

1 Interview with ERNEST FELD
2 Holocaust Oral History Project
3 Date: June 10, 1992.
4 Place: San Francisco, California
5 Interviewer: Sylvia Prozan
6 Richard Kirshman
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8 MS. PROZAN: THIS IS THE HOLOCAUST ORAL HISTORY
9 PROJECT INTERVIEW OF ERNIE FELD, TAKING PLACE IN SAN
10 FRANCISCO ON JUNE 10, 1992. MY NAME IS SYLVIA PROZAN.
11 ASSISTING IN THE INTERVIEW IS RICHARD KIRSHMAN.

12 Q. ERNIE, WHERE WERE YOU BORN?

13 A. I was born in 1925, February 21st, in Lucenec, which was
14 in Czechoslovakia.

15 Q. AND WHAT WAS THE SIZE OF THE TOWN?

16 A. The size of the town was around 30, 40,000.

17 Q. TELL ME ABOUT YOUR FATHER.

18 A. My father, he had a moving company -- not cars, but then
19 horses. And he had a few horses, a few big flat moving
20 like different things from the train station to the
21 businesses. He was transferring, like you have the
22 U.P.S. -- okay -- U.P.S. then, but not so modern. And
23 my mother, she was home. And I had one brother,
24 younger, Alex.

25 Q. WHAT WAS YOUR FATHER'S NAME?

- 1 A. Max.
- 2 Q. WHERE WAS HE FROM?
- 3 A. He was from Czechoslovakia.
- 4 Q. AND HIS PARENTS?
- 5 A. And his parents were Hungaro-Czechoslovakian, because it
- 6 was the Hapsburg Austria-Hungary. And it goes back so
- 7 far, that I have to go back to when Hungary, Austria and
- 8 Czechoslovakia were together. That is the Austria
- 9 Hungarian monarchy, then it started, the parents and so
- 10 on.
- 11 Q. DID HE HAVE A LARGE FAMILY?
- 12 A. And before that, I should correct that my name is
- 13 Ehrenfeld originally. When I got my citizenship here, I
- 14 just cut it in half and E-H-R-E-N was omitted. And the
- 15 only reason I did it, I was a chef at David's. Then I
- 16 went to the City College here, and I'll tell you later.
- 17 Anyway, I got in my own business, and I learned
- 18 English. And when I bake, and that spelling, that made
- 19 me sick. Imagine, E-H-R-E-N-F -- so, I said, let's cut
- 20 it in half. So, when I got my citizenship and papers,
- 21 they just cut it in half. That's how I became Feld.
- 22 Q. WHEN DID YOUR GRANDPARENTS MEET, ON YOUR FATHER'S SIDE?
- 23 A. My father's, they were in Lucenec. They were all
- 24 couples there. And they have a daughter that she has a
- 25 produce market. And they were going to the Shul, to the

1 temple, and coming home. And they waited for the
2 Sabbath to see 30, 40 children, because my father had
3 six, seven, brothers and sisters.

4 And they were very religious -- no TV's -- so
5 everyone had at least six to 10 children. And how many
6 now, that is a different story.

7 Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR MOTHER, WHERE WAS HER FAMILY?

8 A. She was from -- they call it Rimashimony (phonetic),
9 which is also about 60 miles from that city. Her
10 parents was Braun the name, Braun, my mother's side.
11 And her father was a little Jewish guy with a little
12 beard. And in the village where he lived, he was the
13 only Jewish guy.

14 And all the people there, the peasants, they were
15 looking at him like Moses, because when it was passover,
16 he went up in the middle of the village square and took
17 the Hamad, (phonetic) and Bernard said, "Passover is
18 coming; he's burning the bread."

19 And he was supplying his son, who was in Moraska,
20 (phonetic), which is up in Morava, which is part of
21 Czechoslovakia. He has a deli, and he was collecting
22 from the farmers all the eggs and goose and the liver,
23 and the Schaufeld, (phonetic), which is the one that
24 kills the goose and the chickens, and he came out once a
25 week. He collected some gypsies, and they were flocking

1 the feathers from the chicken, and that, and cleaned
2 them, and he packed them and shipped them.

3 And he was going with a horse and the buggy, every
4 day, to different villages, collecting the eggs and
5 things. And every summer, I was waiting I go there,
6 because I love to hold the horse when he went. So, I
7 sat with him.

8 And that was my pleasure to go with the horse, and
9 collecting the eggs, and paying the farmers the money.
10 That was what he was doing. And it was a little
11 village. And he was so religious that every Sabbath,
12 five kilometers -- that's about how many miles -- seven,
13 eight miles, was a temple. And every Sabbath, he went
14 and he rode miles and miles.

15 And if I wanted to get pocket money, I had to
16 schlep me with him and go. I didn't like the whole
17 thing, but I had to go with him because, during the
18 whole week I needed money when I was at the
19 grandparents, and if I didn't go to the temple, then he
20 didn't give it to me. So, that's what I was doing.

21 Q. HOW MUCH WOULD HE GIVE YOU?

22 A. Oh, he gave me then -- the grandmother said, don't tell
23 him -- so, I was schlepping from both sides, so I had
24 enough for going to the candy store and all those
25 things. That was my summer vacation.

1 Q. WERE THERE OTHER SIBLINGS ON YOUR MOTHER'S SIDE?
2 BROTHERS OR SISTERS?

3 A. Yeah. My mother had one, two, three sisters. Two of
4 them -- three sisters my mother had, and one, two, three
5 brothers. One, Louie, he left Czechoslovakia to Paris.
6 He lived in Paris. When the Germans came in, so he lost
7 his life and the family.

8 The other one lived in Morava, Isidor, another son,
9 and he had family and children, all gone in the
10 concentration camp. That's two brothers. The third
11 brother, Alex, he finished M.D. before the war, the
12 doctor. He didn't get in the practice, because it
13 started. Hitler moved into Czechoslovakia, and I don't
14 know how exactly, but he got out of Czechoslovakia to
15 England.

16 And then they created the Czechoslovakia Brigade,
17 which was stationed in Palestine; just like they had
18 Polish Brigade, Czechoslovakia Brigade. And the
19 Americans and the British, they used it when they
20 invaded Germany. And those guys were the first ones
21 to -- how do you say it -- to liberate Czechoslovakia.

22 And when I came back, related to Alex, I met him in
23 Prague. He came back as an officer with the British
24 Brigade, and I came back from the labor camp contingent.
25 So, we met there, two of us. That was in Prague.

1 Anyway, that was the three brothers.

2 And then my mother had sisters, two of them
3 exterminated. And one of the sisters' husband was with
4 me in the same brigade, the labor. And other sister,
5 she was a teacher, Sara. And she is the only one who
6 returned. One brother and one sister from seven people.

7 And Sara, she was liberated, and she moved to
8 Koshinka, (phonetic), which is in Slovenko. And after
9 the war, I met with her. She stayed in Czechoslovakia.
10 She was a teacher in Hungarian, and taught both
11 languages.

12 After January, she died. After the war, I went two
13 times to visit her. And in January, I was still there,
14 and in February they called me, '83, '84, they called
15 me. She died. And Alex, he died five years ago. He
16 had sons and a daughter, and so I met them in Prague.
17 The children are living. My aunt, she didn't have no
18 children.

19 Q. WHEN YOU WERE -- TAKING YOU BACK TO VACATIONS WITH YOUR
20 GRANDPARENTS, WERE YOU THERE ALONE OR WITH YOUR BROTHER?

21 A. No, my brother was so small, he was one or two years
22 old, because my father died when I was seven, so my
23 mother never get married again.

24 Q. HOW OLD WERE YOU ON THESE VACATIONS?

25 A. From seven to ten, twelve. Every year, the two months,

1 so they send me up to the village. My mother wanted to
2 get rid of me -- she had enough all year -- and my
3 grandparents, they were waiting, so I should be there.

4 Q. DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER MET?

5 A. How they met?

6 Q. YES.

7 A. Yes. They met -- their two cities, they are nearby, and
8 families knew each other, so that's how they met there.
9 And when I came back here, I have papers I found that
10 invitation to the marriage, Max and Sara, and I have it
11 with me, a copy, which, after the war, different gentile
12 people knew me.

13 I went back to my city, and they gave me pictures,
14 but they put it away. So, I have the invitation, which
15 is -- I always tell my friends in Tahoe, when I show
16 them, I'm a legitimate son. This is 1924, and I was
17 born in 1925, so --

18 Q. HOW LARGE WAS THE TOWN IN WHICH YOU GREW UP? YOU SAID
19 30, 40,000?

20 A. Yes.

21 Q. HOW MANY JEWS?

22 A. There were a lot of them, because you had two
23 synagogues. One was so big, like you have here,
24 Arguello, the reformed. And the other one was an
25 orthodox, which was at least like Beth Shalom. So,

1 there were a lot of Jews everywhere -- in business, in
2 agriculture, doctors, and everything. In the village,
3 everybody knew each other. I don't remember ever they
4 had any problems of anti-Semitism.

5 Q. YOU CAN'T REMEMBER ANY?

6 A. No. We never had anything until -- until the
7 Hungarians, in '38, they moved in.

8 Q. WHAT ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL?

9 A. I went to the -- we had a Jewish school, up to five
10 grades, the public school, that was Jewish. After that,
11 you had to go to high school, or gymnasium or whatever.
12 That was in two languages, Hungarian and Slovak.

13 Q. WHAT LANGUAGE WOULD YOU SPEAK AT HOME?

14 A. At home, we spoke Hungarian. And I went to school,
15 Slovak. So I spoke both languages. And then the rest
16 of the family, my father's side, they spoke Yiddish,
17 which I never understood.

18 Q. WHERE DID YOU LIVE?

19 A. Oh, I lived in Lucenec then.

20 Q. What kind of dwelling?

21 A. Oh, there was a big complex of two families. And one
22 was a gentile, was a butcher shop. And my mother and
23 we. And we had a big backyard. And we had two
24 neighbors. And we were -- even now I visit -- those
25 people are still alive. They're from -- they're from

1 when we lived together. And Hathaway is her name. Her
2 husband already died, her parents died, but she has some
3 five, six children. They all married.

4 I was three years ago in Czechoslovakia. They took
5 me around and introduced me to everybody, because the
6 mother that's still alive that's my age, we were kids.

7 And they were butchers, and they were always -- I
8 went to play there. And her parents, they loved me.
9 And I loved bacon. And they said, "Just come in.
10 Nobody will see it." So, I always tried. Because I'm
11 not supposed to eat it, so, naturally I wanted to try.

12 That's what it was. We lived together with those
13 people. The name is Polani, and they had children. And
14 her son was also was our conditter -- our baker. And I
15 went to study baking in Lucenec.

16 Q. HOW OLD WERE YOU WHEN YOU WENT TO STUDY?

17 A. I went to high school. And when I finished high school,
18 it was in 1940, I was 15 years. I signed a contract for
19 three years. And I had to go to school in the
20 afternoon, industrial school; and in the morning to the
21 afternoon, I had to work in the bakery. And in 1943, I
22 got my diploma and I became the chef.

23 Q. GOING BACK TO HIGH SCHOOL, THE HIGH SCHOOL WAS WITH JEWS
24 AND NON-JEWS?

25 A. Yeah, yeah.

1 Q. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT IT?

2 A. What do I remember? Oh, we had sometimes -- there
3 also -- I mean, kids what they learn -- gentiles --
4 about Jesus and different problems. Some of them, they
5 said the Jews crucified Jesus, and all those things that
6 the way then they were studying in the gentile schools.

7 And holidays, and so on, that I just read in a
8 newspaper that they had a meeting in Prague, the reform
9 rabbis and the Pope -- and I read that because I am
10 president of the congregation in Tahoe, and I get in all
11 the newspapers -- and I just read that they met with
12 Rome, and the Pope and the other guys from New York, and
13 they decided, the Catholics, they have to correct the
14 books about the teachings that existed up to now,
15 because it said in the papers, I read it, it contributed
16 unwillingly, it said, the Catholic, to the persecution
17 of Jews.

18 Like children, they were bugging us, beating us up
19 sometimes. But there were always a few guys, the Jewish
20 guys, that they were strong enough, so they beat them
21 up. So, it was 50/50.

22 Q. YOU DIDN'T GET BEATEN?

23 A. No. I got along. Maybe because I -- even now -- and in
24 concentration camp, and the Germans and Hungarians, the
25 whole life, they always thought I don't behave so

1 Jewish. I didn't have long payess. And I thought and I
2 think like anybody, the rest of them.

3 So even when I was in the concentration camp,
4 everybody -- I even went out to the villages to get some
5 extra food, and they never want to believe that I am
6 Jewish. "You don't look Jewish." You know, "You don't
7 look Jewish;" then I'm okay.

8 Q. What color was your hair?

9 A. Black, and blue eyes. And the way I talk, even now, I
10 have the bakery, I have a lot of people coming from all
11 over the United States, 17 years.

12 And I have just now, from Johannesburg, a couple
13 that ran away from there because of all those problems.
14 And he is a doctor in Sacramento. And his wife and they
15 were outside, looking in the bakery, and they wanted to
16 come in, and they saw me.

17 And she went up, and they came in, and then she
18 said -- when she came in -- "You have challah?" I said,
19 "Yeah." And when she said, "challah," she said, "It's
20 "challah?"

21 A. I said, "If you know it's challah, I'll show you my
22 oven." I even take to her a little piece of dough. She
23 said, "You are Jewish?" Then she started laughing and
24 arguing with her husband, because her husband said, "You
25 told me don't go in because it looks like a German guy.

1 He doesn't have any even in his face."

2 And then they were so excited. And Friday night,
3 they asked me, in Jewish, "Maybe you have a candle
4 holder?" And I said, "Sure, I have. What do you mean?"
5 And I said, "You want to have a Friday night dinner?
6 Stay at the Hyatt. We have another couple." And they
7 said, "How did you get here?" I said, "You come in the
8 evening."

9 So, I shut the shop at 6:00, and I put up the
10 tables. I brought the candelabra, the candles, and I
11 have the cover for the challah that I brought from
12 Jerusalem. I put the two challahs, and get the wine
13 cup.

14 And they came in. And they were so excited, they
15 were taking pictures. And I made a Kiddush. And then I
16 let them do the Motzi and the challah. And then I made
17 the Israeli dinner with pita, felafel and humus.

18 They couldn't get over it. They invited me to
19 Sacramento, and every time they sent somebody, 17 years.
20 People write letters from Chicago, from New York, the
21 North Shore, Forest.

22 I am the president of the congregation. And Yom
23 Kippur I sang the Kol Nidre. And at the Hyatt, I rent
24 Hugo's rotisserie the last four years, and I have a
25 hundred people for Passover dinner.

1 I buy here the kosher meat, everything. So, they
2 say -- and when it is Yom Kippur, then they blow the
3 Shofar in the evening. I run home -- it's five minutes
4 to the bakery -- and I have already the whole dinner,
5 with the lox, schmear, cream cheese, the whole schmear.
6 Nobody goes home. They have lunch, dinner there. And
7 so they say, religious, German, the president, he cook,
8 he hunt -- what else do you want here in this little
9 hole here in Incline Village?

10 Q. WHICH SYNAGOGUE DID YOU GO TO?

11 A. Where?

12 Q. IN YOUR HOME TOWN?

13 A. The orthodox. Everybody, long beards. Everybody was
14 the orthodox.

15 Q. Why didn't you have payess?

16 A. I wasn't excited about it. I had to go to the Sunday
17 school, but I -- all the family there, the brothers,
18 sisters, everybody, the ten kids, so I had to go with
19 them. So I went there. But my mother, she was more
20 modern, so she didn't insist on those things.

21 Q. You said that you didn't behave Jewish, when we were
22 talking about high school. What does that mean?

23 A. Not that I didn't behave, but I didn't demonstrate.
24 When they ask me the same thing, what I do in the bakery
25 in Tahoe, the Germans and others coming in, first of

1 all, I show all my pictures that I did in the camps:
2 Torahs for bar mitzvah, and the books, and I made
3 exhibitions in Israel of different things from sugar,
4 globes and building. And I have letters from Ben Gurion
5 and Chaim Weitzman. I did all this when they were still
6 alive.

7 So, all these pictures I am putting out there. And
8 people who are around, they see it. And I have a menu,
9 and I print it. They couldn't put it unkosher, because
10 I have a few things kosher in Tahoe.

11 So, I wrote in Hebrew letters, and the printer put
12 it on. So, when the people come in, I show them. And
13 the Hyatt sends people over because I have kosher food
14 in the freezer. So, I don't hide it. And this is what
15 you're asking me now?

16 Q. ABOUT HIGH SCHOOL?

17 A. Oh, the high school. So, it's the same thing. I just
18 show them what I am. But I did not -- in order to --
19 they say -- to be separated, you separate yourself. I
20 was friendly to all. I didn't see any difference
21 between the gentiles. Everyone is my friend.

22 And I didn't put up all this, I mean long payess,
23 I, myself, didn't think you should demonstrate every
24 time he's Jewish, he's not Jewish. I didn't understand
25 why aren't we all the same.

1 I went to the temple. I went to the Mikva. I did
2 all those things for the rest, but didn't make it so
3 demonstrative that -- I am. If they asked me, I was.

4 I remember when the Hungarians came in. And then
5 the first thing was curfew, before they took us away,
6 the yellow arm band. And after 6:00 in the evening, you
7 cannot walk on the street. And nobody knew. I couldn't
8 understand.

9 So, I sneak away from the house, and I ran out to
10 the street. I wanted to see what it mean. So, I met
11 the policeman. And he see me, and he tells me, "Are you
12 Jewish? Don't you know you're not supposed to go out on
13 the street." And I said, "I know, but I don't know
14 why."

15 So, he said, "Before I beat you up, get home
16 quickly," because we knew each other. So then I knew
17 why I'm not supposed. I couldn't understand what the
18 whole difference about what they were persecuting us.

19 Q. DO JEWISH FAMILIES CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS?

20 A. Orthodox kosher restaurants, my mother, and all the
21 sisters, brothers, they had Passover Seder in the
22 morning till 4:00 o'clock. That was even -- and now,
23 left over from the families everywhere, two, three kids,
24 like me, we went to Israel, and they are there. They're
25 living in Benabarak, (phonetic), if you know what

1 Benebarak is. It is closed Saturday. And every one had
2 nine, ten children. And all ten children already got
3 married, and they have children. When I go there, it's
4 more than 500, since 1949.

