

HOLOCAUST TESTIMONY

OF

DEBORA NEUDORFER

Transcript of Audiotaped Interview

Interviewer: Edith Millman

Date: November 20, 2001

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Gratz College
Melrose Park, PA 19027

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DN - Debora Neudorfer¹ [interviewee]

EM - Edith Millman [interviewer]

Date: November 20, 2001

Tape one, side one:

EM: This is Edith Millman interviewing Mrs. Debora Neudorfer. Today is November 20, 2001. Mrs. Neudorfer could you tell me when and where you were born?

DN: In Bucharest, Romania, December 31, 1914.

EM: Could you tell me a little bit about your family?

DN: We were two sisters, my parents, we were more or less middle-class, I went to private school, but through the war we were much downer because it was not so-- my father couldn't make so much business. We lived--before my sister got married, my brother-in-law was taken to *Zwangsarbeit* [Ger: forced labor] he ran away as a lot of Jewish young men run from work, they have to...

EM: Could you tell me what year was it when he was taken to forced labor? Approximately--before...?

DN: '41...

EM: In 1941.

DN: Approximately.

EM: Could you tell me your father's first name and your mother's?

DN: My father first name was Adolf.

EM: So what was your maiden name?

DN: Flachs.

EM: And...

DN: My mother name was Cecilia Flachs born Schnierer.

EM: All right, now did both your parents live in Bucharest before the war?

DN: Yes, they were born and we lived their whole life in Bucharest, and it was a large and a big family, cousins and other...

EM: Tell me what did your father do for a living?

DN: He was a businessman with how you--*Chemische-sachen*

EM: In chemicals?

DN: *Chemische*, it was completely different. It is now chemists, but you call it *Chemische*...

EM: [unclear]

DN: ...for industry.

EM: Oh, chemicals for industry.

¹nee Flachs.

DN: Yeah.

EM: Okay. Did you live in an apartment or in a house?

DN: In an apartment.

EM: Could you tell me a little bit about your childhood?

DN: We were more or less nice...

EM: Middle-class?

DN: ...middle-class, we had a maid always. When I was very young my father, my parents bought a piano. I had a piano teacher. When was the war we had...

EM: Before, stay before the war.

DN: This was before the war...

EM: All right.

DN: ...when was the war she, they had to sell the piano, we had to move into a smaller apartment. My mother had a brother who was never married and he lived with us; he lost his job. He worked in the Bank Marmarus [phonetic]. It was a very new and very big bank in Bucharest.

EM: Tell me now how long did you go through school, to what year, and what did you do after you finished school?

DN: It was a private school where you went already--this was 10 years, 10-12 years, I really don't remember.

EM: Did you live in a Jewish neighborhood?

DN: More or less.

EM: So it was mixed?

DN: Yes, always.

EM: Did you have contact with non-Jews?

DN: Very little, almost no, almost none, because we had, my mother had a lot of cousins and family and we were always with the family, very little contact with non-Jews.

EM: Was it a Jewish school that you went to?

DN: No, it was a Protestant School.

EM: A Protestant School?

DN: Yes.

EM: So you did but you didn't have many Jewish friends from school?

DN: A Protest-- but it was 99% were Jewish--it was a girl's school and 99% were Jewish girls.

EM: Tell me, was your father or were your parents Orthodox or did...?

DN: No.

EM: They were not Orthodox?

DN: No.

EM: Did you observe any Jewish Holidays?

DN: Yes, Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Hanukkah, Pesach, but not [unclear].

