in another restaurant. I lived with this couple, with these older people. Two Jewish boys, we roomed there, you know. We slept in one bed.

The people that we lived with, they were not Jewish. They were Gentile.

Were the other boys that you--

The other boys were Jewish.

Were they disguised as Gentiles also?

What?

Were they Jewish disguised as Gentiles?

Yeah, also another Jewish boy living as a Gentile. But him, it just so happened that he had such a Jewish face that if you were just any ordinary man can tell that the man was Jewish. But I stayed with him, you know.

So I used to talk in my sleep in Yiddish. The people that we lived with, they lived in the same room. They were in the same room with us. There was only a curtain between our bed and their bed. He used to wake me up many times at night, you know, to shake me, I should wake up because I'm talking in Jewish. If they hear me talk Jewish, they'll turn us in.

So then, finally, one day we went to this other restaurant. This friend of mine, this Jewish friend, he had a Gentile friend that he knew from before the war, and this guy happened to see him in the restaurant. He knew he was Jewish.

So he turned him in. He turned in the other guy. Since I was sitting with him, they caught me, too. So what they did, it just so happened that these guys were not interested in getting us killed. They were interested in taking our money away.

They took us up to our apartment. They took away all our clothes. They took away all our money. They told the people that we live with. They said to the older people, do you know that these guys are Jewish?

Now of course the older people did not know that we were Jewish. They started to pray and to let them go. They were afraid because, see, the Nazis, if anybody was hiding out on the Jews, they killed the Gentiles, too.

So what happened, they took away all our stuff, all our money and everything, and downstairs, they released us. So we were pretty lucky that they did not kill us. Money was no problem. I was able to get as much money as I wanted.

How did you do that?

Through the Zionist organizations, or when I went into the ghetto. You see, what happened, when they took the people into the ghetto, they took away all their belongings, all their money. The Germans did and the Hungarian soldiers, the Nazis. They put it into a certain room there.

We knew about it, see. A few Jewish boys that were hiding out as Gentiles, we knew about it. We broke into that place. We used to go in there at night with a pass key. We used to take away.

We knew that these Jews that they took away the stuff from, they were not there anymore. They were taken to the ghettos, or they were killed. They couldn't get to that stuff. They couldn't take any of their stuff.

So we took their money. We have plenty of money. Money was no problem. The problem was survival.

I had as much money as I wanted. I could have buy apartments, anything I want to with the money that I had. The money that they took away from me didn't mean a thing.

The main thing was survival. That was very, very important, not to lose your, like you say, your cool. Just keep calm.

You've talked a lot about the Zionist organization helping you out. They must have met in secret. How did that work?

Yes, now the Zionist organization, they had hiding places like underground where a lot of older people and children

survived. Of course, a lot of them were caught, too, you know. But a lot of them did survive through the underground from the Zionist organizations, that the Zionist organizations provided.

They provided money. They provided clothing. They provided Gentile identifications. They provided bunkers.

A lot of people were living in a house that had a double floor, you know. Then in the basement, they dug tunnels. They were hiding there.

Of course, it wasn't very comfortable. You had to lay in one place and sleep in the same place. Excuse my expression, whatever you had to do in that same place, you know. In fact, a lot of them died because they couldn't take it anymore in there.

But the tunnel, the underground had two entrances. If they came in, if they happened to find out about it, the Nazis, they came in one end, they were able to run out the other end if they didn't catch both ends.

How did you find out about this group?

Well, I knew about it. I was never in that tunnel. I was never in the underground. I was with the underground, but I was never hiding out in the underground. I was free because I figured that I can survive on the outside.

People that didn't think they can survive on the outside acting as a Gentile, they went into bunkers. Some of them survived. Most of them did not.

But I survived all the time. I was free all the time. I worked with the Zionist organizations. We were in touch. I talked to them every day. In fact, a lot of times, many times during the day.

How did you do that?

Well, I knew where they were. You see, they did not have any offices. They were in the underground.

Their offices was in the underground. If I had to see them, I had to go to them. They also knew where I was.