5 Q. You're cousins?

6 A. Cousins. My father's brothers, sisters, the families.
7 And it's all with the strammel, you know, the fur hat.
8 And the women have the hair, the peruke, the sheitl,
9 (phonetic), in Yiddish, and the younger ones, and I
10 would go there.

11 So, visiting there the first time -- now I know --
12 but the first time I went there from America, and
13 visiting, and want to hug them, and they said, "Just
14 give your hand." Don't -- you don't -- you're not
15 supposed to even touch. My own family, they are so
16 religious.

17 Q. HOW MANY PEOPLE WOULD THERE BE AT PASSOVER SEDER WHEN
18 YOU WERE YOUNG?

19 A. The family, itself, it was fourteen. And me and my
20 mother. So, there were about 20 people. And Aaron, one
21 of my father's brothers, he always took me there. But
22 you can't go every place, because my father wasn't
23 alive, so everybody felt sorry. So, he invited once
24 this family, that family. When it's a holiday, I should
25 be there.

1 Q. WHAT YEAR DID YOUR FATHER DIE?

2 A. Let's see -- '32.

3 Q. OF WHAT?

4 A. He picked up in the First World War -- that was -- I
5 know this story -- malaria, which is getting dizzy,
6 attack, and things left over. He get suddenly dizzy.
7 Once, he fall down from the bicycle in the city.

8 And one day, I was playing in the backyard, and we
9 had a big open water hole where they bring the water up.
10 And so some of my kids, they said, "Look inside.
11 There's a hat in the water." And I looked inside. And
12 we run into the parents, each of us. Somebody is dead.

13 And that was my father. He went into the water.
14 And then the fire department came. I remember even
15 today, they pulled him out, and put him down there on a
16 white blanket. And the doctor -- nothing helped. That
17 was it.

18 Q. Had he served in the army?

19 A. Yes.

20 Q. Where?

21 A. The First World War, the Hungarian, in 1918.

22 Q. And do you know where he was when he --

23 A. No, I don't know. I don't know. I never, even if I
24 asked, I already have forgotten. But I know all of
25 them. Some of them, they showed medals that they got.

1 And he was a sergeant. Even as a kid I heard all the
2 stories when they talked to each other. We listen, when
3 they got together: Do you remember this, do you
4 remember that. All of them, they were big patriots of
5 the Hungarian.

6 Q. DID YOU PLAY WITH YOUR BROTHER, ALEX, OFTEN?

7 A. Sure. And I beat him up a few times because I was much
8 bigger than him. And I always helped my mother, because
9 she was alone and I was eight, nine, ten, so I helped in
10 the kitchen and in the restaurant. That's how I got in
11 the bakery business. I love so much licking, eating, so
12 she said, "You better go and learn baking."

13 Q. WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DID SHE BAKE, MAKE?

14 A. She was famous with the strudel. The whole city, they
15 came, what she make strudel and other things. She was
16 very good in cooking and bakery. The whole city knew
17 her -- not only Jews -- everybody, because of home
18 cooking that was the specialty.

19 And she had regular customers. She had some 20, 30
20 young guys that worked. And we had also four rooms,
21 like bed and breakfast; that, plus the people just
22 walked in. And it was kosher.

23 Q. SO, PART OF YOUR PLACE WAS SHE BAKED AND SOLD?

24 A. In the restaurant.

25 Q. IN THE RESTAURANT?

1 A. Yes. I went to school and I helped her. So then I went
2 to study baking.

3 Q. AT HER SUGGESTION?

4 A. Yeah. I mean, she was my mother, so I didn't have all
5 the brain what I should do. I knew I wanted to
6 play; that's all. The rest I didn't know what I want.

7 Q. YOU MENTIONED THAT YOU SIGNED A CONTRACT. WHAT DOES
8 THAT MEAN?

9 A. You couldn't do like here in the United States. Here is
10 everything Reader's Digest and instant. Everybody in
11 six months is already a professional.

12 You had to sign a contract for three years. And if
13 you broke it up, nobody will take you anymore, because
14 that's the end. You have to hold out three years, with
15 no salary, no money, working six days a week, ten,
16 twelve hours, washing, cooking, changing the diapers on
17 the boss's children -- anything. It's a cold boynik
18 (phonetic), as they say in Hebraic.

19 Everything like in a department store, everything I
20 was doing. But this way, in three years, I got a
21 profession. Here, in City College, when I went in here
22 to study, I went just for the language. But I wanted to
23 know what Americans do, to understand. And when I found
24 out one month I was -- people here in the city -- and
25 when they found out I am the chef at David's, all the

1 international chefs, and things, they said, "That's it.
2 You are a student chef, and don't fool us, and don't
3 make homework, don't make nothing."

4 I got A's in high school. I graduated here with
5 the Presidio Army School in San Francisco, because of
6 the English. Then I went to City College so that, I
7 mean, going from one place to another, something -- what
8 are you saying?

9 Q. THE SCHOOL?

10 A. No, no, no. Jewish, forget. There is only one school.
11 The first four (inaudible) -- the Jewish congregation,
12 they hold the school, so the first four years they
13 should learn Jewish. It's like the Hebrew Academy. You
14 learn religion and general subject.

15 Q. AND THEN HIGH SCHOOL?

16 A. No more Jewish. Everything is general.

17 Q. SO, WHAT KINDS OF THINGS DID YOU LEARN HOW TO COOK,
18 MAKE, BAKE?

19 A. No, no. At school we learned the business, sanitation,
20 and how to become a professional. And they gave us the
21 basis to be a businessman. And the other half, from
22 morning till afternoon, and other days, I was just
23 working in the bakery. And you do everything,
24 everything what comes up.

25 So, all the bakery profession here, you have the

1 doughnut, somebody makes the cake, somebody cooks.
2 Anything you want, I do it. I had schools that I was
3 teaching in hospital in Israel, all women, that they
4 were managing hotels and convalescent homes. I was
5 teaching them two weeks there, on the spot, half day
6 theory, and then we cooked it, and we ate it.

7 Q. DID YOU HAVE A BAR MITZVAH?

8 A. Sure, I had a bar mitzvah.

9 Q. WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER ABOUT IT?

10 A. I don't remember much about it, but I know I had a
11 bar mitzvah because of the pictures and telling the
12 things of what -- my cousins telling me, "you were
13 here," and my father. And the rabbi in Lucenec, he made
14 sure every time I am with his own children, together
15 there, since I didn't have my own father.

16 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THE RABBI?

17 A. Sure. His sons are in Jerusalem, and his daughters,
18 half of the family, and I go there and we meet. I have
19 pictures that they just put up in Jerusalem -- I don't
20 know what the month -- a big plaque of Lucenec, of the
21 city, in memory of all the people that died in Lucenec.

22 And I have a picture where everybody who is still
23 alive from Lucenec, everybody came to Jerusalem, and
24 they opened this big plaque there, and people go there
25 once a year.

1 Q. NOW, WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF -- (inaudible)

2 A. The first memory of that -- they came in (inaudible)
3 tanks. Nothing that you see now in the army. They were
4 coming in with horses. (Inaudible) conquering the west
5 with the (inaudible), and all that. That's how they
6 came in. Horses and soldiers and big buggies. And
7 that's how they moved. (Inaudible.)

8 They gave -- like the Black Panthers they call
9 themselves here -- they gave some special name, that
10 they hated the Jews.

11 But they have businesses. And I remember when
12 (inaudible). And they took -- (inaudible). That was
13 the last, the Jews.

14 Q. WHAT YEAR WAS THIS?

15 A. 1938. Hitler gave a present to the Hungarians.

16 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER HAVING FEAR?

17 A. Fear, sure. Then, it started. Now, my mother could go
18 only from 10:00 o'clock in the morning to the market for
19 the restaurant to shop. The market was open at 6:00,
20 but Jews are not supposed to go. That's how we started.
21 Slowly. So, the cream and the cheap stuff, it's for the
22 gentiles, and not for the Jews. And at 10:00, then my
23 mother could go down.

24 There were a lot of farmers, that she knew them so
25 long. And everybody hated Jews. And those farmers, we

1 went -- they came in, sneaking into the house earlier,
2 so that my mother should have the meat, the eggs, and
3 everything, so she -- because, by 10:00, not much left
4 over on the market.

5 Q. WHAT OTHER CHANGES WERE THERE?

6 A. Well, they started in school. I mean, they --
7 everything that you can imagine. And the businesses
8 were limited when you open, and certain businesses had
9 to be closed because it was too conspicuous.

10 And then in the evening we didn't go out, because
11 the young guys, the gentiles, they were -- they got the
12 inspiration from all the rules. And whenever they saw
13 one Jewish boy, or what, they beat him up good. So, we
14 started holding together like in a ghetto from '38 to
15 '44.

16 In spite of that, Hortwich (phonetic) was the
17 president of Hungary. He insisted to the last moment
18 that the Germans cannot come in to Hungary, and they
19 cannot dictate all the executions and deportations of
20 the Jews.

21 And in '44, then there was a coup, and the
22 Hungarians, they call them Milosh (phonetic), which is
23 SS, they took over the country. And then they started.
24 Then they gave the order in Lucenec, everybody moves in
25 in this area, in a quarter of the city. And every house

1 that has four rooms, or what, every family leave the
2 house just what taking what they can carry in the hand,
3 and they get one room. And the kitchen, they use it
4 together.

5 So, I was there one week, so I helped my mother and
6 my brother move in. Then it was '44, and then I had to
7 go to the labor camp.

8 Q. BEFORE THIS HAPPENED, IN BETWEEN '38 --

9 A. And '44.

10 Q. AND '44, WHAT WERE THE TYPICAL DAYS LIKE FOR YOU?

11 A. Oh, I went to where I worked. He wasn't Jewish. This
12 was the bakery where I -- people there -- people,
13 itself, they knew. And those that were decent, and so
14 forth, they just didn't demonstrate openly that they are
15 still going with the Jews and inviting to the house.

16 They just tried to be polite, you know, polite.
17 Don't call me, I call you. And we didn't push too far.
18 We are happy that they leave us alone.

19 Q. DID YOU STILL GO TO THE SYNAGOGUE?

20 A. When?

21 Q. FROM '38 TO '44?

22 A. Yeah, yeah, we still went to the synagogue. They left
23 that, because every order that came from the Hungarians
24 from the Germans, it was handed to the president, and he
25 had to execute it, tell us what not to do, and what to

1 do. And after the synagogue, after the praying, he
2 said, "Now, don't go there. Don't do this. This is the
3 order," and so on.

4 Q. DO YOU RECALL YOUR MOTHER'S SPEAKING TO YOU ABOUT THE
5 CHANGES?

6 A. You are talking now -- I mean, I saw -- I was already
7 18, so I saw it myself. I knew what's going on.

8 Q. DID YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE CAMPS, WHAT WAS
9 HAPPENING TO THE JEWS IN OTHER COUNTRIES?

10 A. We heard that they picked up from Poland, and then from
11 Germany, all the Jews, because we had a lot of people
12 that they run away from the Germans and come to Hungary,
13 and Hungary gave them a place to stay.

14 They could, as a political, or Jewish or what, so
15 they escaped from there. So, they were saying that they
16 take them from Poland and to work, and this and that.
17 But all that, with the gas chambers and that, only when
18 I got into the labor camp, and I saw people I met on the
19 road, because they came, brigades, and big train loads,
20 that they put them in and took them to Poland.

21 Then I started in the labor camp seeing what's
22 going on. But, really, I didn't believe it until I was
23 liberated.

24 And then the families in my city came home. And
25 some of them, like you see in the pictures when they

1 show from the Holocaust, and every family, many that I
2 knew, went to the house, and I saw that his wife was all
3 bone and half dead. I was sick. I just -- I couldn't
4 believe it.

5 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER WHEN THE ORDER CAME THROUGH FOR THE
6 GHETTO?

7 A. Yes. Beck -- that's the name -- the city member, the
8 president. And he was a general, or whatever, from the
9 First World War. He had a lot of medals, and he was
10 respected. So, the police chief gave him all the
11 orders.

12 And he got the Judenrat together, the Jews from the
13 temple and the elders, and they formed like a little
14 management of the ghetto. And they are inside, doing
15 the whole thing, cooperating with the police.

16 The police -- the Hungarians tried -- a few were
17 beating up Jews. But a majority tried to do it -- they
18 knew you a long time, so let's do it nicely.

19 And they did it nicely. And we thought it was a
20 ghetto, and we thought it would blow over. How long can
21 tsoress -- Jews are used to it. Nobody knew -- when I
22 left for the labor camp, I left my mother there, in one
23 room there, but I never thought that what will happen.

24 Nobody believed it. Nobody believed it. We didn't
25 hear anything. The Hungarians, it was all separated.

1 There were newspapers depicting Jews with the long noses
2 and satyrs. And instigating. And slowly, they build up
3 the youth and other people that they started really
4 hating Jews. And they could break up a window, or beat
5 up the Jews. And they worked on that, the government,
6 but politely.

7 Q. WHAT DO YOU RECALL OF MOVING YOUR MOTHER TO THE GHETTO?
8 WHAT WAS SHE ABLE TO TAKE?

9 A. I took a four-wheel buggy, that usually horses pull, and
10 I myself pulled it. Like you see in the "Fiddler on the
11 Roof," the guy, Tevya, he pulls it; and the horse got
12 sick, and he pulls the milk. That I was pulling the
13 buggy. And every time they put on furniture, I made a
14 few trips from the house to the ghetto.

15 But you can just put so much in one room. And the
16 rest, we had a lot of neighbors, and my mother said,
17 "You take this, and you take this." And everybody was
18 crying, the neighbors.

19 You go there -- and this -- and really, they're
20 sorry, you know. And then, when she was out in the
21 ghetto, so she prepared my camping bag on my back, and
22 things she got together. And I went to the train
23 station. And all the Jews were there. And the army was
24 there organizing us and putting us in wagons. And we
25 go.

1 We got to -- the name is Kishkun Latassa,
2 (phonetic), which is in Hungary, down not far away from
3 Budapest, a little ranch, and there we started camping.
4 And they organized us, and divide us in brigades. You
5 work here. You work there. And this was what was going
6 on.

7 And we had our Hungarian overseers, I mean from the
8 army, that they watched us.

9 Q. YOU WERE 19 AT THAT TIME?

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. DID YOU -- HOW MANY -- HOW LARGE WAS THE JEWISH
12 CONTINGENT?

13 A. Oh, they were different brigades. A few hundred, a few
14 hundred. And we ran. And everybody went on the field,
15 one at the airport. They were moving us, gave us orders
16 every morning where you go to work.

17 Q. HOW MANY FROM YOUR TOWN WENT?

18 A. From my town there, I had maybe some ten, fifteen.
19 Because, on the train station, when we got to this
20 place, Kishkunata, (phonetic), they started dividing:
21 You go this way and you go that way. And that was from
22 all Hungary, so we got mixed up from different cities.

23 Q. WHEN YOU LEFT KISHKUNATA, (PHONETIC), DID YOUR FRIENDS
24 GO WITH YOU? HOW MANY LEFT?

25 A. Oh, at the train station, you had thousands. I mean men

1 from 17 or 16, that looked healthy -- they didn't live
2 at home -- other than -- they that looked so sick, they
3 left at home at the ghetto, and they didn't take them.

4 Up to 45, 50. And the men all there went out to
5 work. I mean, they were organized. At home stayed home
6 only the real old ones and the real young ones, and the
7 women in the ghetto.

8 Q. AND HOW OLD WAS YOUR BROTHER?

9 A. At that time, six or seven.

10 Q. WHEN YOU LEFT, WHAT DID YOU HAVE IN YOUR MIND ABOUT WHAT
11 WAS GOING TO BE AHEAD OF YOU? WHAT DID YOU ANTICIPATE?

12 A. Who anticipated? We thought that, just like when the
13 youngsters here going to the army, and we thought, so,
14 we're Jewish, so we just work with the Army. And you,
15 what did you bring? What did your mother pack in your
16 rucksack? What do you have here?

17 That was all the talking. We didn't think anything
18 bad, because we were -- we knew that, because we were
19 Jewish, they took us. But we didn't -- if somebody
20 said -- if whomever I talk -- maybe the adults, 40, 50,
21 maybe they knew it, but they didn't tell us what's going
22 on. So, the young guys like me, we didn't even dream
23 what we're getting into.

24 Q. HOW LONG WAS THE JOURNEY?

25 A. A day or so from Lucenec. And we got there, and they

1 started sorting. And the names -- you belong here --
2 and then the army officers and plain soldiers, some ten,
3 they were like in prison camps. They took 200 here, 200
4 there. You will stay here.

5 Like we were put in a ranch where is like big
6 ranch, so in Texas you have. So, they had their
7 hundreds of cows in a big place where they keep the
8 cows -- how you call it in English?

9 Q. BARN?

10 A. Barn, yeah. And one side, the cows, they got the food,
11 and they're standing in the line; and the other side,
12 there were the straw and --

13 So, they had there some hundreds of cows in a big
14 place where they keep the cows -- how you call it in
15 English -- a barn, yeah -- and one side, the cows, they
16 got the food, and they're standing in the line, and the
17 other side, there was the straw and the food for the
18 cows.

19 On the other side, they made room. We put down
20 there our blankets and things. We slept on one side in
21 one row, and the cows on the other side. And it was
22 pretty good, because winter, from the cows, it stinks a
23 little bit, but it was pretty warm.

24 That part, I remember, with the cows is good,
25 because we would freeze to death, and the big barn and

1 the cows. That was our place where we slept. From
2 there we went to work every day.

3 Q. What month of the year was this?

4 A. We started in April, '44 -- in March, '44. And it went
5 through till '45. Also, as I said, because the
6 Hungarian government resisted, so the Hungarians, that's
7 why you have all the in Hungary -- now you have schools
8 and hospitals. And the government put up -- like Tony
9 Curtis put up that new willow tree of copper and steel,
10 and everybody can put up the name of the person who
11 died.

12 So, in Hungary, the government, they want to pay
13 now compensation for the lost property and things. I
14 just talked to them. The law is just working now. So,
15 they tried, from all of them -- all the countries that
16 you had there, they had the power.