EM: Did your father go to synagogue?
DN: Only on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.
EM: Before the war, did you experience any antisemitism?
DN: I can't say it was, no. No, more normal.
EM: Did you hear what was going on in Germany since 1934?
DN: No, we did not know.
EM: You did not know.
DN: No, we knew when she occupied Poland, then we knew when Hitler occupied Belgium and...
EM: Holland?
DN: ...Holland.
EM: Could you tell me if you knew what was going on in Transylvania and--even before and after Romania lost its territories?
DN: Much later we heard something when people from Transylvania was taken to Auschwitz but we didn't know what it is.
EM: Did you have relatives that lived in different areas of Romania or did everybody live in Bucharest?
DN: All the family lived in Bucharest. My mother has a brother who lived in Paris.
EM: How much did you know about the persecution of Jews by the Nazis?
DN: We did not know.
EM: You did not know?
DN: No.
EM: Now could you tell me what the feelings of the Jews were when King Carol² was forced to resign?
DN: I don't remember.
EM: You don't remember?
DN: No, completely I don't remember.
EM: Now, did you know about the Iron Guard?
DN: I'm sure I was there in Bucharest when the Iron Guard came to be the criminals.
EM: Now, did you know about any pogroms by the Iron Guard? Any persecution of the Jews by the Iron Guard, any pogroms? Were there any pogroms? You know any killing of Jews by the Iron Guard? Did you know anything about it?
DN: It was something but I don't remember it was by the Guard or it was already by the communists. We had the [unclear] and they started to take young people outside from the street, outside the city, and they killed them.
EM: And you don't know if...

²September 7, 1940: King Carol abdicated in favor of his son, Prince Michael after turmoil which resulted from the cession of Romanian territory to Hungary.

DN: They took it out from the city and they called it *Gi- Lava* [phonetic]...
EM: Oh, *Gi-Lava* [phonetic].
DN: *Gi-Lava* [phonetic].
EM: Okay. Did you or your family, are you affected by any anti-Jewish legislation in, like in 1940, by any laws that antisemitism or anti-Jewish? Were you affected by any of that?
DN: Not too much.
EM: Not too much?
DN: No.
EM: Oh.
DN: What I remember, now it's 50 years.
EM: Can you describe your life between 1940 and '43?
DN: '40 and '43?
EM: Were you working at the time? You were out of school already, I guess.
DN: Oh sure.
EM: Did you have a job?
DN: No, we didn't have no jobs, I and my sister that to make some money we-- how you call it? *Wir haben zu hause gestrickt* [Ger: We knitted at home].
EM: Uh-huh[affirmative], you did handiwork at home...
DN: Yes.
EM: ...and you were
DN: We made knittings and gloves and did things for some, for other people.
EM: Uh-huh [affirmative]. Was it easy to get wool for to make all these gloves?
DN: Yeah we couldn't buy. We got wool from the place where we, for whom we work, thank G-d they gave us and we make the gloves and jackets...
EM: And sweaters?
DN: Sweaters, yes.
EM: And you make it for...?
DN: For money!
EM: I know but you for a store, you gave it to a store or did you...?
DN: A lady worked for a store because...
EM: Well, did you have--did you or your family have any contact with the Federation of Jewish communities?
DN: No.
EM: No contact.
DN: How it was that we could manage without help from neighbors, neighbors we had to...
EM: So not just to help, but did you know that they existed and that they were helping...?

DN: We knew about it, we didn't have nothing to do with--we were I think a member of the community but we didn't have nothing to do...

EM: Did your father still work at that time?

DN: Yes.

EM: He was able to work?

DN: Yes, he worked for him alone.

EM: Yes, he was...

DN: Yeah.

EM: Okay.

DN: But much less, you can imagine.

EM: Now what, what did you know about the camp in Transnistria.³

DN: We knew about the Transnistria because a cousin of my mother's, I think one day he didn't go to the *Zwangsarbeit* and he was taken with one from the first transport from Bucharest, first they were from home taken and arrested, and then they were sent to Transnistria.

EM: And he was from Bucharest?

DN: Who?

EM: Your, your uncle?

DN: Cousin, I said cousin.

EM: Cousin.

DN: It was a first cousin of my mother. We knew that he was in Bucharest. Years before he was the director from the company, the movie company, Warner Bros. he was a director for all Romania.