Now another thing that was very scarce, but food. I had a lot of money, but I was starving. I did not have any food. In fact, at one time, there was about four or five of us living together, Jewish boys, in one apartment. We took out an apartment that they took the Jews out of. Now the apartment was full of clothes, furniture, and everything. They gave it to us as Gentiles.

But we had no food. This was in an apartment house. Now we used to go every day, a block away, two blocks away.

That was another thing, you see. We were bombed 24 hours a day. We were bombed by the Americans. We were bombed by the English. We were bombed by Russians.

So a little after that, we were living in the shelters, because you couldn't stay already and you couldn't walk around on the street. A lot of people did, but it was dangerous to walk on the street. So we had this apartment. We didn't go much to the shelter because we were afraid that they will recognize us because we were Jews, and they'll give us out.

So two blocks away, there was an old lady. We used to bring her women's clothes from the apartment that we had. She used to give us the crust from the bread that she saved for years.

She couldn't eat the crust. She just ate the inside. The crust she always put away. She let it dry out. She saved that for years and years and years.

She had sackfuls of it. That crust was worth gold. It's like having gold. We used to bring her money.

She didn't even want to take any money for the stuff. She used to give us a glass of tea and a few pieces of crust. For gold, that was worth, maybe, \$2,000. At that time, it was a lot of money.

But food was not available. So we did this for a long time. Until one time, we were on the fourth or the fifth floor, hiding out. A bomb hit the house, a bomber.

We were lucky. The bomb came right into our kitchen. See, the rest of the people, nobody lived in the apartment. Everybody was in the shelter.

Like I said, we built, like, a little bunker in the apartment. We stacked up a lot of furniture. We were hiding behind the furniture just in case somebody comes and we run in there and we hide behind that furniture.

So one time, the Nazis came and they inspected the house. They looked around all over the house, looking for Jews. But they didn't catch us. They did not find us.

Well, you still had your papers, right?

Yes. I still had my identification. See, with me, I was a young boy. But my friends, they were older.

I had no problem. But you see, people over 14, they had to go to battlefield because they were drafted into the army. Now the battlefield was only about two or three blocks away.

They were older boys. They were already 16, 17, and 18-year-old boys. Walk into that old lady, they were caught. I happened to stay back home in the apartment. They were supposed to bring me the food.

They were caught. On the street, they stopped them. How come you guys are not in uniform?

Until they finally said, well, we wore a uniform. But we were afraid already because the war was very close to home. So we took off our-- they didn't even think that they were Jews.

But they told them they were going to take them in. They were going to kill him because they're not in battlefield. So they begged them, and they finally told them.

They took them into headquarters. They gave them back the soldiers uniforms, and they sent them into battle. Now battlefield was only two or three blocks away. They never went back to the old lady because they couldn't anymore.

Now they came home to see me. I was in the shelter. They were in uniform. I said, hey, what's going on here? I didn't know what happened.

So they told me that they have to go in battlefield. So it just so happened it wasn't a bad thing. Because at least they were not Jews, you see? There was nothing worse than being a Jew.

It took us a long time to say goodbye. I was in a shelter. As they went up, upstairs, they were going to walk to battlefield, a bomb hit the building again, and they were all injured, all four of them.

Two of them were killed. They were my friends, my Jewish friends. Two of them were injured.

We took them down to the shelters and we started to give them first aid there. There, everybody helped out, and they gave them first aid. Another one died later on, and another one survived.

At that time, soldiers came in. To me, it did a lot of good. Because you see, the soldiers provided me with food to take care of the injured soldier there. Now he was not a Jew anymore. He was an injured soldier.

So me, it did a lot of good. Nobody would ever think that I was Jewish. I took care of him. I had plenty of food for a

long time.

Until, what, you know what they say, everything goes by, you know. There is an end to everything. Finally, they did not give us any more food. There was no more food.

I used to go beg people for food, but they wouldn't give it to you. So one day, the janitor's baby died, a baby, maybe three months old, you know. So what are you going to do? They were afraid to go and bury the baby.

