

1 VOICE: Why don't you state who everybody is, the  
2 date and location and begin at your convenience.

3 Q. TODAY IS JUNE 12TH, 1990.

4 VOICE: Actually, it's the 13th.

5 Q. IT IS THE 13TH? OKAY. I HAD ONE SET UP FOR  
6 YESTERDAY. SHOULD WE START OVER?

7 VOICE: No. We can just go ahead.

8 Q. THIS IS JUNE 13TH, 1990. I'M GENE AYERS INTERVIEWING  
9 NATHAN SATAR.

10 A. Safar.

11 Q. SAFAR. PARDON ME. I'LL GET IT RIGHT. AT THE  
12 HOLOCAUST LIBRARY AND RESEARCH CENTER, 639 14TH  
13 AVENUE, SAN FRANCISCO.

14 MR. SAFAR, WILL YOU JUST START BY TELLING US YOUR  
15 FULL NAME AND THE DATE OF YOUR BIRTH AND WHERE YOU  
16 WERE BORN.

17 A. Well, my name is Eliaza Nathan Safar. I was born on  
18 5-22-24 in Satmar, Transylvania.

19 Q. LET'S START BY JUST HAVING YOU TELL US HOW IT WAS  
20 THERE NEAR YOUR HOME CITY AND WHEN YOU WERE A LITTLE  
21 BOY GROWING UP AND ABOUT THE JEWS THERE.

22 A. Well, I was born to a family of nine children.  
23 Orthodox Jews, not Hasidim. Orthodox there is  
24 different.

25 And, well, I was going to Haita from 3 years old

1 to 12 years old like everybody else. And then after  
2 that they put me in apprenticeship to be a tailor.  
3 Well, I was a tailor for a while, about two, two and a  
4 half years and I didn't like it.

5 So my father was a shoemaker and I told him, "I  
6 want to be a shoemaker. I don't want to be a tailor.  
7 I don't like it." So he said, "No, you will stick  
8 with the profession." But I say, he was very strict.  
9 Then I just left home. Like they say, I run away.

10 Q. HOW OLD?

11 A. Well, about 16, 16 years -- between 16 and 17. Well,  
12 I went to work for a theater, you know, to put the  
13 scene together, the scene for the play. And this  
14 theater pretty soon moved to Sigget Maramoosh. It's  
15 another city. I was working there in the theater and  
16 was living by a cousin. So my father saw that he  
17 can't do anything with me. "Well," he said to my  
18 cousin, "send him home. He wants to be a shoemaker,  
19 let him be a shoemaker. So be it."

20 So I came home. And I stayed with my father,  
21 worked with my father. It was like any other  
22 teenager, you know. My father was a shoemaker who  
23 made shoes for market. He sold the shoes in the  
24 market. He had employees. He was working at home.  
25 Everyone was sitting in his own home, and made the

1 shoes, bring it to my father. Eventually we used to  
2 take it to the market and we sold those shoes and made  
3 a pretty good living out of it.

4 Well, it was nice until 1940, normal life, when  
5 the Hungarian Army came in. As soon as they arrived,  
6 they yell on the streets, "Jews, we are not coming to  
7 you. Don't be so" -- how to say it? -- "so glad" or  
8 it's another word for it, I don't know. "Don't be so  
9 glad."

10 My father was a big Hungarian, because he was  
11 serving in World War I in the Army, a staff sergeant,  
12 you know. They liked it. We kids, we didn't like it.  
13 We know the Romanian are better, because in Romania  
14 could do anything. For a few dollars, for a few lays  
15 you could buy everything. But the Hungarian couldn't  
16 do that.

17 So the kids knew it. We go all the time in the  
18 night to hear the radio from England, the BBC. Was it  
19 British Broadcasting? I still remember. We had  
20 neighbors, Christian neighbors. They were Communist,  
21 you know, they came to my father to listen. Because  
22 not everybody had a radio at that time, so they came  
23 to listen to the broadcasting, you know, from England.

24 And we knew what's going on in Poland. We knew  
25 what's going on in Czechoslovakia everywhere with the

1           Jews. And we always said, "Father, try to do  
2           something." Well, he couldn't do it because it was  
3           too late. Borders have closed. The war was on. And  
4           the trouble started there.

5           Until about a year later they started the Jews  
6           cannot sell merchandise in markets. They started to  
7           make trouble for the Jews. We have trouble from them  
8           before there, too, it was the bagdads the kids beating  
9           us up. It's a hard life.

10          Right away the Hungarian, they took the 21 year  
11          and older, the eligible military people, you know, the  
12          Christian men to the Army. The Jews went to forced  
13          labor. And what they did, they send them to the  
14          front, you know, where they're fighting, to dig those  
15          ditches and all those barricades and barbed wires.  
16          And they push the Jews forward, you know, to dig with  
17          all those shovels and -- I don't know -- the pitch,  
18          what you call those axe, pitch axe or axe.

19          And it was passing that way about another year  
20          came always harder and harder. In 1944, I remember  
21          really good, it was in April. It was the 2nd or 3rd  
22          of April when the Germans came in the city.

23          But before that, I had a very good friend what I  
24          was raised with him. He was -- the parents, the  
25          father died and the mother was very poor. She used to

1           sell newspapers in the street and they didn't have  
2           much to eat. So he's my age and we were raised  
3           together and I always feed them, you know.

4                   And he told me -- I told him that, "I want to run  
5           away. I don't know where I am going. I am going  
6           somewhere. I don't want to go in the ghetto." They  
7           start to get in the ghetto. I am not that kind. I  
8           can't do that.

9                   So he told me, "You don't go in the ghetto. Here  
10          is my papers. You just take my papers and go in the  
11          bigger city and live there." But how can you live  
12          when you don't have from what to live?

13                   My father, the family didn't know I want to go  
14          away, because I said I wouldn't say anybody. If I say  
15          it to somebody in the family, they won't let me. And  
16          I don't want to stay, I want to go.

17                   So I took his papers, and run away from home and  
18          went to Cluj. Cluj is a bigger city. I have my  
19          sister living there. My older sister was living  
20          there. But nobody knew me there because I never been  
21          before in that apartment on that street. I was there  
22          before, but another place, another street.

23                   And I told her I have Christian papers and she  
24          was doing me all kinds of trouble that she was scared,  
25          you know. Jewish people are scared. And I told her,

1 "Listen, you just find me an apartment where I can  
2 live with these papers. You don't care about me. I  
3 will take care of myself."

4 And she did. She find me an apartment. And I  
5 used to come to her. She had two guys, two Christian  
6 guys. They used to work for the Delmartay. It was a  
7 very big shoe factory and they made for the horses,  
8 what do you call those? Harms or what?

9 Q. HARNESS?

10 A. One of those lay on the horses. Harms?

11 Q. HARNESS.

12 A. Harness, yeah. They used to live by her in a room.  
13 And they used to work there, you know, all by hand.  
14 There was no machines at that time. And she didn't  
15 say that I am her brother. She said it's a friend  
16 from home. Because I used to come there to talk to  
17 her and they didn't know I am a Jew.

18 I was going with a girl, a Jewish girl, during  
19 that time. And let me explain to you, in Hungary  
20 there were Jews, exception Jews. Not many, but it  
21 was. They were like Hungarian. The purpose was, I  
22 think, by the Hungarian, they were served in World War  
23 I and they lost a leg, you know, they got somehow in  
24 fighting injured and they were exception Jews.

25 So I was going with a girl and she had a father.

1           The same way, they were exception Jews. But the  
2           father wasn't trusting. He said to me one day, "You  
3           know, what, Nathan? I have here some clothes, but I  
4           want to save," because then it was expensive those  
5           things. "Why you don't take them to your sister and  
6           the other two Christian boys and just let it stay  
7           there, because they will take your sister. They will  
8           stay in this apartment. They won't throw out the  
9           Christians."

10           So what I did, I took those clothes and took a --  
11           you know those carriages with the horses. I don't  
12           know how they call them, you know, the horses before  
13           it was cars that took people.