EM: And were many people taken to forced labor, to the *Zwangsarbeit*?

DN: Sure, a lot of people because they didn't work much, they didn't, the artists all, the lawyer, they didn't work, taken to the forced labor. So as my brother-in-law was taken to forced labor, and a lot of them run away.

EM: Now, do you know what kind of work they were doing and where?

DN: Yeah, they were -- *Ich möchte besser sagen in Deutsch, nicht?* [Ger: I better say it in German, okay?]

EM: [unclear]

DN: *Sie haben ausgegraben tranchées für die Militär zu machen zu machen Übungen.* [Ger.: They dug trenches for the army's maneuvers].

EM: They are digging trenches for the military?

³Transnistria: "An artificial geographic term, created in World War II, referring to a part of the Ukraine, conquered by German and Romanian troops in the summer of 1941." In addition to its sizable Jewish population, over 150,000 Jews were deported to Transnistria during 1941 and 1942. It was the site of two concentration camps and extremely harsh conditions. It is estimated that approximately 200,000 Jews and Roma people were murdered in Transnistria.
(http://www.yadvashem.org/yv/en/exhibitions/this_month/resources/transnistria.asp, Accessed June 1, 2016)

DN: Trenches, yeah.
EM: Now what military, for the Romanian Military?
DN: For the Romanian Military, yeah.
EM: Do you remember where?
DN: Out of town.
EM: Right, could they come home or...?
DN: No.
EM: They were in their labor camp?
DN: Yes, yes, and he never come home. My sister went there to bring him clean clothing, clean clothes and many times packages of food because the food what that they gave them it was not enough.
EM: Was your sister older than you and...?
DN: Well she was younger but they started to go together and so...
EM: When did she marry him?
DN: In '42.
EM: Did both of them survive the war? Did they survive?
DN: Yeah, yeah, sure.
EM: So she came back from the camp?
DN: She ran away.
EM: Oh she ran away?
DN: Hundreds of young men run away from this camp.
EM: And did they have to go into hiding after they ran away? Did anybody look for them?
DN: No, she didn't have too much trouble the whole time till...
EM: Who was in charge of the camp? Was the Iron Guard?
DN: I don't know.
EM: You don't know?
DN: I think Romanian, Romanian, yeah.
EM: You don't know if it was the Iron Guard?
DN: I don't remember. I don't think because -- it was, I think it was already Antonescu.
EM: What do you remember about the time in Romania when Antonescu was in power? Did it get much worse for the Jews?
DN: I don't remember, I don't think, it was the same thing, because they were-- they didn't work and...
EM: I mean you personally or your father, did he feel more threatened or more in danger when Antonescu was in power?
DN: No, no, only when it started bombardment.
EM: Yeah, now, could you tell me about the bombardment?

DN: It started on the 4 of April 1944--the bombardment on the date -- we were lived, we lived till 20 till August, day and night after, under bombardment. On the daytime came I think the Americans and in the night came the English, and the first bombardment was terribly, they destroyed the whole --how you say it in English?

EM: Oil refineries?

DN: Yeah, but no.

EM: Oil fields?

DN: No. The whole -- I remember...

EM: The railroads?

DN: The railroads, the *Haupt* [main railroad] in Bucharest.

EM: Mmm hmm [affirmative]. They destroyed them underneath main railroad station in Bucharest.

DN: Yeah, yeah.

EM: Did you know why the Americans and the British were bombarding Bucharest?

DN: Because they were with Antonescu⁴ was with the German.

EM: Okay. Now tell me, what happened after 1944?

DN: Oh, in August '44 it was the armistice in Romania and Bucharest. They announced that the Russian are coming and it was armistice but everybody thought it would be easier but it no, you with the soldiers it was terrible, you couldn't go more on the streets, especially young woman and they, it was, they were very wild and [unclear] to girls. I didn't have special, but I know so...

