

-TITLE-GABOR FENYES
-I_DATE-
-SOURCE-FORT WAYNE JEWISH FEDERATION
-RESTRICTIONS-
-SOUND_QUALITY-GOOD
-IMAGE_QUALITY-GOOD
-DURATION-1 HOUR 2 MINUTES, ENDS ABRUPTLY
-LANGUAGES-ENGLISH
-KEY_SEGMENT-
-GEOGRAPHIC_NAME-
-PERSONAL_NAME-
-CORPORATE_NAME-
-KEY_WORDS-
-NOTES-
-CONTENTS-
1918-1945

0:00:20 Born in Budapest, Hungary in 1914. His father was a POW in World War I who spent time in Siberia. The family was very religious especially during and after the war. Gabor's father was an attorney but wanted Gabor to go into business. Gabor married his childhood sweetheart in Budapest.

0:02:40 When asked by the interviewer when he first became aware of what was happening around him, Gabor stated that 1938 was a key year for him. Little by little he recognized that "German influence" was growing.

0:04:55 Gabor prepares to discuss his life in a forced labor camp.

0:07:15 Gabor observes that no one plans to leave their home, He had no where to go: Hungary was surrounded by hostile enemies. The acknowledged goal was to try and save your own neck. Gabor had some friends who went to Israel with the help of his father; they had no family. Gabor never gave a thought to leaving.

0:09:00 Gabor gives some more general reactions. No one thought they would have to do something out of the ordinary in order to survive. German occupation was believed to be temporary. Gabor did not have to wear a yellow star because he was placed in a forced labor camp. Putting Jews in these camps got them out of the mainstream of Hungarian life.

0:10:45 Gabor's job was to load and unload boxcars. He believes he was in the camp from 1939-1942, but he is unsure of the dates. He does know that he was in an all-Jewish camp.

0:15:00 He was on a thin diet for such heavy work. He remembers marching to various communities to do his job. It was still possible to send and receive mail.

0:16:00 Gabor's family remained in Budapest. His father died at the end of the war. His mother and wife survived because they remained in Budapest, Gabor believes. They were able to live in a barber's building as protected persons.

0:17:00 Gabor was sent to Austria. He had never heard of a concentration camp. He did not know where any were until he arrived at one.

0:19:20 He was sent to Mauthausen to work after a short stay in a smaller camp (no name given). He continued to work on boxcars.

0:19:50 Liberation came to Mauthausen on the 5th of May, 1945. The event was celebrated many times. Gabor talked with the American soldiers since his father had taught him English in order to prepare him for the business world.

0:02:00 The Americans fed the survivors well, letting them take whatever they wanted from the supply depot. Gabor remembers warning people not to eat so much; those without sense would eat two pounds of meat at once. They died instantly because their system could not handle all the food after having been starved for so long.

0:23:30 From the time of the liberation, Gabor survived as a matter of good fortune. His knowledge of German and English helped him immensely. He helped in the resettlement of Hungarian survivors in exchange for food and clothing.

0:25:15 Gabor relates how he could not go back to Hungary himself: "they killed me once, why should I go back?" He decided to emigrate. He eventually got his wife and mother out of Hungary. When his wife died, his daughter noted that when he died a very rich history would die with him. She wanted to visit Hungary and so Gabor went back.

0:26:45 None of his friends had survived. Some had finagled their way out of the forced labor camps in Russia but were sent to Yugoslavia a month later where conditions were harsh. Gabor states that his experiences were "child's play" compared to theirs.

0:28:50 He went to his high school reunion; there was only one other person there.

0:30:20 Gabor attributes his survival to his ability to stick to certain principles. First and foremost, he never volunteered for anything. He relates a story to illustrate his success. In the labor camp, a new commander was assigned to Gabor's group. The man was a former judge who knew Gabor's father. He wanted to help Gabor, and told him to raise his hand at the next meeting. The commander would be sure to select Gabor for the special assignment which would make his load easier. Gabor says he did not want to offend the man, but he did not want to volunteer for anything. If he were sent somewhere, fine.

The commandant rebuked Gabor for being so stupid as to refuse his help, but gave him food. The special group marched into Russia and encountered Russian soldiers. Not one person from the group was found.

0:34:30 Gabor relates the story of how he got his wife out of Hungary. A group of Hungarians worked in Austria, loading equipment onto trucks. This equipment was used by Germans for use in the war. Gabor made a deal with the commander of the group. Gabor had saved many cigarettes and offered three cartons to the man in return for bringing his wife in the next transport. They found her and brought her out of Hungary.

0:36:00 When asked if he would liked to have seen his mother again, he said "of course, but I'd like to be an American when I see her.

0:37:00 He made friends with an American commander and became his adviser. The Americans could tell Gabor "until the cows came home" that trains would take him home: he was not going.

0:39:55 Gabor describes how he wound up in Fort Wayne.

0:47:30 Gabor discusses why he is participating in this program. If only one person thinks he is honest, he will be justified.

0:51:00 Gabor never met any Russians but thought them primitive. he lived in the American zone in Vienna, and relates that if one lived in the Russian zone, he or she was in for trouble. He describes that zone as being in a state of "anarchy".

0:52:45 Gabor brought his mother to visit him in Fort Wayne. She was especially impressed by the large amounts of food available.

0:57:30 When asked by the interviewer what he wants children today to learn from him, he states that "things do not happen by themselves. Something has to move it. Everyone is capable of making a contributions."

1:02:00 Tape ends abruptly.

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