

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,530

2
00:00:03,530 --> 00:00:06,230
This is the United States
Holocaust Memorial Museum

3
00:00:06,230 --> 00:00:09,770
interview with Tibor
Borsos, conducted

4
00:00:09,770 --> 00:00:16,880
by Gail Schwartz on July 29,
1996 in Chevy Chase, Maryland.

5
00:00:16,880 --> 00:00:22,760
This is tape number
one, side A. Could

6
00:00:22,760 --> 00:00:25,530
you please give
us your full name?

7
00:00:25,530 --> 00:00:28,430
My full name is Tibor Borsos.

8
00:00:28,430 --> 00:00:30,390
Is that the name
you were born with?

9
00:00:30,390 --> 00:00:30,890
Yes.

10
00:00:30,890 --> 00:00:33,610

11
00:00:33,610 --> 00:00:35,300
And where were you born?

12
00:00:35,300 --> 00:00:37,960
I was born in Budapest, Hungary.

13
00:00:37,960 --> 00:00:39,010
When were you born?

14
00:00:39,010 --> 00:00:43,150
March 12, 1927.

15
00:00:43,150 --> 00:00:46,090
Let's talk a little
bit about your family.

16
00:00:46,090 --> 00:00:49,180
Who were the members
of your family?

17
00:00:49,180 --> 00:00:54,460
My father, who was a physician.

18
00:00:54,460 --> 00:00:58,480
My mother, who was a housewife
without any profession,

19
00:00:58,480 --> 00:00:59,080
otherwise.

20
00:00:59,080 --> 00:01:01,720
At that time, it was
customary in Hungary.

21
00:01:01,720 --> 00:01:06,810
I have an older sister who was
born in 1920 whose name is Ann.

22
00:01:06,810 --> 00:01:10,810
And I have a brother who was
born in 1923 whose name is

23
00:01:10,810 --> 00:01:12,739
[? "Bee-luh." ?] He
is also a physician.

24
00:01:12,739 --> 00:01:17,530

25

00:01:17,530 --> 00:01:19,060

Could you be a
little more specific

26

00:01:19,060 --> 00:01:21,160

about your father
and his position?

27

00:01:21,160 --> 00:01:22,090

Yes.

28

00:01:22,090 --> 00:01:26,320

My father was born
in Transylvania.

29

00:01:26,320 --> 00:01:29,140

So was my whole family,
actually, except us children.

30

00:01:29,140 --> 00:01:31,570

I'll explain it later.

31

00:01:31,570 --> 00:01:35,110

He was a physician,
a pathologist,

32

00:01:35,110 --> 00:01:38,770

who was well known in
scientific circles.

33

00:01:38,770 --> 00:01:42,970

He became chairman of the
department of pathology

34

00:01:42,970 --> 00:01:46,150

in Debrecen, eastern
Hungary, in 1936.

35

00:01:46,150 --> 00:01:50,130

He spent one year in the
United States in 1931--

36
00:01:50,130 --> 00:01:54,140
'30, '31-- at Rochester
University with Dr. Whipple,

37
00:01:54,140 --> 00:01:56,050
the famous Nobel Prize winner.

38
00:01:56,050 --> 00:01:58,300
And that is what
made it possible

39
00:01:58,300 --> 00:02:01,420
for us to come to America,
ultimately, because

40
00:02:01,420 --> 00:02:04,300
of his American connections.

41
00:02:04,300 --> 00:02:07,480
Where was he prior to
your move to Debrecen?

42
00:02:07,480 --> 00:02:09,280
In Budapest.

43
00:02:09,280 --> 00:02:10,360
At the University?

44
00:02:10,360 --> 00:02:11,200
At the University.

45
00:02:11,200 --> 00:02:12,130
That's correct.

46
00:02:12,130 --> 00:02:14,860
And he was named
professor and chairman

47
00:02:14,860 --> 00:02:20,570
in 1936, the chair in Debrecen.

48

00:02:20,570 --> 00:02:27,890

Let's now talk a little bit
about your life and growing up.

49

00:02:27,890 --> 00:02:29,330

What about your education?

50

00:02:29,330 --> 00:02:32,090

Can you tell us a
little bit about that?

51

00:02:32,090 --> 00:02:36,770

I come from a upper
middle-class Hungarian family

52

00:02:36,770 --> 00:02:39,860

of intelligentsia,
as they call it.

53

00:02:39,860 --> 00:02:42,830

My grandparents were already
physicians and architects.

54

00:02:42,830 --> 00:02:47,240

My great grandparents were
also intellectual people.

55

00:02:47,240 --> 00:02:52,190

And therefore, our whole family
life was highly intellectual.

56

00:02:52,190 --> 00:02:54,620

As a child, I grew
up in a family

57

00:02:54,620 --> 00:03:01,280

that was full of literature,
music, art, concerts, opera,

58

00:03:01,280 --> 00:03:04,780

ballet, typical
middle midwestern--

59

00:03:04,780 --> 00:03:08,630

I'm sorry-- middle
European family life

60

00:03:08,630 --> 00:03:11,180

of the upper middle classes.

61

00:03:11,180 --> 00:03:13,910

But it's not upper class,
because in Hungary,

62

00:03:13,910 --> 00:03:16,290

distinctions are very important.

63

00:03:16,290 --> 00:03:21,170

And so my family was the typical
bourgeois family, as typical

64

00:03:21,170 --> 00:03:29,020

you can make it, with servants,
with every possible comfort

65

00:03:29,020 --> 00:03:30,110

a family can have.

66

00:03:30,110 --> 00:03:32,660

67

00:03:32,660 --> 00:03:35,790

I was educated in
public schools.

68

00:03:35,790 --> 00:03:39,980

This was customary-- elementary
school in Budapest first.

69

00:03:39,980 --> 00:03:43,940

And later in
Debrecen, after 1936,

70

00:03:43,940 --> 00:03:47,810

I was sent first to a

Catholic high school,

71

00:03:47,810 --> 00:03:51,320
because Debrecen was 90% or
80% Protestant, which was

72

00:03:51,320 --> 00:03:53,060
a very unusual city in Hungary.

73

00:03:53,060 --> 00:03:57,770
It was called Protestant Rome
because of the preponderance

74

00:03:57,770 --> 00:03:59,120
of Protestant Hungarians.

75

00:03:59,120 --> 00:04:02,810
And my family was
Catholic in background.

76

00:04:02,810 --> 00:04:04,370
This led to some
terrible problems,

77

00:04:04,370 --> 00:04:07,640
because I had
rejected Christianity

78

00:04:07,640 --> 00:04:11,210
as early as age 10,
because I could not

79

00:04:11,210 --> 00:04:17,570
stand the false sainthood, which
was preached by the Catholic

80

00:04:17,570 --> 00:04:19,450
Church.

81

00:04:19,450 --> 00:04:21,519
Was this a conclusion
you came to on your own?

82

00:04:21,519 --> 00:04:23,755

Very early on, my own.

83

00:04:23,755 --> 00:04:25,390

And it caused a lot
of trouble, as you

84

00:04:25,390 --> 00:04:28,090

can imagine-- the family,
and in my friends,

85

00:04:28,090 --> 00:04:32,210

and so forth-- because
I was a renegade.

86

00:04:32,210 --> 00:04:36,100

Also, I made a Jewish friend,
which I'll come to later.

87

00:04:36,100 --> 00:04:37,560

My mother had many
Jewish friends.

88

00:04:37,560 --> 00:04:40,590

She was also anti-clerical,
very strongly.

89

00:04:40,590 --> 00:04:43,970

So possibly, I got
something from her.

90

00:04:43,970 --> 00:04:47,170

My father, on the other
hand, was conventional.

91

00:04:47,170 --> 00:04:55,900

And he will not buck the
middle-class conventionality

92

00:04:55,900 --> 00:04:57,250

of religiosity.

93

00:04:57,250 --> 00:04:58,990
He was not religious
in that way.

94
00:04:58,990 --> 00:05:01,930
But it was proper
to be religious,

95
00:05:01,930 --> 00:05:05,350
somewhat similar to somebody
who goes only to high holidays

96
00:05:05,350 --> 00:05:07,780
to a synagogue,
otherwise doesn't.

97
00:05:07,780 --> 00:05:11,950
That's kind of a religiosity.

98
00:05:11,950 --> 00:05:16,120
So your family life was not one
of very strong observance then.

99
00:05:16,120 --> 00:05:18,610
No observance whatsoever.

100
00:05:18,610 --> 00:05:20,930
None.

101
00:05:20,930 --> 00:05:22,660
There was nothing
in the family ever

102
00:05:22,660 --> 00:05:25,090
in which there was any
kind of observance,

103
00:05:25,090 --> 00:05:26,980
except as children we
had to pray, of course.

104
00:05:26,980 --> 00:05:28,270
That's the standard.

105
00:05:28,270 --> 00:05:30,640
Every night, you had
to say your prayers.

106
00:05:30,640 --> 00:05:33,610
That is a very
standard midwest--

107
00:05:33,610 --> 00:05:36,040
I said midwestern,
I don't know why--

108
00:05:36,040 --> 00:05:38,670
middle European convention.

109
00:05:38,670 --> 00:05:43,930
And you will see pictures of
children praying at night.

110
00:05:43,930 --> 00:05:47,620
I lay me down to sleep,
that kind of thing.

111
00:05:47,620 --> 00:05:49,600
What about holidays like
Christmas and Easter?

112
00:05:49,600 --> 00:05:51,560
Christmas was very important.

113
00:05:51,560 --> 00:05:55,240
That was very important
all of middle Europe.

114
00:05:55,240 --> 00:05:58,700
The Christmas tree, the
presents, the excitement,

115
00:05:58,700 --> 00:06:01,590
the lights, the--

116

00:06:01,590 --> 00:06:04,210
all this kind of thing
was very important.

117
00:06:04,210 --> 00:06:06,310
But it was not very religious.

118
00:06:06,310 --> 00:06:09,740
It was somewhat like the
Japanese having Santa Claus.

119
00:06:09,740 --> 00:06:12,430
It is a-- well, they do.

120
00:06:12,430 --> 00:06:14,530
And in America,
too, a lot of people

121
00:06:14,530 --> 00:06:16,600
have Christmas trees
and all kind of thing.

122
00:06:16,600 --> 00:06:22,520
But it doesn't connect to
religiosity in a deeper sense.

123
00:06:22,520 --> 00:06:25,210
Easter was not
celebrated at all,

124
00:06:25,210 --> 00:06:27,850
except for one thing,
which was very important.

125
00:06:27,850 --> 00:06:30,670

126
00:06:30,670 --> 00:06:37,290
We could get-- since
it was Passover time,

127
00:06:37,290 --> 00:06:39,340
we would get Jewish food.

128
00:06:39,340 --> 00:06:42,025
And we always had fresh--

129
00:06:42,025 --> 00:06:45,950

130
00:06:45,950 --> 00:06:46,450
Matzo?

131
00:06:46,450 --> 00:06:46,810
--matzo.

132
00:06:46,810 --> 00:06:47,450
Thank you.

133
00:06:47,450 --> 00:06:48,550
For some reason, I
couldn't bring it up.

134
00:06:48,550 --> 00:06:50,950
Fresh matzo was always
important in our household.

135
00:06:50,950 --> 00:06:53,080
But this has nothing
to do with Judaism.

136
00:06:53,080 --> 00:06:56,560
It was just simply
available, and we loved it.

137
00:06:56,560 --> 00:06:58,310
Did you know this was
typical Jewish food?

138
00:06:58,310 --> 00:06:59,770
Oh, absolutely.

139
00:06:59,770 --> 00:07:00,280
Oh, yeah.

140

00:07:00,280 --> 00:07:02,613
Sure, because my Jewish
friends, we went to their house.

141

00:07:02,613 --> 00:07:04,460
And we always had it there.

142

00:07:04,460 --> 00:07:06,460
So there was no
question it was Jewish.

143

00:07:06,460 --> 00:07:10,930
But it was not connected
to religious observance.

144

00:07:10,930 --> 00:07:13,320
But that was very important
that we could have matzo.

145

00:07:13,320 --> 00:07:15,970
We loved matzo.

146

00:07:15,970 --> 00:07:18,580
What kind of relationship did
you have with your parents?

147

00:07:18,580 --> 00:07:21,310
Was your father a
strict disciplinarian?

148

00:07:21,310 --> 00:07:24,220
My father was a more
distant figure, as-- again,

149

00:07:24,220 --> 00:07:26,380
standard European problem.

150

00:07:26,380 --> 00:07:29,860
He worked a lot as a
physician and a professor.

151

00:07:29,860 --> 00:07:33,250

He worked from 7:00
till lunchtime--

152
00:07:33,250 --> 00:07:35,560
we had a big meal at
lunchtime, of course--

153
00:07:35,560 --> 00:07:37,207
then a short rest period.

154
00:07:37,207 --> 00:07:39,790
He went back to work, came back
for dinner at 7:00, 8 O'clock,

155
00:07:39,790 --> 00:07:41,450
and went to work again.

156
00:07:41,450 --> 00:07:44,168
So many times, I haven't
seen him until the weekends,

157
00:07:44,168 --> 00:07:45,960
except for dinner time--
lunchtime, I mean.

158
00:07:45,960 --> 00:07:47,020
Lunchtime.

159
00:07:47,020 --> 00:07:49,690
Did he have a medical practice
besides his teaching position?

160
00:07:49,690 --> 00:07:50,440
No, he did not.

161
00:07:50,440 --> 00:07:52,270
He was a pathologist.

162
00:07:52,270 --> 00:07:55,540
He was consulting,
obviously, in autopsies

163

00:07:55,540 --> 00:07:57,050
and this kind of thing.

164
00:07:57,050 --> 00:08:01,240
But his primary purpose was
teaching, performing autopsies,

165
00:08:01,240 --> 00:08:06,830
and consulting with various
agencies on forensic problems.

166
00:08:06,830 --> 00:08:09,220
Not like the airplane crash,
but that sort of thing--

167
00:08:09,220 --> 00:08:11,230
like murders, or what have you.

168
00:08:11,230 --> 00:08:14,650
Did he have colleagues
who were Jewish?

169
00:08:14,650 --> 00:08:21,800
In Hungary, after the
1919 Communist Revolution,

170
00:08:21,800 --> 00:08:25,150
many of the universities
had numerus clausus,

171
00:08:25,150 --> 00:08:28,930
and numerus nullus,
mostly numerus clauses,

172
00:08:28,930 --> 00:08:32,110
as you might-- you know
what those terms mean.

173
00:08:32,110 --> 00:08:36,909
And the answer is, yes,
but it was limited.

174
00:08:36,909 --> 00:08:43,870

And it was not easy for
a non-schmatta Jew--

175
00:08:43,870 --> 00:08:46,070
you know what the term
means, obviously--

176
00:08:46,070 --> 00:08:49,040
who did not convert
to Christianity.

177
00:08:49,040 --> 00:08:51,970
It was not easy to
become full professor.

178
00:08:51,970 --> 00:08:53,780
Did he have personal
friends who were Jews?

179
00:08:53,780 --> 00:08:54,280
Yes.

180
00:08:54,280 --> 00:08:55,720
The answer is, yes.

181
00:08:55,720 --> 00:08:56,373
Yes.

182
00:08:56,373 --> 00:08:58,040
And did these people
come to your house?

183
00:08:58,040 --> 00:09:00,700
Did the families
socialize together?