EM: So they...?

DN: This was in August, then in October I left with my husband so...

EM: Now, where did you meet your husband, your future husband?

DN: A few months before.

EM: Where?

DN: In Bucharest by a friend of mine.

EM: Was he also born in Romania?

DN: Born?

EM: Yeah.

DN: I tell you my husband was born in Poland.

EM: Okay, do you know when he came to Romania?

DN: He said, I think, he was taken from Katowice in the first transport to *Zwangsarbeit*.

EM: To forced labor?

DN: Yeah and...

⁴Antonescu, Ion: (1882 - 1946) Prime Minister of Romania from 1940 to 1944. He aligned Romania with Germany. Romania then participated in the invasion of the Soviet Union in June, 1941. Antonescu was executed as a war criminal in June of 1946.

EM: That was taken, that was during the war, right?

DN: After they started. It started on the 1 of September when Germany, when Poland was occupied. He was young and he was in the first transport and they met him in a place and they said they have to go east and I know this from what he told me, you know; and they came very east, they had, everybody had some money, and they brought him to start a new *lager* Nisco [phonetic].

EM: A new camp...

DN: A new camp, yeah, and he, with other boys, young men, run away from the camp, and they, I don't know how, I don't remember more. They came by the border from Poland with Romania, between Poland and Predkar. Romania is Bukovina. And between these two countries is a small river, Ceromosc and it was winter and they broke the snow, the ice, because it was frozen and they came on [unclear] trucks to Chernovitz, to Romania and then they lived in Chernovitz at that time and when the Russian came, they came south to Bucharest.

EM: So they came with the Russians or before the Russians came, when the Russians came to Chernovitz. Did they go with the Russians to...?

DN: I don't know.

EM: ...to [unclear]? You don't know?

DN: I don't know.

EM: Because you said when the Russians came...

DN: Yeah, they couldn't [unclear] and with money they bought farms papers and so they live that time in Chernovitz, a group of Polish young men, and then they came south to Bucharest.

EM: And that's when you met him. What year was it when you met him?

DN: What?

EM: What year did you meet him?

DN: In '44.

EM: In '44, and then you decided to go to Palestine, you said?

DN: Yeah, because it was already the Communists and all Polish young men had false papers and it was--I don't remember what but it was something. They were afraid the Communists will -- afraid they would take them. At the time he had a *domicile fausse*.

EM: False...?

DN: A false domicile in a small city in Romania where I'm from there, they came back to Bucharest...

EM: Now you said the Polish young men, were they Polish gentile or Polish Jews?

DN: No, nice Jewish boys, nice Jewish boys, and I don't remember--it was something, they were all afraid and they said we have to go. In the meantime they went by the Jewish organization and everybody was registered, and she registered me also.

And we wanted to get married but it was impossible, it was impossible with the whole situation [unclear] so we went to -- with a group of Polish and Romanian young people to Palestine.

EM: How did, how?

DN: *Wie die Schweine* [Ger.: like pigs].

EM: Like pigs? [chuckle]

DN: *Immer wie die Schweine* [Ger.: always like pigs]. It was unbelievable, the Jewish organization send us then with a train to Constanta and they said there we wait a boat of us. We were 350 people, and when we came and my husband saw the boat, he said, '*Hier wollin Sie herein legen drei hundred fünfzig*' [Ger.: here they want to accommodate 350] people?

EM: [unclear]

DN: We stayed so.

EM: Mmm hmm.

DN: As animals -- three days we didn't undress, it was no food, absolutely not, we live really as the *schweine*.

EM: Okay, so it was so very overcrowded.

DN: Overcrowded?

EM: So, that was still the war was still going on at that time?

DN: In Europe, but in Romania no more. In Romania it was already the Communists. The Communists, with a big Jewish woman was a big communist, Panker, Panker.

EM: So were the Communists against you leaving Romania, or were they persecuting people who wanted to leave Romania, or who were leaving Romania?