17 Because they cooperated with Hitler, they sent the
18 army, and like the Japanese, so they left and they
19 pressured them. But they left them. You kill your own
20 Jews. So, they didn't move in. And they tried to lip
21 service.

22 Oh, they killed a few, just for so they trust them,
23 the Germans. But the real trouble started then in '44.

24 Q. WHAT KIND OF WORK DID YOU DO?

25 A. Anything you want. The most interesting picture was

1 Ferry Head (phonetic). That's how they call the
2 Hungarian airport -- Ferry Head 1, Ferry Head 2 --
3 because they build the two airports in Budapest because
4 all the tourists coming in.

5 And then there was only one airport. And all the
6 German -- they use the German planes, the bombers, and
7 the Stukas, and everything, they came down there.

8 And at night, that was the most beautiful thing,
9 one night, the Jews are sitting in the village, and we
10 saw the Russians coming in, bombing Budapest, and then
11 the American liberators, and they are bombing.

12 In the daytime, they are bombing the big holes, the
13 craters. They couldn't use the airport. And they got
14 the Jews there, and we were filling up the holes so the
15 planes can take off. That was our job, to keep, to
16 maintain the airport.

17 Then they took us to other places, and we were
18 digging holes, and anything they want. Whatever they
19 needed us, they moved around. We didn't stay in one
20 place in Hungary.

21 Q. HOW LONG WERE YOU IN THE BARN?

22 A. About three, four months, that part. Then they moved us
23 out. The names you can't write down because the
24 Hungarian names sound so -- but, anyway, after, we
25 worked together with the Germans, and we build new

1 airports, brand-new. We were doing all this job. They
2 are mixed overseers, German and Hungarian soldiers. And
3 we are working there and building new airport.

4 And then, at home, anything they needed service to
5 the army so they can use the soldiers to fight, so we
6 were servicing the kitchen, the latrine, anything you
7 want.

8 Q. WHEN YOU SAY, "BUILDING THE AIRPORT," DOES THAT MEAN
9 CONSTRUCTING THE RUNWAYS?

10 A. Constructing the runways -- not the building. The sand,
11 doing squares, and then asphalt, and then with trucks
12 bringing in, unload, put it, straighten up -- just as
13 you see it when they work on the new road -- an airport
14 is like a new road from the beginning.

15 Q. HOW LONG A WORKDAY WOULD YOU HAVE?

16 A. Well, they got us out at 7:00 o'clock till 5:00, 6:00
17 o'clock in the evening, until it was light.

18 Q. WHAT DID YOU DO FOR FOOD?

19 A. We had our own cooks, the Jews, who were in the kitchen,
20 and they cooked. And they brought us the rations. And
21 then we had to divide it for a week or so. And we were
22 cooking and doing things. So, people got food.

23 Q. WHAT WERE THE RATIONS?

24 A. It was not bad, not bad. I was working in the kitchen.
25 Every time they found me. And then when the Germans --

1 and my sergeant, the Hungarian, he wanted to show off
2 that he has a Jewish guy and he knows how to cook from
3 anything -- then the officers' club, the Germans, they
4 took me there.

5 And I started making hors d'oeuvres, and things
6 from cans from nothing that I didn't dream. And they
7 had no ravioli and no pasta and no nothing. Just flour.
8 And from the flour, I made dough, and I made the pastas,
9 and the soup noodle -- anything you want -- from
10 nothing.

11 And so they expected me, and they took me out from
12 the general work.

13 And one German officer, he was always watching over
14 me, because, without me, there's no Christmas, there's
15 nothing. So, he watched over me that nothing should
16 happen to me. So, I got through pretty good there.
17 Just from flour, and they love -- that's in Hebrew --
18 poppy seed and the wide noodles -- that's Christmas.
19 Without this, there's no Christmas -- not the Germans,
20 not the Hungarians.

21 And they wanted if I could make it. I had no
22 noodles. So, I said, "I can make it." So, he said, the
23 officer, the German -- "Whatever you need, just tell me;
24 I'm standing next to you."

25 "First of all," I said, "I need a hundred Jews." I

1 did not need to much, but they don't go to work. He
2 said, "Okay, here you have." I said, "They don't go to
3 work." I said, "Now I need all the champagne bottles
4 that you guys are drinking there, the empty ones."

5 The Jews go there, and I was yelling out, "Jews, go
6 out," just so he feel that I am also on his side, just
7 to make him feel better. Because when he says "Dirty
8 Jews," it's different; but if I say so -- and the whole
9 gang, I knew how to cook, so everybody want to go with
10 me.

11 I needed shovels. Anything I needed, the German
12 officer was there, and I would get. There was a hole
13 with a backyard, like stones, and the hundred Jews, they
14 cleaned up all the stones right away. And it was
15 smooth, the whole area.

16 And I was giving the orders, and the German was
17 just standing there. And Jews, they wanted to please me
18 because they wanted to be around, not going out, because
19 that was a good job and more food.

20 So, then I got the shovels, and I made a circle
21 with a stick on the ground. And I said, "Behind the
22 circle, you dig it then all around, all you guys, until
23 you get to your pupik, to the belly button."

24 And when they did this, I said, "Now all the Jews
25 in the hole" -- and I sent ten of them -- they took

1 apart a whole tent, you know, those big tents that they
2 live in it, the army.

3 They pulled it apart, straightened it out, and they
4 covered the whole middle section like a tablecloth. And
5 I brought a big sack of flour. And one guy was going
6 and pouring flour all in the middle there, and the Jews
7 standing around, and they took, everybody, a champagne
8 bottle.

9 And in the kitchen, I took three Jews. And in the
10 big kettle there, water and flour, they kneaded, and I
11 made the dough. And then I started making little ran --
12 (phonetic), little pieces of dough, and handed it to the
13 guys. And they took it there, and to everybody in the
14 circle, and they started rolling it.

15 Q. WITH THE CHAMPAGNE BOTTLES?

16 A. With the champagne bottles. And they got it into nice
17 round, thin, like the Italians make pasta. And then I
18 got this together. One guy went around and, on his arm,
19 got it all collected, and put it in the kitchen.

20 I rolled them up. I cut them, boiled it in the
21 water, put the poppy seeds on it, and we had poppy seed
22 noodles for the Officers' Club.

23 And because of that, the Germans said, "With the
24 rest of the flour, you can make for the Jews." We don't
25 have food there. We just had certain things. And that

1 was our desert.

2 And when it was ready, the big kettle is ready and
3 they're standing in the line. I saw what's coming. I
4 said to somebody else, "You deal it out," because I
5 thought the person -- I will be in the dough there,
6 because it was like -- like when they have an invasion.

7 I mean, everybody wanted to get there. And they
8 went in the hand and food, and eating, and got their
9 poppy seed noodle out. And then, I got the --
10 (inaudible) salted butter, making sweet butter. I
11 invented things.

12 Q. HOW DID YOU DO THAT?

13 A. How did I do it?

14 Q. MAKE THE BUTTER?

15 A. I got out the cans of the salted butter, put it in
16 water, told them just wash it, until he washed it off
17 like gold in the water. He washed out the salt. There
18 was no more salty. Then I got ice. And then I took
19 this butter and eggs we had.

20 I took the egg yolk, mixed it in the butter, and it
21 was so yellow beautiful that Christopher -- here, they
22 don't have such a nice butter. And I made cheese. It
23 got hard. I cut it in squares. Jews wrapped it. And
24 the Germans had tea butter.

25 So, they thought anything so genius they had to

1 keep alive. And because of that, then they let me -- I
2 had some money, and I paid the Hungarian villages. They
3 had those little ovens outside, like in Israel they
4 bake, the people, from bricks.

5 And I paid for it, and I used it, and I bought
6 material. And I started -- while we were there -- it
7 was not too long -- every Friday night, the Jews came
8 home. Like in the flea market, I had the table outside,
9 and I had challahs and pastry, everything for the Jews.

10 And the Germans just let me, because one day they
11 gave me to do whatever I want to do because I'm doing
12 for the officers and those things. But it was two,
13 three months of honeymoon.

14 Q. TELL ME A LITTLE BIT MORE ABOUT THE HONEYMOON. HOW MANY
15 DAYS -- SEVEN DAYS A WEEK YOU WORKED, ONE FOR THE JEWS
16 AND SIX FOR THE GERMANS?

17 A. Yeah, yeah. Fridays, they let me because I said Friday
18 night I want to prepare.

19 Q. AND YOU SAID YOU HAD MONEY. WHERE DID YOU GET THE
20 MONEY?

21 A. Everybody brought money (inaudible). Every month, a
22 minimum, I don't know, like in the prison. Even here in
23 the United States, the prisoners get money. So, there
24 was a little money. And some people brought a little
25 extra money, so they had money to buy. And I got the

1 money what I paid for the material for the challahs and
2 things.

3 Q. YOU WENT INTO THE VILLAGES AND BOUGHT?

4 A. I was in the villages. And I went. And then I bought
5 from this guy eggs, and this guy this. And I used his
6 kitchen. I used his oven. And when it was ready, I
7 opened the table -- I mean stones and bricks, and put it
8 out. And when the guys came home from the work, first,
9 it was, "How did you do it?" But then it was you got
10 used to it, every good things.

11 Q. DID YOU DO THIS YOURSELF? DID PEOPLE --

12 A. Myself, myself.

13 Q. HOW MANY JEWS?

14 A. There was 150, 200. I didn't bake for the Jews.
15 Whatever I could get my hands on, I made it. If it was
16 salt, I bought it. I got my money for the material. So
17 it was nothing there. It wasn't how much I want, how
18 much I could get. It was how much the village was ready
19 to sell me material. It wasn't what I wanted.

20 Q. DID YOU HAVE ANY TROUBLE BUYING BECAUSE YOU WERE JEWISH?

21 A. They knew. The whole gang, we were Jewish there. So
22 the Hungarians, they weren't too excited. The
23 villagers, they're not politicians. They got along
24 before with the Jews. With the villagers -- all the
25 villages that you had, they were hiding Jews, they were

1 hiding children.

2 Even now, they make jokes in Hungary, that remember
3 the Second World War, those that remember, and at the
4 Catholic Churches, the priests were saying, "There's not
5 enough room, too many Jews here," because they took them
6 in to save them.

7 Q. WHEN YOU WERE WORKING AT THE OFFICERS' CLUB, WHERE WERE
8 YOU STAYING?

9 A. They had the nice houses, and we were living with the
10 cows. But it was in one big ranch, so I didn't have to
11 go too far -- just walk over there.

12 Q. HOW MANY TIMES A WEEK WOULD YOU BE MAKING FOOD?

13 A. I couldn't tell you, because it was so long. I just
14 know, any time they had something -- they had their cook
15 there for the Germans, their pastries, and things -- and
16 I said I can do this and that. And the chef, I mean, he
17 was older than me, and he couldn't do it, and I can do
18 it. So, Jews always make miracles -- Moses and minyans.

19 Q. HOW DID THE HONEYMOON END?

20 A. They moved us out from there to another city or village,
21 or whatever, and then we worked there and we worked
22 here. So, that was it.

23 Q. AND DID GERMANS EVER COMPLIMENT YOU ON YOUR COOKING?

24 A. Sure. That wasn't the SS. That was the Wehrmacht. You
25 see, in the old movies, not once they had the arguments

1 with the SS, because they tried to act out like the
2 Russians, the KGB, and the Russian Army also didn't like
3 it too much that somebody oversees the things.

4 So, that was there, just like what it was, like the
5 Germans and the Hungarians, after almost the end of the
6 war, in March, we were marching, everybody, with the
7 Germans, Jews, brigade out to Germany.

8 And we were before the Austrian border. And we
9 were marching on the road. And the SS with trucks and
10 tanks moving. And we were on the side, because they
11 want to go faster. We weren't too excited to go fast,
12 because we wanted to stay in Hungary.

13 And then one of the SS guys I remember jumped from
14 the truck, right there where I was standing in the road
15 marching. And my uncle -- my mother's sister, her
16 husband -- he was going there.

17 And this guy came there with a long iron stick, and
18 started beating anybody who he can reach with the iron
19 stick. And I remember my uncle, his ear, he cut off
20 half of his ear. And it was bleeding.

21 And I was -- I didn't know what was going on,
22 because that's the first time I saw with my own eyes
23 things that happen.

24 And Hungarian Army on the side who was watching,
25 the soldiers, and the sergeant in the front, and they

1 saw the screaming. And the sergeant run back there.
2 "What's going on?" And he saw the SS there beating the
3 Jews. And this sergeant -- he said, "Leave them alone."

4 And he didn't want to leave it, the SS guy beating
5 us. So, he pulled out his gun, his revolver, and he
6 hold it on the German. He said, "If you don't stop it,
7 I shoot you, because those Jews were given to me. I
8 kill them, not you."

9 So, when he said he'd kill them, so, the German guy
10 stopped, because he thought -- but he really
11 lip-serviced, because he saved us, that guy.

12 Q. THE PERSON WHO WAS GUARDING YOU AS YOU WERE BAKING AND
13 COOKING, THAT WAS AN SS?

14 A. He was just coming to get me from the camp, from the --
15 it was like a village -- and he came over to the camp to
16 the Jews. And from the sergeant, the Hungarian
17 sergeant, he said, "I take him." So, that's all. Ten
18 minutes, I was on the other side where the Germans were.
19 And they took me back and back, so I couldn't walk
20 around, because we were always watched.

21 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER ANY OTHER SPECIAL MEALS THAT YOU MADE
22 FOR THE GERMANS?

23 A. No -- that -- I mean, I made, from the pig brains, you
24 take -- it's like when you take now the Jews taking the
25 markbein, (phonetic), they call it in Jewish -- they put

1 in the soup the bones, the shin bones. What is in the
2 inside, it is soft. It's very good.

3 And so, I did it with onion and eggs. And I baked
4 it from puff dough, little pates, empty inside -- I make
5 it even now -- and I filled that in with salt and
6 butter, and you can drink with it. Things like that, I
7 remember. It's salted and sweet. I enjoy it. So I can
8 bake a little, so I'm back in business. But it didn't
9 last too long.

10 Q. AFTER THAT HONEYMOON, THEN WHERE DID YOU GO?

11 A. Then another city, another village. And we worked here,
12 and we worked there. And it was freezing here, and it
13 was not so much food. And then some people lost their
14 shoes and had to put on just wrap it around with some
15 material. Then it started getting some places worse and
16 some places better.

17 Then one got sick. Then they got him out to the
18 hospital, and we never seen him. Then they started
19 getting the tolls of the suffering. Remember, not
20 everybody was so young. Many left. Many died, because
21 I didn't see them again, so I don't know what happened.

22 Q. AND YOU MET YOUR UNCLE?

23 A. Oh, he was in the same brigade with me, yeah. He came
24 back with me, yeah.

25 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER HOW YOU WERE TOLD TO START WALKING OR

1 WHY? YOU WERE WALKING TO THE AUSTRIAN BORDER?

2 A. Yeah.

3 Q. DID THEY GIVE YOU ANY REASON?

4 A. The Russians are coming. They're moving towards
5 Hungary. The Germans were losing the war. The
6 Americans are on the other side. They are in Hungary.
7 So, the Germans were moving to what's Austria. That's
8 the border of Hungary, Gradz.

9 And so they were moving to the border there. And
10 they took the Jews with them, everybody. Only we
11 weren't too excited to move too fast. The Germans --
12 there are Jews on the sides. We politely stood on the
13 side, because, in the meantime, you sit down and wait.
14 So, this brigade never got over to Austria. That's how
15 we were saved. If I would have gone over to Austria, so
16 they would have probably put us in the wagons and the
17 Final Solution.

18 Q. What year was that?

19 A. '45.

20 Q. (INAUDIBLE) AFTER THE --

21 A. Then what happened? Then it was daytime, and getting
22 evening, and so -- and hunger -- (inaudible) and they
23 [the Germans] didn't want to go back to Germany to
24 continue fighting. They are happy already that the
25 Russians are coming to finally finish this whole thing.

1 So, I remember I was in the brigade there -- oh --
2 when this episode was, when I said this SS jumped out.
3 And the sergeant went, and there were trucks with
4 clothing and soldiers' overcoats.

5 And he stopped the truck. And he ordered all the
6 Jews to get the overcoats, the soldiers' coats, and get
7 off the yellow band. So, the Germans don't know, but
8 there were a lot of labor camp, those that believe in
9 Saturday, the Sabbath. And the gentiles, they were put
10 there -- communists, not Jews. They wore white arm
11 bands then. We wore yellow.

12 So, we dressed up in soldiers' overcoats. That's
13 how you moved. We put on the hat also, so we were like
14 army laborers, labor camp, but not Jews. Nobody knew.

15 Then I told you -- they went by -- everybody is
16 running like crazy. Nobody knew where his brigade was.
17 It was such a mess there. So, one soldier, again, he
18 saw me, and he said, "Let's run away." I says, "Where?"
19 He said, "Just go with me."

20 So, he was a soldier. He had a gun, everything.
21 So, I left the brigade, and I was dressed as a soldier.
22 So, I went with him. And we are walking. He says, "I
23 know here -- I met a woman in the village. Her husband
24 is not home. She is pretty cute. That's mine. You
25 just come along with me. I save you."

1 So, I went with him. We didn't get to the house.
2 And there was the M.P. -- Military Police -- looking for
3 guys like we that run away. And he got two of us, and
4 got into -- the general stop there. The general -- the
5 Hungarian started -- "Where are you guys going?" And
6 all of that. And we thought: That's it. They shoot us
7 because you run away from the brigade.

8 And he -- the Hungarian guy -- he was talking. He
9 says, "General, such a mess on the road. I was just
10 walking around with this guy trying to find" -- and he
11 said the number. I shut up, because I belonged to the
12 labor. He said, "What brigade?" "Hungarian Army. And
13 we went with the Germans, and I got lost there, and I
14 can't find them, and that's what I'm looking for them."

15 So the general said to the M.P., "Leave them alone,
16 and you guys go and find your brigade."

17 And so we went. We were let go quickly. And we
18 went to this house, and we hide ourselves. When it was
19 dark, the woman had in the backyard a grave. She was
20 running -- she had a hell of a time -- a bomb shelter.
21 So, at night, the woman, the child -- she had a little
22 child -- and that guy and me, we went underground,
23 sitting there all night, with food. They're shooting.
24 Around 4:00 o'clock, 5:00 o'clock, nothing.