14       Q.    TROLLEY CAR, I GUESS?

15       A.    With horses.

16       Q.    PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION?

17       A.    Public transportation. But it was a horse and a  
18           carriage, like you see it here in some places they  
19           still have them. Well, I rented one like this and he  
20           took me to my sister. It was about two kilometers to  
21           go.

22           And let me explain something else. Everyday it  
23           was bombing.

24       Q.    BOMBING?

25       A.    Bombing, the Americans came bombing. And at that time

1 the siren went off in the city. So it was a law,  
2 everybody had to run for cover, cover in the basement.  
3 Any house you can find, just in the basement because  
4 of the bombing. So my luck was the guard -- exactly  
5 it was an SS house, a big SS house. And the guard was  
6 standing outside. And the same minute the siren  
7 start, this guy stopped the horse and we have to run.

8 And this guy, the guard, the SS man, he yell  
9 to me, "Hungarian, run in the basement here." I  
10 didn't know what to do, you know. First thought it  
11 was scary, and then I said what can happen? What  
12 happen, happen. And I run in there.

13 And it was over, when I come out, he put his hand  
14 on the clothes, you know. And I don't know how they  
15 forgot one winter coat. It was a black winter coat  
16 and it was the button David, the yellow star of David.  
17 What you call them here, the star of David was there.  
18 And he just took his rifle and hit me with it, with  
19 the cart -- with the other side, you know, with the  
20 handle. He hit me right in the face. And I run away.  
21 So that was the first -- the first lecture of mine how  
22 to...

23 Next to the SS house was, was a temple, a Jewish  
24 temple. We call them temple, not synagogue. It was a  
25 temple and they were working on it, teenagers, Jewish



1 teenagers, with the stars. At that time it wasn't the  
2 band, it was stars. Jewish teenagers, and they made  
3 from the temple a warehouse. They put lumber like  
4 this, you know, in the temple.

5 Because I forgot to tell you that the teenagers,  
6 Christian, went to the pre-military before they goes  
7 in the Army. But the Jews were going to work at that  
8 time. It was -- but they could go home, but only for  
9 working one day a week. One day a week. We had to  
10 go to work one day a week before the ghetto. So  
11 people were working there.

12 I run to my sister. I put down the clothes. And  
13 I figure what I'm going to do. This girlfriend said  
14 to me, "Nathan, we have a piece of land in between the  
15 border," because there was the border in Cluj. It was  
16 a few kilometers was the border. "We can go over to  
17 Romanian all of us and maybe there is better."

18 "Well," I said to her, "okay. I go and talk to  
19 my sister." I went back and talked to my sister and  
20 said to her what she said to me. And she said, "Well,  
21 we can't go now? My daughter went to the barber," you  
22 know, to the beauty salon. It was three days before  
23 they took her to the ghetto and she goes to the beauty  
24 salon. You understand? And they could go out only  
25 one hour a day, one hour from 11:00 to 12:00. They

1           couldn't go anywhere.

2           So I saw there is nothing working here. This, I  
3           can't do anything. Next day I tried again, because we  
4           couldn't go out for more than 11:00 to 12:00. And I  
5           told her again, "What are we going to do?"

6           And she said, "You go out know now and watch  
7           what's going on." And I went out and looked around  
8           and talked to people. And it was already -- the  
9           Hungarian Army knew what's going on and they were  
10          already by the borders everywhere. They didn't have  
11          that much soldiers at the border, because Romania and  
12          Hungary, they were allies at that time. They were  
13          together. So the border wasn't guarded that much.  
14          Jews could escape to Toda, it's another a little city,  
15          Toda, from Cluj to Toda. And a lot of people escaped  
16          that way to Romania, but they didn't know either what  
17          they were doing, because it's the same thing like in  
18          Hungary. And there they were winners, because in  
19          Romania they didn't throw the Jews out. They stayed  
20          in Romania. They let them work there. And they said,  
21          "Out? No. Here, yes, in my country." But they  
22          killed people too. Like my wife, she lot lost her  
23          father in the Yasi in the city. They just took her  
24          out from the home and that's it. She was only 12  
25          years old then.

1           But, otherwise, my sister was in Bucharest living  
2           and it was -- everything was all right there. It  
3           wasn't all right, but at least they didn't go to  
4           Auschwitz. They stayed and worked for -- they clean  
5           the streets and other hard works and that was it.

6           Well, after three days they took away my sister  
7           and her daughter in the ghetto. And Cluj was a  
8           ghetto, not like in other cities. This was outside of  
9           the city. And it was a huge brick mill, they make  
10          bricks. A brick mill is what they call them? And it  
11          has a very, very big yard. And this yard, on one side  
12          they made covers like against the sun, sheets and  
13          things.

14          How I know it because, later on when I was  
15          already in the labor, slave labor -- what you call it?  
16          -- then I saw everything, because I was working in  
17          this ghetto. No Jews, no people were there anymore.  
18          We were cleaning up. So I when they took my sister, I  
19          just didn't know what to do. No Jews anymore in the  
20          city. Can't see anything. I was walking like a hobo,  
21          you know, on the streets. I didn't know what to do,  
22          what I'm going to do. I was living from odd words,  
23          you know, to carry from the market the ladies', you  
24          know, the fruit and the vegetables and things like  
25          that.

1 Q. YOU HAD YOUR CHRISTIAN PAPERS?

2 A. I had my papers, the Christian papers, sure. But I  
3 didn't use them all the time. I just used them when I  
4 had to use them, you know. When I saw it's safe, then  
5 I went like the wind, you know, like instant. But  
6 then I had to use them. Because I was a shoemaker, I  
7 could open my shoes, you know, to insole, to the sole,  
8 and my papers was in between the insoles. Nobody  
9 could see them there, you know. If I need them, I  
10 just lift the insole and I had them.

11 But another thing I want to tell you, after  
12 -- three days after they took the Jews away, it was  
13 another day, and I just didn't know what to do. And I  
14 was walking. And I was walking by a temple, a Jewish  
15 temple, a form of a Jewish temple, and I saw inside  
16 somebody is walking around. But Jews were all in the  
17 ghetto already. I said, "What can it be?"

18 I'm going in and there is a guy from the forced  
19 labor. They let him home the last time to see his  
20 parents and, you know, the family. They left him off  
21 for the weekend. They used to do that, you know,  
22 because this was attached to the Army. This wasn't a  
23 civil, it was the Army.

24 So I saw this guy there. He says to me, "What  
25 are you doing here?" I said, "I'm a Jew, but I don't

1 know what to do. I'm confused."

2 So he said to me, "Listen to me. The best thing  
3 is for you -- I'm going back to -- not to the unit."  
4 It was a recruiting place, a big -- Nongbang -- it was  
5 a city not far from my city, about 30 kilometers. And  
6 there they were recruiting. Not soldiers now, they  
7 are recruiting Jews for labor, you know. But I was  
8 under the age. I was only 20. I have to be 21 to get  
9 in there.

10 So I said to him, "Listen, I'm not in the age.  
11 And I don't want to be a slave." And he said to me,  
12 "Listen, as long as they give you good food there, and  
13 you always can escape. If you want to go, you go. If  
14 you take the risk, you can go."

15 So I was listening to him. He took me in there.  
16 I was arriving in the morning, in the morning there,  
17 and I saw everything in the few hours I was there.  
18 Mostly the people that was from my city, you know,  
19 which was very close to my city, I talked to them.  
20 And what about Satmar? The ghetto was already done.  
21 It was closed. Nobody could go out. But my father  
22 still was home.

23 What happened, one of my sisters, she died here.  
24 She lived in this place where they made the ghetto,  
25 you know. It was streets, houses. Actually in Satmar

1 the Jews were living all together, mostly all  
2 together. Very -- a few Christians were living with  
3 Jews. They were Jews and gypsies. A few, not too  
4 many, Christian people, you know, were the Hungarian.

5 Well, she was living there and my mom said,  
6 "Well, why we don't go two weeks before to my  
7 daughter?" -- to her daughter, to my sister -- "We  
8 will have a more comfortable living, you know."  
9 They go at the last minute. They took them with  
10 wagons, you know, took them away with wagons. That  
11 way my father says, "No, I stay home as long as I can."