DN: I don't know because it was-- I don't remember. Because it was two months after the Commun-- after the army [unclear]. It was on 22 of August? No, September.

EM: No.

DN: And in October we left.

EM: Now you, where did you leave from, you mentioned a name, which town, which port did you leave from?

DN: From Constanta.

EM: From Constanta.

DN: In Romania by the Black Mer.

EM: By the Black Sea.

DN: By the Black Sea, yeah.

EM: And how long did it take you to get to Palestine?

DN: I think two weeks. It took us, it took us three days to go to Bursa.

EM: Oh, okay.

DN: Instead of a half a day.

EM: And...

DN: Because from, you know by the Bursa [unclear] Asian Turkey, and usually from Constanta it takes three-quarters of a day to go from Bursa to come to Turkey and it took us three days.

EM: And then did you disembark in Turkey or did you...?

DN: Yeah, we disembarked, yeah...

EM: And...

DN: ...and the Jewish organization took us and on a train through Constant -- through all Turkey...

EM: Through all Turkey.

DN: And then south it was English and here it was Lebanon and Syria.

EM: How did you go, by truck, by train or through...?

DN: By train.

EM: By train.

DN: The whole Turkey till we came to-- and the English military took us.

EM: Well they didn't object to you going to Palestine? They didn't stop you?

DN: No, no, then, no.

EM: This was in '44.

DN: No, and they brought us in Is--in Palestine it was a military *lager*-- Atlit.⁵

EM: Mmm hmm. Atlit.

DN: Then they took us, and later there we could wash and clean and this, it was unbelievable, it was military *lager*, we could wash we were so relieved when we came to Atlit.

EM: And how long did you stay in -- I thought that Atlit was a prison. It wasn't a prison? It was a camp?

DN: It was not a prison.

EM: It was a camp.

DN: But when we came it was, it was from the-- it was *Kaserne* [military barracks] because we, we didn't, it was from the English military.

EM: Okay.

DN: Atlit, and then they took every Polish refugee, they took in the evening by the interrogatory and they wrote everything what, what they went through, through the-- then they knew, so then they knew a lot of things.

EM: So they interrogated all the [unclear].

DN: They interrogated them.

EM: Who did the interrogation, the British or the...?

⁵The Atlit detention camp was constructed by the British Mandate in what was then Palestine, at the end of the 1930s, as a military camp on the Mediterranean coast. It was converted by them between 1939 - 1948 to a detention camp for "illegal" immigrants who found themselves, yet again, incarcerated behind barbed wire. (jewishvirtuallibrary.org)

DN: The British, British officer, sure.
EM: Now how long did you stay in this camp?
DN: I don't remember.
EM: You don't remember. Well was it a couple months or...?
DN: No, no.
EM: Tell me, you said something that you got married on the boat.
DN: On this boat, yeah.
EM: Who performed the ceremony, was there a rabbi?
DN: A rabbi, he said he was a rabbi. I [unclear] and then we came to and then...
EM: So when you came to Palestine, you came as man and wife?
DN: Yeah, sure. I live in, I was registered already by the Jewish organization when my husband --when he registered him, I was already registered as his wife.
EM: Did you have any relatives in Palestine, any relatives, any...?
DN: Relatives? No.
EM: No?
DN: I had, I had a far, a far cousin.
EM: Did she know that, did he know that you were coming?
DN: No, how? How they knows it? She, nobody from the family knew that they would live.
EM: How long did you live-- stay in Palestine?
DN: Two and a half years.
EM: Then you came to the United States?
DN: No. [Tape one, side one ended]

Tape one, side two:

EM: This is an interview with Mrs. Deborah Neudorfer and this is tape one, side two, Edith Millman interviewer. Tell me, what did you do in Palestine? How did you earn a living?

DN: My husband some worked by--how you say? Funny how sometimes-- [unclear] but not often steady by the city and he helped to take the garbage in the morning.