184
00:09:00,700 --> 00:09:03,880
There was absolute
distinction in socialization

185
00:09:03,880 --> 00:09:06,220
and where people lived.

186

00:09:06,220 --> 00:09:11,627

The kind of separation by living areas like the United States,

187

00:09:11,627 --> 00:09:13,960

which shocked me enormously when I came to this country,

188

00:09:13,960 --> 00:09:15,700

didn't exist in Hungary.

189

00:09:15,700 --> 00:09:18,040

There was no restriction where people could live,

190

00:09:18,040 --> 00:09:21,040

where they could go, or where they could stay, or--

191

00:09:21,040 --> 00:09:24,215

none, except under the last Nazi types, of course.

192

00:09:24,215 --> 00:09:25,340

That's a different problem.

193

00:09:25,340 --> 00:09:27,520

But under normal conditions, even though there was

194

00:09:27,520 --> 00:09:31,600

anti-Semitism in Hungary, even though there was numerus

195

00:09:31,600 --> 00:09:34,060

clausus and numerus nullus, let's say,

196

00:09:34,060 --> 00:09:36,670

there was absolutely no restriction on where people

197

00:09:36,670 --> 00:09:39,130
lived or where people would
buy a house, or they could--

198
00:09:39,130 --> 00:09:40,600
apartment, or
anything like that.

199
00:09:40,600 --> 00:09:43,070
I was deeply shocked when
I came to this country

200
00:09:43,070 --> 00:09:45,520
and, first time, I
have seen restrictions

201
00:09:45,520 --> 00:09:49,120
on the neighborhoods
written in the contract.

202
00:09:49,120 --> 00:09:52,450
When we bought a
house in 1965 here,

203
00:09:52,450 --> 00:09:54,860
we still had a clause in
it-- not valid anymore.

204
00:09:54,860 --> 00:09:56,860
I refused to sign it, of course.

205
00:09:56,860 --> 00:09:58,990
And it didn't make any
difference at that time.

206
00:09:58,990 --> 00:10:00,880
But I have been--

207
00:10:00,880 --> 00:10:02,530
my wife and I have been--

208
00:10:02,530 --> 00:10:05,450
never was as much

shocked as at that one.

209
00:10:05,450 --> 00:10:08,050
Let's talk about your very
early life in Budapest.

210
00:10:08,050 --> 00:10:09,790
I know you moved in 1936.

211
00:10:09,790 --> 00:10:11,990
And that meant you were
only nine years old.

212
00:10:11,990 --> 00:10:12,650
Nine, yes.

213
00:10:12,650 --> 00:10:12,850
[BOTH TALKING]

214
00:10:12,850 --> 00:10:13,690
Yeah, something like that.

215
00:10:13,690 --> 00:10:14,370
Right.

216
00:10:14,370 --> 00:10:16,590
But let's just talk about that.

217
00:10:16,590 --> 00:10:19,930
Did you live in a mixed
neighborhood also in Budapest?

218
00:10:19,930 --> 00:10:21,010
Absolutely.

219
00:10:21,010 --> 00:10:23,050
There were no non-mixed
neighborhoods.

220
00:10:23,050 --> 00:10:26,230
And you had Jewish
friends as a youngster.

221
00:10:26,230 --> 00:10:29,610
I can't remember any
friends as all, basically.

222
00:10:29,610 --> 00:10:30,430
It's funny.

223
00:10:30,430 --> 00:10:33,053
I went to elementary
school around the corner.

224
00:10:33,053 --> 00:10:34,720
And I know there were
Jewish kids there.

225
00:10:34,720 --> 00:10:37,990
But there was no distinction.

226
00:10:37,990 --> 00:10:40,510
There was no way of
knowing, except by name,

227
00:10:40,510 --> 00:10:41,570
or something like that.

228
00:10:41,570 --> 00:10:44,200
So in the school, there
was no distinction.

229
00:10:44,200 --> 00:10:45,820
Personal friends,
we had very few,

230
00:10:45,820 --> 00:10:47,900
because we had
lost of relatives.

231
00:10:47,900 --> 00:10:55,130
And most of my childhood
was around our relations--

232

00:10:55,130 --> 00:10:57,400
my cousins, my second
cousins, and so forth,

233
00:10:57,400 --> 00:11:00,050
and a very large
number of family.

234
00:11:00,050 --> 00:11:03,460
And so primary friends we have,
if you can call them friends,

235
00:11:03,460 --> 00:11:06,310
were children from my family.

236
00:11:06,310 --> 00:11:08,050
I cannot recall
outsiders at all.

237
00:11:08,050 --> 00:11:09,720
I just have no memory of it.

238
00:11:09,720 --> 00:11:11,680
We must have had.

239
00:11:11,680 --> 00:11:13,240
But I have no recollection.

240
00:11:13,240 --> 00:11:15,250
And again, you were
young before you moved.

241
00:11:15,250 --> 00:11:17,410
But up to that
point, did you notice

242
00:11:17,410 --> 00:11:21,370
any incidences of
anti-Semitism before you

243
00:11:21,370 --> 00:11:22,810
moved to Debrecen, in Budapest?

244

00:11:22,810 --> 00:11:24,570

Not personally, no.

245

00:11:24,570 --> 00:11:26,020

No, I never had seen any.

246

00:11:26,020 --> 00:11:29,320

247

00:11:29,320 --> 00:11:31,210

Later, of course, is
a different question.

248

00:11:31,210 --> 00:11:36,710

But until-- I never seen
anything like that at all.

249

00:11:36,710 --> 00:11:42,580

So your childhood in Budapest
was a relatively calm time.

250

00:11:42,580 --> 00:11:44,190

It was a wonderful childhood.

251

00:11:44,190 --> 00:11:45,160

That's all I can say.

252

00:11:45,160 --> 00:11:46,510

There was no problems.

253

00:11:46,510 --> 00:11:50,080

Now, why is it that your
father moved to Debrecen?

254

00:11:50,080 --> 00:11:52,240

He was named chairman
of the department.

255

00:11:52,240 --> 00:11:55,120

In Budapest, there was no
chairmanship available.

256

00:11:55,120 --> 00:11:58,390

And therefore, he was asked
whether he would accept one

257

00:11:58,390 --> 00:12:01,270

in one of the
provincial universities,

258

00:12:01,270 --> 00:12:02,600

as one would call it.

259

00:12:02,600 --> 00:12:06,160

And that's why he was then
stationed in Debrecen.

260

00:12:06,160 --> 00:12:08,530

All universities in Hungary
were state universities.

261

00:12:08,530 --> 00:12:11,530

There were no private
universities, none.

262

00:12:11,530 --> 00:12:15,820

There were five medical
schools, and that was it.

263

00:12:15,820 --> 00:12:17,110

So you're nine years old.

264

00:12:17,110 --> 00:12:18,880

And you moved to a new town.

265

00:12:18,880 --> 00:12:21,460

Was that a hard
adjustment for you?

266

00:12:21,460 --> 00:12:24,640

I have no recollection of
having a hard adjustment.

267

00:12:24,640 --> 00:12:27,190

The excitement was that,
from the apartment house,

268
00:12:27,190 --> 00:12:29,560
we moved to a house
with a big yard, which

269
00:12:29,560 --> 00:12:31,180
was a wonderful thing.

270
00:12:31,180 --> 00:12:36,790
And I have no recollection
of having difficulties.

271
00:12:36,790 --> 00:12:39,453
The only thing I can
say is that the life

272
00:12:39,453 --> 00:12:41,620
became totally different,
because this was a smaller

273
00:12:41,620 --> 00:12:42,120
town.

274
00:12:42,120 --> 00:12:45,670
Instead of 1 and 1/2 million
people, it was 120,000.

275
00:12:45,670 --> 00:12:47,620
It's a provincial town.

276
00:12:47,620 --> 00:12:50,960
It lacks a lot of culture,
which Budapest had.

277
00:12:50,960 --> 00:12:52,180
There's no opera house.

278
00:12:52,180 --> 00:12:55,510
There's only one theater,
which was pretty bad.

279

00:12:55,510 --> 00:13:02,860

Concerts were in a hotel room.

280

00:13:02,860 --> 00:13:04,877

There was no concert hall.

281

00:13:04,877 --> 00:13:06,460

So that's the kind
of problems we had.

282

00:13:06,460 --> 00:13:09,263

And my mother was absolutely
the most unhappy person

283

00:13:09,263 --> 00:13:10,180

I ever met in my life.

284

00:13:10,180 --> 00:13:12,013

She just hated life in
Debrecen, absolutely,

285

00:13:12,013 --> 00:13:14,450

completely hated it.

286

00:13:14,450 --> 00:13:16,750

And one of the
things I recollect,

287

00:13:16,750 --> 00:13:18,640

which was very
important for her--

288

00:13:18,640 --> 00:13:20,660

she had three or four
very lovely ladies whom

289

00:13:20,660 --> 00:13:21,910

she became very friendly with.

290

00:13:21,910 --> 00:13:24,470

And they're all Jewish,
every single one of them.

291
00:13:24,470 --> 00:13:26,560
And because of this, she
was ostracized actually

292
00:13:26,560 --> 00:13:30,280
by my father's colleagues wives.

293
00:13:30,280 --> 00:13:32,295
I don't mean necessarily
they don't talk to her.

294
00:13:32,295 --> 00:13:33,920
But she was always
looked upon, there's

295
00:13:33,920 --> 00:13:35,770
something wrong with her.

296
00:13:35,770 --> 00:13:37,990
Was this even in the late '30s?

297
00:13:37,990 --> 00:13:40,510
This is all '36,
'37, '38, '39, '40.

298
00:13:40,510 --> 00:13:43,450
We talk about a time after '36.

299
00:13:43,450 --> 00:13:47,200
And I don't recollect
their names anymore.

300
00:13:47,200 --> 00:13:49,468
But I remember these ladies
who came to our house.

301
00:13:49,468 --> 00:13:50,760
My mother had coffee with them.

302
00:13:50,760 --> 00:13:52,907
And they went out to

their house, and so forth.

303

00:13:52,907 --> 00:13:55,490

And there were at least two or three of those who were Jewish.

304

00:13:55,490 --> 00:13:56,470

There's no question about it.

305

00:13:56,470 --> 00:13:58,240

I remember very distinctly who they were.

306

00:13:58,240 --> 00:14:00,700

Did your parents talk about their friendship

307

00:14:00,700 --> 00:14:03,057

with you, and the fact that these people were Jewish,

308

00:14:03,057 --> 00:14:03,890

and that they were--

309

00:14:03,890 --> 00:14:04,720

It did not come up.

310

00:14:04,720 --> 00:14:07,060

This was not an important point.

311

00:14:07,060 --> 00:14:14,620

For instance, our [? mental ?] life outside of school

312

00:14:14,620 --> 00:14:16,230

was ice skating.

313

00:14:16,230 --> 00:14:20,560

The skating rink-- which was a natural pond, not artificial--

314

00:14:20,560 --> 00:14:25,270

was absolutely our
center of life.

315
00:14:25,270 --> 00:14:29,200
And there was no
distinction of who it was.

316
00:14:29,200 --> 00:14:31,030
Jews, non-Jews, we were
all mixed together.

317
00:14:31,030 --> 00:14:32,840
And we played ice
hockey together.

318
00:14:32,840 --> 00:14:34,870
There was simply no distinction.

319
00:14:34,870 --> 00:14:37,420
How did you know the other
young people were Jewish?

320
00:14:37,420 --> 00:14:40,210
In Hungary, everybody knows
it, because the names,

321
00:14:40,210 --> 00:14:42,550
first of all, give it away.

322
00:14:42,550 --> 00:14:46,270
Either they had names
coming from Eastern Europe--

323
00:14:46,270 --> 00:14:49,660
that is, Galitziana names
like Greenberg, or whatever--

324
00:14:49,660 --> 00:14:52,210
or they translated to Hungarian.

325
00:14:52,210 --> 00:14:56,350
So the best friends we had,
their name was [? Fajnysh. ?]

326
00:14:56,350 --> 00:14:59,320
[? Fajnysz ?] was
our lawyer, actually,

327
00:14:59,320 --> 00:15:01,060
and a good friend of--

328
00:15:01,060 --> 00:15:03,370
the children were a very
good friend of ours, Janos

329
00:15:03,370 --> 00:15:07,780
and Pisti, John and Stephen.

330
00:15:07,780 --> 00:15:10,810
And [? Fajnysz ?] means Glenz.

331
00:15:10,810 --> 00:15:11,410
Means what?

332
00:15:11,410 --> 00:15:16,990
Glenz, G-L-E-N-Z, which
is a typical Jewish name.

333
00:15:16,990 --> 00:15:18,430
But that, translated
to Hungarian,

334
00:15:18,430 --> 00:15:20,920
became [? Fajnysz. ?] Now,
everybody knew that the person

335
00:15:20,920 --> 00:15:23,830
called [? Fajnysz ?]
must be Jewish.

336
00:15:23,830 --> 00:15:26,140
There was no argument.

337
00:15:26,140 --> 00:15:28,310
Did you spend time in these

Jewish children's homes?

338
00:15:28,310 --> 00:15:28,810
Oh, yeah.

339
00:15:28,810 --> 00:15:31,760
Oh, this is a complete
free of back and forth.

340
00:15:31,760 --> 00:15:32,770
We went over there.

341
00:15:32,770 --> 00:15:33,580
They came to us.

342
00:15:33,580 --> 00:15:38,170
We played, whatever children do.

343
00:15:38,170 --> 00:15:40,960
Did you experience
any negative aspects

344
00:15:40,960 --> 00:15:43,300
from your non-Jewish
friends when you would

345
00:15:43,300 --> 00:15:44,620
play with your Jewish friends?

346
00:15:44,620 --> 00:15:45,650
None.

347
00:15:45,650 --> 00:15:47,620
No.

348
00:15:47,620 --> 00:15:48,610
Not in my memory.

349
00:15:48,610 --> 00:15:50,410
Not in this particular time.

350

00:15:50,410 --> 00:15:55,270

There was absolutely no
problem in our circle of who

351

00:15:55,270 --> 00:15:57,610

was Jewish, who was not Jewish.

352

00:15:57,610 --> 00:15:59,810

That is not true
of other circles.

353

00:15:59,810 --> 00:16:02,170

But certainly, in our circle--

354

00:16:02,170 --> 00:16:03,710

my friends, my family--

355

00:16:03,710 --> 00:16:06,460

there's no problem whatsoever.

356

00:16:06,460 --> 00:16:08,930

You were quite young,
obviously, at the time.

357

00:16:08,930 --> 00:16:11,980

But when the first law
came in, in May of 1938,

358

00:16:11,980 --> 00:16:13,630

was that something
you were aware of?

359

00:16:13,630 --> 00:16:14,310

Granted, you were--

360

00:16:14,310 --> 00:16:14,650

Yes.

361

00:16:14,650 --> 00:16:15,310

-- years old.

362

00:16:15,310 --> 00:16:16,570

Yes, we were aware of it.

363
00:16:16,570 --> 00:16:17,470
We were aware of it.

364
00:16:17,470 --> 00:16:18,520
And we knew about it.

365
00:16:18,520 --> 00:16:21,610
And my parents were
appalled by it.

366
00:16:21,610 --> 00:16:24,200
But there was nothing
we could do about it.

367
00:16:24,200 --> 00:16:25,690
What do you do about it?