12 So I talked to those guys and they say the ghetto  
13 is closed, but I don't know what's happened. I said  
14 to myself, "I want to see it. I want to see my  
15 family."

16 (BREAK IN TAPE.)

17 A. Very little, you know, very little difference. But,  
18 you know, I know those things pretty good.

19 Q. OKAY. IT JUST HELPS KEEP IT ALL TOGETHER. IF YOU  
20 WANT TO PICK UP WHENEVER YOU GET READY TO GO.

21 A. Yeah.

22 Q. WHERE YOU LEFT OFF, I THINK YOU WERE -- YOU WANTED TO  
23 GO SEE THE --

24 A. Parents.

25 Q. THE GHETTO. AND THIS IS BACK IN --

1 A. Not the ghetto. I want to see my parents. To hell  
2 with the ghetto.

3 Q. YOUR FATHER WAS NOT IN THE GHETTO?

4 A. No. That's why I went home.

5 Q. YEAH.

6 A. That's why I went home. And you will see here. You  
7 can go now. Just chokes me, you know.

8 Q. YEAH, I KNOW.

9 A. Well, I came to Nutibong, to this place that they call  
10 Curlet, where they were recruiting for the Army and  
11 the Jews. But this time Army wasn't -- Hungarian Army  
12 wasn't anymore there because they were all fighting in  
13 the front. So what they did, they recruiting Jews  
14 there. And it was a general, if you heard about him,  
15 Levitsky. He was one of the best. He saved a lot of  
16 Jews. Levitsky was his name. I heard they sold the  
17 book here in the United States from his book why he  
18 did it.

19 So next day in the morning I saw everything  
20 around was going on. And I say, "I'm going to  
21 Satmar." It wasn't too far away. It was about 30  
22 miles. Let me see -- let me tell you how it was  
23 there. That recruiting place, it was a very, very  
24 huge building and nothing else. A few little houses  
25 like, I don't know, stables for horses. No restroom.

1           You had to go to the latrine, make a latrine and go.

2           And around, no wires, no barbed wires, nothing.

3           Everybody is free. You can go if you want to go.

4                   But if they catch you, at that time the Jews  
5           just got the bullet or the ghetto, nothing else. That  
6           was worse than a dog. It's just shoot you and let you  
7           stay there on the floor. They didn't have any respect  
8           for nobody.

9                   And that was the Hungarian Army did it, not the  
10          Germans. The Hungarian did it. Because they were  
11          allies. And we didn't see too many of them, of the  
12          Germans, in whole Hungary. At least I didn't see so  
13          many of them. I saw it here and there one walking.  
14          And on the train, I saw when they went through to go  
15          to fight in Russia, I saw that. Yeah, that was a lot  
16          of them. But otherwise in the streets we didn't see.  
17          All what we did, was the Hungarian. Hungarian had a  
18          special Army for that. They called them the chanders  
19          [CK], they were at that time, later on it was Nilosh.

20                   So I jumped on the train, I came home, and I came  
21          to the rail station in Satmar and, you know, those  
22          carriages for the horse that I told you before? Well,  
23          it was a few guys that did know me. I was raised with  
24          those guys.

25                   And one of them we used to play soccer all the



1           time, you know. And he saw me and he says to me --  
2           they called me Nattay at home, because Nathan -- they  
3           called me Nattay. He says, "Nattay, what are you  
4           doing here?" I said to him, "Hey, listen take me to  
5           Shemanshe, that what I had the papers from. Take me  
6           to him." And he took me right away without a word.

7           I talked to this guy. I find him at home and I  
8           talked to him. And he said to me, "Why do you want to  
9           go to the house?" Because we were -- we were living  
10          outside the city, you know, suburb, what you call it?  
11          And the houses, they weren't houses attached to  
12          houses. It was a house with a big back yard and  
13          another house a few meters further. So it wasn't...

14          He said to me, "Why you want to go there?" He  
15          knows, he knew. "Your parents are in the ghetto, only  
16          your father is home." I said to him, "I want to see  
17          my father."

18          So this guy took me, with the horse and the  
19          carriage took me out. It was about six to seven  
20          kilometers from the city. And on the corner of the  
21          street wasn't the house, it was tierras [CK] -- what  
22          they call them? Corn, was growing corn. I jumped in  
23          the corn. This guy was waiting with the horses and  
24          the carriage on the side. I was jumping in the corn.  
25          And a guy from -- those guys who came to my father to

1 listen to the radio, he saw me. And this was a baker.  
2 He was a big Communist, a guy about 18 years old, you  
3 know, a teenager. And said to me, "They just took  
4 your father about two hours ago, and you split right  
5 away because the neighbors know already."

6 So I didn't go back to the carriage. I said,  
7 "You can't catch me in Satmar where I was born.  
8 Nobody can catch me there."

9 So I was running to the river -- we had a very big  
10 river in Satmar -- by the port, by the bridge, by the  
11 -- like the bridge on the river.

12 Q. THE DOCKS YOU MEAN? WHARF?

13 A. Wharf?

14 Q. RIVERBANK?

15 A. Riverbank. I was running to the bridge and out to the  
16 the railroad station. And we had little trains. We  
17 had little trains. We had big trains, but the little  
18 train was going outside, was going only Notgar and  
19 Notabong to there and not further, you know. And I  
20 jumped on this train and left back to the recruiting  
21 place in Notabong.

22 Well, I was back. And about three days later I  
23 heard about 8:00 to 9:00 o'clock in the morning,  
24 soldiers. I saw soldiers coming out with rifles and  
25 the bayonettes, you know. They used to put the

1 bayonettes on. We run away. No? Nowhere to run  
2 anymore.

3 So with the bayonettes they yell, "Line up! Line  
4 up! Line up!" We were about a kilometer, four rows,  
5 four row. To line up, you know, all the Jewish people  
6 there. We don't know what they want. And we were  
7 about one line here, and the other line one meter, and  
8 the other line one meter, and the soldiers were going  
9 around pick us, you know, hit us all the time with the  
10 handle of the weapon.

11 And when they saw we are lined up, they said,  
12 "Take off everything, put them on the floor." It was  
13 after a rain, you know. It was after a big rain and  
14 we have to take everything to naked, everything down.  
15 "Take off everything from your pockets." I didn't  
16 know. Maybe they were going to finish us there. But  
17 it wasn't that.

18 They took away everything they could, rings,  
19 watches, gold, anything they could, they robbed from  
20 us, they take it away. But some people were smart.  
21 They had gold ring and things like that. And we had  
22 about 30 or 35 soldiers, but we were a few thousands,  
23 you know. They took out this gold. And it wasn't an  
24 apartment, it was dirt floor and after a rain, you  
25 know, how there is puddles there, and they kicked with

1           the foot gold and watches everything in the puddle,  
2           the rings, what they could. But they, not everybody  
3           could do it because not everybody had the courage to  
4           do it. They would rather give it away than get killed  
5           there. But I saw it how they did it. They just put  
6           it on the floor and kicked it. But they took  
7           everything out and left it on the floor and kicked it  
8           in the puddle. If this guy couldn't kick it in this  
9           puddle, the next one in the next line would kick it in  
10          the puddle.

11                 Then they took away everything and then we got  
12           dressed. At least they thought they took away  
13           everything. But after everything was over, the guys  
14           who had the things they knew where it is, they went  
15           and they picked it up.

16   Q.   MEN AND WOMEN?

17   A.   Not women. No it's a form of labor, no. It's forced  
18           labor. No women, all men. It's no women involved at  
19           all here. The women were in the ghettos.

20                 About two days later -- yeah, they feed us. You  
21           know with what they feed us? We had a half bread,  
22           half a loaf of bread a day. And we are supposed to be  
23           in the Army. Half loaf of bread, about a pound. They  
24           gave us marmalade. You know what marmalade is? And  
25           sometimes they give us a little coffee. That was our

1 food. On this we have to live.

2 Two days later I saw that it's a group. Somehow  
3 in the middle of the yard there is a group standing,  
4 Jewish. A group is standing. I go there and take a  
5 look and what's there, they are recruiting. They make  
6 a company. A company in -- I don't know. In  
7 Hungarian, a company is 360 people. Over a hundred is  
8 a company. They made a company of 360 Jews from  
9 Satmar, only Satmar. So I went there. They didn't  
10 even ask me for my age. They enlisted me. I was  
11 enlisted.