25 Because we didn't know, because many times the

1 Germans beat back the Russians, so they -- and we were
2 expecting the Russians moving in -- but it was so quiet.

3 So, we were guessing, who is it? Are the Germans
4 still here or the Russians?

5 So, we got out. We lift up the thing. It was
6 nobody. Quiet. Everybody is dead. The whole city
7 dead -- the village.

8 And then, the guy -- the soldier -- said, "Let's
9 go. It's a big forest, let's go. Let's see. Maybe we
10 find somebody." We are walking. Suddenly we hear
11 horses, a bunch of them coming, and I see the Russian
12 cossack.

13 I was already happy. They are already coming in.
14 And they saw the two of us, and they stopped us. They
15 saw Hungarian soldiers; right away, the guns stop. And
16 they start talking Russian. And I speak Czech, so I
17 spoke the Russian language, and I talked with them.

18 That's fine. So they let us go. And that's how I
19 saved this guy now. Because then, when they got into
20 the camp, everybody together, they selected the
21 Yugoslavs, the Czechs, and they feed them nice, gave
22 them everything, the Russians, and send them back home.
23 (Inaudible) or walk home.

24 And all the Hungarians, they got together, and they
25 took them to Siberia to work. It doesn't matter. Jew

1 or not Jew, Hungarian is Hungarian. And they took them
2 all to Siberia. (Inaudible)

3 And there were a lot of officers and Russians in
4 the Russian Army that they helped the Jewish -- they
5 stole them out from the wagons. They took -- the
6 Russian Jewish officers, they took out the Hungarian
7 soldiers -- I mean the Jews that are dressed like
8 soldiers -- and took them out, and send them back to
9 Hungary so they don't go to Russia.

10 Q. THE RUSSIAN JEWISH SOLDIERS?

11 A. Yes. (Speaking Russian words) So, the Russians -- that
12 was the end of the war. And then, with the train, I
13 went to where the train went, with the whole gang, to my
14 city, Lucenec. Then I had to walk some twenty miles,
15 because the train didn't go on to there, because it was
16 bombed, the roads, things.

17 And I got home. And that was already in the
18 beginning of April -- I just saw here for the senior
19 citizens, there was already a big restaurant. And from
20 the American -- I didn't know -- the joint -- the
21 money -- they're already cooking there, and all this
22 that they came home.

23 We came there to look for my mother. We saw that
24 there, and we came every day there to eat free meals.

25 Q. AND YOUR MOTHER?

1 A. I was home, and I was waiting. And I heard she was
2 there in this camp, that camp. We were every day going,
3 the whole bunch that came home, Jews that are in the
4 city, to the train station, to see who is coming. Every
5 day, somebody came. Then I saw nobody comes home from
6 my side. And then I just packed my stuff, and I went up
7 to Prague to my uncle, I told you there, a doctor.

8 Q. GOING BACK TO THE RUSSIANS COMING IN ON HORSEBACK, YOU
9 WERE SAYING THERE WAS SOME SORT OF CAMP THEY TOOK YOU
10 TO?

11 A. Yeah. They make us walk to a big city. And there, they
12 had camps, all the prisoners of war. And they were
13 investigating them, who is what nationality, what. And
14 they separated Czechs, Yugoslavs, and the brothers, the
15 Germans, Hungarians, those they put us separate. And
16 after a few weeks, then they let us home.

17 Q. WHAT WAS THE NAME OF THE CITY?

18 A. That was Sumbate (phonetic) or West Brame (phonetic), in
19 Hungary. From the border, you see, Sumbate is right on
20 the Austrian border. And you go more inside, and there
21 are other cities. And there, they made up -- there was
22 a Russian general, and officers, and all that. And that
23 was what they were doing there.

24 They were separating, and investigating who is who,
25 who is Nazi, who is not Nazi. And that was the place

1 where they brought in anything. They caught people, and
2 they investigated, and then they sent them, like
3 Mengele, the German doctor, you go left, you go right.

4 And the Russians were sending the Nazis, and all
5 the Hungarians that was in this gang, and the terrorists
6 to Russia, to work there in the prison camps. And the
7 rest of them, the Slavic who were occupied, so, they let
8 us go home. And we came home, and that was it.

9 Q. WHERE HAD YOUR MOTHER STAYED?

10 A. Oh, they told me -- I mean people said, "I saw her in
11 this concentration camp, and I saw your brother." I
12 can't imagine. Every time, they were going, the women,
13 some came home, and they said, "In the beginning, I met
14 your mother, and hidden," and others said, "They got
15 them there, and, with your brother, they get gassed."

16 And that's I -- I don't know, exactly. I have
17 cousins that are on my father's side, that are women
18 that are there. They know everything. They are in
19 Israel.

20 But after the war, the less I talk about it, I feel
21 better. So, I didn't go over and over. I knew what
22 happened, and I can't help, so it doesn't make any --

23 Q. AND YOUR BROTHER?

24 A. With my mother, because he was small, so they sent both
25 of them together. All the little kids and women, they

1 just exterminate in the gas chambers. But exactly
2 where, maybe I knew it in '45, but it's a long time, so
3 I don't know what camp it was exactly.

4 Q. WHO IN YOUR FAMILY CAME BACK TO THE CITY?

5 A. To the city? From the family, the cousins, those are in
6 Israel. Cousins -- guys and girls -- and they got back
7 their houses, and until we got organized, and came the
8 Zionist movement, and we moved everybody to Israel.

9 We left Czechoslovakia. And the only thing from
10 the parents, the family, that's Sara, the teacher who
11 died in January, she was in the concentration camp.

12 And the doctor who run away to London, and in the
13 English brigade, and they were stationed in Palestine
14 until Eisenhower's invasion to Europe. And he died six,
15 seven years ago in Prague. So, now is nobody.

16 Q. AND THE UNCLE WHO WAS WITH YOU?

17 A. Oh, he died, too. He came back, but he was in such a
18 bad shape that, in Lucenec, he was there, that he was
19 there a few years, and he died after the war. He wasn't
20 in very good shape when he came back.

21 And I left the city. I went up to Prague, and then
22 Karlsbad, which is the Sudeten then. And I opened a
23 bakery there with a Czech guy. I had no money. I had
24 the brains. He had the money.

25 And in '46, '47, I had a bakery, with no money.

1 And everything I made there, it was for the Zionist
2 movement. And the Germans were moving me around
3 Christmas month, for the poppy seed -- the Zionist
4 organization did the same thing.

5 When I was in Karlsbad, and had a bakery, and they
6 were organizing all the youth left over the Czech, they
7 made the hakshara (phonetic), the summer camps, and got
8 the young children without parents, and telling them
9 about Israel, and all that, and moving them out to
10 Israel. So, they had the sessions of a week.

11 And then I remember, from Israel, they were the
12 shaliheem (phonetic), the representative from the Soknud
13 (phonetic), and from the central, from Prague, they came
14 there from the organization.

15 I was there in a kibbutz. We lived, some 15 guys,
16 in Karlsbad, in a German house. Because the Czechs,
17 after the war -- I was in Karlsbad -- they did the same
18 thing with the Germans.

19 There were millions of Germans in the Sudetenland.
20 And every day they brought up a train with wagons, and
21 every German had to take 50 kilo -- a hundred pound
22 bag -- and go out from the house.

23 And they took over the government houses, and
24 everything, and they moved them back to Germany. And
25 all these houses was left over empty. If you came home

1 from the concentration camp, Jew or not Jew, you showed
2 it, and you got a house to live in Karlsbad.

3 So, we got a house, some six-story, and 20 young
4 Jewish guys, and we were studying about Israel,
5 preparing ourselves to go to Israel.

6 And I had the bakery. And anything I made there,
7 it's a hundred percent collected, and every money I got,
8 I put it in there for everybody. And cooking and eating
9 and having a good time.

10 And the young girls were cooking. They had no idea
11 what to cook, so I had to show them how to cook. In the
12 daytime, I had to work. I was like that stick, so thin.

13 I was working outside eight hours. I was working
14 in the kibbutz eight hours, showing them how to cook,
15 how to bake. And then, from the central Zionist
16 organization in Prague, they find out now what I am
17 doing in Karlsbad. So, they said, "You're -- Israel
18 calls you, and now I need you. We need you."

19 And they were sending me to those camps in the
20 forest. They said, (in Hebrew) "No food, there's no
21 wisdom. And you are the wisdom, because you bake. So,
22 those kids doesn't know anything about Israel. But
23 Friday night, on Sabbath, with cakes in the forest, they
24 will remember."

25 So, that was what I was doing, baking in the

1 forest, going from one forest to the other. And then I,
2 myself, I left Czechoslovakia. That was it.

3 Q. YOU WENT FROM LUCENEC TO PRAGUE?

4 A. Yes -- to Karlsbad.

5 Q. WHAT TIME ARE WE TALKING ABOUT? DO YOU MEAN MONTHS IN
6 PRAGUE?

7 A. In '45, April, I came home in Lucenec. I was there
8 four, five months. Then I saw nobody came home. And my
9 aunt, she was not far away, the teacher. She came home,
10 and she said, "My brother is home. The doctor, he is in
11 Prague. Why don't you go up there."

12 So I went up there, and I met him there. And there
13 was a big hotel taken over by the Americans. And they
14 gave there room and board, all the Jewish girls and guys
15 that came home.

16 And we lived there free, eating there. And anybody
17 they helped us to find jobs. And we were waiting there,
18 what to do next. And then they came, the Zionists, and
19 I had to go to Israel.

20 Q. NOW, WHEN DID YOU OPEN THE BAKERY?

21 A. In Karlsbad?

22 Q. YES.

23 A. In 1946. There was two bakeries. One was closed. So,
24 I went to the one that was open, and I told the Czech
25 guy, "I'm a baker." He said he could sell anything, but

1 there's no material. He said he doesn't know how you
2 get on the black market stuff.

3 I said, "I have a few friends, get sugar, get
4 that." So, he said, "See the bakery there closed? It's
5 huge. You just give me half of the profits, but you get
6 the material," because he doesn't have the connection.

7 I went to Prague, and I knew here a guy and there a
8 guy, and I got the sugar, got the flour. And I started
9 baking, and half of the money I gave him, and half of
10 what I made I put in the kibbutz.

11 That uncle, the doctor, he saw what I'm doing -- he
12 wasn't a Zionist -- he said, "I was in Palestine then,
13 in '43. The Arabs, what's going on there, there will
14 never be peace." He was Jewish, but not Zionist.

15 He said, "Don't go there. And what you're doing
16 is, all this money you're making, gold in the hand," he
17 said. "The hands, like gold, you can do, and through
18 the war. You should go there. The Americans, they're
19 picking up all the children that are left without
20 parents. Go to America. You could be a millionaire."

21 I said, "I have to go fighting that to Israel."
22 So, he couldn't convince me. And anything I made, I
23 just put it in the kibbutz, all the money. And then we
24 were organized.

25 If you don't know, the Russians were supporting the

1 Zionist organization. In Czechoslovakia was a big camp,
2 an army camp. And they were training all the pilots,
3 all the ammunition, everything, where the soldiers were
4 flying from Czechoslovakia with their planes that the
5 Americans are flying in Davos to Israel.

6 Q. WHO WAS TRAINING?

7 A. The Czechoslovakian government. They had a special army
8 camp, and training young Jewish guys as the soldiers to
9 go to Israel to fight.

10 Q. WHAT WAS THE NAME?

11 A. I can't remember. It was one camp. And other -- when
12 you had the history, in Israel everything -- ammunition,
13 everything -- came from Czechoslovakia, factories that
14 they do it even now.

15 After that, they were selling to the Arabs, when it
16 changed, the situation, but it was everything from
17 Czechoslovakia.

18 Q. WHAT WAS THE SIZE OF THE CAMP?

19 A. It was an army camp, a giant. I mean, hundreds and
20 thousands of youth were organized there. And I heard
21 some of the planes that they board there. And they were
22 trained like pilots, and they flew in, with ammunition,
23 from Czechoslovakia to Israel.

24 In Israel, you have a few kibbutzim that they are
25 based. I mean, they made a Mossari, (phonetic), which

1 is the village of Mossarim, they gave them a lot of
2 kibbutzim that's made from Czechoslovakia.

3 Q. WHAT HAPPENED ONCE THE PLANES GOT TO PALESTINE?

4 A. Maybe they unloaded, or they stayed there, or they came
5 back. I mean, so far, I was not there, but I was in the
6 Zionist organization, so they said what's going on. And
7 then we were organized, and moved out in '47 from
8 Czechoslovakia in a big long train to Belgium.

9 There was many camps that they were organizing the
10 youth until they got the ships in Marseilles, so the
11 exodus from Cyprus. So, we are sitting in Belgium in
12 1947. The end of '47, then we were moved to Marseilles.
13 We got the big ship there, they bought in the junk yard.

14 And they made shelves. There was one bed. I made
15 five of them. So, when you had to go in some, they had
16 to lift you up and put it in on the shelves.

17 All the Jews were like herrings, sitting there,
18 3,500 people sitting in a little ship. And you wanted
19 to go out, because things, dances, on the deck, and then
20 young guys running back and forth.

21 And the captain was screaming, "Don't go, so many
22 Jews." There are Spanish. They organized Spanish
23 gentiles from Spain. And they were moving the ship,
24 because they were the professionals.

25 And there were only one or two representatives from

1 the Zoknud, that they were directing the ship. The
2 whole thing there, the organization, like the Shinbad,
3 (phonetic), and the CIA, or whatever you call it.

4 And the captain -- sometimes the ship was going a
5 little like that -- and he says, "200 guys go on the
6 other side." We were balancing the ship.

7 Q. WHEN DID THE SHIP SET SAIL?

8 A. In '47.

9 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THE MONTH?

10 A. It was September something, because the storm -- I mean,
11 the sea was very stormy. I know I was vomiting so much.
12 It was autumn something -- autumn time that the ship
13 took sail from Marseilles.

14 Q. AND YOU MEMBER 3,500 PEOPLE?

15 A. Yeah. I have pictures on the ship, that the cooks had,
16 and my friends, and you could see the ship and all that.
17 And I was also the cook.

18 Q. WHEN DID THE SHIP SET SAIL?

19 A. In '47.

20 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER THE MONTH?

21 A. It was September something, because the stormy -- I
22 mean, the sea was very stormy. I know I was vomiting so
23 much, that it was autumn something, autumn time it set
24 sail to Haifa from Marseilles.

25 Q. And you remember 3,500?

1 A. Yes. I have pictures on the ship with my cook's hat,
2 and my friend, and you can see the ship and all that.
3 And I was there also the cook.

4 And then we got to Tel Aviv -- or Haifa. We see
5 already the lights and everything. And then Jewish
6 representatives, all of a sudden, they gave the order
7 for the Spanish captain, destroy all the motors, the
8 machinery, everything. No power. So, the ship is just
9 sliding.

10 Because he figured out, if he's sliding to Haifa,
11 then he runs on the ground, and then he told us -- he
12 had a conference -- "You leave everything behind. You
13 jump in the water and run."

14 And there on the shore, they are ready, the
15 Haganah, with trucks, and they pick you up right away,
16 and get you in the kibbutzim.

17 So, everything was going nice, quietly. And before
18 we get to the ground, run on the ground the ship, the
19 British had all the Navy out there watching, because
20 they did not want illegal guys coming in.

21 And lights were just going in the sky, you know,
22 the projectors. And suddenly, three projectors got us
23 in the middle. They found the ship. And they started
24 moving, the British Navy, against us, and surrounded us,
25 just touching, one ship the others.

1 And the British captain went on the projector, and
2 he told us that the British Army, this and that, and you
3 are all prisoners, you are illegal, and give up.

4 And Zofnud, they knew what to do. They trained us.
5 They had so many ships that go to Cyprus, they told us,
6 when he start that, you guys on the deck, all the
7 younger ones, thousand, just start dancing the Hora.
8 And as loud as he speaks, you scream louder and sing.
9 Don't bother with them.

10 And it was going like Moses brought out from Egypt
11 the Jews -- the ten plagues, the British had ten
12 plagues. It started with water, then the black oil,
13 then the tear gas. Then I don't know exactly. Finally,
14 before the tenth plague, then the ninth, they were
15 shooting in the air.

16 And we were still dancing. And when the tear gas
17 came, we had ready the buckets with water and towels.
18 We put it on our face. We knew everything, so it
19 doesn't bother us. We're young. We fight the
20 British -- no guns, nothing.

21 And so, then they started. And then, when they
22 shoot in the air, and the officers from the Zofnud, they
23 told the young guys to climb up the top of the -- how
24 you call it?

25 Q. MAST?

1 A. Mast, like in a chain. And I in the kitchen prepared
2 all the bottles and everything. And we in the chain,
3 and standing and handing over those guys, and British,
4 when they closed -- then, before they shoot us, first
5 they tried -- they were jumping over the soldiers on our
6 ship, because they were so close.

7 And we were fighting with them. And from the top,
8 those guys with bottles, they were hitting them, and
9 injured a lot of British. So, they moved back. They
10 saw it's too many Jews; they can't do it.

11 And then they started shooting. And from the top,
12 a lot of friends, they were just falling down like
13 flies. The British killed at least 10, 15. Then we
14 gave up, and they took over the ship.

15 And then they got like a tow car, and the ship
16 pulled us in to Haifa. And then the Jewish Zofnud tried
17 to talk to the British that there is at Lid, (phonetic),
18 a camp in Israel. Why would you take them to Cyprus?
19 Put them in at Lid, but don't take them.

20 There is going on three, four days. But the
21 British wouldn't give up. So, they took us over to
22 their ship, which was like when you get from Kenya,
23 those animals, you get the lions, and things in little
24 clumps, because they were so afraid from the Haganah,
25 the terrorist organizations, they did not know who we --

1 we might take over the ship.

2 So, they transferred us to their ship. And 30, 40
3 Jews in a wire cage, locked in, and that's how they got
4 us to Cyprus. But we wouldn't go. It took them two
5 days. They brought up all the Red Cross, the Army, the
6 British. And they brought, you know, for the injured
7 guys, how do you call it, the beds --

8 Q. STRETCHERS?

9 A. -- stretchers. And that's how they picked us up and
10 took over the other ship. Just like when you see now,
11 against abortion, when they carry, the police, that's
12 how they got us to the ship. And they got us to Cyprus.
13 And I was there two years, till '49.