368
00:16:25,690 --> 00:16:27,910
You don't go out in the
street and demonstrate,

369
00:16:27,910 --> 00:16:31,050
not in Hungary, not
the middle class.

370
00:16:31,050 --> 00:16:34,360
So it was a fact of life.

371
00:16:34,360 --> 00:16:36,910
Now, the laws did not--

372
00:16:36,910 --> 00:16:40,210
nobody wore yellow stars.

373
00:16:40,210 --> 00:16:44,710
The law simply specified certain
things, which couldn't be done.

374
00:16:44,710 --> 00:16:46,690
But it did not affect

the public life.

375

00:16:46,690 --> 00:16:48,490

Whether you run a
streetcar, a restaurant--

376

00:16:48,490 --> 00:16:53,050

nothing in Germany where there
are signs, Juden [GERMAN]..

377

00:16:53,050 --> 00:16:55,690

That did not exist in Hungary.

378

00:16:55,690 --> 00:16:58,390

There was no
restriction of freedom

379

00:16:58,390 --> 00:17:02,470

of movement, no restriction
of freedom of living,

380

00:17:02,470 --> 00:17:04,150

or even doing your job.

381

00:17:04,150 --> 00:17:06,089

A lawyer was still a lawyer.

382

00:17:06,089 --> 00:17:10,910

And he could still have
Christian clients or friends.

383

00:17:10,910 --> 00:17:12,319

There was no restriction.

384

00:17:12,319 --> 00:17:17,020

So the laws did not affect
us and them in terms

385

00:17:17,020 --> 00:17:18,589

of our personal relationship.

386

00:17:18,589 --> 00:17:21,190

It effected the Jews,
obviously, for other reasons,

387
00:17:21,190 --> 00:17:23,140
which are restrictive reasons.

388
00:17:23,140 --> 00:17:26,172
But it did not affect
our daily life.

389
00:17:26,172 --> 00:17:28,089
Again, was this something
that you talked over

390
00:17:28,089 --> 00:17:31,960
with your parents when
the laws came into effect?

391
00:17:31,960 --> 00:17:33,880
It was discussed.

392
00:17:33,880 --> 00:17:36,400
And they were appalled by it.

393
00:17:36,400 --> 00:17:37,280
But that was it.

394
00:17:37,280 --> 00:17:39,790
There was no further argument.

395
00:17:39,790 --> 00:17:41,950
There was none of
the kind of thing

396
00:17:41,950 --> 00:17:44,590
like my wife had, that
the children were told,

397
00:17:44,590 --> 00:17:46,850
don't play with Jewish
children anymore.

398

00:17:46,850 --> 00:17:50,320
One of the things she remembers
is that problem of '33

399
00:17:50,320 --> 00:17:54,010
came about, and the Jewish,
non-Jewish friendship

400
00:17:54,010 --> 00:17:54,970
was finished.

401
00:17:54,970 --> 00:17:56,692
This was not true in Hungary.

402
00:17:56,692 --> 00:17:58,400
You still play in the
same swimming pool.

403
00:17:58,400 --> 00:18:00,508
We have the same skating rinks.

404
00:18:00,508 --> 00:18:02,050
There was no argument,
no discussion.

405
00:18:02,050 --> 00:18:04,840
There was no question
that this was how it was.

406
00:18:04,840 --> 00:18:08,500
How the laws affected
otherwise their lives

407
00:18:08,500 --> 00:18:11,870
was not really affecting
our relationship, which

408
00:18:11,870 --> 00:18:13,180
was a very curious problem.

409
00:18:13,180 --> 00:18:14,580
But it's true.

410

00:18:14,580 --> 00:18:16,210

And so you still felt
comfortable going

411

00:18:16,210 --> 00:18:16,910

to their house.

412

00:18:16,910 --> 00:18:17,860

Oh, absolutely.

413

00:18:17,860 --> 00:18:19,450

Absolutely.

414

00:18:19,450 --> 00:18:21,550

Did you belong to
any youth groups?

415

00:18:21,550 --> 00:18:22,130

Boy Scouts.

416

00:18:22,130 --> 00:18:23,380

The only thing I belonged to--

417

00:18:23,380 --> 00:18:24,490

Boy Scouts.

418

00:18:24,490 --> 00:18:26,120

Was that mixed Jewish
and non-Jewish?

419

00:18:26,120 --> 00:18:27,190

I don't remember.

420

00:18:27,190 --> 00:18:29,380

But the Hungarian
Boy Scouts were not

421

00:18:29,380 --> 00:18:32,470

run from churches, not
like here, which most are

422

00:18:32,470 --> 00:18:34,030
run by synagogues and churches.

423
00:18:34,030 --> 00:18:37,120
In Hungary, they were
run strictly from schools

424
00:18:37,120 --> 00:18:39,010
or from private organizations.

425
00:18:39,010 --> 00:18:42,940
There was no affiliation
with any church at all.

426
00:18:42,940 --> 00:18:46,270
But I have no recollection
that, in my troupe,

427
00:18:46,270 --> 00:18:47,500
there were Jewish boys.

428
00:18:47,500 --> 00:18:48,518
I don't remember.

429
00:18:48,518 --> 00:18:49,810
There may or may not have been.

430
00:18:49,810 --> 00:18:51,670
I can't tell you.

431
00:18:51,670 --> 00:18:56,980
So in '38, '39, what did you
know about a man named Hitler?

432
00:18:56,980 --> 00:18:58,180
Again, you were young.

433
00:18:58,180 --> 00:18:59,755
Oh, we knew a great deal.

434
00:18:59,755 --> 00:19:01,630
As a matter of fact,

something very important

435

00:19:01,630 --> 00:19:04,425
happened in 1930--

436

00:19:04,425 --> 00:19:05,800
the date may be
off a little bit.

437

00:19:05,800 --> 00:19:07,510
I have documentation-- 1934.

438

00:19:07,510 --> 00:19:10,786
My family's name was
not Borsos, originally.

439

00:19:10,786 --> 00:19:11,520
My father--

440

00:19:11,520 --> 00:19:12,037
What was it?

441

00:19:12,037 --> 00:19:13,620
My father's name was
[? Dockstaber, ?]

442

00:19:13,620 --> 00:19:16,490
a German name.

443

00:19:16,490 --> 00:19:23,030
And when Hitler came to
power, the ausland Deutsche,

444

00:19:23,030 --> 00:19:26,390
the Germans not
living in Germany,

445

00:19:26,390 --> 00:19:29,630
were approached by the
Nazis, especially those

446

00:19:29,630 --> 00:19:31,730

with German names.

447

00:19:31,730 --> 00:19:33,680

And they were asked
to join some kind

448

00:19:33,680 --> 00:19:38,700

of-- like the Bund in America,
the Nazi organization.

449

00:19:38,700 --> 00:19:40,927

Many of the people
who had German names

450

00:19:40,927 --> 00:19:42,510

changed their name
to Hungarian names.

451

00:19:42,510 --> 00:19:45,590

My father changed his name to
a Hungarian because of this,

452

00:19:45,590 --> 00:19:48,345

not to be associated
with a German background.

453

00:19:48,345 --> 00:19:49,970

Did the rest of his
family do the same?

454

00:19:49,970 --> 00:19:51,545

Or was he the only one?

455

00:19:51,545 --> 00:19:53,420

There was nobody else
except the brother, who

456

00:19:53,420 --> 00:19:55,370

lived in Transylvania, Romania.

457

00:19:55,370 --> 00:19:59,110

So as I mentioned, all my family
comes from Transylvania, which

458
00:19:59,110 --> 00:20:01,470
then became Romania in 1918.

459
00:20:01,470 --> 00:20:04,670
So there was a separation
in terms of countries also.

460
00:20:04,670 --> 00:20:07,730
But there were only
two brothers, my father

461
00:20:07,730 --> 00:20:08,760
and his brother.

462
00:20:08,760 --> 00:20:09,260
That's all.

463
00:20:09,260 --> 00:20:11,910
There was nobody
else in the family.

464
00:20:11,910 --> 00:20:15,690
So again, to get back to Adolf
Hitler, what did you as a 10,

465
00:20:15,690 --> 00:20:17,300
11-year-old--

466
00:20:17,300 --> 00:20:19,640
what was your
perception of this man?

467
00:20:19,640 --> 00:20:23,000
The perception was a
raving maniac, literally.

468
00:20:23,000 --> 00:20:24,950
We heard his speeches
on the radio.

469
00:20:24,950 --> 00:20:26,930

And there was no
television, obviously.

470
00:20:26,930 --> 00:20:28,580
But there were newsreels.

471
00:20:28,580 --> 00:20:31,230
And we saw him
raving like a maniac.

472
00:20:31,230 --> 00:20:34,910
And all of Hungary-- the
people who are not Nazis--

473
00:20:34,910 --> 00:20:37,250
were afraid of him,
really afraid of him.

474
00:20:37,250 --> 00:20:39,080
What language did
you speak at home?

475
00:20:39,080 --> 00:20:41,390
Hungarian, of course.

476
00:20:41,390 --> 00:20:43,190
Did you understand
German, though?

477
00:20:43,190 --> 00:20:44,360
Quite well.

478
00:20:44,360 --> 00:20:49,070
We always had nannies
who were from Austria.

479
00:20:49,070 --> 00:20:52,710
We had nannies who were
brought for that purpose,

480
00:20:52,710 --> 00:20:56,270
so that they bring us
up in another language.

481
00:20:56,270 --> 00:20:59,090
Hungary, being a
strange country,

482
00:20:59,090 --> 00:21:02,960
strange in terms of not
being in the European

483
00:21:02,960 --> 00:21:05,180
but an Asiatic country--

484
00:21:05,180 --> 00:21:07,730
and language had nothing to do
with any European languages.

485
00:21:07,730 --> 00:21:10,570
And we had to learn European
languages to survive.

486
00:21:10,570 --> 00:21:14,060
So first was German
always, because the sphere

487
00:21:14,060 --> 00:21:17,120
of European powers--

488
00:21:17,120 --> 00:21:19,610
Hungary belonged to
the German sphere

489
00:21:19,610 --> 00:21:21,650
through Austria,
Hungary, and so forth.

490
00:21:21,650 --> 00:21:23,180
As opposed to
Romania, they belonged

491
00:21:23,180 --> 00:21:27,080
to the French sphere, and Poland
the French and Russian sphere.

492

00:21:27,080 --> 00:21:28,670

We belonged to
the German sphere.

493

00:21:28,670 --> 00:21:33,830

So everybody talked second
language as German language.

494

00:21:33,830 --> 00:21:37,640

Franz Kafka in Czechoslovakia,
the famous Jewish writer,

495

00:21:37,640 --> 00:21:40,670

wrote in German, not in Czech.

496

00:21:40,670 --> 00:21:45,260

That's because the main
second language is German.

497

00:21:45,260 --> 00:21:48,020

Were you aware of Kristallnacht?

498

00:21:48,020 --> 00:21:49,385

Oh, yes, absolutely.

499

00:21:49,385 --> 00:21:50,260

We saw the newsreels.

500

00:21:50,260 --> 00:21:51,620

Can you describe
what you thought?

501

00:21:51,620 --> 00:21:52,495

We saw the newsreels.

502

00:21:52,495 --> 00:21:55,892

We saw the newsreels,
and was appalled.

503

00:21:55,892 --> 00:21:56,600

We were appalled.

504

00:21:56,600 --> 00:21:59,240

My family was appalled by it,
completely appalled by it,

505

00:21:59,240 --> 00:22:01,610

such a thing can
happen, especially

506

00:22:01,610 --> 00:22:06,260

because the German culture
was so much admired because

507

00:22:06,260 --> 00:22:10,320

of the great German
music, literature,

508

00:22:10,320 --> 00:22:12,020

contribution to science.

509

00:22:12,020 --> 00:22:14,660

My father was a member of the
German pathological society,

510

00:22:14,660 --> 00:22:16,580

for example.

511

00:22:16,580 --> 00:22:20,180

We were appalled that this
nation of such culture

512

00:22:20,180 --> 00:22:23,090

can do such awful things.

513

00:22:23,090 --> 00:22:25,228

Did you talk this over
with your Jewish friends,

514

00:22:25,228 --> 00:22:26,520

what happened on Kristallnacht?

515

00:22:26,520 --> 00:22:28,430

I have no recollection

of that at all.

516

00:22:28,430 --> 00:22:30,410

If I did, I don't remember.

517

00:22:30,410 --> 00:22:32,720

I don't know.

518

00:22:32,720 --> 00:22:36,330

And then, when Germany invaded
Poland in September of '39,

519

00:22:36,330 --> 00:22:38,250

what is your
recollection of that?

520

00:22:38,250 --> 00:22:39,270

Horror.

521

00:22:39,270 --> 00:22:42,300

Well we were all terrified
that the war is come,

522

00:22:42,300 --> 00:22:43,920

and that now the
World War is coming.

523

00:22:43,920 --> 00:22:46,337

And we knew that Hungary is
going to get into it somewhere

524

00:22:46,337 --> 00:22:47,100

along the line.

525

00:22:47,100 --> 00:22:51,450

Since the government was
pro-German and irridenta--

526

00:22:51,450 --> 00:22:56,120

this is the Italian word for
reclaiming territories lost

527

00:22:56,120 --> 00:22:59,280
in the First World War--

528
00:22:59,280 --> 00:23:03,660
the sentiments of
the government was

529
00:23:03,660 --> 00:23:07,830
for German, not to say pro-Nazi,
but certainly pro-German,

530
00:23:07,830 --> 00:23:11,430
which meant pro-Nazi at this
point, no matter what you did.

531
00:23:11,430 --> 00:23:14,580
And in order to get back some
of the territories-- which

532
00:23:14,580 --> 00:23:16,260
we did, ultimately.

533
00:23:16,260 --> 00:23:18,530
Part of Slovakia
came back to Hungary.

534
00:23:18,530 --> 00:23:19,890
Ruthenia came back to Hungary.

535
00:23:19,890 --> 00:23:22,050
Part of Romania came
back to Hungary.

536
00:23:22,050 --> 00:23:24,780
This gave the
Hungarians, including

537
00:23:24,780 --> 00:23:27,390
our family, a very good
feeling, because we

538
00:23:27,390 --> 00:23:29,130
came from Transylvania.

539

00:23:29,130 --> 00:23:32,400

And the territory
where my family

540

00:23:32,400 --> 00:23:36,865

lived for hundreds and hundreds
of years was under Romania.

541

00:23:36,865 --> 00:23:38,490

And so there's a good
feeling about it.

542

00:23:38,490 --> 00:23:39,720

So there's a very--

543

00:23:39,720 --> 00:23:41,160

the feeling was dichotomous.

544

00:23:41,160 --> 00:23:42,420

On the one hand--

545

00:23:42,420 --> 00:23:46,320

fear and revulsion of
the Nazis doing this.

546

00:23:46,320 --> 00:23:49,860

On the other hand, regaining
the lost territories

547

00:23:49,860 --> 00:23:53,040

as good patriots, we
felt very good about it.

548

00:23:53,040 --> 00:23:55,800

So it's a very
difficult feeling,

549

00:23:55,800 --> 00:24:00,480

this torn feeling, the
Nazis helping you out

550

00:24:00,480 --> 00:24:03,453
to regain lost territories.

551
00:24:03,453 --> 00:24:04,870
Right or wrong,
it doesn't matter.

552
00:24:04,870 --> 00:24:06,900
But that's how the feeling was.