EM: Oh okay, that was, what city was that?

DN: In Tel Aviv, by Tel Aviv we took a room by Tel Aviv, in S'Khunat Hatikvah [suburb of Tel Aviv].

EM: Oh, okay and you didn't work, only he worked? Right?

DN: Yeah, I worked in a factory [unclear] from the organization in a factory.

EM: Which organization was it? Do you know?

DN: Now it's another name, you call it before Betar.⁶

EM: Betar, Betar, were you a Zionist before the war?

DN: Huh?

EM: Were you a Zionist before the war?

DN: Yeah, but I was not active only another type of Zionists organization in Bucharest who was more to remain in Romania.

EM: Oh, okay so you didn't have contact with Betar before?

DN: No.

EM: And Betar helped you in...?

DN: Mine, my husband.

EM: Oh, your husband.

DN: Not me.

EM: Oh okay, was your husband a member of Betar before the war?

DN: Yes.

EM: Oh, now...

DN: You know, Betar is now this, this other *Partei* [party] when Netanyahu was president-- how you call this?

EM: Likud?

DN: Likud, yeah.

EM: Okay, that's survived, I know.

DN: It was Betar but years before, it was so many years before.

EM: Tell me now you mentioned you went to Poland from Palestine, why did you go to Poland?

⁶Mass Zionist Youth movement identified with Zionist Revisionism. [Encyclopedia of the Holocaust].

DN: He wanted to look for the family.
EM: And okay, so where did you go, to what city?
DN: To Katowice.
EM: To Katowice.
DN: ...where I met Elsa.
EM: Oh okay, you met Elsa Turkelkof in...?
DN: To my husband, to--my husband lived before the war also in Katowice and he met few peop--some man who lives, he was befriended in Bucharest and other people who he met he was good before the war and so we started to be together.
EM: Okay well Mrs. Elsa Turkelkof is a survivor of Auschwitz...
DN: Yeah.
EM: ...and she, and Mrs. Neudorfer is very friendly, and as a matter of fact we interviewing Mrs. Turkelkof's house. Tell me how long did you stay in Poland?
DN: I think my two also, about two, three years until--in meantime Israel...
EM: Became...
DN: ...became a state and we all registered to go back.
EM: So you all went back to...
DN: Israel.
EM: To Israel. How long did you stay in Israel then?
DN: We came in '50 and we left in '57. My husband left in '56 because he had from the home brother and sister. He found a brother who lived after the war in *lager* [camp]. He was in Germany, not D.P., and then they came to America and when they became citizens, they took us to America. Yeah, to United States.
EM: Now you have one son, where was he born?
DN: In Haifa, he was born in Haifa.
EM: And tell me, so you came to this country already with your son?
DN: With my husband.
EM: With your husband and son?
DN: Oh sure.
EM: Okay. And, you mentioned that one of your husband's siblings survived. How many of his siblings didn't survive? Did he have a large family?
DN: There were six children home and only this brother survived.
EM: Now how about your family?
DN: My sist...
EM: Did they all survive and tell me what happened to your parents and to your sister.
DN: My parents remained in Bucharest the whole time in the same apartment, and in '47 my sister and brother-in-law left as Displaced Person to Italy and his unc--his brothe-- my mother has a brother who lived in Paris, I told you, and then from Italy they went to Paris and by my uncle. He was also after the war with two children so it was not

so easy, and my sister and brother-in-law left for Argentina because it was very hard to remain as D.P. in France.

EM: Oh, and now...

DN: And from Argen-- they were few years in Argentina and from my brother-in-law, brother was already in Canada and he brought them to Canada.

EM: Okay. Now your, both your parents...?

DN: Died.

EM: [unclear]

DN: No, my father died in Bucharest and then...

EM: What year was it? When did he die? It was after the war already?

DN: Oh sure, after the war, yeah.

EM: So he died of natural causes?