14 Tape 2 of 2:

15 Interview with ERNEST FELD

16 Holocaust Oral History Project

17 Date: June 16, 1992.

18 Interviewers: Sylvia Prozan, Richard Kirshman.

19 Transcriber: Julianne Eberl

20 Q. FROM THE TIME YOU LEFT KARLSBAD TO THE TIME YOU GOT ON
21 THE SHIP IN MARSEILLES --

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. -- WERE YOU BAKING?

24 A. Again, in Brussels, we were there. There were at least
25 six giant camps, tens of thousands of Jews brought over

1 from Europe, and waiting there until the Israeli Zofnud
2 could buy ships, prepare them in Marseilles, and then
3 they moved in each time a group to Israel.

4 Q. And you were baking?

5 A. And in the camp, they needed cooks and baking. So, I
6 was a manager. I was cooking, and doing those things,
7 and a lot a funny things.

8 Q. WHAT FUNNY THINGS?

9 A. You know, the crooks are Jews and gentiles when they get
10 money in their hand. And those that get the American
11 money, they were buying the cheapest meat, and then the
12 cheese is triangles of Swiss soft cheese.

13 We ate so much, and the young guys -- they were all
14 young guys -- and they all got sick of it, and they
15 demanded they change the menu.

16 And I said, "I can cook only what they give me the
17 material. I cannot cook anything else."

18 So, they started doing a revolution there. And
19 when they brought in cheeses in the dining room -- you
20 see the ceiling -- they open it, and they threw it, and
21 it stick to it. The whole ceiling was full of cheese,
22 and it was going on for a week.

23 And there was a French millionaire in Brussels, he
24 was managing liaison officer between the Belgian and the
25 Jewish Zofnud. And he was shopping, and all that. So,

1 anyway, we didn't like it.

2 And then I remember I saw what the guys are doing
3 there, don't eat, and what can I do. So I told all my
4 guys, because I was managing the kitchen, "We go on
5 strike." Three days, we don't cook. We wouldn't go in.

6 And then the management of the Jews, they got
7 scared because people have to eat, and all that. So,
8 finally, they rearranged the portions, had better meat
9 and things, and everybody was peaceful in Belgium.

10 Then they wanted to improve for the pregnant
11 women -- that we were on the way to Israel -- they
12 found, like in Tahoe, a giant hotel in Karpellenbush,
13 (phonetic), on the Holland border. And they moved all
14 the pregnant women there. And from there they got them
15 nine months to the hospital.

16 But until -- between six and nine months they were
17 there, and I -- they send me there as a cook and a
18 pastry -- and there was a high-class, five-star hotel --
19 cooking things for the ladies. And I was there, me and
20 maybe two more guys, with 200 pregnant women. Imagine!

21 Q. WHAT DID YOU COOK FOR THEM?

22 A. Anything. Pastries -- the best what I can, because we
23 had material. It was American dollars that the Jews
24 sent from here.

25 Q. AND HOW DID YOU GET TO MARSEILLES WHEN THAT TIME CAME?

1 A. Oh, then they took us in big trucks. Convoys got to
2 Marseilles. And it wasn't just from Belgium. It was
3 from everywhere they organized, the Zofnud, the Jewish
4 organization, some three and a half thousand.

5 And they got us on the ship. It was a whole day
6 loading, loading. And all these beds -- five story
7 high. You should have seen when somebody at the top
8 started vomiting, and the guys dying from the smell.

9 We were laughing -- I wasn't laughing, but I was on
10 the deck, because I was cooking, even on the ship. So,
11 this baking stuff saved me through Germans, Russians and
12 Israelis. And here I was invited to Kenya from the
13 United States to advise on cooking and baking --
14 whatever.

15 Q. HOW LONG WAS THE JOURNEY ON THE SHIP?

16 A. It was about a week, I think. It was endless. It's
17 nothing -- Marseilles is two, three days -- but they
18 were going on routes not to meet any British patrol.
19 And in Cyprus, I was there two years; that's it.

20 Q. THE BRITISH SHIP GOING TO CYPRUS -- I JUST WANT TO MAKE
21 SURE I UNDERSTAND.

22 A. From Haifa.

23 Q. FROM HAIFA, THERE WERE LIKE CAGES?

24 A. Cages, they take cages where you can put in 20 Jews. It
25 was comfortable, but it was an open ship, an army ship,

1 and they made from mesh wire and a door, and they put in
2 20 here, 30 there. Not women, just men. They weren't
3 sure if this is not the Haganah, or Begin or the other
4 guys, or terrorist organizations, but they didn't take
5 any chances that they might take over the ship.

6 Q. DO YOU REMEMBER YOUR THOUGHTS AS YOU GOT ON THE BRITISH
7 SHIP AND WERE TAKEN BACK TO CYPRUS?

8 A. The things that happen, I mean, I am telling here in
9 one, two hours, and there on the ship, it was rolling
10 like history in an hour. I mean, you got on a ship
11 three and a half thousand, and they're vomiting, and
12 they -- I mean, things were happening so fast that you
13 were so occupied.

14 It's like you see those detective pictures, and
15 you're so occupied, you don't even realize what's
16 happening until you get to Cyprus. Then you had time,
17 two years to think about it.

18 Q. HOW WAS THE LIFE THERE?

19 A. First of all, when they got us off in Cyprus, nobody
20 takes anything -- luggage -- anything that we brought
21 with us. The British then unloaded everything. And
22 they made sure that every suitcase that they could
23 open -- even my accordian -- there was an empty space in
24 the camp. Every truckload, they throw in everything,
25 just to mix them up, to pay back the Jews.

1 It took us a month to sort our things. I was going
2 with one shoe, from one camp to the other, "Did you get
3 my other shoe?" Because we had -- they didn't steal
4 anything, but they mixed them up. And I didn't have my
5 shirt. I didn't find my accordian. And she brought me
6 this, "Oh, is this yours," until we matched things
7 together.

8 Q. DID YOU EVER GET YOUR SHOES?

9 A. I got my shoes. My accordian, I didn't get it. Anyway,
10 we got the tents, we got the barracks, and there it
11 started organization in groups, kibbutzim. And that's
12 how they gave the food for us, the British. And we
13 cooked alone.

14 Q. YOU COOKED?

15 A. Everybody. Everybody in the kibbutz cooked for himself.
16 There, I didn't cook anymore. There, I opened my own
17 bakery in the camp.

18 Q. HOW DID YOU GO ABOUT DOING THAT?

19 A. We had Romanian Jews -- you know the story about
20 Romanians -- they come to Israel. It's nothing that
21 fancy. And the Zofnud ask me, "Where are you from?"
22 "Czechoslovakia." He writes it. "Then your name?"
23 Then comes the Romanian guy, and he says, "What's your
24 name," and he says, "where are you from," and he says,
25 "from Romania."

1 He said, "I didn't ask your profession. I asked
2 you where are you from," because Romania is a name that
3 they move anything that is hot -- stealing.

4 So, in Cyprus, there were a lot of Romanians. At
5 night, those army barracks that have metal on the top,
6 and at night, they took it off. And the Romanians
7 install later, everything, this material.

8 And then it was hidden -- it was a big camp and the
9 British couldn't control everything -- they straighten
10 it out. And everybody that has money, they made me
11 pens, and chimney and oven, and anything you want.

12 And I started a bakery there, making ice cream --
13 even the British came in and said it's better than in
14 Nicosia.

15 Q. HOW DID YOU MAKE ICE CREAM?

16 A. That's what I was waiting you would ask. We had a
17 cantina, where you get everything. And the Zofnud --
18 he, the representative with the Greeks from Cyprus --
19 they moved, in truckloads, every kind of food to the
20 canteen.

21 And we had money. And we were buying the things.
22 So, I talked to the canteen, the manager. I need ice.
23 So, big blocks -- no electricity -- big blocks of ice, I
24 got at least six blocks of ice at one time delivery,
25 paid for it. Where I had barracks where I lived, I took

1 three Jewish guys -- now I paid them -- now is not the
2 German camp.

3 So, electricity -- there's no electricity. I paid
4 them. They dig under my, like here in the house, a big
5 square hole. And we got there the straw, and fill it
6 up.

7 And I made from wood a cover. And all that ice
8 with straw covered, it holded out a week. And then I
9 got from the schmaltz herring -- you know what schmaltz
10 herring is, what the Jews eat -- and they saw that in
11 the cantina, they gave me the drum. I washed it.

12 And then the installato -- the Romanian -- he made,
13 from metal things on it, a handle like when you grind
14 coffee in a big pot. And around it you put the ice and
15 the salt, and when you move it around, you get ice
16 cream. So, I made ice cream there.

17 And then I got a table -- I bought it -- you buy
18 it -- we had money. And on the table, I made two holes,
19 and we made there handles on each end. And I got two
20 guys. We had Christmas bells, and he was going around,
21 in ten languages, was yelling around the camp, "Ice
22 cream, ice cream." And when I made it, I put it in
23 there with ice and salt, and we were selling ice cream.

24 And there was the opposite story. The Germans
25 didn't have lukschen (phonetic) noodle; they had flour.

1 Here, we didn't have flour -- at Shabbat, a bobka with
2 chocolate, cinnamon rolls, anything -- you don't have
3 flour.

4 So, I got the idea -- pasta, the noodles, the
5 British gave so much, every kibbutzim, they couldn't eat
6 anymore. How much could you eat?

7 So, I bought up, for nothing, all this material. I
8 got all the army sweet Carnation condensed milk in a big
9 drum that the Romanians made me. I put in water and the
10 milk and mixed it up.

11 By Thursday night, a lot of this was milky sweet
12 sugar because with the water. Then I opened -- not
13 me -- I had a few Jewish guys -- everybody wanted to
14 work for money.

15 And they opened all the cans with the noodles, and
16 they throw it in. And I pushed it, pulled it, until it
17 was so up to the top you couldn't squeeze in nothing.
18 And then, next day, morning, that was the dough ready.
19 It melted. It was like a dough. Revolution backwards.
20 You make it.

21 And then I had ready. Then I got some yeast, and
22 some sugar and chocolate. And I mixed it and I put it
23 in pans and I baked it and I sold it. I sold ice cream
24 and I sold cakes.

25 And I made the whole British camp from hot sugar

1 and wires and everything. There was a whole exhibition,
2 and I made the whole thing from sugar, all that I have
3 pictures, and the British major is looking at them.

4 Of him I took a picture that I made in Cyprus with
5 the Israeli flag.

6 Q. DESCRIBE WHAT YOU MADE AGAIN?

7 A. The camp had that post, the wires -- how you call it --
8 the wires that --

9 MR. KIRSHMAN: THE BARBED WIRE?

10 A. The barbed wire around --

11 MR. KIRSHMAN: YOU MADE A MODEL OF THE CAMP?

12 Q. MODEL?

13 A. A model of the camp, with a tent in the middle, and the
14 people and the sand, and in the middle, the Israeli
15 flag, and I displayed it.

16 Q. EDIBLE?

17 A. Edible. I made here all that from caramel sugar, the
18 croquembouche, and the French, and all those things.

19 With hot sugar, you work. I had at the Bruxhall
20 Exhibition in 1958, Davis, that you see the whole shop,
21 I build it all from sugar, and I have a picture
22 displayed, everybody standing in the line there.

23 Q. YOU WERE STAYING ON CYPRUS?

24 A. Yes. I had pictures, and I made wedding cakes, anything
25 you want. Everyone knew there is a bakery there. I

1 have a chimney, and I am baking there.

2 Q. SEVEN DAYS A WEEK?

3 A. No. We were playing poker. We had two years. We had
4 lots of time. It wasn't a German camp. So, you just
5 waited until we can get to Israel.

6 Q. HOW DID THAT FINALLY COME ABOUT?

7 A. Oh, well, when Israel came, from November, in the United
8 Nations, then we automatically became Israeli citizens,
9 so they had no right to keep us. So they started to let
10 us go. They had a list.

11 First, the women and the children, and I don't know
12 how many thousand Jews the British are moving each time
13 with trucks. The ship from Augusto, (phonetic), from
14 Nicosia, the whole trip is a few hours to Israel.

15 And I remember there was a list, a few thousand
16 Jews -- and no Jews. The British couldn't understand.
17 They were giving all the rations all this time, and
18 there are 4,000 Jews less. That died? What?

19 Then the Zionist organization, the representative
20 from the Zofnud, now the story could be told -- when
21 Ronald was on the TV, he said, "The story could be
22 told."

23 So, they took them and showed them the underground
24 tunnels that we built there -- I didn't know either --
25 under the wire fences into the part where the oranges

1 were growing.

2 The Greeks, they were against the British. They
3 were there, waiting outside with big trucks, big
4 baskets, the size of a guy. And once you get through
5 climbing on there, the Greeks took them in the basket,
6 close it so the British didn't care -- they think it's
7 oranges -- and they took them out to the port, the shore
8 where is not open shore.

9 And the Israeli ship or the Greek sailboat came in,
10 and, 20 at a time, they moved to Israel. And it was
11 going on two years. Nobody knew. And the British, they
12 were looking for 4,000 Jews, and they gave all this
13 extra food. So the women, children, they had extra food
14 in the camp. And that's how I finished the Cyprus
15 story.

16 Q. AND WHEN EXACTLY DID YOU ARRIVE IN ISRAEL?

17 A. In 1949.

18 Q. WHAT MONTH?

19 A. What month? It was in the summer -- May or something
20 like that. (Door opens)

21 Q. WHAT HAPPENED?

22 A. We got in the camp again there, in Israel, new arrivals.
23 And they ask, "Who wants to stay in camp? Who has
24 family? Who can go out?" And I had my -- I was
25 married -- and my wife, she had family there.

1 Q. WHERE DID YOU GET MARRIED?

2 A. In Cyprus. They said it's not nice to live together,
3 two young guys from Czechoslovakia, and you go to
4 Israel. And besides, the American joint organization,
5 they give everybody who gets married a present. We got
6 a toothbrush and a toothpaste. That was a wedding
7 present. So, we got married just for that.

8 Q. YOU MET YOUR WIFE IN CYPRUS?

9 A. No.

10 Q. WHERE?

11 A. In Czechoslovakia, in the camp where I said I was
12 cooking, baking.

13 Q. KARLSBAD?

14 A. Karlsbad, where we were going around. She also wanted
15 to go to Israel.

16 Q. HER NAME?

17 A. Her name is Helen. And we met, and she volunteered to
18 go to Israel, and we got on the same ship.

19 Q. SO, YOU WERE TOGETHER?

20 A. Together all the time -- in Belgium, and here and there.
21 And so we got to Cyprus. And then in Israel, then we
22 got divorced.

23 Q. WHO MADE THE CAKE FOR YOUR WEDDING?

24 A. I have it here. Me. It's a giant. It's like the
25 Notre Dame in Paris. All from hot sugar, burnt sugar,

1 caramel with nuts inside. And you make like a paste
2 like the kids when they're playing with the -- how you
3 call it --

4 Q. PLAY DOUGH?

5 A. Play dough. But you have to do it fast, because if it
6 gets cold, that's it. So, I was making it, making it
7 round, and the tower, and the whole thing. And it was a
8 tall, three meter. And that was -- I made it for my
9 wedding, so for all the guys around, so they could eat
10 it.

11 (Telephone interruption)

12 Q. WE WERE TALKING ABOUT THE WEDDING?

13 A. So, I made a cake. And we had a Jewish wedding there.
14 We had the rabbis there. We had everything there. So,
15 we were married. Then we got to Israel. And when we
16 got to Israel, then what we got -- an iron bed, that's
17 so much they gave us, the Zofnud, the Jewish
18 organization. And that was it. So --

19 (Telephone interruption)

20 Q. SO, YOU GOT A BED?

21 A. That's in Israel.

22 Q. YES.

23 A. And then I moved out from the camp. I don't have to
24 stay there. And I found right away a job in Natanya.
25 And I went in the hotel, rented a room. And soon I got

1 together money. I rented an apartment. And that was
2 it.

3 Q. AND YOUR JOB WAS?

4 A. Baking. I was baking then in Natanya. And then the guy
5 who saw me baking, and paying me money, and they saw I
6 can do anything, and he said he thinks it will be much
7 better, instead of paying me overtime and everything,
8 let's make it 50/50.

9 No money -- I don't have to put in money. I don't
10 buy the bakery, but the profits is half mine. But I
11 worry about everything. He just comes every month to
12 get the money.

13 Q. LIKE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA?

14 A. Yeah, the same story. So, I was going -- I employed
15 people, I baked, and I had half of the profit. I was
16 then -- then in Natanya, I moved to Cadera, (phonetic),
17 and there I was a baker.

18 Then I went to Jerusalem. And in Jerusalem,
19 another German guy, German Jewish guy, we got together
20 and we started catering. And Chaim Weitzman, the
21 president, the first president, he was half blind
22 already.

23 In Rehovat, where the Weitzman Institute is, they
24 had a big garden party, and invited all the diplomats.
25 And we two young guys went to Rehovat with some four or

1 five women, and we pulled up this limousine from the
2 garage, and we prepared the whole party for the
3 diplomats and Chaim Weitzman.

4 And then for Ben Gurion I built the ninth year
5 accepting Israel to the United Nations. I got an idea.
6 I was a chef in a hospital, and I built from sugar, hot
7 sugar, just like for my wedding, a whole cake. And on
8 the top was a giant globe and the map of Israel.

9 I wrote in Hebrew, "Ninth Year." And then I called
10 up the office of the president -- I mean the minister's
11 representative, which is Ben Gurion, from Affula, that I
12 want to give him this cake.

13 So, from Affula to Jerusalem, how did it get there?
14 So the secretary, who is from the army, one general, and
15 then the Secretary of State, they wrote me a letter.
16 And they said that they don't know how it will get to
17 Jerusalem, but the picture I sent of the cake, just the
18 thought -- I have it in writing -- whatever I say, I can
19 prove -- just the thought of giving Ben Gurion this
20 cake, it's already the blessings should be on me. But
21 he thinks that there is the army camp in Affula, and I
22 should contribute this cake in his name to the army.