553
00:24:06,900 --> 00:24:09,300
And again, do you have
any specific recollections

554
00:24:09,300 --> 00:24:11,520
of Germany invading
Poland in September?

555
00:24:11,520 --> 00:24:12,480
Yes, very much.

556
00:24:12,480 --> 00:24:16,200
Oh, we listened to the radio
all the time, constantly.

557
00:24:16,200 --> 00:24:21,050
And we had maps
with flags on it.

558
00:24:21,050 --> 00:24:22,288
We had National Geographic.

559
00:24:22,288 --> 00:24:23,830
We subscribed to
National Geographic,

560
00:24:23,830 --> 00:24:25,830
and we had all the maps.

561
00:24:25,830 --> 00:24:28,810
And my parents had
every map mounted on--

562

00:24:28,810 --> 00:24:32,010

not them, but had them
mounted on canvas.

563

00:24:32,010 --> 00:24:36,270

And our room was lined with
world maps all over the rooms.

564

00:24:36,270 --> 00:24:40,220

And my brother and I put flags
on his where the front was,

565

00:24:40,220 --> 00:24:42,820

and where they were marching
through, and so forth.

566

00:24:42,820 --> 00:24:45,360

So this was very much--

567

00:24:45,360 --> 00:24:48,090

we knew exactly
what was going on.

568

00:24:48,090 --> 00:24:51,660

And we were very much
afraid the Germans will win.

569

00:24:51,660 --> 00:24:55,050

This was until 1941, until
they attacked Russia.

570

00:24:55,050 --> 00:24:57,810

We were all convinced that
Germany will win the war.

571

00:24:57,810 --> 00:25:01,600

There was no question in
our mind, none, N-O-N-E,

572

00:25:01,600 --> 00:25:03,750

that Germany will win the war.

573

00:25:03,750 --> 00:25:05,128
Was that a frightening thought?

574
00:25:05,128 --> 00:25:05,670
Very much so.

575
00:25:05,670 --> 00:25:06,212
Very much so.

576
00:25:06,212 --> 00:25:07,410
Why?

577
00:25:07,410 --> 00:25:09,720
Because we knew that,
once Germany wins the war,

578
00:25:09,720 --> 00:25:11,095
they're going to
come to Hungary.

579
00:25:11,095 --> 00:25:12,950
And they're going to
Germanify everybody.

580
00:25:12,950 --> 00:25:14,850
And nobody wanted to be German.

581
00:25:14,850 --> 00:25:18,660
There was no desire
to become German.

582
00:25:18,660 --> 00:25:21,240
And we knew that
the Germans will

583
00:25:21,240 --> 00:25:23,600
exploit Hungary like
they exploited Poland

584
00:25:23,600 --> 00:25:25,140
and the rest of the world.

585

00:25:25,140 --> 00:25:31,530
What was your parents'
feelings about Admiral Horthy?

586
00:25:31,530 --> 00:25:33,780
Admiral Horthy was
a strange person.

587
00:25:33,780 --> 00:25:37,290
And I have no
recollection that they

588
00:25:37,290 --> 00:25:39,750
were either for or against him.

589
00:25:39,750 --> 00:25:43,160
It was a fact, a fact of life.

590
00:25:43,160 --> 00:25:45,050
Horthy was a very
strange person.

591
00:25:45,050 --> 00:25:46,890
I don't know if you
know much about him,

592
00:25:46,890 --> 00:25:50,550
but a contradictory person.

593
00:25:50,550 --> 00:25:54,180
I have to backtrack,
if I may, to 1919.

594
00:25:54,180 --> 00:25:57,510
Hungary was the first
country in the world that

595
00:25:57,510 --> 00:26:03,460
became a Soviet communist
country, before Russia,

596
00:26:03,460 --> 00:26:06,015
because Russia was still in

a Civil War at that time.

597
00:26:06,015 --> 00:26:07,390
But Hungary was--
well, let's say

598
00:26:07,390 --> 00:26:10,400
Russia was earlier a little
bit, because 1917 revolution,

599
00:26:10,400 --> 00:26:11,380
and '18, and so forth.

600
00:26:11,380 --> 00:26:12,430
But this is 1919.

601
00:26:12,430 --> 00:26:18,310
Hungary becomes the second
Soviet country in the world.

602
00:26:18,310 --> 00:26:21,700
That was one of the most
traumatic things that

603
00:26:21,700 --> 00:26:26,140
happened in Hungary ever,
outside of Turkish occupation,

604
00:26:26,140 --> 00:26:30,060
which was 300 years before.

605
00:26:30,060 --> 00:26:34,620
It was a time of total chaos.

606
00:26:34,620 --> 00:26:37,480
It was a time of what
they call the Red Terror.

607
00:26:37,480 --> 00:26:39,270
Are we switching?

608
00:26:39,270 --> 00:26:46,530

Red Terror-- it's a time of
absolute and complete fear

609
00:26:46,530 --> 00:26:51,930
on 90% of the Hungarians' part
who were not communist leaning.

610
00:26:51,930 --> 00:26:56,010
Especially the middle class
was afraid, obviously.

611
00:26:56,010 --> 00:26:59,010
And the story goes--

612
00:26:59,010 --> 00:27:02,393
my father was always well
dressed, being conservative.

613
00:27:02,393 --> 00:27:04,060
Most of the time, he
wore a black jacket

614
00:27:04,060 --> 00:27:08,010
with striped colors,
as a typical professor.

615
00:27:08,010 --> 00:27:09,630
And he always had a
white handkerchief

616
00:27:09,630 --> 00:27:12,060
in his upper pocket.

617
00:27:12,060 --> 00:27:14,400
And he was walking down
the street in Budapest

618
00:27:14,400 --> 00:27:17,100
during the communist revolution.

619
00:27:17,100 --> 00:27:18,810
And the Red Guards
came up to him,

620
00:27:18,810 --> 00:27:21,013
tore his handkerchief
out of his pocket,

621
00:27:21,013 --> 00:27:22,180
and slapped him in his face.

622
00:27:22,180 --> 00:27:25,180
You dirty bourgeois.

623
00:27:25,180 --> 00:27:27,140
So that's the kind
of stories we heard.

624
00:27:27,140 --> 00:27:29,270
And they were true stories.

625
00:27:29,270 --> 00:27:32,840
The other was that Szamuelys,
the two famous Szamuelys--

626
00:27:32,840 --> 00:27:34,950
I can spell the name later.

627
00:27:34,950 --> 00:27:37,060
They were the
commissars for safety.

628
00:27:37,060 --> 00:27:41,950
And they had a train,
which was clad in armor.

629
00:27:41,950 --> 00:27:47,410
And they raced through
Hungary, and got people out

630
00:27:47,410 --> 00:27:49,690
of their houses, and shot
them, and killed them.

631
00:27:49,690 --> 00:27:51,640

This is the famous Red Terror.

632
00:27:51,640 --> 00:27:55,440
And Horthy came back
with the White Terror.

633
00:27:55,440 --> 00:27:59,530
The middle class liked the
White Terror very much,

634
00:27:59,530 --> 00:28:01,240
and did not like the Red Terror.

635
00:28:01,240 --> 00:28:03,790
This was a fact of life.

636
00:28:03,790 --> 00:28:05,540
Whether right or wrong,
looking back now--

637
00:28:05,540 --> 00:28:06,980
this is 70 years later--

638
00:28:06,980 --> 00:28:09,530
this is how it was.

639
00:28:09,530 --> 00:28:13,360
The Red Terror was feared much
more than the White Terror.

640
00:28:13,360 --> 00:28:17,700

641
00:28:17,700 --> 00:28:19,390
The other thing,
which was very bad,

642
00:28:19,390 --> 00:28:22,650
and that has a great deal
to do with anti-Semitism--

643
00:28:22,650 --> 00:28:25,830

that virtually everybody in the
Red Terror was Jewish who run

644

00:28:25,830 --> 00:28:29,970

it, whether it was RĂj~koczi,
BĂ©la Kun, the Szamuelys.

645

00:28:29,970 --> 00:28:32,010

And I cannot tell you
other names right now,

646

00:28:32,010 --> 00:28:33,468

because they don't
come back to me.

647

00:28:33,468 --> 00:28:36,240

Every single one of
them were Jewish.

648

00:28:36,240 --> 00:28:38,668

And that had an enormous
anti-Semitic backlash

649

00:28:38,668 --> 00:28:39,960

in Hungary when Horthy came in.

650

00:28:39,960 --> 00:28:42,770

651

00:28:42,770 --> 00:28:45,100

And as you know, BĂ©la Kun
and RĂj~koczi fled to Russia.

652

00:28:45,100 --> 00:28:48,680

And RĂj~koczi came back
in 1947 and took revenge

653

00:28:48,680 --> 00:28:50,860

on the Hungarians again,
which is another story,

654

00:28:50,860 --> 00:28:52,390

which I wasn't there anymore.

655
00:28:52,390 --> 00:28:52,990
But I'm sorry.

656
00:28:52,990 --> 00:28:54,440
I just wanted to interrupt you.

657
00:28:54,440 --> 00:28:59,950
That's a very important
part of the anti-Semitic--

658
00:28:59,950 --> 00:29:04,930
not violent, but nasty
Anti-Semitic in Hungary.

659
00:29:04,930 --> 00:29:10,580
It had a great deal to do with
the 1919 Soviet Revolution.

660
00:29:10,580 --> 00:29:13,430
When you were a
young boy, and you

661
00:29:13,430 --> 00:29:15,485
heard anti-Semitic
comments, did you respond?

662
00:29:15,485 --> 00:29:18,050

663
00:29:18,050 --> 00:29:22,600
Not usually, because it
was not wise to do so.

664
00:29:22,600 --> 00:29:23,600
What were you afraid of?

665
00:29:23,600 --> 00:29:25,010
Well, they're beaten up.

666
00:29:25,010 --> 00:29:27,230
People on the street--

let's say, a gang of youth

667

00:29:27,230 --> 00:29:30,650

come run and start yelling,
you're a dirty Jew.

668

00:29:30,650 --> 00:29:32,887

You're not going
to say, shut up,

669

00:29:32,887 --> 00:29:34,970

because they're going to
beat the hell out of you.

670

00:29:34,970 --> 00:29:37,430

So I've been called
many times Jewish.

671

00:29:37,430 --> 00:29:40,210

My appearance in
Hungary is Jewish.

672

00:29:40,210 --> 00:29:42,040

I had black, curly hair.

673

00:29:42,040 --> 00:29:44,030

I had a very large nose.

674

00:29:44,030 --> 00:29:47,510

And I have been very often
accosted in the street

675

00:29:47,510 --> 00:29:48,980

and told, you dirty Jew.

676

00:29:48,980 --> 00:29:50,270

And you keep your mouth shut.

677

00:29:50,270 --> 00:29:52,400

You don't say anything.

678

00:29:52,400 --> 00:29:54,000

It's wiser not to say it.

679

00:29:54,000 --> 00:29:55,117

I'm sorry to say that.

680

00:29:55,117 --> 00:29:57,450

Whether you call it cowardice
or not, it doesn't matter.

681

00:29:57,450 --> 00:29:58,697

It's survival.

682

00:29:58,697 --> 00:30:00,780

How did you feel when you
were called a dirty Jew?

683

00:30:00,780 --> 00:30:02,660

Not very well.

684

00:30:02,660 --> 00:30:04,710

Not very well, I must tell you.

685

00:30:04,710 --> 00:30:07,580

But I knew exactly what they
meant, because I had friends.

686

00:30:07,580 --> 00:30:09,028

And we talked about.

687

00:30:09,028 --> 00:30:11,070

You did talk about this
with your Jewish friends.

688

00:30:11,070 --> 00:30:11,190

Oh, of course.

689

00:30:11,190 --> 00:30:13,350

And what were some of the
things that they said?

690

00:30:13,350 --> 00:30:18,990

Oh, it's a little bit

like, it can't happen here.

691
00:30:18,990 --> 00:30:20,580
We are not like the Germans.

692
00:30:20,580 --> 00:30:21,750
We are Hungarians.

693
00:30:21,750 --> 00:30:23,730
We all go with Hungarians.

694
00:30:23,730 --> 00:30:26,952
They were as good
Hungarians as anybody else.

695
00:30:26,952 --> 00:30:29,410
For hundreds of years, they
lived in Hungary, most of them.

696
00:30:29,410 --> 00:30:33,240
And so they just took
it in stride, sort of.

697
00:30:33,240 --> 00:30:35,010
They're just gangsters.

698
00:30:35,010 --> 00:30:37,500
Forget about it.

699
00:30:37,500 --> 00:30:40,500
That was basically the attitude,
at least from my recollection.

700
00:30:40,500 --> 00:30:43,300
Are there any other--

701
00:30:43,300 --> 00:30:52,120
[AUDIO OUT]

702
00:30:52,120 --> 00:30:57,640
This is tape one, side B in
the interview of Tibor Boros.

703
00:30:57,640 --> 00:30:59,050
And you were talking--

704
00:30:59,050 --> 00:30:59,580
Borsos.

705
00:30:59,580 --> 00:31:01,720
Borsos.

706
00:31:01,720 --> 00:31:07,360
And you were talking about
the anti-Semitic incidents

707
00:31:07,360 --> 00:31:08,620
in the late '30s.

708
00:31:08,620 --> 00:31:09,910
I was going to ask you--

709
00:31:09,910 --> 00:31:11,030
More early '40s.

710
00:31:11,030 --> 00:31:11,530
OK.

711
00:31:11,530 --> 00:31:13,780
I was going to ask you, any
more other specific ones

712
00:31:13,780 --> 00:31:15,160
that you could describe to us?

713
00:31:15,160 --> 00:31:18,410

714
00:31:18,410 --> 00:31:21,840
We lived in a upper
middle-class neighborhood,

715
00:31:21,840 --> 00:31:23,780

a mixed neighborhood, obviously.

716

00:31:23,780 --> 00:31:26,910

And there were very few
of any incidents there.

717

00:31:26,910 --> 00:31:30,230

However, we knew that the
more poor Jewish neighborhoods

718

00:31:30,230 --> 00:31:34,400

suffered a great deal
more, especially those who

719

00:31:34,400 --> 00:31:38,240

maintained the Eastern
European Jewish garb--

720

00:31:38,240 --> 00:31:42,680

the long black caftans,
the payots, the shtreimels.

721

00:31:42,680 --> 00:31:48,645

They were much more subjected
to attacks of hate or abuse,

722

00:31:48,645 --> 00:31:50,270

because they're
obviously identifiable.

723

00:31:50,270 --> 00:31:51,562

They didn't need a yellow star.

724

00:31:51,562 --> 00:31:53,310

You knew they were Jewish.

725

00:31:53,310 --> 00:31:55,040

There's no question about it.

726

00:31:55,040 --> 00:31:58,940

Moreover-- and this is,
again, a digression--

727

00:31:58,940 --> 00:32:02,900

even among the upper
middle class of Jews,

728

00:32:02,900 --> 00:32:08,060

there was a fair amount of self
anti-Semitism present in which

729

00:32:08,060 --> 00:32:10,940

they did not like to see
the East European Jews,

730

00:32:10,940 --> 00:32:13,740

because they were uneducated.

731

00:32:13,740 --> 00:32:16,400

They were not nice.

732

00:32:16,400 --> 00:32:19,530

They were loud.

733

00:32:19,530 --> 00:32:22,570

They're looked upon as
somebody who was hurting them,

734

00:32:22,570 --> 00:32:26,240

much the same in
Germany, as you know.