12 Next day we were going to Satmar. We had a  
13 lieutenant commander tell -- the soldiers were all  
14 volunteers, all old people. We had only one soldier,  
15 a private and a corporal. They were from the Army,  
16 from the regular Army. But the other ones were all  
17 volunteer dressed in uniform like soldiers. And we  
18 had a Jewish lieutenant that wasn't a civil. He had  
19 the Army -- hat of the Army with his rank, had  
20 national band, red, white and green, Hungarian flag.  
21 And here he had in gold his rank, his rank of  
22 lieutenant. But power, nothing. Like another Jew, he  
23 couldn't tell for a soldier, a Hungarian soldier, one  
24 word to do something, only to us. All the privileges  
25 we had -- he had not to work. He didn't work. He was

1 attached to the commander, to the lieutenant  
2 commander.

3 And it was Jews. They were two Jews what they  
4 had in the company from Satmar. What was -- they  
5 convert to Christianity. So instead to wear the  
6 yellow band, they wear white bands. But they were  
7 working like any other -- no sir, nothing, no  
8 privileges, nothing. All they knew is they converted  
9 to be a Christian. He had the white band.

10 So after next day we were preparing to go. We  
11 were -- about two days later we were in Satmar. They  
12 put us in the middle of the city in a big, huge market  
13 building. Huge, there was huge. But we didn't have  
14 nothing, only the clothes on us. They didn't give us  
15 even to cover us up, you know, in the night from the  
16 cold or something, like a blanket, something, nothing.  
17 They put us in there.

18 I was lucky because I am a shoemaker. So I told  
19 the guys, "Listen, if I will repair your shoes here,  
20 then you will have shoes." So they made me a  
21 shoemaker there. So I had the band. And I had on the  
22 band was written "shoemaker." So I had the privileges  
23 to go out in the city and buy merchandise like soles  
24 and nails what I had to have. So I could go out. I  
25 had a pass, a piece of paper. What it says, that

1           nobody can touch me because I'm attached to -- our  
2           name was 110/67 lego [CK] company. That was the  
3           company's name, 110, with a pare, 67. I don't know  
4           what you call this line.

5       Q.   THIS WAS A COMPANY IN THE ARMY OR WAS IT A LABOR  
6           COMPANY?

7       A.   That's a labor company but attached to the Army. Like  
8           a civilian couldn't touch us, a policeman couldn't  
9           touch me. An MP had the right to me. You understand?  
10          We were attached to the Army. The Army fed us. We  
11          were working like slaves without pay. Well, they paid  
12          a little sold [CK]. What they call them? Every  
13          month you got probably like, here, \$5. That was what  
14          we got. That we had to buy shoes, clothes. We were  
15          working in our own clothes. We had no right to wear  
16          any military clothes, only a hat. A hat that -- if  
17          you own a hat, a hat, it's okay.

18               But in Satmar I was -- I was lucky because I was  
19               repairing shoes. But the other guys -- God. It was  
20               their unit, an Army and they were engineers. They  
21               build bridges over the rivers. You imagine those  
22               barges made from steel. It was only about 35 foot and  
23               wide about 10. And they gave 15 guys or 16 guys to  
24               lift those barges to take them from the base, from the  
25               military base to the river on the shoulders. That the

1 way they punished. And on those barges they have  
2 barbed wires. You know, they put barbed wires in it  
3 and they put all kind of stuff what they use.

4 Well, it was hell there for the boys. For me, I  
5 was working, you know. Me and two other guys --  
6 three, we were three guys. But I wasn't forced for  
7 this work. If I want to go out to work, I could do  
8 it. I just changed my band and went to the work for  
9 the guys.

10 Well, we were there in Satmar probably -- that  
11 was -- I came to Satmar on a date in May. I think it  
12 was 3rd of May 1944. 3rd of May, yeah, something like  
13 that.

14 Well, the main thing, it was very hard, very hard  
15 for the people. Now when we are in the Hasidim, like  
16 I told you, we had the Hasidim in our group, in the  
17 company. But we had a lieutenant commander what was a  
18 volunteer, what volunteered, but only he knew it. We  
19 didn't know it then. We knew it after the war,  
20 because we gave him a big banquet. He was  
21 volunteering to the Army just because he want to save  
22 the Jews of Satmar. He was from Satmar. He was a  
23 teacher before that.

24 Q. NON JEWISH?

25 A. Non Jewish. He was Christian.



1 Q. HE WAS A CHRISTIAN?

2 A. He was a Christian, yeah. His name was  
3 Vitase Graphacarmain. [CK] Vitase means hero. He  
4 was a hero from World War I. But he volunteered to  
5 save the Jews from Satmar how much he can. And he was  
6 -- he was behaving that way with us. But we had a  
7 staff sergeant. He was an anti-Communist and  
8 anti-Jew. He was the biggest anti-Semite which you  
9 can imagine.

10 But what was the problem, later on -- and we  
11 didn't know and the first time we had to suffer a lot.  
12 But later on in Budapest and those places already,  
13 they knew that this guy is alcoholic and the guys just  
14 had to bring wine and let him drink, because the  
15 lieutenant commander said, "Give him just to drink.  
16 Let him be drunk all the time. It won't be that much  
17 a problem."

18 You see, other companies, other Jewish companies  
19 -- we weren't the one. There was hundreds of it.  
20 They had guards -- probably a company of 350, 400  
21 people, they had about 50, 60 guards. We didn't have  
22 that. We had two soldiers. We had over 80-years-old  
23 sergeant, and the staff sergeant, and the lieutenant  
24 commander. That's what we had.

25 So, let's go back to Satmar. Yeah. The Hasidim,

1       you know, they refuse to shave. Piyas, they didn't  
2       want to cut the piyas. The caftans. They didn't want  
3       to do it. They said, "We die. We don't care. We  
4       pray all the time and that's it." So when they had to  
5       go out to work, then they put them in the middle of  
6       the line. It was one, two, three, four -- four rows,  
7       and they put them in the middle, you know, with capala  
8       [CK], you know, so that they cannot see it growing,  
9       you cannot see with this big, big hat, because they  
10      were in big trouble then, you know.

11               But later on when the lieutenant commander said,  
12      "Listen, guys" -- not to me and not to guys like me,  
13      because I didn't have the money. There was very rich  
14      people. When we came to Satmar the second time, they  
15      had a lot of money because it was stashed money, you  
16      know, in the basement in the houses in the ghetto and  
17      they went and they knew where it was and they picked  
18      up everything they could. They had money. You know,  
19      they had money. The big ones like engineers and  
20      lawyers, we had there.

21               So he said to those guys, "You know what you do  
22      with the Hasidim? You make them cooks. Let them stay  
23      in the base and cook for company. So that way they  
24      did the most. We had about 30. You know, you had  
25      enough, three, four cooks. More, you don't need that.

1 Well, Satmar, we were for about three to four  
2 weeks. I can't recall exactly. But one day we heard  
3 an order, "Line up!" We knew there was something  
4 going on. "Line up!" When we lined up, come the  
5 order, "Forward to the rail station!" Railroad  
6 station.

7 Well, they took us to Cluj. They bombed in Cluj  
8 the railroad stations building, leveled the whole  
9 thing, you know, the Americans. So we had to go. We  
10 were the lego. "Lego" means, everywhere where they  
11 bomb, we have to clean up. We were working with the  
12 clean up, like a cleanup team.

13 So we went out and they put us in the wagons, you  
14 know, railroad wagons, opened and closed. But this  
15 lieutenant commander wasn't a stupid guy, he was  
16 really smart. Now I can understand how he worked. To  
17 Cluj from Satmar you had to make with the train, no  
18 more than six, seven hours. It took two weeks to get  
19 there. Very slow. And then he gave the order to pull  
20 out for two or three days on the side, you know.  
21 And then they start to go again and that way he pull  
22 the time.