23 And I gave it to them. And they ate it. But I got
24 two letters from Ben Gurion from the office that I made
25 this cake.

1 Q. NOW, YOUR FIRST MAJOR CATERING JOB WAS FOR CHAIM
2 WEITZMAN?

3 A. I was a young guy. I worked with another German Jew.

4 Q. AND THEN AFTER THAT?

5 A. I was in Jerusalem. And then I opened a bakery there,
6 in partnership, in Meersharim, (phonetic), that all my
7 partners, they had the tallis, the strammel. They
8 didn't know how to bake, but they had the connection.
9 Because in Jerusalem, unless you are real orthodox, you
10 can't accomplish nothing.

11 So, I made a partnership with him. We open a
12 bakery. And that was a 101 percent orthodox kosher.
13 Anybody who was some real orthodox rabbi, he bought
14 pastries only there in Meersharim.

15 Q. YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT THE UNITED NATIONS WANTING
16 YOU TO ADVISE PEOPLE IN KENYA. WAS THAT RECENT OR WAS
17 THAT BACK IN ISRAEL?

18 A. No, no, that's here. I came to the United States in
19 '57.

20 Q. HOW LONG DID YOU HAVE YOUR BAKERY?

21 A. Where?

22 Q. IN ISRAEL, IN JERUSALEM?

23 A. Oh, I had it some three, four years. Then I had two,
24 three years in Natanya. I was going around, because I
25 just opened one, and it was so scarce, professional,

1 other guys that had money to see what I'm doing there,
2 they offered me partnership, better money.

3 So, I was young. I was going somewhere else, to
4 open another bakery, another bakery. So, I was in
5 Jerusalem, in Natanya, in Hillel -- wherever you want.

6 I got tired of all of the baking. Then I got
7 offering from the central organization of the Histradut,
8 which needed -- they had convalescent home everywhere
9 where their employees, that labor movement, send out for
10 two weeks' vacation. And they needed somebody to manage
11 it, to teach people cooking. So, I went there as a
12 teacher, manager, whatever you want.

13 Q. When did you decide to leave Israel?

14 A. In -- that was private, personal with my wife then, and
15 we went then. I had a son. And she didn't get
16 assimilated -- she couldn't -- to the Israeli. I
17 learned Hebrew. I speak it now. Eight languages. And
18 every country where I went, so I learned and went to
19 school. And she, just Yiddish and Czechoslovakian, and
20 she couldn't get into the stream.

21 I wanted to go to the Habim, (phonetic), the
22 camera, you know, so we decided we get a divorce. And
23 she had a brother in Oakland, and he took her up to
24 Oakland, another sister. And the son left with me,
25 because the -- they couldn't arrange, the sister, when

1 she is here, she can ask for son -- the quota system.

2 And then one year I tried to get the divorce from
3 here, and I send my son here, because he should be with
4 the mother. But in Israel divorce is not so simple.
5 The rabbis have everything in their hand religious. And
6 I just thought I might just not get this divorce,
7 because those guys -- here, there -- anyway, everybody
8 said, "What can you lose? Take a year's vacation from
9 the job, from the Histadut, and take your son to
10 America. And you see America, and then you come back."

11 So, I took it. I brought us here. We got
12 divorced. And everything was fine. And I was going
13 around -- I didn't know a word of English -- and went
14 around trying to find jobs. And they paid me \$3 or \$5
15 an hour, because I couldn't speak the language.

16 And I was looking around, and I went on Geary
17 Street, and I saw David's. I saw, "Kosher Deli." I
18 went in. And this guy, he speaks Polish, he speaks
19 Hebrew, and he just started.

20 And I showed him the pictures that I made in
21 Israel, all those things. And he said that's what he
22 was buying in the Ukrainian bakery that is gone a long
23 time ago. He doesn't have a bakery.

24 So, he says, "That's what I need. I want a
25 European bakery." And he said, "Oh, these pictures are

1 beautiful. You come in at night." He didn't have a
2 bakery, just a kitchen. "You go there and make
3 anything; I want to see."

4 So, I make a few things at night. So, he look at
5 it -- that are -- in '57, he gave me \$800 a month, and
6 food, and everything, and he said he wants to take me
7 to -- not the labor union, because he is in the union,
8 but he wants to take me to his attorney.

9 And he drew up a contract that he bought me body
10 and soul. I can't work anywhere -- I still have a
11 contract. I can't tell anybody anything. If I want to
12 have more money, I tell him, and he pays me more. I
13 have everything I want, anything I want, but I am there.

14 So, I was there five years. I build him up the
15 bakery. That's what he has, all the recipes, everything
16 else. And I am still -- even now, I stayed there. And
17 we are good friends. He asked me to make my own bakery.

18 And then when I was there, he agreed that I could
19 work at night, from 6:00 in the evening to 1:00
20 midnight. Then I went to sleep. And I bought myself a
21 motorcycle. And at 7:00 I was already in school here,
22 to graduate high school, to learn English. But I went
23 not at evening; I went regularly, with the rest of the
24 kids, all day. And I went to high school.

25 And the Czechoslovakian school papers, they gave me

1 credit, all of it. They just said you just have to
2 learn English. Geography, all that, you know
3 everything. That's the same thing in English. Nothing
4 else. You just take literature, and all that, and
5 political science and American history.

6 And that's what I did. So I finished. Graduation,
7 I finished in one and a half years. I graduated with
8 the Presidio Army School.

9 Q. How old were you when you graduated?

10 A. Thirty-five. I came here, I was thirty-three.
11 Thirty-five. And when I graduated, I didn't believe it.
12 And they gave me \$50, the school, as a -- how do you
13 call it -- for --

14 Q. An award?

15 A. Award for best student. So, I said I'm working at
16 David's. All the kids -- they were really kids -- I'm
17 making money, so I said, "Give it to somebody else who
18 needs it."

19 And I was so impressed -- the English -- I didn't
20 believe it. I mean, that's the language that's
21 phonetic -- reading, speaking, you have to learn it
22 three times. Not like any other language that you
23 learn, and I learned many other languages.

24 And I learned -- I was so impressed -- I talked to
25 all my classmates. They were Arabs, from Lebanon,

1 everybody. And I said, "I'm going to David's," and he
2 let me. At David's, I prepared hors d'oeuvres,
3 pastries, and a giant book from marzipan, a chocolate
4 cake.

5 And I wrote there, in English, a whole poetry
6 thanking my teachers that I learned English. And I made
7 a big party at the Benjamin Franklin High School. And
8 the teachers came there, and they said -- the counselor,
9 he said, "I think that was the first time in the United
10 States and the last time that any student is so
11 impressed they put up a party like that." I have the
12 pictures.

13 And then I thought, now I know English, that's it.
14 And they, the teachers, they got me, and they said, "You
15 can't waste your time. You have to go to college."

16 I said -- but with all this knowledge -- so, they
17 convinced me, and they took me to the City College. And
18 I have the one-day examination, because the foreign
19 students, all the questions, and I was accepted to the
20 hotel restaurant management.

21 And that was it. And then, from that, I just
22 bought a bakery in Berkeley, and I opened my own bakery,
23 and I left David.

24 Q. WHAT'S THE NAME OF THE BAKERY IN BERKELEY?

25 A. The same as is now, Ernie's International Pastries, all

1 the time. And then I bought one in Oakland. Then I
2 sold Berkeley. Then I bought it in Tahoe. And now I'm
3 only in Tahoe.

4 Q. WHEN DID YOU MOVE TO TAHOE?

5 A. In '76. But I was working one week both places. Friday
6 night, I went up to Tahoe from Oakland, opened there
7 only Saturday, Sunday. Monday I came back and I opened
8 here Tuesday through Friday. I did that from '76 to
9 '83, two bakeries at the same time. Then I sold the
10 Oakland bakery in '83. Now I'm only in Tahoe.

11 But I have here, like in Lafayette, you have
12 customers, doctors, and others that they used to buy the
13 whole Bay Area challahs and things in Oakland. And they
14 say there's no challah like that. And that I'm doing
15 every year. Solznik, this guy who distributes, the
16 matzohs, once, twice a year, I bring big loads, and I
17 put in the freezer, and I'm still delivering here all my
18 pastries.

19 Yesterday I delivered to San Rafael, for \$500, a
20 big bar mitzvah cake, and a big challah, and all that.
21 And they order because they want to have what I made
22 when I was in the Bay Area.

23 Q. WHAT'S THE MOST MEMORABLE --

24 A. What?

25 Q. -- THING YOU EVER MADE? WHAT STICKS OUT IN YOUR MIND?

1 A. Made an impression on somebody or made a pastry?

2 Q. THAT YOU BAKED, PREPARED? WHEN YOU THINK OF ALL THESE
3 MARVELOUS CAKES AND PARTIES AND EVERYTHING, WHAT STANDS
4 OUT IN YOUR MIND AS THE MOST --

5 A. It is like women's dresses, every year is another thing
6 comes up. I made in Israel, there was an exhibition of
7 fruit and vegetable, and I made a pavilion from sugar
8 and marzipan, and in Hebrew letters, and the whole
9 thing. And it was displayed in the movie, in the news,
10 and they're writing in the newspapers about it, what I
11 made there.

12 And then I made that globe, that two letters from
13 Ben Gurion. And I made, in Tahoe, little cream puffs,
14 800 Chinese pagoda for a wedding cake, just like the
15 Chinese. And every time I would be bored if I don't
16 invent something.

17 Q. DID YOU WORK WITH MARZIPAN IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA?

18 A. Sure. That's where I learned it. I learned everything
19 there and on the road. I mean, when I came here, I
20 argued with everybody, because they have so many things
21 what they do here. And I was the conservative guy.

22 Now, what I did, I picked up everything that I can
23 adopt to the European system. But the Americans, they
24 never adopt anything that I make. So, I can make
25 anything. I can do things that I have no competition.

1 And I open when I feel like and I close when I feel
2 like, because if you want the same thing, you have to
3 come to Tahoe.

4 Q. And there you -- how often are you open there?

5 A. Summer is open eight days a week. That's July, August,
6 because the whole world is on the shore. I am right
7 there. Winter. October and April, then I go close a
8 month. In April, a month, a month in October. I go to
9 Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Israel. That's my vacation.
10 And during winter, I supply the ski areas, the last 20
11 years, so I'm open four days, mostly wholesale.
12 Wholesale, it doesn't have to be open. You bring it to
13 them and they break their head.

14 Q. WHAT'S YOUR AFFILIATION WITH THE TEMPLE AT TAHOE?

15 A. What affiliation?

16 Q. YES.

17 A. I was on the board, then the president, and the
18 religious chairman, and the cook, and anything. And
19 every year the people that live there, 60 in the
20 congregation, and every year they wait already the
21 children. They said, in the big cities, they don't have
22 this.

23 Every year I invite all the mothers with the little
24 kids. And in the bakery, there are some 40 people,
25 mothers and children. And I roll out on my machine the

1 dough, and I give every little kid the cutter, and he
2 makes houmantashen -- the children, babies, and big
3 ones. And we bake it and they eat it. So, whatever it
4 comes up they need.

5 Now we had the philharmonic orchestra, from a
6 kibbutz, in Incline Village, that was also in San
7 Francisco, I think. And they were there, and they
8 performed there. And so, there are a lot of kosher.

9 So, I suggested -- because once they were there,
10 and they make sandwiches, they didn't know what to eat.
11 They didn't know it was kosher. Now I suggest -- then
12 I'm not the president now -- to the president: I'm
13 going to contribute the whole thing. I feed them.

14 So he got the restaurant. He made space. So I
15 made, for some 60 people, pita, felafel, humus, baklava,
16 and everything, on the house. So, all those guys that
17 came in -- and I was standing there and serving, and
18 speak Hebrew, too, and it's kosher -- they said, "In all
19 United States, in this little hole in Incline Village,"
20 they were so impressed that I made that for them.

21 Q. WHERE DID YOU LEARN TO SING?

22 A. Sing?

23 Q. SING?

24 A. When I got here, when I had the bakery, the first bakery
25 when I left David, there was an Israeli organization,

1 Beth Hillel, in Berkeley, the youth organization, the
2 Israeli students.

3 And I volunteered there. They needed a bass
4 baritone. So, they had a group, and we went. I was
5 learning and singing. And Hadassah meetings, they
6 invited us. And we sing there, the youth organization,
7 the Jewish youth organization.

8 Q. YOU SAID THAT YOU CHANTED IN TEMPLE?

9 A. Yes, the real Hasidic, the way in the orthodox temple
10 they sing Kol Nidre.

11 Q. DID YOU DO THAT IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA?

12 A. No, I just -- I saw it. And in Israel, all my family
13 that are real orthodox, and I always loved music. In
14 the bakery, people come in. Outside I have tables, and
15 they're coming in.

16 And it filled with 10, 15 Arabs. They want their
17 pita, felafel, and all that. Then I see -- because I
18 was in Israel, the Arabs, I heard the language, I have
19 tapes that goes out on the -- I put on Arab music. They
20 already ate the hummus, the felafel. They ask, "Can I
21 sit a little bit more? Where can you hear such nice
22 Arab music here in the United States?"

23 The Israelis come there. Right away, I can hear
24 right away what accent. So, I put up the Israeli music.
25 Then there are Germans, and I put up Lehar and Bach, and

1 all this German music. And I have Greek music.

2 Anything you want. And people come in, and they say

3 it's an international place.

4 Q. YOU HAD AN ACCORDIAN. WHEN DID YOU GET THE ACCORDIAN?

5 A. Oh, at home, when I was a kid. My mother got it for me.

6 I learned on the piano, and accordian is almost the

7 same. And then the war, so I just -- on the ship, I was

8 still playing the accordian. Then we went from Belgium

9 to Israel, and they ganged around me, and they were

10 singing. But the British, they --

11 Q. HOW LONG DID YOU TAKE LESSONS? YOU TOOK PIANO LESSONS?

12 A. Yes. My mother's friend, she was a piano teacher, right

13 in the backyard, so she was giving lessons. But I love

14 the accordian. It's more mobile than a big piano. But

15 that's just for fun, nothing professional.

16 Q. WHAT IS YOUR SON'S NAME?

17 A. Morrie.

18 Q. AND WHERE DOES HE LIVE?

19 A. He lives in Oakland. And he's married. And he didn't

20 change the name. You know, the youngest, I change the

21 name. He won't change it. He left it Ehrenfeld.

22 That's what it is. I didn't even know where it is. I

23 looked on the map. There's a city in the United States

24 called Little Ehrenfeld.

25 Q. YOU HAD RELATIVES, AND YOU HAD FAMILY IN THIS COUNTRY,

1 IN AMERICA? YOU HAD AN UNCLE?

2 A. I had an uncle. I had another one. Everybody died.
3 So, there's -- the only family I have, it's my son, and
4 my daughter. But no family, nobody. Family was in
5 Czechoslovakia; that's it. And in Hungary. And the
6 majority is in Israel -- all of them.

7 (Questions by Mr. Kirshman)

8 Q. DID YOU GO TO THE HOTEL SCHOOL HERE?

9 A. Yeah.

10 Q. FOR HOW LONG?

11 A. I went for one year. And then everybody said, why don't
12 you get independent? What? Open your own bakery. I
13 said, no, I am staying at David's -- good money,
14 everything. And one day, a rainy night, I read a
15 newspaper, check the ads, just for curiosity, and there
16 is a bakery for sale, a thousand dollars. That -- I
17 mean, that's just a funny country; when it's free, or
18 something, watch out.

19 So -- but I am curious. So I went down to
20 Berkeley. And there was a guy, and there's a bakery, a
21 giant bakery. I said, "How much?" A thousand dollars.
22 I said, "Why?"

23 He said, my uncle, a Swedish guy, had here on
24 Adeline Street a bakery ten years, and now it's getting
25 so bad, that street, he wants to open one in San

1 Francisco. He opened on Irving Street, and the bakery,
2 he didn't want to sell it. He said he doesn't need the
3 money. What he wanted, he wanted to make a mensch from
4 him, this guy, so he gave him free.

5 He dropped him in the water: Now you have to work.
6 And he thought that working, this guy, the bakery, he
7 said that's not for him. And he just wanted a nominal
8 something. A thousand dollars? I mean, that's --

9 I bought a bakery. I sold pieces of equipment more
10 than that. But I kept it, the bakery, and I fixed it,
11 and I needed some more money. So David signed as a
12 guarantor, and I went to the Hebrew Free Loan, here in
13 San Francisco, and they gave me \$3,000 without interest.

14 And so, I set up the bakery and wholesale. I had
15 20 shops and supplies, in San Francisco and all over,
16 and that's how I started out in Berkeley.

17 And because of that, that caused -- you can stay
18 with one tochis and two horses -- either finish the
19 college -- so, \$5,000? You know of Moses with the fire
20 and -- I heard -- the pharoah, the fire and the gold?
21 Why did he stomach, Moses? He took Aaron with him. Was
22 it a legend or a joke?

23 When they fish Moses from the water, and they
24 brought Moses there, the queen and all the advisers to
25 pharoah, they said, He's a Jewish guy. Don't start with

1 it. Jewish guy, when he grows up, he take your crown.

2 So, the witch doctor, he says, let's put on the
3 table burning coals and gold. Let's put Moses in the
4 middle. Let's see where he goes. So, where he goes, a
5 little child, where he goes, shining gold, he was
6 climbing that.

7 And then come the angel, and he pushed him toward
8 the fire. And his hand got into the fire. And it
9 burned, so he took his hand into his mouth. That's how
10 he burned his tongue.

11 That's why Aaron was with him, to pharaoh, because
12 he wasn't a good spokesman. So then I had the college
13 or the bakery? I took the bakery. And I finish. I
14 didn't finish there.

15 But, actually, I went to the college to learn the
16 names of the material in English. Whatever it was
17 there, and they found out, they didn't let me make
18 homework. They said, you can teach us all the --

19 And I got a letter from the counselor, and when I
20 opened that, I had my own bakery. That's why I had --
21 City College, I don't have the final papers, except
22 graduation, yeah.