DN: Yeah, he was old and he get cancer, he got cancer and...

EM: And your mother?

DN: She was still living with this brother, what I told you, and then she wrote, we started to send some money because they couldn't-- it was not enough and then she wrote that she can no more because there it was not as here. You had to go to buy wood for winter for the oven, you know how it was.

EM: Yes.

DN: And she said, it's very hard and she wrote to my sister and they called me. I was already here on Valentine where I lived before, and they said *sehr klug* [that's smart]. I have nothing against--yeah because she said she can arrange for her brother to be some place. I said, I have nothing against that we bring mother, but I cannot because in America there is a law you have to be first citizen and then you can bring somebody from your family, and they said, yes, we know already but we can't bring her because in Canada there was a law so many years before after two years, they get her a green card and they brought my mother to Montreal.

EM: So then your mother stayed in Montreal?

DN: Yeah.

EM: Okay.

DN: She was by my sister by 15 years.

EM: Oh okay.

DN: Yeah.

EM: Now could you tell me a little bit about your life here in America? Your husband, did your husband work?

DN: [chuckle] Oh we worked, as horses we worked. [chuckle]

EM: And you have one son?

DN: Yeah, only one son.

EM: And is he married?

DN: He's married, he has three children and he lives by Los Angeles, in San Marino, San Marino it is high class...

EM: So does any of your family, your mother's family or your father's family, did any of them go to a concentration camp and die there?

DN: No, nobody.

EM: So actually everybody survived there?

DN: Yeah, yeah. I have cousin, not first cousin but second cousin who lived in Germany, they run and they came to Germany, and there they have family in Germany. I have cousin from this uncle in--his children were born in Paris and I am in contact with them. My cousin--I was by them in Paris, I was few time in Germany by them, by this cousin. My cousin--she's a widow now--who lives in Paris was this summer by me few days, she...

EM: So you're actually still--so you have still a family in, an extended family, you still have family that...?

DN: Yeah, yeah.

EM: [unclear]

DN: [unclear]

EM: Okay, is there anything else that you would like to add to this interview about your life dur--especially during the war and the attitude of the Romanian people towards the Jews, persecution or anything like that?

DN: No, I wouldn't make a--I, how you call it? *Zwangsarbeit* [forced labor] one year by statistic.

EM: Where?

DN: In Bucharest.

EM: Well, who put you into that?

DN: The government. I got a letter at home, said I have to present and I went out of town by the army and they send me...

EM: All because you hadn't mentioned [unclear]...?

DN: Yeah, I made statistic one year.

EM: So that was office work, right?

DN: Yeah, you know what is statistic?

EM: Yeah, I know what this is.

DN: You know, I spoke with somebody by self help, and the lady told me that she does not know what is a statistic, [unclear] a social worker, now that you have a master degree. Yes, but she did not know what is statistic.

EM: Okay and your bosses they were all Romanians, right, in that labor camp? Who supervised you?

DN: It was in a private house because these they could arrange, it was not far from where we lived. They took a house and they make it so offices with benches, [unclear] and we took the paper and we had to work this statistic.

EM: Tell me something now, did you, could you go home?
DN: *Yah.*
EM: You could go home?
DN: Sure.
EM: But you had to go to this type of work?
DN: Yeah, no, it was not far, I could walk; it was not far from where I lived.
EM: Uh-huh [affirmative].
DN: Because they arranged people not too far.
EM: Was it only Jewish people that worked in this...?
DN: Only Jewish.
EM: Only Jewish people.
DN: Sure.
EM: They took you to a forced labor...?
DN: Only Jews.
EM: Did you get paid?
DN: No. [chuckle]
EM: You didn't get paid, so but did you get food then?
DN: Absolute nothing.
EM: Mmm hmm [affirmative].
DN: Absolute nothing.
EM: So you worked--how many hours a day did you work?
DN: At least five, six hours a day, sure.
EM: And that was for a whole year? Do you know what year it was?
DN: No, I can't remember.
EM: Was it towards the end of the war or the beginning?
DN: No, no, no.
EM: No, no, uh-huh.
DN: [unclear]
EM: And then...
DN: ...in the middle.
EM: And how did it end? I mean after you worked there in this forced labor unit then they let you go home and you stopped working?
DN: Yeah, yeah, it was, my time was over.
EM: Oh, okay.
DN: Yeah.
EM: But your mother...?
DN: Every person who had at least four years school, not gram-- ours was so four years ground.
EM: Grammar school.