735

00:32:26,240 --> 00:32:28,600

And since Hungary had
a very large population

736

00:32:28,600 --> 00:32:32,290

of intellectual Jews, like in
Germany, an enormous number--

737

00:32:32,290 --> 00:32:38,230

it was doctors, lawyers,
writers, actors, conductors,

738

00:32:38,230 --> 00:32:40,550

you name it.

739
00:32:40,550 --> 00:32:42,740
There was a very
large middle class.

740
00:32:42,740 --> 00:32:46,390
They were not happy
about the appearance

741
00:32:46,390 --> 00:32:51,190
of the lower classes, especially
the more orthodox type lower

742
00:32:51,190 --> 00:32:51,730
classes.

743
00:32:51,730 --> 00:32:53,740
This was a problem.

744
00:32:53,740 --> 00:32:58,150
When you were in
school, did the teachers

745
00:32:58,150 --> 00:33:00,860
treat the Jewish
students any differently?

746
00:33:00,860 --> 00:33:02,290
This is a very funny question.

747
00:33:02,290 --> 00:33:05,310
I went first for three years
to a Catholic high school.

748
00:33:05,310 --> 00:33:07,010
We start with wait a minute.

749
00:33:07,010 --> 00:33:09,460
You won't believe what
I'm going to tell you.

750

00:33:09,460 --> 00:33:11,590
The first three
years, from 10 to 13,

751
00:33:11,590 --> 00:33:13,000
are at a Catholic high school.

752
00:33:13,000 --> 00:33:14,500
There were Jewish
students that were

753
00:33:14,500 --> 00:33:16,300
treated better than we were.

754
00:33:16,300 --> 00:33:17,925
How is it that the
Jewish students were

755
00:33:17,925 --> 00:33:19,092
in the Catholic high school?

756
00:33:19,092 --> 00:33:21,850
Oh, because it was
a good high school.

757
00:33:21,850 --> 00:33:25,070
And at least 10% to
15% of the student body

758
00:33:25,070 --> 00:33:28,510
was Jewish in that
Catholic high school.

759
00:33:28,510 --> 00:33:30,400
As a matter of fact,
I have a colleague

760
00:33:30,400 --> 00:33:32,650
who lives in Indiana who was
in the same school I was,

761
00:33:32,650 --> 00:33:34,750
in the same class.

762
00:33:34,750 --> 00:33:35,983
And he looked me up.

763
00:33:35,983 --> 00:33:37,150
And we talked to each other.

764
00:33:37,150 --> 00:33:40,570
I have a picture of me and
him in the same class, which

765
00:33:40,570 --> 00:33:42,730
is an interesting sight, again.

766
00:33:42,730 --> 00:33:44,860
I was kicked out of the
school, ultimately, because

767
00:33:44,860 --> 00:33:47,820
of my anti-Catholic sentiments.

768
00:33:47,820 --> 00:33:50,670
Now, in Hungary, you don't
kick out a professor's son.

769
00:33:50,670 --> 00:33:53,460
You're asked to leave.

770
00:33:53,460 --> 00:33:57,030
And I was asked to leave
because of my behavior

771
00:33:57,030 --> 00:33:58,980
against the Catholic Church.

772
00:33:58,980 --> 00:34:02,280
How did you express
this publicly?

773
00:34:02,280 --> 00:34:03,400
Nastily.

774
00:34:03,400 --> 00:34:03,900
I called--

775
00:34:03,900 --> 00:34:05,430
Can you give us an example?

776
00:34:05,430 --> 00:34:07,920
Well, I called them
such things like,

777
00:34:07,920 --> 00:34:13,010
dirty priests who are beating
up children all the time.

778
00:34:13,010 --> 00:34:14,800
You are not Christians,
because Christians

779
00:34:14,800 --> 00:34:16,650
are supposed to love people,
and you hate everybody,

780
00:34:16,650 --> 00:34:17,630
and that kind of thing.

781
00:34:17,630 --> 00:34:19,650
So there was nothing
but terrible trouble.

782
00:34:19,650 --> 00:34:22,575
I was beaten up many times
by the priests and the--

783
00:34:22,575 --> 00:34:24,460
you know how they did it?

784
00:34:24,460 --> 00:34:28,929
They'd take your finger,
and take a ruler.

785
00:34:28,929 --> 00:34:31,260
And they beat your

fingers like this,

786
00:34:31,260 --> 00:34:34,659
until you're practically bloody.

787
00:34:34,659 --> 00:34:38,409
And so you have no idea.

788
00:34:38,409 --> 00:34:42,675
I can't express my disdain,
even today after so many years,

789
00:34:42,675 --> 00:34:46,060
of the revulsion I had
against the behavior

790
00:34:46,060 --> 00:34:48,949
of the Catholic Church,
the Christians in Hungary.

791
00:34:48,949 --> 00:34:50,949
What was their treatment
of the Jewish students?

792
00:34:50,949 --> 00:34:52,560
Better than us.

793
00:34:52,560 --> 00:34:55,570
Better me, for certain,
partly because of course

794
00:34:55,570 --> 00:34:58,258
they did not dare
to buck the system,

795
00:34:58,258 --> 00:35:00,300
because their parents sent
them there, of course.

796
00:35:00,300 --> 00:35:02,883
And they were told to keep your
mouth shut proudly, I suppose,

797

00:35:02,883 --> 00:35:04,570
and behave properly.

798

00:35:04,570 --> 00:35:06,950
And so they were
treated much better.

799

00:35:06,950 --> 00:35:09,610
Also, they didn't have to
go to religious services.

800

00:35:09,610 --> 00:35:12,430
They were exempted from going
to the religious education.

801

00:35:12,430 --> 00:35:14,830
The rabbi came.

802

00:35:14,830 --> 00:35:17,050
In Hungary, all religions
were treated equally,

803

00:35:17,050 --> 00:35:19,090
in spite of the 1930s laws.

804

00:35:19,090 --> 00:35:22,840
In the upper chamber of
Hungary, the chief rabbi

805

00:35:22,840 --> 00:35:26,170
was ex officio in
the upper chamber.

806

00:35:26,170 --> 00:35:27,460
So was the Catholic primate.

807

00:35:27,460 --> 00:35:30,310
So was the head of the Lutheran
Church and the Presbyterian

808

00:35:30,310 --> 00:35:30,850
Church.

809
00:35:30,850 --> 00:35:36,990
The chief rabbi was part of
the Hungarian government.

810
00:35:36,990 --> 00:35:39,540
Every priest in
Hungary, or rabbi,

811
00:35:39,540 --> 00:35:42,180
got a pay from the
state, because we

812
00:35:42,180 --> 00:35:47,040
had to pay taxes to the state,
because local church tax.

813
00:35:47,040 --> 00:35:51,842
And pro-rata, if 6% Jew, 6%
of the money goes to the Jews.

814
00:35:51,842 --> 00:35:52,800
That's what I'm saying.

815
00:35:52,800 --> 00:35:53,758
It's a strange country.

816
00:35:53,758 --> 00:35:55,140
Here are the anti-Semitic laws.

817
00:35:55,140 --> 00:35:59,890
At the same time, the state
supports the synagogues.

818
00:35:59,890 --> 00:36:03,310
This is only in Hungary.

819
00:36:03,310 --> 00:36:05,010
What was your
parents' feeling when

820
00:36:05,010 --> 00:36:06,660

you had to leave school at 13?

821

00:36:06,660 --> 00:36:08,220

My father was OK.

822

00:36:08,220 --> 00:36:08,760

I'm sorry.

823

00:36:08,760 --> 00:36:09,630

My mother was OK.

824

00:36:09,630 --> 00:36:12,960

My father, we had lots of
fights about it, enormous amount

825

00:36:12,960 --> 00:36:18,980

of fights, because he wanted to
be a nice boy, proper behavior.

826

00:36:18,980 --> 00:36:21,090

But my mother understood it.

827

00:36:21,090 --> 00:36:24,070

And then I went a
non-Catholic school,

828

00:36:24,070 --> 00:36:28,290

to a state school,
which was paradise.

829

00:36:28,290 --> 00:36:30,432

And at that time, your
father's colleagues--

830

00:36:30,432 --> 00:36:32,390

were many of them Jewish
at the medical school?

831

00:36:32,390 --> 00:36:33,330

As I said before, no.

832

00:36:33,330 --> 00:36:35,070

There were very few Jews.

833

00:36:35,070 --> 00:36:37,632

Because of numerus clausus,
there were very few Jews.

834

00:36:37,632 --> 00:36:38,340

Even in Debrecen.

835

00:36:38,340 --> 00:36:40,815

Even at Debrecen.

836

00:36:40,815 --> 00:36:41,315

OK.

837

00:36:41,315 --> 00:36:44,890

838

00:36:44,890 --> 00:36:47,170

Hungary declared war
on the United States

839

00:36:47,170 --> 00:36:48,790

in December, 1941.

840

00:36:48,790 --> 00:36:51,080

That's correct.

841

00:36:51,080 --> 00:36:52,365

The mosquito to the elephant.

842

00:36:52,365 --> 00:36:56,310

843

00:36:56,310 --> 00:36:59,760

What was your reaction or
your family's reaction?

844

00:36:59,760 --> 00:37:01,320

In our household,
there was always

845
00:37:01,320 --> 00:37:05,250
an American flag on display.

846
00:37:05,250 --> 00:37:05,940
How is that?

847
00:37:05,940 --> 00:37:07,510
Because my father
was an American.

848
00:37:07,510 --> 00:37:08,760
He was a very poor American.

849
00:37:08,760 --> 00:37:10,170
And he loved America.

850
00:37:10,170 --> 00:37:12,480
And he had lots of friends
that corresponded with him.

851
00:37:12,480 --> 00:37:13,980
The National
Geographic comes to us.

852
00:37:13,980 --> 00:37:16,780
Time magazine came
to us all the time.

853
00:37:16,780 --> 00:37:20,890
The Time magazine was our
major source of information.

854
00:37:20,890 --> 00:37:22,470
So were you fluent in English?

855
00:37:22,470 --> 00:37:24,630
No, my father was.

856
00:37:24,630 --> 00:37:27,510
And he translated this,
all this information.

857

00:37:27,510 --> 00:37:29,130

Time magazine came.

858

00:37:29,130 --> 00:37:32,720

By the time the war broke
out, of course, it stopped.

859

00:37:32,720 --> 00:37:35,250

But even before that, there
were blacked out areas.

860

00:37:35,250 --> 00:37:38,070

The censors blacked out certain
areas in the Time magazine.

861

00:37:38,070 --> 00:37:40,470

I remember so
distinctly the little

862

00:37:40,470 --> 00:37:44,100

black squares, like a funeral
thing in there, censored,

863

00:37:44,100 --> 00:37:45,630

blacked out things.

864

00:37:45,630 --> 00:37:48,630

You had mentioned previously
that your father had spent,

865

00:37:48,630 --> 00:37:50,730

I think, a year in
the United States.

866

00:37:50,730 --> 00:37:51,890

Under what auspices?

867

00:37:51,890 --> 00:37:54,050

He was a Rockefeller fellow.

868

00:37:54,050 --> 00:37:58,315

The Rockefeller Foundation

supported scientists to come

869
00:37:58,315 --> 00:38:00,570
to-- even today they do this--

870
00:38:00,570 --> 00:38:07,030
to come to America to study, and
work, and exchange information.

871
00:38:07,030 --> 00:38:10,410
So he was at Rochester
University in Rochester, New

872
00:38:10,410 --> 00:38:10,947
York.

873
00:38:10,947 --> 00:38:12,780
But he came by himself,
not with the family.

874
00:38:12,780 --> 00:38:14,160
That's correct.

875
00:38:14,160 --> 00:38:16,860
The money was not sufficient to
support the family, the three

876
00:38:16,860 --> 00:38:18,350
children and wife over there--

877
00:38:18,350 --> 00:38:21,150
over here, at that
time, over there.

878
00:38:21,150 --> 00:38:22,780
What about the Arrow Cross?

879
00:38:22,780 --> 00:38:23,710
Was that--

880
00:38:23,710 --> 00:38:24,210
Yes.

881
00:38:24,210 --> 00:38:26,160
--a very obvious
presence in your life?

882
00:38:26,160 --> 00:38:31,920
Not until 1943, '44.

883
00:38:31,920 --> 00:38:33,120
Not until then, no.

884
00:38:33,120 --> 00:38:34,030
The answer is, no.

885
00:38:34,030 --> 00:38:36,250
As a matter of fact, Horthy
didn't like them at all.

886
00:38:36,250 --> 00:38:38,700
And many Arrow Cross
people were in jail,

887
00:38:38,700 --> 00:38:40,650
because Horthy was afraid
of the Arrow Cross,

888
00:38:40,650 --> 00:38:43,950
that they're going to depose
him, which they did ultimately.

889
00:38:43,950 --> 00:38:47,940
So the Arrow Cross was no power.

890
00:38:47,940 --> 00:38:50,760
We're now up to 1942.

891
00:38:50,760 --> 00:38:53,250
And life went on in your school.

892
00:38:53,250 --> 00:38:57,970
And was there any
further restrictions

893
00:38:57,970 --> 00:38:59,370
that you can speak about?

894
00:38:59,370 --> 00:39:00,330
None whatsoever.

895
00:39:00,330 --> 00:39:02,980
As a matter of fact, because
of an agricultural country,

896
00:39:02,980 --> 00:39:04,070
the food was plentiful.

897
00:39:04,070 --> 00:39:06,600
And we always laugh
about it that we complain

898
00:39:06,600 --> 00:39:09,620
that all we can eat is
nothing but beefsteak,

899
00:39:09,620 --> 00:39:14,520
and sour cream,
and wonderful food.

900
00:39:14,520 --> 00:39:17,130
We had no problem
whatsoever with food.

901
00:39:17,130 --> 00:39:21,270
Sugar was rationed,
funny enough,

902
00:39:21,270 --> 00:39:23,070
because when they
rationed sugar,

903
00:39:23,070 --> 00:39:25,890
the sugar consumption went
up because the poor people

904

00:39:25,890 --> 00:39:27,120
couldn't afford it.

905
00:39:27,120 --> 00:39:29,240
And they sold the
coupons to rich people.

906
00:39:29,240 --> 00:39:31,060
And so they used more
sugar than before,

907
00:39:31,060 --> 00:39:34,410
which is another typical
Hungarian idiocy.

908
00:39:34,410 --> 00:39:35,300
It's a crazy country.

909
00:39:35,300 --> 00:39:36,780
I'm telling you.

910
00:39:36,780 --> 00:39:39,760
What kind of activities did
you do with your Jewish friends

911
00:39:39,760 --> 00:39:40,890
around 1942?

912
00:39:40,890 --> 00:39:45,930
Ice skating on the pond,
swimming in a pool, summer--

913
00:39:45,930 --> 00:39:51,020
and otherwise, just get together
and play games, what kids did.

914
00:39:51,020 --> 00:39:57,660
We played with cards, read
books, looked at girls.

915
00:39:57,660 --> 00:39:59,690
Did you socialize
with any Jewish girls?

916
00:39:59,690 --> 00:40:00,640
Yes.

917
00:40:00,640 --> 00:40:02,010
Yes.

918
00:40:02,010 --> 00:40:03,600
Yes.

919
00:40:03,600 --> 00:40:06,683
I had, what, I would say
five or six good friends.