23 Q. AND YOU DID REFER BRIEFLY TO A TRIP TO EAST AFRICA?

24 A. Yeah. When I was in Oakland, International Pastries,
25 when I gave the name -- I had a Swiss magazine, when in

1 Berkeley, when I opened the shop, what name? In six
2 months, I saw a globe, a face of a pastry shop. I said,
3 that's a very good idea. And I took this as an emblem.
4 And all my papers there is printed, there is a globe and
5 a hat and this. And if it's a globe, it's
6 international, and so I put Ernie's International
7 Pastries.

8 And this appears -- all the credit department -- I
9 bought things from New York, and there, and extra and
10 everything, on credit. You come here with no money.
11 And I got offers for, I mean, I didn't have a penny. I
12 could have done whatever -- and then, they saw -- there
13 was the -- the haves and the have not.

14 The UN organization, United Nations development
15 organization, wants to have the third countries, those
16 that have German, European, American, to develop the
17 countries, anything they need, technical help.

18 So somebody from the United Nations invited
19 anybody -- big companies, Goodyear Tires, Coca Cola.
20 And they saw Ernie's International Pastries. They
21 thought it was something, I don't know what. So, they
22 send me a letter -- I don't know. I read it. Me?

23 And I called up. They had a phone number. And
24 they said: Yeah, we would like to have your
25 organization. If you would come to Kenya, because we

1 have the symposium of the whole world, and we need
2 people that they be officers between the American
3 machinery, and they know how to bake. Senegal, Lebanon,
4 Kenya.

5 And I got the idea. I never was in Africa. I can
6 deduct it from taxes -- business trip. And I go there.
7 And I wasn't there yet. So, I went to there. And I
8 made reservations in the Hilton in Kenya. And I went to
9 a big reception. Uomo Kenyatta, the president, was
10 there.

11 And they listed all the organizations from Germany,
12 America -- Coca Cola -- and there is Coca Cola, Goodyear
13 Tires, Ernie's International Pastries. And I was
14 loving -- I mean, one, I was a baker -- the managers,
15 and everything.

16 And we got microphones. He spoke Swahili. He
17 translated to me in English. Then we had the meetings,
18 all that, the Germans, the Americans, about machinery.
19 And I saw, here I am -- gold and David -- and I saw, who
20 I am here -- gold yet and David. So, I thought -- I
21 thought -- just two days, I paid the interesting part of
22 the business. I saw that nothing comes out. I'm
23 already there. So, from Johannesburg, I met there a
24 priest, and who presented a ranger at Kenya, a black guy
25 who had a jeep, and he took us for hunting with cameras

1 to the Kilimanjaro Mountains. And that's what we did.

2 I was there, and then I got back. So, I was two
3 weeks in Kenya. And since then, I am getting from the
4 government, and newspapers, different magazines,
5 professionals, the general manager, the baker, the
6 purchasing agent -- they think Ernie's International.
7 There are a few guys moving around, so -- that's it.

8 Q. WHEN YOU SAID THAT YOU GO BACK TO EUROPE ONCE OR TWICE A
9 YEAR --

10 A. Yeah.

11 Q. WHAT DO YOU DO THERE?

12 A. What am I doing there? First, I want to see my city,
13 Lucenec, how it looks, what's left over. Until I found
14 it, because they demolished half of the city. And I
15 found old friends where we lived, what I said, the
16 butcher, and daughters, and all the family. And they
17 all were all excited, from America, and I'm still alive.

18 So, I went there, and so, the whole house, it's
19 like 20 units in one two-story, where we had the
20 restaurant and all that.

21 I went in there. It's 20, 30 years, they didn't do
22 anything. It's black. It's crumbling apart. And in
23 the houses inside, gypsies and anything, they live
24 there. It looked to me like I was walking in the
25 cemetery, because this reminded me. It's not only the

1 building, but my parents and everybody.

2 And it looked so gloomy that, once I was there, I
3 said I don't go there. Then I went to Koshita, where my
4 aunt who died, she was a teacher. And I went to visit
5 her. And I was taking always there things, because they
6 have nothing -- presents, suitcases and things.

7 Then I went to Budapest. There I have family and
8 friends. And I want it to be home. And then every year
9 to Israel, because there I have everybody there, and
10 just a little vacation. Some people go to Hawaii. I go
11 there. And it's much cheaper because of the exchange of
12 the American dollars. So, I enjoy so far in Hungary,
13 Czechoslovakia, and Israel more.

14 Q. WHAT'S THE FONDEST MEMORY YOU HAVE OF YOUR MOTHER?

15 A. What can I -- I was always helping her in the kitchen
16 and things. And she was working very hard. I --

17 Q. WHAT DO YOU THINK OF HER WORKING IN THE KITCHEN?

18 A. I have pictures. I have leftover pictures. Little
19 things. I enlarged it. I have it in my room. So, I
20 have pictures: The whole restaurant, some thirty
21 people, and she and me, a little guy.

22 And I just remember her. I remember her that --
23 all the kids were there, because their fathers and
24 everybody. And she was just a widow then. And that's
25 what I remember.

1 If I had to read a book or something, I always run
2 outside. We had -- the restrooms weren't in the
3 house -- outside. So, I went outside, and I was reading
4 because if she saw me not doing anything -- come wash
5 the dishes, wipe this, do this.

6 Then she gave me money so I could go to the movie,
7 and all those things.

8 Q. YOUR FATHER, DO YOU HAVE MEMORIES OF HIM, YOUR FONDEST
9 MEMORIES?

10 A. My father, he was like a clown of the city. The kids,
11 when it was Purim, you know, the markets and things.
12 And her brother has a produce market, I remember,
13 outside, like here you have open. And the children were
14 always running after him, because he always had some
15 tricks in his pocket. So, he bought, like Fourth of
16 July, little ammunition, like little jewels from clay,
17 or what, that explode.

18

19 But you have to step on it. So, we were sitting
20 outside there at night. And the lights, you know, the
21 petroleum lights hanging there, and my father's brother
22 sells the watermelon, and people stop there, and they're
23 eating it.

24 And we kids there, and my father, and at night and
25 before Purim. And the kids came. Uncle Max and what he

1 had in his pocket, those jewels, those little bombs of
2 firecrackers for the kids.

3 And he told, just put around and put everywhere on
4 the floor, and the people who used to come and buy
5 watermelon and what, and stepped on it, and it exploded,
6 and it just made a lot of noise. And the children, we
7 were loving it.

8 And he was always cooperating with the children.
9 And everyone wanted to sit on the horses, because he had
10 horses and buggy, you know, the giant ones, moving
11 furniture.

12 What kid doesn't like horses and all those things?
13 And sports, he was head of the football -- soccer --
14 games, and so he was always jolly and running around
15 doing things.

16 Q. DID THEY EVER FIND OUT THAT YOU ATE PIECES OF BACON?

17 A. I don't know. It was a long time ago.

18 Q. DO YOU STILL EAT THE BACON?

19 A. Now, but I always put on the hat, so it's kosher. I
20 sell in my bakery, but everything is kosher. And
21 omelets I make, no bacon. So, I find in Chicago, a
22 place sells pastrami -- and I didn't even know -- I put
23 it in the frying pan. And if you dry it slowly, a long
24 time, it becomes -- it looks like a bacon dry.

25 And I put it on the eggs, and I didn't see one

1 gentile say it's not bacon, and it's kosher, too. So,
2 now I can eat kosher bacon.

3 Q. WHAT'S THE MOST LUSCIOUS THING YOU EVER ATE?

4 A. From where?

5 Q. ANYWHERE?

6 A. Every time -- I make, like you know what beans is, and
7 kishka, and the meat, what I put in Friday night in the
8 oven, and it stays there all night -- that was European
9 stuff. And that's what I do in Tahoe.

10 Then I package them and freeze them. And people
11 come in from New York, with the Kippah, (phonetic), and
12 they want to have kosher. And I have things I just take
13 out of the freezer, and one moment.

14 And they write letters. They say, in the forest
15 here, the food, but they never thought they'd find such
16 a Jewish tradition in the bakery and all this culture.
17 And I take pictures with me, and they take it home. And
18 the children that they, it's coming there, they write
19 letters to Tahoe and the bakery.

20 It's not just baking. It's body and soul. That's
21 what I say -- that's -- everybody goes home to
22 Chicago -- attorneys and this -- and writing, and they
23 say -- the term is joke -- they say: "I told my
24 neighbor, if you go to Jerusalem, don't forget the
25 Wailing Wall. If you go to Tahoe, you have to go to

1 Ernie's."

2 Q. I WANT TO THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR THIS INCREDIBLE
3 COMPELLING STORY AND FOR SHARING IT WITH US.

4 A. You're welcome. I found it out in Israel. I never
5 knew. Just now they told me, my cousin. We were
6 separated in groups.

7 Q. WHEN YOU WERE IN ISRAEL ON ONE OF YOUR TRIPS, YOU
8 LEARNED ABOUT SOMETHING UNUSUAL THAT HAPPENED, FROM A
9 COUSIN?

10 A. I go there many times. But two years ago, or three
11 years ago I was there. And my father's brother's
12 children, which is my cousin -- the girls, they -- we
13 are talking about every time the concentration camp, all
14 that, what happened.

15 And they said, you know that David, our brother,
16 they found him in Budapest. I said, I'm just going
17 there now from Israel. They say, yes, go in the Jewish
18 cemetery. You will see the tombstone. We put it up,
19 and there you will see all the names. The only
20 tombstone for thousands, from 500 people from the
21 family, because the rest is all burned somewhere. And
22 this is the only guy that has a -- that you can touch,
23 the real tombstone.

24 Q. HOW DID THEY FIND HIM?

25 A. The Hungarian newspapers, they showed me. I made a

1 copy, that I gave you now, and it says that the
2 Hungarian government, when they were demolishing the
3 houses, and the reconstruction, and things, and there
4 was a big, deep grave.

5 And they found there a guy, and preserved, dressed,
6 everything. And they found a wound in his stomach --
7 the Nazis, or the Hungarian, the SS shot him, or they
8 don't know how he got the bullet.

9 And in his pocket they found the passport and his
10 name from the Swiss -- I don't know -- the Swiss or the
11 Swedish, because both of them, they're giving out
12 passes. And those people, the Hungarians and the
13 Germans, they couldn't touch them, because they became
14 citizens of Switzerland. That's how Wallenburg saved
15 thousands of Jews.

16 So, he had this in his pocket. But he was walking
17 probably in the wrong place in Budapest. It was in '45.
18 Then finished the war. And there were still parties of
19 Nazis, and that. And they shot him.

20 And they found him. And then the Jewish
21 congregation and the government, they started
22 investigating -- who, where -- and that's how they got
23 to Israel, and they called the brother, sisters.

24 They came up to Budapest, and the rabbis, and they
25 made the whole ceremony. And they put up the tombstone.

1 Q. In what condition was the body?

2 A. The body, it was preserved. The doctors couldn't
3 believe it. That the dress and the suit -- everything
4 on him, it looked like it just happened yesterday. It
5 was like miracle. I mean, two years -- that comes
6 apart. And they said, in the paper, they wouldn't
7 believe -- they didn't know how it happened. Maybe it
8 was because no air came to it. It just -- it happened.

9 So, I went to Budapest. And Marik, (phonetic),
10 that is my friend here, she came with me to the
11 cemetery, and she took those pictures where I am
12 standing next to the tomb from Budapest. (Shows photos)

13 (Questions by Mr. Kirshman)

14 Q. COULD YOU TELL US WHERE THESE PICTURES WERE TAKEN AND
15 WHEN IT WAS TAKEN?

16 A. This picture is my mother, with her friend, in 1922 or
17 '23. You can see the dress. It's the old-fashioned,
18 mink and all that stuff. She was still a young woman
19 then, in Czechoslovakia.

20 Q. OKAY. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

21 A. This is where I am there, about eight years old, in
22 1933, 1934. My father already was dead. And that is my
23 brother, two, three years old. My mother in the middle,
24 and her sister.

25 Q. AND YOU ARE WHICH PERSON?

- 1 A. I am the older boy there. That's her sister, Hella, the
2 name, and my mother's name is Sara.
- 3 Q. AND TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?
- 4 A. And this is here, in the middle, that's my mother's
5 father, Braun. Gigabot, (phonetic), she was in
6 Hungarian. And those that's sitting down there, that's
7 my grandfather's parents -- how you call it in English.
- 8 Q. GREAT-GRANDFATHER?
- 9 A. Yeah, and his wife. And those are the brothers, my
10 grandfather's brothers, two of them, one on each side.
- 11 Q. DO YOU KNOW WHEN THIS WAS TAKEN?
- 12 A. When this was taken? When my grandfather was still
13 young. It could have been taken in '17, '18.
- 14 Q. DO YOU KNOW WHERE?
- 15 A. In Czechoslovakia, in the village.
- 16 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS ONE, PLEASE.
- 17 A. Oh, this one is 1945. I just got back from the labor
18 camp -- and it was in 1946, in Prague, winter -- with a
19 friend.
- 20 Q. WHO IS YOUR FRIEND?
- 21 A. A friend in the kibbutz.
- 22 Q. OKAY, TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.
- 23 A. This is the restaurant I was telling you about. My
24 mother has a restaurant, and all those people that you
25 see there, those were working people, different

1 organizations.

2 And they made a big party, and got together. You
3 see the saxophone, and all that. I don't know what were
4 they were celebrating, but they all came together to
5 show their gratitude to my mother, she was cooking so
6 well.

7 And you see there at the table, that's me there in
8 the hat. And my mother is standing in the middle,
9 between the two women that are not related -- just
10 customers.

11 Q. THIS IS YOUR MOTHER HERE?

12 A. Yes.

13 Q. BELOW THE HAND OF THE SAXOPHONIST?

14 A. That's it.

15 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE?

16 A. This is Sara Braun, my mother's sister. She was a
17 teacher in the Jewish public school before the war. And
18 after the war, she came back in Czechoslovakia, and she
19 continued in the state schools teaching. And now she
20 was retired already.

21 I was there every year visiting her in Koshita,
22 which is in Slovenska. In the meantime, she was pretty
23 bad, and this January I visited there, and I came back
24 here, and in February, her stepdaughter called me that
25 she died.

1 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS.

2 A. This is my mother's brother. His name is Alex Braun.
3 He studied to become a doctor before the Second World
4 War. And when the Germans occupied Czechoslovakia at
5 the same time, he run away from Czechoslovakia, that we
6 didn't even know, because we lost contact.

7 And he went to England. In England, you had the
8 whole Czechoslovakian leadership. They organized a
9 Czechoslovakian brigade. And they were preparing them
10 for the big invasion back to Europe. And he was
11 stationed in Palestine.

12 And then when Eisenhower started the invasion,
13 D-day, they were moved into the front line. And the
14 first American occupation, the soldiers, they got in
15 Czechoslovakia, he was with them, the Czechoslovakian
16 brigade, as you see the uniform. And he was a doctor.

17 And he started working in Prague in a hospital. He
18 got married, and he has two children that I was visiting
19 every time in Prague.

20 Q. WHERE WAS THIS PHOTO TAKEN?

21 A. In Prague.

22 Q. AND WHAT YEAR WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN TAKEN?

23 A. That was in 1946, when he came back from there.

24 Q. TELL ME ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

25 A. This is my first picture in 1945, when I got back from

1 the labor camp to Lucenec, my home town. And I -- that
2 was my first blue silk shirt I bought from the
3 Americans, and a white jacket; that was the first money
4 I got some decent clothing after the war.

5 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

6 A. This is in 1944, in that ranch that I said Kishkun
7 (phonetic), which is a Hungarian name. And there we
8 were living there, our brigade. You see half-nude --
9 everybody got only a Hungarian soldier's hat. If you
10 see the soldiers, we have the same hat.

11 The hat, we got it, but otherwise, we have to be
12 dressed in civil and a yellow band, and we were working
13 there in the fields. Those are different places. Those
14 are the soldiers watching us, the Hungarians, because at
15 that time they didn't agree to German interference.

16 And at the top you see the officer, his hat is a
17 little under size. This is a guy that pulled out his
18 gun on the SS guy, that he stop beating us there or he
19 shoot him.

20 Q. THIS GUY ON THE TOP ROW HERE?

21 A. No, no, the soldier. The middle one.

22 Q. OH, I SEE.

23 A. There are four soldiers, three private, and one is the
24 sergeant.

25 Q. AND WHICH ONE IS YOU?

1 A. The one with the hat sitting down there holding the
2 number of the brigade; that's me.

3 Q. THE BOY SITTING CROSS-LEGGED IN THE FRONT?

4 A. That's it.

5 Q. HOW DID YOU COME BY THIS PICTURE?

6 A. I say I was baking, and that three months was like a
7 honeymoon there, and so I wanted pictures. And the
8 soldiers made pictures, and they developed, and I just
9 kept it. I don't know, I kept a few things with me.

10 Q. YOU KEPT IT FROM THAT TIME TO ISRAEL?

11 A. Through all this, you -- (Inaudible).

12 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS ONE, PLEASE.

13 A. This is in 1945, when in my city I was waiting for my
14 mother, my brother. Nobody came home. And I was just
15 alone. So, I decided to go up to Prague. And an
16 American joint committee had a big hotel overtaken. And
17 there I got a job.

18 I could have been there without a job, but the guy
19 next to me -- I am there -- how shall I say it, the top
20 there, with the white jacket.

21 Q. YOU'RE HERE?

22 A. Yes. The guy with the hat next to me is the chef. The
23 guy to the left from here is the director of the
24 organization. And here are young Jewish boys and
25 girls -- free food and board, room and board, and

1 everybody trying to go to school and so on, and study.

2 What you see there, all the women and guys, after
3 the war, the Czechs, I said they deported all the
4 Germans because of the Germans exterminated the whole
5 village there, because the first governor of Germany in
6 Prague, they shot him. And for that, the Germans
7 exterminated the city -- little city -- in Prague in
8 Czechoslovakia.

9 So, after the war, the Czechs deported all the
10 Germans through the Sudetenland, with 50 pounds, back to
11 Germany. And all the houses, everything, they gave them
12 to repatriated Jews and non-Jews who didn't have a home.

13 And in the meantime, they still were moving them
14 over -- anybody that didn't have so much transportation,
15 so they kept them in a camp, a labor camp. They
16 couldn't get out from there. And any organization,
17 special Jewish organizations that they were working for,
18 social help for the young kids, they acquired those
19 people for no money for the camp.