23 We came to Cluj two weeks later. And the base,  
24 they put the base right the next street to the  
25 railroad station, the next street. It was a regular

1 house, probably Jewish house, a big house, you know.  
2 You could put -- it wasn't beds, you know, you just  
3 lie down on the floor and sleep. You didn't have  
4 something else to cover us or to put something on the  
5 floor. We didn't have clothes to change it. We  
6 didn't wash ourselves, you know, like to take a shower  
7 or something. I probably went three months one time.  
8 We couldn't do it. It wasn't there.

9 So we came to Cluj. They put us on this base.  
10 And the next day I found myself to work in a very big  
11 factory, Darmarta, one of the biggest in Romania. It  
12 was in Romania. I'm talking about before the  
13 Hungarian came in. So I went there and I worked by  
14 stretching hides, animal hides.

15 And the other guys, they went to clean up the  
16 railroad station. They made a lot of money there,  
17 because they hit the railroad station. They hit the  
18 cash, too. You know in the rubles they find it here.  
19 Mostly the money was there, was mostly coins. They  
20 find a lot of coins here and there, so they made a  
21 little money. But I didn't have that luck. I had to  
22 work somewhere else.

23 Well, what else was there? I worked in the  
24 dermatology. Then they put me -- I didn't want to work  
25 so hard. I said, "I am going to be a little bit

1 free."

2 Then after that, they send us out to the ghetto.  
3 What they give me my assignment was to collect all  
4 those shoes, what the Jews left, you know. They  
5 couldn't take anything with them. Because how -- I  
6 didn't see it, but I believe it, because my sisters  
7 and my family were in those closed wagons for Satmar  
8 or from Cluj to Auschwitz. They couldn't go even out.  
9 They had to do there everything. And they were like,  
10 they say like herrings packed. Didn't have air, they  
11 were closed. Not like us. When we went, you know, we  
12 were free. Some people, they were young, some people  
13 went and sit on the train on the top just for air.

14 Well, they send us to the ghetto. And this the  
15 first time I saw this place. And I was assigned to  
16 collect all those shoes. There was really nice  
17 shoes there, too, you know. Well, most of it we  
18 recovered here a piece, there a piece, you know. Just  
19 a little bit.

20 Then it comes -- a special Army came, Hungarian  
21 Army, and picked up those clothes, picked up all those  
22 things. You could find rummy cubes and all kinds of  
23 things.

24 Q. THE PEOPLE IN THE GHETTO HAD BEEN TAKEN AWAY?

25 A. Yeah. No jews anymore.

1 Q. THIS IS THE GHETTO IN CLUJ?

2 A. The ghetto in Cluj. The people were all in Auschwitz.  
3 Probably a lot had died in the gas chambers already.

4 Q. DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY WENT FROM CLUJ?

5 A. I don't know. Yeah, Auschwitz. My sister told me.  
6 She came back, she told me.

7 You know, one thing that I -- let me see how it  
8 was, if I recall right.

9 Can you cut it for a second?

10 Q. SURE.

11 (BREAK IN TAPE)

12 A. I forgot to mention that the first time we were in  
13 Satmar, this friend of mine who gave me those papers  
14 visit me. They could visit us, you know, for a few  
15 seconds. And I told him that I want to go home. I  
16 don't care. I break in the house. What I am doing, I  
17 don't know. But I want some souvenirs from home.

18 So he said, "Well, you see, my brother is in the  
19 Army and he has leave, but he wouldn't do it. He is  
20 too much of a coward for that." But this guy, his  
21 name was Jelog, Jelog. He said he will do for money  
22 anything. And he was on leave, too, from the front.

23 He called him up and told him what I want to do  
24 and he said, "Why not? I take him under my bayonette  
25 and no guard can tell me. He's my prisoner." That's

1 the way it was. He came to the base.

2 And I told my sergeant, you know, this old Socky.  
3 We called him Socky. And I told him, "Listen, I want  
4 to go out a little bit. I got to buy some stuff." He  
5 said, "You can go. How long it will take?" I told  
6 him, "About three or four hours. I want to look  
7 around." He said, "Well, you do it, but I don't know  
8 about that."

9 So he came, this guy, and told me, "Nattay, what  
10 do you want to do?" I told him, "Listen, you just  
11 take me home. I'll pay you." So he took me home  
12 under the bayonette. We walked. It was about six,  
13 seven kilometers. We walked out to the house.

14 The next door neighbor on the right side was a  
15 very good guy, a very quiet guy. But on the left  
16 side, it was an anti-Semite. Well, I took him to this  
17 guy on the right side and told my neighbor, "Give him  
18 a few beers. I will pay you back."

19 And what I did, he sat down there and I went in  
20 the back yard. The Jewish houses were stamped,  
21 stamped. It was closed and stamped, everything in it.  
22 If you break in the house -- if you are Christian and  
23 break in the house like this, they kill you for that.  
24 Not a Jew. What I did, I figured out what to do. I  
25 went in the back yard. We had like a shed. We had a

1 ladder there and we had -- we used to dig, you know,  
2 it was a garden. And we had what I think they call  
3 them pitch axe, you know, those with the tine, very  
4 slim nose and the other side wide.

5 So I took the ladder from the side of the house  
6 where they couldn't see it from the outside. Anyway,  
7 not too much people were walking in there because the  
8 houses weren't so attached to each other. So I went  
9 there and I took this and took out five of those  
10 bricks. We had those bricks, the red bricks. Not the  
11 small ones. And slipped in the attic, slipped in.  
12 From the attic we had a ladder to go down in there.  
13 It was like a room, like a closet. Not big. My  
14 mother used to make for winter all those -- she cooked  
15 for the winter, you know, those berries, and I don't  
16 know how they call them.

17 A FEMALE: COMPOTE?

18 A. Compote? I don't know another name for it. Doesn't  
19 make any difference.

20 From there it was a door to the kitchen where my  
21 father used to work and my mother used to cook. And  
22 there was a window to the back yard, and by the window  
23 was a table. On the table, I didn't know, but later  
24 on, I find it out the hard way. It was a brand new  
25 blouse, you know, my sister's. She just bought a



1 shirt -- a jacket, a new jacket and a new skirt. The  
2 skirt and the jacket was on the floor, but the blouse  
3 was on the table. And you could see it from the back  
4 window, but I didn't know.

5 So I picked up -- I picked up a hammer from my  
6 father and some pictures or the curtain. And I take  
7 the suit with me, the jacket and the skirt and the  
8 blouse, I sell it because it was good money and it was  
9 warm, you know. In Hungary everything was money at  
10 that time.

11 What I did, I put back those bricks nicely as it  
12 was. I put back everything. And I went back to the  
13 soldier. I told the soldier and he took me back to  
14 the base. It passed about two days. The next door,  
15 you know the anti-Semite neighbor, come running to the  
16 base and called me out to the door. And when they let  
17 her through -- see, the Christian, they will let her  
18 in the yard, just in the yard to talk to me. She said  
19 just to the soldier, "I just wanted to talk to him."

20 She said just like this to me. She said,  
21 "Nattay, if you don't give me this blouse, you know  
22 what happens. I am going to the authorities. I tell  
23 them that you were in the house. You break in."

24 So I didn't talk to her. I went in, took the  
25 blouse and gave it. She left. I was already in the

1 death row, you know. Well, what they did with the  
2 Jews, just shoot them right there. Nothing else. It  
3 wasn't -- you didn't have to go to a jury or to a  
4 court to do that. They had the right to shoot you.  
5 So I took this jacket and this skirt and gave it to my  
6 friend who give me these papers.

7 Well, that was what I forgot to include. I  
8 forgot to include this.

9 Well, let's go back to Cluj. What in Hungarian  
10 they call them Kolishivar. I worked in the ghetto  
11 to clean up the ghetto, and the guys cleaned up the  
12 railroad station.

13 And one day he comes to me, because I know the  
14 city very good, I was living in it twice. And a  
15 friend of mine, who is in Brooklyn, his name is  
16 Berkovich -- Brooklyn here in the United States. He  
17 has a restaurant. Now he is a Hucit, a Hasid.