DN: Yeah, and then five, everybody who had more than grade six, eight classes had to go to...

EM: To work.

DN: ...to work, yeah.

EM: Well this was only for the Jews at this Romanian school--Gentiles-- only Jews had to go to work?

DN: Only Jews.

EM: Only Jews.

DN: Sure.

EM: Okay. All right, is there anything else you would like to add?

DN: I told you more than I expected. [chuckle]

EM: All right, thank you very much...

DN: [unclear]

EM: All right, thank you very much.

DN: This is nothing, thanks God how it was. We went in our school but still it was not...

EM: [unclear]

DN: I remember today we didn't have wood for the kitchen, so in Romania was some lamps of--and you have to burn them on gas or petroleum and you have-- so we bought them in the two room what we lived on six, because my sister had a small apartment, she has to come home, they made her to pay rent from work.

EM: Yeah.

DN: So we lived six on six in two rooms and we build, we brought these two lamps in one of the room, and there was cooking, we cooked there and we had...

EM: Was the food were rationed? Did you have to have ration cards to get food, or could you go to a store and buy?

DN: Yeah, we didn't find everything.

EM: You didn't find, but you didn't have to have special ration cards?

DN: No, no.

EM: No. All you needed was...?

DN: Because Romania was not occupied.

EM: Yes, I understand but...

DN: Romania was friend, Antonescu was a friend with the Germans.

EM: Yeah, I know. There was a real, no real shortage of food? Was there a shortage of food?

DN: Yeah.

EM: There was shortage.

DN: Yeah, and we brought these two lamps in one of the room, and there you cooked what you cooked.

EM: You cooked what...

DN: You make one pot but you have to have gas, and by our neighborhood there was no more gas, and somebody, I don't know how my mother found, I don't know where they had gas. It was so cold; I took so big something-- it was aluminium, to go there with *Strassenbahn* [trolley car].

EM: Uh huh.

DN: Trolley, tramway, how you call it? And I went there, they didn't have none. I came so without nothing, so frozen that I never in my life I will forget this, this tour.

EM: Okay, well...

DN: It was a bombardment--in two minutes you had to be dressed and to run...

EM: I see.

DN: By time it was in daytime, it was so big also by other neighborhood that all the glasses from the windows, from the bedroom of my parents were in the bed.

EM: Yeah, were there many buildings destroyed, buildings, apartment buildings?

DN: Yeah. Only the windows but you can imagine in the two beds, the whole big glasses in the bed, and we run by the mother of my cousin who is now in Germany, and I came with a valise and I started to cry, and I run, I wasn't young, and they asked me where are they? They are coming, but I fell down, I had nerves. To live under bombardment for so many months, day and night. At least they told, they started to see [unclear] and they went by the borders.

EM: So where did you run? Where did everybody go?

DN: We run in a place where it was...

EM: No bombardment.

DN: ...an apartment, house, it was a small...

EM: A small building.

DN: Yeah.

EM: But in Bucharest.

DN: Yeah, in Bucharest, sure.

EM: All right, thank you very much, we, I appreciate it and it's going to be put to good use.

DN: Yeah.

EM: But thank you very much.

DN: It's not--there are people who are more...

EM: Well, don't feel guilty, just be happy that you didn't have to go through that.

DN: Yeah I think so, you see...

EM: Okay, thank you, thank you very much.