920
00:40:06,683 --> 00:40:08,850
Out of those, two were
Jewish, or three were Jewish.

921
00:40:08,850 --> 00:40:10,950
So half or half, I would say.

922
00:40:10,950 --> 00:40:12,240
I didn't have many friends.

923
00:40:12,240 --> 00:40:15,210
But those were
very good friends.

924
00:40:15,210 --> 00:40:19,740
The best Jewish friends we
had was the lawyer's son.

925
00:40:19,740 --> 00:40:21,000
Pisti was my age.

926
00:40:21,000 --> 00:40:22,380
John was my brother's age.

927
00:40:22,380 --> 00:40:29,520
Now, the Hungarian army, when
it became involved with Russia

928
00:40:29,520 --> 00:40:37,100
in 1941, drafted a lot of
people, including the Jews.

929
00:40:37,100 --> 00:40:42,380
They wore Hungarian
uniforms with a yellow band.

930
00:40:42,380 --> 00:40:45,050
And they were work battalions.

931
00:40:45,050 --> 00:40:46,760
They were sent to the front.

932
00:40:46,760 --> 00:40:48,740
And their job was
to dig the trenches,

933
00:40:48,740 --> 00:40:53,870
and tend the kitchens,
and scut work.

934
00:40:53,870 --> 00:40:56,175
And they died like flies,
like all the Hungarians.

935
00:40:56,175 --> 00:40:57,800
The estimates are,
at the present time,

936
00:40:57,800 --> 00:41:00,920
that about half the Hungarians
and about 25,000 Jews

937
00:41:00,920 --> 00:41:04,130
died on the Russian
front for nothing,

938
00:41:04,130 --> 00:41:06,950
just as a fodder for Hitler.

939
00:41:06,950 --> 00:41:09,410

So the Jews were caught in
it, but not as fighting units,

940
00:41:09,410 --> 00:41:10,670
as service units.

941
00:41:10,670 --> 00:41:13,190

942
00:41:13,190 --> 00:41:15,120
The Jews were the
Blacks of the army,

943
00:41:15,120 --> 00:41:17,142
like the American Blacks
who did nothing, mostly

944
00:41:17,142 --> 00:41:18,350
service in the American army.

945
00:41:18,350 --> 00:41:21,770
The same way, the Hungarian
Jews did the scut work

946
00:41:21,770 --> 00:41:25,080
for the Hungarian non-Jews.

947
00:41:25,080 --> 00:41:27,560
Were these serious
topics ones that you

948
00:41:27,560 --> 00:41:31,170
discussed with your brother?

949
00:41:31,170 --> 00:41:32,720
I have to ask him.

950
00:41:32,720 --> 00:41:35,090
I don't remember.

951
00:41:35,090 --> 00:41:35,720
We had friends.

952
00:41:35,720 --> 00:41:36,803
That's all I can tell you.

953
00:41:36,803 --> 00:41:38,030
But I don't remember.

954
00:41:38,030 --> 00:41:40,342
Now, John was drafted,
because he was

955
00:41:40,342 --> 00:41:41,550
three years older than I was.

956
00:41:41,550 --> 00:41:44,210
So by the time I
was 15, he was 18.

957
00:41:44,210 --> 00:41:48,080
So he was sent to
the Russian front.

958
00:41:48,080 --> 00:41:51,040
He came back, but ultimately
died at Auschwitz.

959
00:41:51,040 --> 00:41:53,800

960
00:41:53,800 --> 00:41:56,580
And so that that's a fact.

961
00:41:56,580 --> 00:42:02,505
We know that all my Jewish
friends except one were killed.

962
00:42:02,505 --> 00:42:03,380
They never came back.

963
00:42:03,380 --> 00:42:07,380

964
00:42:07,380 --> 00:42:10,190
All right, 1942 is over.

965
00:42:10,190 --> 00:42:11,533
1943, anything--

966
00:42:11,533 --> 00:42:12,200
Nothing changed.

967
00:42:12,200 --> 00:42:12,820
--changing--

968
00:42:12,820 --> 00:42:13,320
Nothing was.

969
00:42:13,320 --> 00:42:13,710
--then?

970
00:42:13,710 --> 00:42:13,970
Nothing.

971
00:42:13,970 --> 00:42:14,470
OK.

972
00:42:14,470 --> 00:42:17,350
Now when did you notice
the next big change?

973
00:42:17,350 --> 00:42:19,710
Well, the big change
occurred, of course,

974
00:42:19,710 --> 00:42:23,375
when the Nazis occupied
Hungary in March, 1944.

975
00:42:23,375 --> 00:42:24,500
I think it's 21st of March.

976
00:42:24,500 --> 00:42:25,340
March 19.

977
00:42:25,340 --> 00:42:26,220
19th.

978
00:42:26,220 --> 00:42:27,820
But they came 21st of December.

979
00:42:27,820 --> 00:42:30,650
It took some time to
go across the country.

980
00:42:30,650 --> 00:42:32,430
Started on the 19th,
the occupation.

981
00:42:32,430 --> 00:42:34,340
And that's been a
big change occurs.

982
00:42:34,340 --> 00:42:36,620
What is your first
impression of that?

983
00:42:36,620 --> 00:42:39,230
We burned the American flag.

984
00:42:39,230 --> 00:42:41,995
That's the first thing we did.

985
00:42:41,995 --> 00:42:43,870
We were afraid that they
come into the house,

986
00:42:43,870 --> 00:42:46,920
they see the American flag, and
that's the end of the story.

987
00:42:46,920 --> 00:42:49,550
So the first thing the family
did-- the American flag went.

988
00:42:49,550 --> 00:42:51,062

Whose idea was that?

989
00:42:51,062 --> 00:42:51,770
I don't remember.

990
00:42:51,770 --> 00:42:53,060
My father probably,
or my mother.

991
00:42:53,060 --> 00:42:53,768
I can't tell you.

992
00:42:53,768 --> 00:42:56,840
But I remember
distinctly what happened.

993
00:42:56,840 --> 00:43:00,200
It was burned immediately.

994
00:43:00,200 --> 00:43:03,890
It was not wise to have
an American flag in the--

995
00:43:03,890 --> 00:43:07,470
see, during the war, although
we were at war with America,

996
00:43:07,470 --> 00:43:08,970
the flag was-- there
was no problem.

997
00:43:08,970 --> 00:43:10,190
Nobody-- you understood.

998
00:43:10,190 --> 00:43:11,960
Hungary is Hungary.

999
00:43:11,960 --> 00:43:14,217
But when the Germans come,
you don't play games.

1000
00:43:14,217 --> 00:43:15,800

You don't play games
with the Germans.

1001
00:43:15,800 --> 00:43:17,070
How did you know that?

1002
00:43:17,070 --> 00:43:18,585
Well, we knew it from the--

1003
00:43:18,585 --> 00:43:20,210
we knew there were
concentration camps.

1004
00:43:20,210 --> 00:43:22,370
We knew that the Nazis
were not the nicest people.

1005
00:43:22,370 --> 00:43:23,240
We knew all of this.

1006
00:43:23,240 --> 00:43:24,530
It was well known.

1007
00:43:24,530 --> 00:43:27,150
How did you know they
were concentration camps?

1008
00:43:27,150 --> 00:43:28,150
I have no idea.

1009
00:43:28,150 --> 00:43:29,150
But this was also known.

1010
00:43:29,150 --> 00:43:30,483
This was known all over Hungary.

1011
00:43:30,483 --> 00:43:32,310
There was concentration camps.

1012
00:43:32,310 --> 00:43:33,770
There was no question about it.

1013

00:43:33,770 --> 00:43:35,190

What we knew, for example--

1014

00:43:35,190 --> 00:43:37,040

that the Germans
demanded from Hungary,

1015

00:43:37,040 --> 00:43:39,710

even before they occupied, that
the Jews should be handed over

1016

00:43:39,710 --> 00:43:41,300

to Germany.

1017

00:43:41,300 --> 00:43:43,370

Not a single Jew,
as far as I know,

1018

00:43:43,370 --> 00:43:47,120

was ever handed over to Germany
until the occupation occurred.

1019

00:43:47,120 --> 00:43:50,120

Horthy refused to
deliver the Jews.

1020

00:43:50,120 --> 00:43:53,460

They are my Jews, he said.

1021

00:43:53,460 --> 00:43:54,510

That's my recollection.

1022

00:43:54,510 --> 00:43:55,385

I think it's correct.

1023

00:43:55,385 --> 00:43:58,640

1024

00:43:58,640 --> 00:44:00,590

One can check this
more as a fact.

1025

00:44:00,590 --> 00:44:04,460

But as far as I know, not
a single Hungarian Jew

1026

00:44:04,460 --> 00:44:09,590

for Hungary was ever handed over
to the Germans during the 1940s

1027

00:44:09,590 --> 00:44:11,840

until the occupation occurred.

1028

00:44:11,840 --> 00:44:13,460

Was that because of
economic reasons--

1029

00:44:13,460 --> 00:44:13,960

No.

1030

00:44:13,960 --> 00:44:17,170

--that Horthy wanted them
in careers and professions?

1031

00:44:17,170 --> 00:44:17,670

No.

1032

00:44:17,670 --> 00:44:19,430

It was very much like Franco.

1033

00:44:19,430 --> 00:44:21,650

As you know, Franco never
delivered back a single Jew

1034

00:44:21,650 --> 00:44:23,290

back to Germany either.

1035

00:44:23,290 --> 00:44:24,100

It's not the law.

1036

00:44:24,100 --> 00:44:26,420

It's just that it was not done.

1037

00:44:26,420 --> 00:44:28,880

A decent person doesn't
kill somebody like this.

1038

00:44:28,880 --> 00:44:34,922

It's just not done, even if you
don't like them, even if it's--

1039

00:44:34,922 --> 00:44:37,070

like the Italians, the same way.

1040

00:44:37,070 --> 00:44:41,060

Even if you don't
like, it's not done.

1041

00:44:41,060 --> 00:44:43,840

A certain noblesse
oblige is involved here.

1042

00:44:43,840 --> 00:44:47,270

It may sound strange to you,
but it's certainly that.

1043

00:44:47,270 --> 00:44:53,230

Even if one talked about
these Eastern European Jews

1044

00:44:53,230 --> 00:44:55,080

as disdainful-- you
know, those Jews--

1045

00:44:55,080 --> 00:44:57,598

this does not mean that
you'd hate all the Jews.

1046

00:44:57,598 --> 00:44:59,390

It did not mean that
you were anti-Semitic.

1047

00:44:59,390 --> 00:45:01,250

In many ways, it's just
that it's not done.

1048

00:45:01,250 --> 00:45:02,645
You don't do such things.

1049
00:45:02,645 --> 00:45:03,770
You don't spit on a person.

1050
00:45:03,770 --> 00:45:04,410
You don't.

1051
00:45:04,410 --> 00:45:06,280
It's a human being.

1052
00:45:06,280 --> 00:45:10,250
Now, that doesn't apply to
the Arrow Cross leaders.

1053
00:45:10,250 --> 00:45:11,000
That's different.

1054
00:45:11,000 --> 00:45:13,430
I'm talking about the
average middle class

1055
00:45:13,430 --> 00:45:16,878
Hungary who was not a party
member of some Nazi party

1056
00:45:16,878 --> 00:45:17,420
or something.

1057
00:45:17,420 --> 00:45:19,280
It's just not done.

1058
00:45:19,280 --> 00:45:22,310
What was it like for you to
see members of the Arrow Cross?

1059
00:45:22,310 --> 00:45:23,352
When you would see them--

1060
00:45:23,352 --> 00:45:25,450
I'd never seen

one, not until '44.

1061

00:45:25,450 --> 00:45:32,590

I'd never seen a single Arrow
Cross in my life, not once.

1062

00:45:32,590 --> 00:45:35,430

All right, the Germans
have invaded Hungary.

1063

00:45:35,430 --> 00:45:37,480

And again, you're 17 years old.

1064

00:45:37,480 --> 00:45:39,080

What was your impression--

1065

00:45:39,080 --> 00:45:39,580

Well--

1066

00:45:39,580 --> 00:45:40,580

--in the very beginning?

1067

00:45:40,580 --> 00:45:43,510

The very beginning,
we had no problems.

1068

00:45:43,510 --> 00:45:51,580

The units that occupied
Debrecen were not very visible.

1069

00:45:51,580 --> 00:45:54,200

They were not--

1070

00:45:54,200 --> 00:45:56,500

I don't know how to put it.

1071

00:45:56,500 --> 00:45:58,010

They didn't bother anybody.

1072

00:45:58,010 --> 00:46:01,430

If you didn't resist them,
they didn't bother you.

1073
00:46:01,430 --> 00:46:04,250
Even the Jews were left alone
for a moment, for a short time,

1074
00:46:04,250 --> 00:46:06,280
for a very short time.

1075
00:46:06,280 --> 00:46:08,420
I'm saying, a very short time.

1076
00:46:08,420 --> 00:46:13,340
And long enough-- and this is
a curious story coming up now.

1077
00:46:13,340 --> 00:46:15,980
Our lawyer and our friend
[? Fajnysh ?] came to us

1078
00:46:15,980 --> 00:46:18,200
and said, you know
what's coming.

1079
00:46:18,200 --> 00:46:20,070
And we said, yes, we
know what's coming.

1080
00:46:20,070 --> 00:46:24,770
And so he said, can you save
something from our property?

1081
00:46:24,770 --> 00:46:26,460
And so at night,
we went to where--

1082
00:46:26,460 --> 00:46:29,260
he lived about,
in American terms,

1083
00:46:29,260 --> 00:46:30,800
one and a half
blocks away from us.

1084
00:46:30,800 --> 00:46:33,430

1085
00:46:33,430 --> 00:46:36,120
And at night, we went over
there, and brought over

1086
00:46:36,120 --> 00:46:41,470
carpets, silver,
some jewelry, but not

1087
00:46:41,470 --> 00:46:46,840
that much, all kinds of
stuff into our house, which

1088
00:46:46,840 --> 00:46:49,090
we then later took
over again at night

1089
00:46:49,090 --> 00:46:52,210
to the institute of my
father in the university,

1090
00:46:52,210 --> 00:46:56,510
and hid some of this
stuff at the university.

1091
00:46:56,510 --> 00:47:00,200
My brother and I, my mother
carried at night these things.

1092
00:47:00,200 --> 00:47:02,730

1093
00:47:02,730 --> 00:47:06,580
And the carpets, the
expensive carpets,

1094
00:47:06,580 --> 00:47:09,840
were put behind
the library stacks

1095

00:47:09,840 --> 00:47:13,090
in the library of university,
and slid behind the walls.

1096
00:47:13,090 --> 00:47:15,590
And they were recovered after
the war, because he came back.

1097
00:47:15,590 --> 00:47:16,937
The lawyer came back.

1098
00:47:16,937 --> 00:47:18,270
And we told him where they were.

1099
00:47:18,270 --> 00:47:19,478
And we fished them out again.

1100
00:47:19,478 --> 00:47:22,380
All this stuff was saved.

1101
00:47:22,380 --> 00:47:26,580
Somebody must have seen it,
because my mother was arrested.

1102
00:47:26,580 --> 00:47:29,902
One morning at 6 O'clock--

1103
00:47:29,902 --> 00:47:31,360
you can't say, a
knock on the door,

1104
00:47:31,360 --> 00:47:32,485
because there was no knock.