18 And he said to me, "Nattay, I know you have the  
19 guts. Let's go out a little bit. If they caught us,  
20 what the hell, they caught us." Anyway, we don't have  
21 anybody anymore. So we sneaked out the door. It was  
22 a Sunday. Sunday wasn't any work. Saturday we work,  
23 Sunday not.

24 So we sneaked out the door. Where are we going?  
25 We want to play billiard. Not like here. Not this

1 kind, you know, the three balls, cannon ball. We went  
2 in and played and through our luck a policeman come in  
3 and says to us, "Can I be the next one?" Like that.  
4 And my friend was laughing and says, "Why not?" You  
5 know, like that. Well, I was the next one. I played  
6 with him. I let him win. And said, "Good-bye."

7 "Where are we going now?" I said to him, "Let's  
8 go out to the beach." The river is the beach. The  
9 same river which flows in Satmar flows in Kolinchivar.  
10 Somush [CK] they call them.

11 We go out to the beach and sit down on the grass  
12 and he says to me, "I bet you those two girls in the  
13 uniform, they are Jews." They were nurses.  
14 Beautiful. There was quite a few Jews who were smart  
15 and had the guts to be with Christian peoples. If  
16 they had the guts, especially girls, they were saved.

17 So I told him -- I used to call him Brugo. I  
18 don't know why. But everybody called him Brugo and  
19 that's a nickname. We slipped a little bit closer and  
20 closer. One of the girls slipped out, you know, how  
21 Jews are, when they talk Hungarian, they slip in a  
22 Jewish word -- Hebrew word, actually. He said to me,  
23 "I thought they are Jewish girls. Let's go and talk  
24 to them."

25 Well, they were scared first when we told them

1           who we were. We were Jews. We didn't have the band.  
2           Only to have the band, they shoot you for it. Sure,  
3           you are a spy. And we talked to those girls and they  
4           told us there is too many of us, that's why we are in  
5           uniforms and we have papers and everything. But the  
6           papers, these papers, they weren't were working for  
7           the hospital or something. If they got caught, you  
8           know, they paid for it. But they had the guts to do  
9           it.

10                 Well, we talked to those girls and we tell them  
11           bye-bye. And we went further and he says to me,  
12           "Let's go to the movie." We go to the movie, we stand  
13           in the line, and I saw my staff sergeant standing in  
14           the first line buying a ticket. He was from the same  
15           city, from Kolinchivar, this guy, this staff sergeant.

16                 I said, "See him? Let's split. Let's split now.  
17           Let's split and get right back to the base." And we  
18           didn't play around anymore. That was in Kolinchivar.

19                 From there, two weeks later, we went back to  
20           Satmar the same way we came, you know. The train was  
21           going very slow. But there we had already more than  
22           when we came because in the ghetto we find things that  
23           had a value. I had a rummy cube, if you know those  
24           rummy cubes, playing rummy. This thing saved my life,  
25           too. And we took what we could, you know. We just

1           cleaned up the ghetto.

2           We went back to Satmar. This time they put us in  
3           the ghetto, in the Satmar ghetto. Right across the  
4           street was the base of the Hungarian military Army.  
5           That's what I told you. About how far was it? About  
6           30 feet. The street wasn't that wide in those places.

7           We got there in Satmar. Well, it was the same  
8           thing. Then I volunteered that I will be water boy.  
9           What's being water boy? We didn't have water. We  
10          have to carry the water about a kilometer from the  
11          base to cook and to wash something. So I was the  
12          water guy with pails, you know, two pails and schlepp  
13          the water to the base.

14          And the other guys, they were working with the  
15          soldiers. But that's the first time we have good  
16          food. Because every time in the evening when we came  
17          home from work, we went for about a hundred yards. It  
18          was the main gate. They lined us up. We went in the  
19          base and there was already cooked meal for us. For a  
20          while. Not for too long.

21        Q.   WERE A LOT OF PEOPLE IN THAT GHETTO?

22        A.   There wasn't any people in the ghetto. They were in  
23          Auschwitz already. They came the second time back.

24          The first time -- I forgot to mention, the first  
25          time when we went to the base to eat was the last --

1 the last military truck, you know, big trucks,  
2 military trucks. The last people, the Jews where they  
3 put from the ghetto on the truck to take them out to  
4 the railroad station. We saw what they did. They did  
5 this on purpose, because we were just once there to  
6 eat. Not anymore.

7 Q. FROM THE RAIL STATION DO YOU KNOW WHERE THEY WENT?

8 A. Auschwitz. Yeah, my sister told me everything. My  
9 sister will be next month, Helen Fargas from  
10 Burlingame. She has an interview too. She will tell  
11 you about Auschwitz. I wasn't there. I was in  
12 Hungary. So I forgot...

13 Q. YOU WERE IN THE GHETTO ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE --

14 A. Yeah, the second time we came in the ghetto. And I  
15 was volunteering for water boy to carry water to base  
16 to have water. I remember I had shoes on my feet,  
17 just a little shirt because the river was there. So  
18 there I jump in the river a little bit, too.

19 Then I find my good friends I went to school  
20 with. Before we lived outside the city, we were  
21 living in the city about -- exactly one block from the  
22 ghetto. My father had a hobby to build houses, you  
23 know. He didn't want to build them, but he paid for  
24 it. He liked to have a house, another, you know, real  
25 estate. The first where I was born is by the ghetto,

1           there where I was born. Then when we went outside the  
2           city I was already about 15, 16, something like that.

3           Well, I went there by the beach, you know, jumped  
4           in the water. The Christian guys come up to me, my  
5           own age from school and everything. One or two of  
6           them was nice to me, but the rest of them  
7           anti-Semitic. Terrible, terrible what they did. They  
8           said things, you know, just to aggravate. "You won't  
9           see your parents. You won't see your dad. You won't  
10          see yourself and you will be killed, too, and I'm  
11          glad." Things like that. So I listened. And the  
12          mouth quiet. I couldn't do anything.

13          Well, we were in Satmar for probably a month.  
14          And then they picked us up again. "Line up!" And we  
15          went to Budapest. What was there now, I know. The  
16          Russian pushed Romania -- Romania was ally to the  
17          Germans. But in one day they turned the weapons  
18          against the Germans and that was the time when the  
19          Russians start to come to Romania and we were very  
20          close. And what they did, they took us out from  
21          there, you know, to work for the railroads, on the  
22          railroads on the way had to be fixed and all those  
23          things. The Americans in Budapest had come every day  
24          bombing, every day, twice.

25          Well, we come to Budapest. To my shock, I come

1 to Budapest with the company, when I saw the first  
2 house with a yellow -- a huge, huge yellow star, you  
3 know, on the house. That was Jewish house, only Jews  
4 were living there. It wasn't a ghetto yet. All the  
5 Jews. But couldn't go out, only from 11:00 to 12:00  
6 o'clock to buy food. They were prisoners in the  
7 house.

8 They took us -- the direction was to an abandoned  
9 brick bakery, huge bakery. But if you go in the  
10 bakery, you know, to lie down, it was the box, bread  
11 box, you know, the red ones. I don't know if you ever  
12 seen them, blood suckers. You couldn't lie down.

13 Me and my friend, we said, "We will lie down  
14 outside. We will sleep outside, you know, by the  
15 building." And they put already blankets from the  
16 ghetto and put down blankets and lie down and try to  
17 sleep. And comes up rain, so we have to go in again.  
18 So we didn't sleep.

19 But next day they lined us up again and marched  
20 -- actually, not marched, only they took us to a  
21 military base outside Budapest, a big military base.  
22 And we came to this military base, soldiers was only a  
23 few Hungarian soldiers. I'm talking about guards,  
24 but the rest was out on the front.

25 Well, they took us there with a trangavar [CK]



1           you know those trangavar? Street cars. Street cars.  
2           It was too far to walk. We had walk all day long to  
3           get there. So me, I couldn't behave. I never could  
4           behave actually. That was my nature. I don't know  
5           why I did it. But I did things, you know.

6           The first day we came to the base, I looked  
7           around. The base was -- around the base was a huge  
8           fence, fence, big fence, you know, around. It was  
9           about four or five blocks big, and the main gate. The  
10          main gate, like in Europe, you know, standing guard,  
11          you know, with the little house standing a guard. And  
12          I said to myself, "God, I'm going to Budapest. I want  
13          to see the city."