Now it was in the wintertime. I used to go out, chop meat from dead horses. There were a lot of dead horses on the street and a lot of dead bodies. In fact, the streets were full of them. Because like I said, the battlefield was right there.

But then I was afraid to go out on the street. The janitor said to me, I'll tell you what. If you go and bury my baby in the park, I'll give you a bowl of soup. This was like somebody offering you \$1 million.

How was he able to get the food?

Well, he had food you see because they were buying food during the war. Married people, you know, they stacked up food. I was a single boy. I didn't have a place to stack.

I didn't think that I'll need it. I had food for a while. But I never thought I'll need it later on.

These people had an apartment where to put it. In the basement, they had a locker room where they were able to put it. But they wouldn't part with it.

So he gave me a bowl of soup and a small piece of I don't know what it was. I don't remember what it was, but it was a piece of meat or something. And I went to bury his baby in the park all by myself with an ax.

You couldn't dig the ground, because the ground was frozen. It took me almost a half a day to dig a little hole to bury that baby. When I came back, that little bit of soup is like giving me \$1 million. It was really something.

Later on, the Russians were so close already. See, the Russians had a bad habit. We knew we knew about it. We were not liberated yet. This is already close to liberation.

The Russians, when they came in, they killed people for a wristwatch. They used to come in to the shelters and take out the women, the young girls, take them to their headquarters to have sex with them. Then they used to release them. They came back home.

So this couple was afraid. They had a young daughter, a very young girl about 16 years old. They were afraid because we were so close to liberation, to being liberated, that it could happen any minute.

So this couple, they said, I'll tell you what, Sam. Well, my name wasn't Sam. They said I'll tell you what. I'll provide you food. I'll give you food every day. I want you to stay lay down in bed with my daughter.

Yeah, you just stay with my daughter in bed in the shelter. There was a lot of people. It was, like, in one room. There were maybe 100 people in one room.

If we should be liberated, if the Russians walk in, because they could have just walked in just like that, I want you to hide my daughter under the cover and you stick out your head so they wouldn't even know that my daughter is in there. That's what happened.

Day after day, I was just lying there. We were looking out, if the Russians, or if we should be liberated, I cover her, and I stick out my head so they wouldn't know that her daughter is there. Because they took out those young girls and they raped them and everything.

During these years that you lived as a non-Jew, did you work?

During the years, during all this happening? No. No, there was no work available. You couldn't work.

The stores were closed. All the stores were closed. The battlefield was there. Budapest, there was a war going on in the city of Budapest. For six months, we were bombed practically 24 hours a day. Aeroplanes used to come in by the thousands.

Did you hear from your brother at all during this time?

No, I didn't know of my family at all, not at all. I didn't know about any of my brothers or any of my sisters. Now my older brother, what happened, I took him out of the labor camp and I got him Gentile papers, too.

How did you get him out?

Well, I got the Gentile papers into the place there where he was. He was able to get out. He went to Israel with the Zionist organizations illegally. As far as I knew, he was in Israel.

But after the war, I found out that he never did get to Israel. He got stuck in Romania. Then he was fighting with the Russians, back to Budapest.

I didn't know about anybody in the family. Until one day, I was in a Zionist organization, and the leader went up to Romania to the capital city to get us some money. When he was in the office, this girl comes into the office, and she asks if anybody knows Teitelbaum. He says yes, I know a Teitelbaum. He's there and there.

So he came back. He came back. He told me that your sister-- this was already in Romania, after the war-- trying to tell you how we found each other. He came back to tell me that my sister is in the capital city of Romania.

So I went to the capital city of Romania to look for my sister, trying to get together. This was a camp where all the refugees came back from concentration camps and that's where they put them. As I was looking for my sister, I found a friend. As I was talking to my friend, a voice behind me says I hear my brother's voice, but I don't see my brother.

That was my younger brother right behind me. We didn't recognize each other because we changed so much because of our bodies were completely changed, because our faces were changed because of no food. We were like skeletons, you know. So we didn't recognize each other.

Why don't we stop at this point--

Sure.

--and then come back when we get a new tape.

Go ahead.