1105
00:47:32,485 --> 00:47:33,800
It was a bell outside.

1106
00:47:33,800 --> 00:47:35,647
We had a garden with
a fence around it.

1107
00:47:35,647 --> 00:47:37,480

And there's a garden
gate, which was locked.

1108
00:47:37,480 --> 00:47:39,270
So there was-- a bell rings.

1109
00:47:39,270 --> 00:47:40,880
And there were
soldiers out there,

1110
00:47:40,880 --> 00:47:43,920
Hungarian soldiers, not German.

1111
00:47:43,920 --> 00:47:47,390
And they said, is the
lady of the house at home?

1112
00:47:47,390 --> 00:47:49,650
They said, servants, that
she's still sleeping.

1113
00:47:49,650 --> 00:47:52,170
Well, would you
please wake her up?

1114
00:47:52,170 --> 00:47:53,040
And they did.

1115
00:47:53,040 --> 00:47:53,905
And they came in.

1116
00:47:53,905 --> 00:47:55,530
And they said, would
you dress, please?

1117
00:47:55,530 --> 00:47:57,960
Come with us.

1118
00:47:57,960 --> 00:48:00,600
And so we were all scared.

1119
00:48:00,600 --> 00:48:02,850

It's not very nice to
see your mother being,

1120
00:48:02,850 --> 00:48:05,520
not dragged, but taken away.

1121
00:48:05,520 --> 00:48:09,150
And she came back at
about 10 O'clock at night.

1122
00:48:09,150 --> 00:48:10,950
And she told us
that she was accused

1123
00:48:10,950 --> 00:48:13,300
of hiding Jewish property.

1124
00:48:13,300 --> 00:48:15,477
And she said, go
ahead, search my house.

1125
00:48:15,477 --> 00:48:16,810
There was nothing there anymore.

1126
00:48:16,810 --> 00:48:20,040
This was all in the institute.

1127
00:48:20,040 --> 00:48:21,298
And they never came.

1128
00:48:21,298 --> 00:48:23,340
And she kept on saying,
you can come to our house

1129
00:48:23,340 --> 00:48:23,970
if you want to.

1130
00:48:23,970 --> 00:48:24,425
There's no problem.

1131
00:48:24,425 --> 00:48:25,740
You can look

everything you want to.

1132
00:48:25,740 --> 00:48:26,948
There's nothing in the house.

1133
00:48:26,948 --> 00:48:29,467
If you find something,
it's a miracle,

1134
00:48:29,467 --> 00:48:30,800
because we haven't got anything.

1135
00:48:30,800 --> 00:48:32,940
We never helped anybody.

1136
00:48:32,940 --> 00:48:35,240
And she was let go.

1137
00:48:35,240 --> 00:48:36,740
But not the Germans--
the Hungarians

1138
00:48:36,740 --> 00:48:39,570
did it, which was important.

1139
00:48:39,570 --> 00:48:41,430
Had the Germans
done it, it would

1140
00:48:41,430 --> 00:48:44,700
have a very different story.

1141
00:48:44,700 --> 00:48:46,350
In what way?

1142
00:48:46,350 --> 00:48:49,260
I'm quite sure that the
Germans would have either

1143
00:48:49,260 --> 00:48:51,840
taken her further away, or
locked her up overnight,

1144
00:48:51,840 --> 00:48:53,940
and made her very uncomfortable.

1145
00:48:53,940 --> 00:48:56,280
The Hungarian army
still respected her,

1146
00:48:56,280 --> 00:48:58,050
the wife of a professor.

1147
00:48:58,050 --> 00:49:02,680
In Hungary, to be a professor's
wife, it's a very big deal.

1148
00:49:02,680 --> 00:49:03,700
It's not like here.

1149
00:49:03,700 --> 00:49:08,190
It's the upper, upper
class, even not money wise.

1150
00:49:08,190 --> 00:49:12,510
But certainly, intellectuals
are very respected.

1151
00:49:12,510 --> 00:49:15,380
Somebody who's a writer, or
somebody who's an artist--

1152
00:49:15,380 --> 00:49:16,830
it's a very respected thing.

1153
00:49:16,830 --> 00:49:19,440
A professor, chairman
of a department--

1154
00:49:19,440 --> 00:49:21,220
this was a big thing.

1155
00:49:21,220 --> 00:49:23,340
So I think that

the Hungarian army

1156
00:49:23,340 --> 00:49:27,210
at that time-- because the
army came, not any kind

1157
00:49:27,210 --> 00:49:30,480
of police organization.

1158
00:49:30,480 --> 00:49:34,057
Obviously, there was officers
who knew my family, probably.

1159
00:49:34,057 --> 00:49:36,390
And then they said, well, let
her go, for heaven's sake.

1160
00:49:36,390 --> 00:49:38,018
So what can you do?

1161
00:49:38,018 --> 00:49:39,810
Did your mother say
anything special to you

1162
00:49:39,810 --> 00:49:41,312
when she was taken away?

1163
00:49:41,312 --> 00:49:43,020
I didn't know about
it until-- because it

1164
00:49:43,020 --> 00:49:44,310
was 6 O'clock in the morning.

1165
00:49:44,310 --> 00:49:45,870
I was still asleep.

1166
00:49:45,870 --> 00:49:49,080
We knew about it, that she was
taken away, but only after.

1167
00:49:49,080 --> 00:49:52,350

I didn't see her
being taken away.

1168
00:49:52,350 --> 00:49:56,300
But I saw her coming back
when they brought her back.

1169
00:49:56,300 --> 00:49:59,990
She was a tough lady,
very tough lady.

1170
00:49:59,990 --> 00:50:01,800
And I can imagine
what she told them.

1171
00:50:01,800 --> 00:50:05,400

1172
00:50:05,400 --> 00:50:07,800
Anyway, the property
was recovered--

1173
00:50:07,800 --> 00:50:09,100
not everything.

1174
00:50:09,100 --> 00:50:09,943
Some was lost.

1175
00:50:09,943 --> 00:50:11,110
We don't know where and how.

1176
00:50:11,110 --> 00:50:13,780
But a lot of the property was
recovered, and he got it back.

1177
00:50:13,780 --> 00:50:16,950
He was the only one who survived
from the family, the lawyer.

1178
00:50:16,950 --> 00:50:20,350
His wife, his two
children, both were killed.

1179
00:50:20,350 --> 00:50:22,966
And then he died of leukemia.

1180
00:50:22,966 --> 00:50:23,940
It was a tragedy.

1181
00:50:23,940 --> 00:50:27,120

1182
00:50:27,120 --> 00:50:29,580
What was it like for you
to see German soldiers

1183
00:50:29,580 --> 00:50:31,572
in German uniforms
at the age of--

1184
00:50:31,572 --> 00:50:33,030
To me, it didn't
make a difference.

1185
00:50:33,030 --> 00:50:33,738
I was not Jewish.

1186
00:50:33,738 --> 00:50:36,870

1187
00:50:36,870 --> 00:50:37,920
Again, you live.

1188
00:50:37,920 --> 00:50:40,140
You have to live.

1189
00:50:40,140 --> 00:50:45,230
If you're not Jewish, and
you are not resisting them,

1190
00:50:45,230 --> 00:50:48,750
nothing happens to you.

1191
00:50:48,750 --> 00:50:51,205

Life goes on.

1192
00:50:51,205 --> 00:50:52,590
The streetcars are running.

1193
00:50:52,590 --> 00:50:53,520
The schools are open.

1194
00:50:53,520 --> 00:50:54,840
You do what you do.

1195
00:50:54,840 --> 00:50:56,640
You go to the swimming pool.

1196
00:50:56,640 --> 00:50:58,800
Nothing stops.

1197
00:50:58,800 --> 00:51:00,940
But your Jewish friends
were under restrictions.

1198
00:51:00,940 --> 00:51:01,980
No.

1199
00:51:01,980 --> 00:51:04,800
The Jewish friends were
essentially taken away.

1200
00:51:04,800 --> 00:51:08,030
Within a month's
time, they're gone--

1201
00:51:08,030 --> 00:51:08,910
a concentration camp.

1202
00:51:08,910 --> 00:51:11,130
They were all rounded
up and taken away.

1203
00:51:11,130 --> 00:51:13,630
The roundups started on
the countryside in Hungary,

1204
00:51:13,630 --> 00:51:16,440
not in Budapest.

1205
00:51:16,440 --> 00:51:19,020
And very soon,
after they came in--

1206
00:51:19,020 --> 00:51:20,400
I don't know when.

1207
00:51:20,400 --> 00:51:23,160
The months, again-- how can I
remember April, or whatever?

1208
00:51:23,160 --> 00:51:24,840
I can't remember that.

1209
00:51:24,840 --> 00:51:28,440
But very soon thereafter,
they all disappeared.

1210
00:51:28,440 --> 00:51:33,390
And the houses were occupied by
Germans, the officers who used

1211
00:51:33,390 --> 00:51:36,720
it for living, and so forth.

1212
00:51:36,720 --> 00:51:39,670
What is it like to have
your friends taken away?

1213
00:51:39,670 --> 00:51:53,910

1214
00:51:53,910 --> 00:51:56,340
But at this point,
so many other things

1215
00:51:56,340 --> 00:52:02,490
happened, which really

took care of the problem,

1216
00:52:02,490 --> 00:52:05,710
because the Russians
were coming.

1217
00:52:05,710 --> 00:52:09,990
By 1944, around
May or June, they

1218
00:52:09,990 --> 00:52:12,290
broke across the
Carpathian Mountains.

1219
00:52:12,290 --> 00:52:17,790
And they were swooping
down the big Pusta.

1220
00:52:17,790 --> 00:52:20,630
And the choice had to
be made what to do.

1221
00:52:20,630 --> 00:52:24,100
And so we left Debrecen,
the whole family.

1222
00:52:24,100 --> 00:52:27,160
In what month of 1944?

1223
00:52:27,160 --> 00:52:28,748
Again, it's May, June.

1224
00:52:28,748 --> 00:52:29,790
I can't tell you exactly.

1225
00:52:29,790 --> 00:52:31,415
Maybe a little earlier,
a little later.

1226
00:52:31,415 --> 00:52:34,680
I cannot tell you exactly, but
sometime late spring or early

1227

00:52:34,680 --> 00:52:36,930
summer.

1228

00:52:36,930 --> 00:52:41,710
And my family was very
strongly anti-communist.

1229

00:52:41,710 --> 00:52:43,650
There's no question
about it that there

1230

00:52:43,650 --> 00:52:48,000
was no sympathy for either
Stalin or for Hitler.

1231

00:52:48,000 --> 00:52:51,690
For us, the two were identical.

1232

00:52:51,690 --> 00:52:53,008
And since we were not Jewish--

1233

00:52:53,008 --> 00:52:54,300
and this is a very funny thing.

1234

00:52:54,300 --> 00:52:58,290
Well, I was saying, Hitler was
the lesser of the two evil.

1235

00:52:58,290 --> 00:53:00,870
You have to understand that--

1236

00:53:00,870 --> 00:53:02,470
the lesser of the two evil.

1237

00:53:02,470 --> 00:53:04,822
It's hard to say how
you measure that.

1238

00:53:04,822 --> 00:53:06,780
Whether it's the 100th
person, the 99th person,

1239

00:53:06,780 --> 00:53:08,160

I cannot tell you.

1240

00:53:08,160 --> 00:53:15,990

But for us, in terms
of cultural death,

1241

00:53:15,990 --> 00:53:20,190

the Russian occupation was worse
than the German occupation.

1242

00:53:20,190 --> 00:53:23,027

And it turned out to
be correct, ultimately.

1243

00:53:23,027 --> 00:53:25,110

Not for the Jews-- again,
this is a very important

1244

00:53:25,110 --> 00:53:27,280

distinction.

1245

00:53:27,280 --> 00:53:29,340

And of course, the
Jews ultimately

1246

00:53:29,340 --> 00:53:30,960

didn't fare well
under Russia either.

1247

00:53:30,960 --> 00:53:37,200

So I don't know if you know
the book by Buber-Neumann,

1248

00:53:37,200 --> 00:53:39,120

Margarete Buber-Neumann.

1249

00:53:39,120 --> 00:53:42,780

She was the wife of the Russian
communist leader Neumann.

1250

00:53:42,780 --> 00:53:47,910

She wrote a book about her experiences, Gefangene bei

1251
00:53:47,910 --> 00:53:51,270
Stalin und Hitler, Prisoner Under Stalin and Hitler.

1252
00:53:51,270 --> 00:53:53,470
She was in both concentration camps.

1253
00:53:53,470 --> 00:53:54,720
And you should read that book.

1254
00:53:54,720 --> 00:53:57,370
I have the book.

1255
00:53:57,370 --> 00:54:02,220
So for us, to come into the communist Russian sphere

1256
00:54:02,220 --> 00:54:05,160
was a frightful possibility.

1257
00:54:05,160 --> 00:54:06,660
And at this point, a decision made

1258
00:54:06,660 --> 00:54:09,990
to try to go west, as far west as America, if possible.

1259
00:54:09,990 --> 00:54:12,570
And the only way you can do it-- by going through Germany.

1260
00:54:12,570 --> 00:54:14,487
There's no other way of getting at that point.

1261
00:54:14,487 --> 00:54:17,280
Somehow, get to western Europe, get out.

1262
00:54:17,280 --> 00:54:18,490
Before we get onto that--

1263
00:54:18,490 --> 00:54:18,990
Yes.

1264
00:54:18,990 --> 00:54:19,950
--in Debrecen--

1265
00:54:19,950 --> 00:54:20,450
Yes.

1266
00:54:20,450 --> 00:54:23,580
--were the Jews
wearing yellow stars?

1267
00:54:23,580 --> 00:54:24,750
I don't remember that.

1268
00:54:24,750 --> 00:54:25,710
It's very strange.

1269
00:54:25,710 --> 00:54:26,890
In Budapest, yes.

1270
00:54:26,890 --> 00:54:27,390
I know that.

1271
00:54:27,390 --> 00:54:30,188
But I don't remember in
Debrecen wearing yellow stars.

1272
00:54:30,188 --> 00:54:31,230
They may or may not have.

1273
00:54:31,230 --> 00:54:32,070
I cannot remember.

1274
00:54:32,070 --> 00:54:34,090
Budapest, no question about it.

1275

00:54:34,090 --> 00:54:37,020

And what about any kind of ghettoization in Debrecen?

1276

00:54:37,020 --> 00:54:39,490

They were concentrated and taken away.

1277

00:54:39,490 --> 00:54:40,740

There was no ghettoization.

1278

00:54:40,740 --> 00:54:45,060

Maybe for a few weeks, but that's a very short duration.

1279

00:54:45,060 --> 00:54:48,510

It was come and go.

1280

00:54:48,510 --> 00:54:49,770

Take them away and go.

1281

00:54:49,770 --> 00:54:51,330

And we knew where they went.

1282

00:54:51,330 --> 00:54:52,423

How did you know?

1283

00:54:52,423 --> 00:54:54,340

Again, we knew there were concentration camps.

1284

00:54:54,340 --> 00:54:56,738

We did not know the extent of Auschwitz, and such things.

1285

00:54:56,738 --> 00:54:58,530

But we knew there were concentration camps.

1286

00:54:58,530 --> 00:54:59,790

We knew there were deportations.

1287
00:54:59,790 --> 00:55:01,207
We knew that they
were taken away.

1288
00:55:01,207 --> 00:55:03,660
And we knew that nothing
good will happen to them.