14          Well, I jumped over the fence on the other side.  
15          And on the trangavar, getting to the city to take a  
16          look, I knew my future, that I have the papers if I  
17          want to split, go away, somehow I have to know what to  
18          do.

19          Well, there I made a big mistake. I saw the  
20          city. When I come back to my surprise, my staff  
21          sergeant were waiting for me. That was in the  
22          afternoon, about 4:00, 5:00 o'clock. He lined up the  
23          whole company to see it. He took like a baseball bat,  
24          you know, that stick. And how much? God, so many  
25          times. That wasn't enough. I was, you know, bloody

1 and everything. And with his boots, the Army boots in  
2 Hungary, they had the metal like the horses,  
3 horseshoe, the metal horseshoe, and kicked here,  
4 kicked out my hip from the place.

5 Well, I couldn't walk. And he yelled to the  
6 guys, "Take him away out there to the stables between  
7 the horses. Throw him in the horse trough." They  
8 couldn't do anything else. They did it. He yelled,  
9 "You see, anyone who tries that again, that's what  
10 waiting for him. Everybody has to know."

11 So, I was lying there. And my friends, they  
12 bring me some food a little bit. I'm not sure. They  
13 didn't have food. I was lying there for probably  
14 almost a month in this dump there. And when I start  
15 to -- I try to walk, I couldn't. And I just slipped  
16 on my ass, you know, and tried to do something to  
17 move. Slowly, slowly, those guys helped me out and  
18 lift me and, you know, when they had a little time  
19 they came to me there. And I was -- I limped a lot,  
20 but I start to walk.

21 What's happen later in the Israeli Army, I was  
22 in the Army, and there they made me an x-ray and told  
23 me what's happened. They said it was kicked out and  
24 half of it is missing. The trochanter, what they call  
25 it that goes -- the ball on the inside, this piece is

1           just rubbed off. It's not existing anymore.

2           So probably the lieutenant commander saw this  
3           trouble. They lined up us about four weeks later and  
4           took us straight in the city in Budapest, an abandoned  
5           Jewish house, probably big one. It was, I remember,  
6           Bansur Utsa 33. That was the place. It was by the  
7           ligget. In Budapest is a big park, a very famous  
8           park, they call it ligget. It was about a block away  
9           from there.

10          Well, that was our base. But our job was to work  
11          with horte. "Horte" was the -- you know, where Horte  
12          was. Horte Miclosh Rapilitare, that means the  
13          airport. Horte Miclosh Airport. What we had to do  
14          was dig ditches. I don't know for what. Probably  
15          they didn't know what to do with us. We had to  
16          travel, you know, to go with trangvars out there. And  
17          I didn't want to stay in the base because I want to  
18          see. I was always with the eyes open. I want to see  
19          what's going on. If I had money, you know, then I  
20          could somehow split. But I said, as long as I have  
21          food and I have area to sleep, I stay. When I see  
22          trouble, I split. Very simple.

23          Well, it happened that one day... One day this  
24          guy showed up, you know, from Satmar and gave me the  
25          papers, showed up in the base. Up to that date, I

1 don't recall. I don't know how he found me. He came  
2 and he said to me, "You know what did this to us?"  
3 They took all the teenagers, you know, under the age  
4 and pulled them out from Satmar and brought them up to  
5 Budapest to defend -- to defend the capital. So he  
6 said to me, "I wouldn't stay here for a minute." He  
7 said, "I'm going home." So he ran to the front and he  
8 wind up in Russia in the prisoner camps. I even  
9 didn't see him after the war.

10 Well, in Budapest in the Bensar Utsa, that was  
11 our steady base. People -- the company used to go to  
12 work at Horte. But bombing was every day, every day  
13 9:00 o'clock exactly. We heard, they said, two cities  
14 in Hungary. On the radio when we heard the two  
15 cities -- I can't recall right now. I know the names.  
16 And when we heard those names, we have to run. We had  
17 to run because the bombers, I saw them, you know, they  
18 came, the American bombers, you know, the big ones  
19 around us with the fighter bombs. I don't know why  
20 they had the fighters there. The Hungarian didn't  
21 have any airplanes to go up, you know, in the horte  
22 ligget, you know the horte airport. I counted. They  
23 had seven airplanes. And do you know how big? For  
24 one map man. They didn't have 45.

25 But although the Americans, they throw the bombs

1 bike chain, come down like chain, you know, but not in  
2 Budapest. Probably railroads or I don't know. In the  
3 evening, the same thing, the same thing. The Russians  
4 didn't do a damn thing in that time. Later on, yes.

5 Q. WERE THE -- THE GERMANS WERE IN BUDAPEST ABOUT THIS  
6 TIME?

7 A. Germans were in Budapest, only few of it. It was an  
8 SS commander, too. That's what they called them.  
9 Okay? But to see in the streets German soldiers, you  
10 didn't. You could see here and there a wagon with two  
11 horses to go to some products, you know, to take  
12 somewhere. But those were allies. They didn't -- it  
13 wasn't occupation there. It was the Hungarian Army  
14 was the main thing in that time. Later on the  
15 Hungarian Army was nothing.

16 Q. ABOUT THAT TIME THE RUSSIANS WERE COMING --

17 A. Yeah.

18 Q. -- FROM ROMANIAN?

19 A. Romania to Hungary.

20 Q. AND DID YOU REALIZE THAT MANY MANY JEWS WERE TAKEN  
21 AWAY ABOUT THAT TIME, BEING TAKEN NORTH?

22 A. Just wait a few minutes, I tell you about that. Sure.  
23 I saw a lot of things. So I just want to tell you  
24 step by step how it was, because otherwise I mix up  
25 myself. I don't know.

1           The Germans, you couldn't see. Only here and  
2           there, a Germans soldier here and a German soldier  
3           there. It wasn't Germans, it was Hungarian Germans.  
4           You know, in Hungary there were living Germans. They  
5           have whole communities, villages. "Todes" they call  
6           them, sass. They were Germans but lived in Hungary  
7           all their lives and before that.

8           Now, where were I? We were working on the horte  
9           ligget -- horte airport for a long time. Actually the  
10          work was easy there. We didn't have any jobs on us  
11          and we didn't have a purpose what to do. Other places  
12          later on, we had to make ditches, you know, fox holes  
13          and like anti-tank -- not barricades, you know. Very,  
14          very big, a kilometer, two kilometer long ditches on  
15          one run. It was probably wide about 40 foot that a  
16          tank, if fell in, can't go through it. It was  
17          anti-tank, but that was later. Yeah, that was...

18          Well, that was the good times. Then one day they  
19          lined us up and said -- took us out to Chomart.  
20          That's about 35 miles out of Budapest, but that's the  
21          place I'm talking about where they made the anti-tank,  
22          anti-tank holes -- what you call them? -- ditches. I  
23          don't know. And that was very hard work because it  
24          was very deep, too. It was about 15 feet deep and  
25          very wide.

1           And at that time I said I'm going to -- back to  
2           my shoemaking. I'm not staying. The base -- on the  
3           base were left the Hasidim, because -- I think so, I'm  
4           not sure -- the lieutenant commander said, "Let these  
5           people stay here. They don't go out. Don't take them  
6           to the German village." That was a German village, we  
7           called them Chomart. But that was the place where  
8           they took out the Jews by foot, darach -- that's  
9           Hebrew -- through Hedish Harlem. Hedish Harlem is a  
10          mountain right into Poland, I think.

11          They showed us -- the Niloshes -- I didn't talk  
12          about the Niloshes. The Nilosh was a unit that was  
13          attached to the Army exactly like the SS was attached  
14          to the German Army, the same thing. Then, just to  
15          show us the heroism they can do, it was some people  
16          they couldn't walk, and they came about 35 miles all  
17          the way from Budapest and had another eight miles to  
18          go -- miles, I mean kilometers. And some were weak,  
19          and those who were weak, just couldn't walk, took the  
20          shotgun and shoot them. They didn't touch. Told the  
21          people -- you know, it was line of probably about a  
22          thousand people walking out to Auschwitz. Shoot them  
23          there to show us to the company they can do it and  
24          throw them out in the side. But they didn't touch  
25          them with their hand. The people had to do it.