20 And they were working in the kitchen. Those are
21 all Germans that you see there, women and men, they're
22 working in the kitchen. They're working in the hotel,
23 cleaning and washing.

24 And they are happy they are there because in the
25 camps the situation was much worse, so they were happy

1 they were volunteering with the Jewish organization to
2 get them out from there.

3 Q. AND THIS ONE?

4 A. This is the ship that sailed out from Marseilles to
5 Haifa. This is on the open sea. On the deck, you can
6 see me. I'm cooking again. You see the hat there on
7 me. And that's my friend that later I married her in
8 Israel or in Cyprus. And that picture was taken on the
9 ship where we were 3,500 Jews.

10 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

11 A. This is the same ship, the half, and you can see the
12 main chimney -- whatever you call it on the ship. And
13 those guys next to me -- I have the shirt on me on the
14 right-hand side. And the other two guys, they're
15 working also in the kitchen. And this is my friend,
16 Ellen, that we sailed together to Israel, that I later
17 married.

18 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS ONE.

19 A. Here is again the gang from the kitchen, which was on
20 the deck, including me and the rest of the guys that
21 worked with me, and my future wife. We were sitting in
22 a lifeboat, sailing on the Mediterranean towards Haifa.

23 This is in Cyprus, where I started a bakery. And I
24 got an empty herring drum you can see constructed by
25 Romanian geniuses -- Jews that are there -- and there is

1 the handle that I am holding. And inside the drum there
2 is a little pot that I pour in the milk to make ice
3 cream.

4 Around it, I put ice, salt, and then I got two
5 Jewish guys, paid them, and they were turning it around
6 until it got ice. And I sold it to the British --
7 anybody who paid it.

8 Q. OKAY. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

9 A. Okay. This is inside -- in Cyprus, they decided, the
10 Jews and the British, all their prisoners have nothing
11 to do. They should do some art work. So, we had
12 floats, which was like little squares -- how do you call
13 it -- cement or it was from marble.

14 And Jews that put up those square floats, and from
15 that, they created like Italian marble. They created
16 the sculpture and things, and pianos, and everybody
17 displayed something.

18 So, I decided to display something, too. So I made
19 a sheet cake of the camp, and the barbed wire around it,
20 and little tents, and the Israeli flag in the middle.

21 And there the two guys on the side, those are the
22 Israeli leaders. And they brought in the sergeant
23 major, the big guy from Cyprus, to see that in candy.

24 Q. TELL US WHAT THIS IS, PLEASE.

25 A. This is the same picture as before -- before I took it

1 to the exhibition hall. You can see the barracks behind
2 me. I am sitting down. And I put it down on my cake,
3 the barbed wire, the tents, the Israeli flag. This is
4 what I made from hot sugar in Cyprus.

5 Q. WHAT ABOUT THIS?

6 A. That is the barracks behind me -- what I was telling --
7 those barracks, you see the mess hall, the way it goes.
8 That was what the Jewish guys stole at night, and then
9 they straightened out, and I got all my bakery equipment
10 from it.

11 And this is the cake that you saw before, the
12 barbed wire, the Israeli flag, and the little houses
13 inside, and me holding it.

14 Q. DID ANYONE EVER EAT THAT CAKE?

15 A. Sure. That's all almond and candy. I just gave it
16 away, after that, to my friends, and everybody ate it.

17 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

18 A. This is my home. That barrack that you see there, there
19 where I live inside -- not the front. The front is from
20 blankets we made like in the front so we had more space.
21 But in the barracks, there I live.

22 You see the chimney. That's for my bakery. That I
23 see -- you can't see it, but there, from tents, there I
24 was baking.

25 And underneath, in the ground, is the ice that I

1 stored. And then, when I made like I showed you before,
2 making the ice cream in a herring drum, here I have a
3 table that you can see and another drum in the middle.

4 And in that is stored ice cream. And I am just
5 serving there the ice cream to my friends that helped
6 to -- they are licking the ice cream -- and they were
7 going with this table, like it was a dead body around,
8 from one camp to the other, and yelling in every
9 language, "Ice cream, ice cream."

10 And the British came in from Nicosia, and they said
11 it is better than the Greeks make it. And you see, in
12 Hebrew, it says (in Hebrew) -- and it says, which means,
13 "Talk Hebrew. The time is depending on it."

14 Because all these guys came in from around the
15 world, and everybody is like Babylonia -- Hungarian, and
16 Romanian -- and they told us, "Before you get to Isreal,
17 learn Hebrew."

18 Q. DID YOU MAKE FLAVORS OF ICE CREAM?

19 A. Sure. I made vanilla, chocolate, caramel -- anything
20 you want. It was so hot inside. This is the exhibition
21 hall, which is otherwise the social hall in the camp in
22 Cyprus. And you see -- most you can see the Israeli
23 flag. And there are other flags from the nations of the
24 immigrants that got to Cyprus -- all those flags
25 there -- and everybody from every country participated.

1 And sculpture of candy, and woodwork, and anything you
2 want. And you had the guys in the front, just crowds
3 for the exhibition.

4 Q. THIS, PLEASE?

5 A. This is in Jerusalem. I just got it from my cousin,
6 which is in the right-hand side, the guy with the shirt,
7 striped shirt, Lieberman, that's one of the guys that's
8 in the bottom row.

9 Q. BOTTOM ROW.

10 A. Bottom row, arms folded -- he organized this whole
11 thing. And they are behind. You see different places
12 from different cities where they put up different guys,
13 the leftovers that are still alive from Lucenec, from
14 the cities that came together.

15 And they had a -- how do you say it in English, on
16 the memory of the death? Once a year, they come
17 together on the day in April when is the Holocaust.

18 Q. AND WHAT YEAR WAS THIS PHOTOGRAPH TAKEN?

19 A. I believe it was probably ten years ago. It was three
20 years ago, I just got it from my cousin. I didn't ask
21 him what year he put it up. He organized it, money and
22 everything, and get the names who is still alive. And
23 he called them to that meeting.

24 Q. THIS ONE, PLEASE?

25 A. This group that you have seen before, from my city, they

1 put up this on the memory of those that they were
2 exterminated in the concentration camps from Lucenec,
3 from my city. And it says in Hebrew and also in English
4 and Arabic letters. In Hebrew, it says (recites in
5 Hebrew). In Czechoslovakian. And underneath, it says
6 in Czechoslovakia and Hebrew. And then you can read it:
7 1940-1944, all those people that died, and were burned
8 in the concentration camps.

9 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

10 A. This is in Affula, in the Galil, (phonetic), where I was
11 the chef in the hospital. And I decided to make a
12 replica cake of the Golan. It's there the brigade that
13 you see those guys there, the officers and soldiers.

14 They have it on the side of their shirt; that is
15 their emblem -- they are the border guard -- you see
16 that little outstanding lighthouses. That's the emblem,
17 border guard. And I made it as a cake, and I gave it
18 them as a present, so they made a picture with me.

19 This is in Cyprus, when I got married. I made my
20 own wedding cake, which is a cake is on the bottom, and
21 the rest is poured from hot sugar and almond, a paste
22 that you have to work while it's still hot.

23 And I shaped those things separate and I glued them
24 together. I put the Star of David on the top. And
25 underneath, this is the Chuppa, if you see underneath.

1 Then, there -- that's the Chuppa.

2 There are four pillars, and that's how I made it.
3 And underneath, it says, "Maralto." (Phonetic) That
4 was about four feet high. And you see the English
5 blanket that we put behind it.

6 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

7 A. This was in 1952 or '3, in Tel Aviv, they decided to
8 have an exhibition of the Israeli fruit and vegetable.
9 And I was a teacher there cooking as a chef in the
10 Bellington Hospital. And I decided to make a replica of
11 an exhibition.

12 That's the entrance. And there's a little guy
13 standing on the side. And in Hebrew, it says (recites
14 in Hebrew), which is exhibition of fruit and vegetable
15 for the people, and the Israeli Menorah emblem on the
16 top. And this picture has two sides coming.

17 Q. TELL US ABOUT THE REST OF THE INFORMATION HERE.

18 A. The exhibition was in Tel Aviv. And you can see
19 newspapers. One is Maariv and the other is Ha'Aretz.
20 In Hebrew they are writing about this cake. That
21 Maariv, it says 29/7/57, so we have the date exactly.
22 And the other newspaper, Ha'Aretz, and then you have the
23 English translation.

24 When I came to the United States, I quickly
25 translated, so everybody here can understand Ha'Aretz,

1 that's Hebrew. And on the right-hand side you have the
2 English translation, the whole thing. It says,
3 Ha'Aretz, a pavilion made of sugar at the food
4 exhibition. Then you see the whole story. Do you want
5 me to read the whole thing? I was 30 years old at that
6 time.

7 Q. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

8 A. This is the same, the pavilion, but now you look at it
9 from the side, the steps covered with woven marzipan,
10 and all the fruit there made from marzipan. And you
11 have a little plate on top of the house, that it says
12 who created this whole thing. This time, they called me
13 Aronson, if you can read Hebrew, it says.

14 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

15 A. This is still the same exhibition pavilion. You can see
16 with the sugar, and icing, and decorated. And this
17 side, the same woven carpet going up. And this side I
18 displayed vegetable. I took tomato, a real one, and
19 filled it up with cream cheese.

20 This one was while I was a chef in Affula Hospital.
21 It was the anniversary of Israel being accepted into the
22 United Nations. I wanted to demonstrate something in
23 candy and cake, and I build -- there is a cake, and on
24 the bottom, four pillars.

25 Underneath, it says, in Hebrew: The ninth year of

1 existence of Israel, ninth year of existence and
2 independence of Israel.

3 And if you go higher, you can see, behind
4 independence, then I demonstrated on the top, accepting
5 Israel in the world organization. That is the globe,
6 the map of Israel, and the emblem of Israel. And in
7 Hebrew it says Israel. And then I made this. I wrote
8 the letter to Ben Gurion and offered him the present
9 from Affula Hospital. And you have newspapers of their
10 writing about it.

11 Q. RIGHT THERE.

12 A. In Hebrew, 1957, it says, (speaking in Hebrew) Gilgolay
13 (phonetic). Gilgolay is the evolution of a cake, how it
14 got from Affula to Jerusalem -- which it never got
15 there, because Ben Gurion wrote me a letter -- his
16 secretary -- that he wishes I should give it as a
17 present to the soldiers in Affula.

18 That's the translation there. "The Evolution of a
19 Cake," that's the translation. The newspapers, and then
20 I have two letters, signed once, the secretary of Ben
21 Gurion. Two of them sent me a letter of thanking for
22 making this cake and giving it to the army.

23 Q. HERE YOU ARE AT DAVID'S. CAN YOU TELL US ABOUT THIS,
24 PLEASE?

25 A. Yeah. That was in '58 or '59, Groups Hall,

1 San Francisco, they had a culinary art exhibition. Then
2 I was a chef at David's Restaurant. And that is the
3 David's Deli then at that time. Now it looks different.

4 I made the whole thing from sugar and icing. And
5 you see David's there. And then I made there a challah,
6 which is 20 pounds, approximately. And it's three
7 tiers. And on the top, you can't see, but I made roses
8 from dough, which I got an award.

9 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

10 A. This one, I worked at David's. You can see there it was
11 5,000 -- let's see -- 5,720 that Jewish year,
12 Rosh Hashonah, and I made on a board the whole thing
13 from sugar, and icing and jelly, blue jelly, the
14 Mediterranean Sea, Tel Aviv, the ships standing there.

15 Then you can see the borders of Jordan. And then
16 you're going down, and you see the Negev. And there is
17 standing Sinai, Mount Sinai, and the Ten Commandments
18 when Moses received the Ten Commandments.

19 And the big plate that you see written in Hebrew
20 and English, that I extracted from the Bible. This was
21 sitting a whole year in David's Deli.

22 Q. HOW LONG CAN A CAKE LAST?

23 A. That's all sugar. It is not real cake. I mean sugar,
24 and egg white, then it dries up. You won't eat it.

25 Q. WHERE IS THIS?

1 A. This is the Hilton in San Francisco, on O'Farrell
2 Street. The KNBR Radio Station in San Francisco had an
3 anniversary, and I heard on the radio they are going to
4 put up a show for all the women, Evangeline Baker, who
5 was the spokesperson of the cooking and baking and
6 anything that women are interested.

7 And I called them up, because they have an
8 anniversary, and they were saying Coca Cola will supply
9 the drinks, and the other, Oscar Meyer -- I don't know
10 who else -- salami.

11 And they are inviting 2,000 guests. And I had the
12 Berkeley bakery. And I called the manager of the
13 station, and I told them I can supply the pastries. So,
14 they called back, and they told me if I know there are
15 2,000 people. And I said that's okay.

16 So, I made all the pastries. And I got a few guys,
17 volunteers, my friends, and we put all the pastries on
18 all the tables, and I am on the picture there. If you
19 move it to the left -- I mean to the right, pardon --
20 the last guy there, that's me, yeah.

21 Q. BEHIND THE WOMAN WITH THE HAT?

22 A. Behind the woman. And they are all the big managers of
23 all the giant corporations. And I am there who supplied
24 the pastries. And they sent me a thank-you letter for
25 all the pastries I gave them. And they invited me for a

1 one hour speech on the radio, where I took -- picked up
2 on my tape at home.

3 And Evangeline Baker introduces me, just like you
4 guys were asking me here, how I went through the war.
5 And I went to Israel. How I got here. And what are
6 those things that I am making now. And I brought
7 samples.

8 And she was sampling it, and she was telling people
9 she is so overhung -- not by me, but by the pastries --
10 she is eating it right now, and she is suggesting
11 everybody should go to Berkeley and taste the pastries.

12 Q. Did it help your business?

13 A. I help myself. This is a picture when I was invited by
14 the United Nations to a symposium in Nairobi. And after
15 the business was over, I went for a sightseeing in the
16 jungle, there to the Ambeseli Lodge, which is right
17 below the foot of the Kiliminjaro Mountain. And here,
18 what you can see through the jungle, I met there the
19 Masai Tribe, which are like the nomads, like the
20 Bedouins in Israel. They have herds, and they are
21 moving around.

22 And all the women there, they already heard what
23 business means. When I said I want to dance Hora with
24 them, they said first give us a dollar, and they are
25 ready to dance around me. And I was ready to dance

1 already, but the guy who took the picture, he was too
2 fast.

3 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

4 A. This is the entrance to the Masai Tribe. Those are the
5 huts where they live, what you cull call in English, and
6 those are the kids running around the house, and I took
7 a picture in front of the little house there.

8 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

9 A. This is the Ambeseli Lodge, bungalow and bungalows. The
10 British built it up. You have swimming pool and
11 everything. And in the background, far away, you can
12 see there the Kiliminjaro Mountains.

13 And this is the entrance, and there is the name of
14 the Ambeseli Lodge, and they're hanging there a buffalo
15 horn, and I am sitting there on the bottom of the floor
16 there.

17 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

18 A. This is a newspaper story about my cousin, David
19 Ehrenfeld, who in 1945 run away from the labor camp in
20 Budapest. He was shot in his stomach. In 1947, they
21 found him, when they were reconstructing Budapest, in a
22 big hole preserved.

23 And he had a stomach wound, plus Swiss passport in
24 his pocket, dead, and two years preserved very good.
25 And this is the tombstone that his sisters from Israel

1 put up in the Budapest cemetery.

2 And this is on my vacation from David's, when I
3 didn't bake, I went up to Lake Tahoe swimming and just
4 enjoying myself. That was in 1959.

5 Q. TELL US ABOUT THIS, PLEASE.

6 A. This is the first Jewish state, when Hitler started to
7 exterminate the Jews, and he decided to show the world
8 that he does not mean any harm, he just wants to keep
9 them separate, he took Czechoslovakia occupied, and then
10 he took Teresienstadt, which is Teresienstadt the --
11 Teresienstadt City, there it says there on the other
12 side.

13 Q. OKAY, WE'LL FLIP IT OVER.

14 A. And this is a hundred Kronen. It says in German,
15 "Quittung Uber Hundert Kronen," and the numbers you can
16 see it's a hundred Kronen. And numbers, you can see, if
17 you move it over, the picture; they didn't use the
18 emblem because Israel wasn't yet in the picture.

19 They used the Ten Commandments and Moses on the
20 picture of the money.

21 And it is by the Judenrat, which means the
22 governing body of the Jews put out money. Because it
23 was a whole city, and all the Germans and scientists,
24 they are privileged people, they send them there, that
25 they will be alive and will live over this whole

1 situation. And so, there was a little state in that
2 state of Czechoslovakia.

3 Q. HOW DID YOU GET THIS MONEY?

4 A. That's money my uncle, who was a solar engineer in
5 Israel. Then he came here. He was invited many times
6 by the United States government. And the solar system
7 just started. He worked in the observatory in Arizona.
8 And he died, and his wife put it in an envelope, and she
9 said -- she's American -- she doesn't understand what it
10 says. Maybe I can put it away, this money. And they
11 are different denominations, from 100 Kronen up to 10
12 Kronen.

13 Q. LET ME PUT THIS ONE UP. I HAVE THAT SAME BILL. AND YOU
14 HAVE A QUESTION, SYLVIA? DO YOU KNOW HOW YOUR UNCLE GOT
15 THE MONEY?

16 A. I don't know how he got the money, but he was also,
17 during the war, before he got to Israel, and his parents
18 in Poland, because he's from Poland. And he got this
19 money probably from Poland, from some friends.

20 And he was collecting different items, newspapers,
21 from the Holocaust. And when he died, so his wife sent
22 it to me, I should keep it and preserve it.

23 Q. LET ME SEE A COUPLE OF THE OTHER BILLS THERE, AND PUT
24 THEM UP THERE. THE SAME WITH THIS MONEY? 20, 50.
25 THAT'S THE ONLY BILL THAT LOOKS USED. IT LOOKS AS IF

1 THE MONEY WAS NEVER USED?

2 A. That was in Israel. He had it in a little -- you say
3 used -- I was putting the heat from my hand, because of
4 showing it every time to people, and the ones that I
5 showed the most, you can see are wrinkled.

6 MR. KIRSHMAN: Two (Mr. Kirshman is showing the
7 denominations on each bill.)

8 MR. KIRSHMAN: There's a five. And the flip side
9 of a ten. And here's a one.

10 (End of tape.)

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