1289
00:55:03,660 --> 00:55:05,400
Did you see any deportations?

1290
00:55:05,400 --> 00:55:06,970
Yes.

1291
00:55:06,970 --> 00:55:09,570
Yes, we saw them
rounding them up.

1292
00:55:09,570 --> 00:55:12,040
Absolutely.

1293
00:55:12,040 --> 00:55:12,580
Absolutely.

1294
00:55:12,580 --> 00:55:13,630
I saw them rounded up.

1295
00:55:13,630 --> 00:55:15,955
I very distinctly
remember a few incidents.

1296
00:55:15,955 --> 00:55:17,650
There's not many, but a few.

1297
00:55:17,650 --> 00:55:19,590
Again, remember,
where we lived, it's

1298
00:55:19,590 --> 00:55:22,030
a mixed neighborhood
of the suburb.

1299
00:55:22,030 --> 00:55:25,310
And there was not many
people, in general.

1300
00:55:25,310 --> 00:55:28,850
It's like living in Potomac.

1301
00:55:28,850 --> 00:55:31,920
So that is a much smaller scale,
in a tiny area of Potomac.

1302
00:55:31,920 --> 00:55:35,170
So if there are 150
families, then 25 are Jewish.

1303
00:55:35,170 --> 00:55:37,810
There's not much thing going on.

1304
00:55:37,810 --> 00:55:40,378
They're taken away at night,
and that's the end of it.

1305
00:55:40,378 --> 00:55:42,420
And though it was at night,
you were still there.

1306
00:55:42,420 --> 00:55:43,670
Most of the time, at night.

1307
00:55:43,670 --> 00:55:45,212
But I have seen
also, in the daytime,

1308
00:55:45,212 --> 00:55:47,320
people are being picked
up and taken away,

1309
00:55:47,320 --> 00:55:50,740
but not in large
quantities, no mass.

1310

00:55:50,740 --> 00:55:55,520

I didn't see mass
deportations, personally.

1311

00:55:55,520 --> 00:55:57,980

And again, was that something
that you spoke about

1312

00:55:57,980 --> 00:55:59,550

with your father and mother?

1313

00:55:59,550 --> 00:56:00,050

Yes.

1314

00:56:00,050 --> 00:56:02,123

And we were very
much afraid, very

1315

00:56:02,123 --> 00:56:03,290

much afraid of what happens.

1316

00:56:03,290 --> 00:56:04,040

What were you afraid of?

1317

00:56:04,040 --> 00:56:05,110

We were afraid what
happens to them

1318

00:56:05,110 --> 00:56:06,950

would happen to us
possibly because of

1319

00:56:06,950 --> 00:56:09,440

our possible connections.

1320

00:56:09,440 --> 00:56:13,610

We were known to be
Jewish sympathizers.

1321

00:56:13,610 --> 00:56:16,020

Were you ever
confronted yourself?

1322
00:56:16,020 --> 00:56:17,916
No, never.

1323
00:56:17,916 --> 00:56:22,180
Never, no.

1324
00:56:22,180 --> 00:56:24,760
Were you able to say goodbye
to any of your friends?

1325
00:56:24,760 --> 00:56:25,690
No, never.

1326
00:56:25,690 --> 00:56:28,430

1327
00:56:28,430 --> 00:56:31,612
No, they just disappeared.

1328
00:56:31,612 --> 00:56:33,070
What about your
teachers in school?

1329
00:56:33,070 --> 00:56:35,680
Did they acknowledge this?

1330
00:56:35,680 --> 00:56:38,400
School was out in June, 1944.

1331
00:56:38,400 --> 00:56:39,850
So there was no more.

1332
00:56:39,850 --> 00:56:41,560
By the time the Nazis
came in, the school

1333
00:56:41,560 --> 00:56:42,580
was finished, practically.

1334
00:56:42,580 --> 00:56:43,450
May, we finished it.

1335
00:56:43,450 --> 00:56:44,325
That's the end of it.

1336
00:56:44,325 --> 00:56:46,720
There was no real discussion
of anything of the sort.

1337
00:56:46,720 --> 00:56:49,440
They were afraid to.

1338
00:56:49,440 --> 00:56:51,190
There was no anti-Semitism
in this school,

1339
00:56:51,190 --> 00:56:53,710
no discussion of
Hitler being great

1340
00:56:53,710 --> 00:56:55,390
or stuff like that, never.

1341
00:56:55,390 --> 00:56:59,257
Had there been Jewish
teachers in the high school?

1342
00:56:59,257 --> 00:57:00,340
Not in my high school, no.

1343
00:57:00,340 --> 00:57:03,010

1344
00:57:03,010 --> 00:57:08,530
There was a Jewish gymnasium in
Debrecen, too, a very good one.

1345
00:57:08,530 --> 00:57:12,310
There was a Catholic
gymnasium, a Jewish gymnasium,

1346
00:57:12,310 --> 00:57:16,170
and a Presbyterian gymnasium,

meaning Calvinist Presbyterian,

1347

00:57:16,170 --> 00:57:18,860
and Calvinist strictly speaking.

1348

00:57:18,860 --> 00:57:23,890
There were three main
non-state supported gymnasia.

1349

00:57:23,890 --> 00:57:27,730
But I went to a state supported
one, a very small one,

1350

00:57:27,730 --> 00:57:30,370
which was part of the
university, actually.

1351

00:57:30,370 --> 00:57:32,170
And as you said,
the faculty did not

1352

00:57:32,170 --> 00:57:33,790
do any kind of indoctrination.

1353

00:57:33,790 --> 00:57:35,242
Oh, no.

1354

00:57:35,242 --> 00:57:36,700
Indoctrination--
we had never been.

1355

00:57:36,700 --> 00:57:38,980
We had never been
indoctrinated ever.

1356

00:57:38,980 --> 00:57:44,210
There was never, ever, in
any one of my experiences

1357

00:57:44,210 --> 00:57:46,375
personally, in which we
had been indoctrinated

1358

00:57:46,375 --> 00:57:48,210

in any kind of
political thing, never.

1359

00:57:48,210 --> 00:57:50,890

1360

00:57:50,890 --> 00:57:52,820

Other people may have
had this experience.

1361

00:57:52,820 --> 00:57:57,970

I was lucky, because I would
have been in big trouble.

1362

00:57:57,970 --> 00:58:00,310

Were you aware of any
resistance movements?

1363

00:58:00,310 --> 00:58:03,070

No, not at all.

1364

00:58:03,070 --> 00:58:05,900

There may have been, but
I was not aware of it.

1365

00:58:05,900 --> 00:58:09,340

I am aware of one person,
a colleague of my father's,

1366

00:58:09,340 --> 00:58:13,510

Professor [? Shonta, ?] who
was the professor of neurology

1367

00:58:13,510 --> 00:58:18,850

and psychiatry who was an old
communist, a very good friend

1368

00:58:18,850 --> 00:58:22,650

of my father's, a
very decent person,

1369

00:58:22,650 --> 00:58:24,430
a very good friend
of the family.

1370
00:58:24,430 --> 00:58:28,600
He was not married and
came often to our house.

1371
00:58:28,600 --> 00:58:32,410
And he told my father-- that's
one of the thing I remember

1372
00:58:32,410 --> 00:58:34,145
personally.

1373
00:58:34,145 --> 00:58:35,020
Another tape is gone.

1374
00:58:35,020 --> 00:58:37,720
My goodness, time is flying.

1375
00:58:37,720 --> 00:58:41,170
My recollection is that
he came to our house

1376
00:58:41,170 --> 00:58:42,760
several times at that time.

1377
00:58:42,760 --> 00:58:43,640
And he said to my--

1378
00:58:43,640 --> 00:58:45,790
don't go away.

1379
00:58:45,790 --> 00:58:48,388
I protect you when the
communists come in.

1380
00:58:48,388 --> 00:58:49,180
You are a good man.

1381
00:58:49,180 --> 00:58:50,260

You are not a Nazi.

1382
00:58:50,260 --> 00:58:52,270
And you are a decent person.

1383
00:58:52,270 --> 00:58:54,550
I'll be on top.

1384
00:58:54,550 --> 00:58:56,000
And I'll protect you.

1385
00:58:56,000 --> 00:58:59,230
I'll make sure that you
are staying as a professor.

1386
00:58:59,230 --> 00:59:01,960
In 1947, he is executed.

1387
00:59:01,960 --> 00:59:04,050
The communists killed their own.

1388
00:59:04,050 --> 00:59:08,170
So that's how much protection
could they give to my father.

1389
00:59:08,170 --> 00:59:10,120
So the decision to
leave Debrecen--

1390
00:59:10,120 --> 00:59:11,670
was that your father's decision?

1391
00:59:11,670 --> 00:59:13,420
It was a family
decision-- mother, father.

1392
00:59:13,420 --> 00:59:16,270
I have no decision
in it whatsoever.

1393
00:59:16,270 --> 00:59:18,350
My sister lived in

Budapest by that time.

1394
00:59:18,350 --> 00:59:22,732
A long time ago, she was
married, had a child.

1395
00:59:22,732 --> 00:59:24,520
It was '44.

1396
00:59:24,520 --> 00:59:28,250
My brother went to university
in Budapest, medical school.

1397
00:59:28,250 --> 00:59:31,030
So I was the only child, which
is a wonderful thing to be,

1398
00:59:31,030 --> 00:59:34,320
by the way.

1399
00:59:34,320 --> 00:59:37,310
And what was the reasoning that
your parents gave you about--

1400
00:59:37,310 --> 00:59:39,350
The reason was we went west.

1401
00:59:39,350 --> 00:59:40,350
The Russians are coming.

1402
00:59:40,350 --> 00:59:41,500
We went west, period.

1403
00:59:41,500 --> 00:59:46,320
It was a very
deliberate decision.

1404
00:59:46,320 --> 00:59:48,070
Go as far west as we can.

1405
00:59:48,070 --> 00:59:50,745
So the next west was Budapest.

1406
00:59:50,745 --> 00:59:53,120
We just closed up the house
and left everything in there.

1407
00:59:53,120 --> 00:59:58,020
We walked away, and
went to Budapest,

1408
00:59:58,020 --> 00:59:59,800
and stayed there
until the summer.

1409
00:59:59,800 --> 01:00:01,567
Was the journey from
Debrecen to Budapest

1410
01:00:01,567 --> 01:00:03,150
a difficult journey
during this time--

1411
01:00:03,150 --> 01:00:03,560
No, the trains were running.

1412
01:00:03,560 --> 01:00:04,760
--with the Germans?

1413
01:00:04,760 --> 01:00:05,760
The trains were running.

1414
01:00:05,760 --> 01:00:08,850
Just another train, and bought
a ticket, and went to Budapest.

1415
01:00:08,850 --> 01:00:11,400
There was no problem.

1416
01:00:11,400 --> 01:00:13,660
The trains were running all
over Europe all the time.

1417
01:00:13,660 --> 01:00:15,400

I'll tell you about
that later, which is

1418
01:00:15,400 --> 01:00:18,718
as crazy a thing in the world.

1419
01:00:18,718 --> 01:00:20,090
So now you're in Budapest.

1420
01:00:20,090 --> 01:00:20,640
Yes.

1421
01:00:20,640 --> 01:00:22,890
And what did you find there
with the situation with the--

1422
01:00:22,890 --> 01:00:23,180
Chaos.

1423
01:00:23,180 --> 01:00:24,100
--Jews in Budapest.

1424
01:00:24,100 --> 01:00:24,660
Oh, chaos.

1425
01:00:24,660 --> 01:00:27,690
First of all-- that
is Budapest, OK.

1426
01:00:27,690 --> 01:00:32,550
My sister lived in a house
overlooking the Danube.

1427
01:00:32,550 --> 01:00:36,660
And next to it was a
house that was later

1428
01:00:36,660 --> 01:00:40,260
declared to be one of
the protected houses.

1429
01:00:40,260 --> 01:00:42,630

So we were right next
to a Jewish house,

1430
01:00:42,630 --> 01:00:44,900
versus a non-Jewish house.

1431
01:00:44,900 --> 01:00:47,165
The houses which
were protected were

1432
01:00:47,165 --> 01:00:48,290
mixed in the neighborhoods.

1433
01:00:48,290 --> 01:00:51,800
They were not separated
in the ghetto.

1434
01:00:51,800 --> 01:00:55,650
And I remember, on the
door, under the protection

1435
01:00:55,650 --> 01:00:58,500
of the Swedish government.

1436
01:00:58,500 --> 01:01:01,670
And it was protected.

1437
01:01:01,670 --> 01:01:04,680

1438
01:01:04,680 --> 01:01:06,390
But the ghetto area--

1439
01:01:06,390 --> 01:01:08,220
and there was not a
ghetto in Budapest.

1440
01:01:08,220 --> 01:01:10,093
There was an area,
which is heavily Jewish,

1441
01:01:10,093 --> 01:01:12,260

which was around the
synagogue, the great synagogue,

1442
01:01:12,260 --> 01:01:14,820
the Dohány Synagogue.

1443
01:01:14,820 --> 01:01:20,460
And that area was,
at that time, already

1444
01:01:20,460 --> 01:01:22,485
blocked off with a gate.

1445
01:01:22,485 --> 01:01:24,600
Or they started to block
them off with a gate.

1446
01:01:24,600 --> 01:01:28,680
It was a wooden gate, so
that the street was not

1447
01:01:28,680 --> 01:01:33,030
open anymore to the main
street, [PLACE NAME]..

1448
01:01:33,030 --> 01:01:35,070
I remember that.

1449
01:01:35,070 --> 01:01:38,250
But I don't remember
anything else otherwise,

1450
01:01:38,250 --> 01:01:40,780
except that that's how it was.

1451
01:01:40,780 --> 01:01:43,440
The ghettoization started.

1452
01:01:43,440 --> 01:01:46,440
What was your reaction
seeing an enclosed area?

1453

01:01:46,440 --> 01:01:49,180

1454

01:01:49,180 --> 01:01:54,750

At that time, it was primarily
a matter of our survival, too.

1455

01:01:54,750 --> 01:01:57,600

It was becoming to
the point that you

1456

01:01:57,600 --> 01:02:00,120

were worried about yourself
more than anybody else.

1457

01:02:00,120 --> 01:02:01,650

It sounds cruel.

1458

01:02:01,650 --> 01:02:03,240

But that's what happened.

1459

01:02:03,240 --> 01:02:05,970

We were all under
constant bombardment

1460

01:02:05,970 --> 01:02:10,530

from the Allied Air Force, and
also by the Russian artillery.

1461

01:02:10,530 --> 01:02:13,971

So you walked in the street.

1462

01:02:13,971 --> 01:02:15,990

And one of the rounds
came in, and exploded.

1463

01:02:15,990 --> 01:02:17,032

And you were thrown away.

1464

01:02:17,032 --> 01:02:19,073

And then you picked up
yourself and walked again.

1465

01:02:19,073 --> 01:02:20,040

It was just constantly.

1466

01:02:20,040 --> 01:02:23,820

There was never a quiet moment.

1467

01:02:23,820 --> 01:02:25,200

Then the big bridge blew up.

1468

01:02:25,200 --> 01:02:26,700

I don't know if you
know about that.

1469

01:02:26,700 --> 01:02:32,710

The Margaret Bridge, in the
middle day, suddenly blew up.

1470

01:02:32,710 --> 01:02:36,170

The charge is either
they were sabotaged--