1 Q. YOU'RE SAYING THEY ARE WALKING TO AUSCHWITZ?

2 A. Walking. Not to Auschwitz, they are walking through  
3 Hedish Harlem. From Hungary out. I don't know. But  
4 I know they were going.

5 One day we had a group only teenage girls, about  
6 a thousand of them. They let them stay for a night in  
7 the village, but sleeping on the floors anywhere they  
8 could, you know. Next day they took them out. That's  
9 what I'm telling you. I saw it.

10 Q. JEWISH GIRLS?

11 A. Jewish girls. They took them out to Hedish Harlem.  
12 Through Hedish Harlem out through Hungary to the gas  
13 chambers to Auschwitz to Poland. I don't know where  
14 they were.

15 Later on -- let me see if I want to tell you  
16 about something else.

17 Yeah, there was one case there. It was working  
18 our company beside another company, Jewish companies,  
19 with the yellow bands. About half a kilometer from  
20 there, we are working volunteers, Christians, the same  
21 work, but they are volunteers. One day a Russian  
22 airplane came down. They called them Mirota. They  
23 were so small they could even go in between the  
24 streets is one flying. Just one man probably. They  
25 came down and shoot those volunteers, you know. They



1           fired about two airplanes, they fired on those people.  
2           They killed a lot of them. When they came to the  
3           Jewish people, they left and go out. They saw the  
4           yellow bands and they know who they are. They didn't  
5           touch anybody. That was a miracle there.

6           In the meantime, I was traveling to Budapest to  
7           buy merchandise for shoes, because this was a village.  
8           This was just farmers, nothing else. It was one  
9           street, that's all. I was at that time -- I was going  
10          and buying, I was walking in the Airjay Bacur. It's a  
11          very large street.

12          And suddenly I saw a guy. You know, I said to  
13          myself, "I know this guy. I know him." It was my  
14          cousin. I didn't have any touch with him at home at  
15          Satmar because he was a gambler, you know. He wasn't  
16          that kind of family like we were. He was from my  
17          mother's side, cousin. He was behaving not right, you  
18          know, like a Jew has to behave. So we didn't stay in  
19          touch. He was a gambler, you know, cards, everything,  
20          you know, what Jew didn't -- drunk, which a Jew didn't  
21          do.

22          So I said, I'm going to approach him. I didn't  
23          have the band, you know. I go and take a look and  
24          said to him, "Penge." He had a nickname, Penge.

25          He looks to me. "Nattay, what are you doing

1           here?" I said to him, "What are you doing?" And he  
2           says, "Well, I tell you if you will work for me."

3           Well, I was suspicious because I knew him, what  
4           he is doing. But he didn't do that in Budapest not at  
5           all that kind of stuff. He was working for the  
6           Russian, for the Russian Army he was working. You  
7           see, in Budapest or in Hungary there wasn't any  
8           resistance. It wasn't partisans. None exists. But  
9           it was other work. Spying on the Army in the streets,  
10          looking around, keeping the eyes open and report it,  
11          report it.

12          So he said to me, "If you will do those things  
13          for me, just keep an eye open and everything. I give  
14          you address where to go. You don't -- you don't know  
15          me, you don't know anybody besides me. I'm the only  
16          one you know."

17          I told him -- what I told myself, "What do I have  
18          to lose? I don't have anything to lose. I know he  
19          won't give me to the Hungarian." I am sure of it,  
20          because he was doing this job because he had the guts  
21          to do it.

22          So I told him, "Well, I am now in a good place.  
23          I have what to eat, but I keep my eyes open." I told  
24          him about this ditching, digging there and everything  
25          and the horte air station there and what they call

1           them? Airport, the horte airport what I saw,  
2           everything what I saw. I didn't do any partisan,  
3           because it wasn't -- if I would be, I would do it.  
4           But I don't care about my life. It was very cheap at  
5           that time, very cheap everybody's.

6           So I went back to Chomart. I was -- I went back  
7           to the base, you know. I had to go to the base  
8           because I had a paper and I had to show it there. And  
9           went back from there, from the base I went back to  
10          Chomart. And we were there for a while.

11          And the Hartee fell. After the war I heard that  
12          they stole Hartee from Budapest in the blanket and  
13          took him to Austria. I didn't know this. But  
14          Salashee came. Salashee was the Nilosh. He was the  
15          head of Hungary, but he was like Hitler exactly the  
16          same, the same, he did the same thing.

17          And at that time the Jews -- and I don't know if  
18          you know or not, but in that time, the Jews in  
19          Budapest and Napsinhaus Utsa, that's a street,  
20          Napsinhaus. And Utsa, that's a street. They throw  
21          grenades on the tanks, Jews. It was in the ghetto,  
22          you know, throw the -- just made the ghetto in that  
23          time. Threw bombs on the Jews. I never saw it, but  
24          it was rumors, but I believe it because it was a lot  
25          of people said the same thing.

1 Q. THREW BOMBS ON --

2 A. Not bombs, handgrenades on tanks.

3 Q. GERMAN TANKS?

4 A. German tanks. German tanks were in Budapest. German  
5 tanks -- when I was in the ghetto later, you know,  
6 like a Red Cross man and worked in the hospital, there  
7 were on every block in the ghetto was standing a  
8 German tank. They wanted to destroy the ghetto.  
9 Every block you had a tank there in that lane.

10 Q. WHEN YOU WENT BACK AFTER SEEING YOUR COUSIN YOU WENT  
11 BACK AGAIN?

12 A. Yeah. I talked to my cousin. My cousin give me a  
13 papers and said, "Here. You want to get in touch with  
14 me, you just come. Nobody will know nothing. And  
15 later on if you need me, I'll be there for you. Food,  
16 money, everything."

17 Well, we came back from there, from Chomart back  
18 to the Bansur 33, that was the base. One day they  
19 took -- they was looking for volunteers at that time.  
20 I don't know why they needed volunteers. So I said, "I  
21 want to see this. I'm going." At that time I was  
22 already involved with this guy, he's my cousin. "I'm  
23 going."

24 Well, it took us 50 people, 50 guys we went out  
25 to the Margateet. It's a very big bridge. It's

1 famous like here the Golden Gate. By the bridge was  
2 under water was barges, huge barges, you know, full of  
3 merchandise, and we had to take it from one barge to  
4 the other one. We didn't know what it is. But one of  
5 us had the guts to turn it over and it says what it is  
6 there. It says screws, bolts, things like that. And  
7 we figured that pretty soon that some kind of weapon  
8 has has been involved.

9 And the next day I reported to my cousin. And he  
10 said, "I'll take care of it. Don't worry. Tomorrow  
11 you will see about three to four strangers between  
12 your people. But you tell your people, keep shut --  
13 the mouth shut. Only that you have to do and the rest  
14 we will do.

15 Next morning we see some people there between us,  
16 the SS from the Germans. They were in civil with the  
17 long leather jackets, you know, in civil. But we knew  
18 it's SS. They had the signs here. They were going  
19 around there. They didn't do nothing to us. They  
20 didn't beat us or something. They didn't have  
21 anything to do with us.

22 And we saw this guy, two guys taking a box, you  
23 know, and slipping in the water on the bottom of the  
24 -- later on I knew already what he told me. You know  
25 what was there in those boxes? Airplane parts. At

1           that time the Russians were close. But what they were  
2           going to do, probably go deeper in the mainland to  
3           take the plains from Budapest, planes there.

4           This kind of things what I was involved, I just  
5           keep my eyes open. Information, simply information,  
6           nothing else.

7           And it was another area there when the  
8           Switzerland -- right? The consul of Switzerland, the  
9           consulate of Switzerland want to save the Jews of  
10          Budapest. They give us shoots pass, papers. But Jews  
11          couldn't go out. The ghetto was here, the Jews  
12          couldn't go out only from 11:00 to 12:00. So there  
13          was a line of a thousand people, but when you get to  
14          consulate, you couldn't get in. They go over the  
15          people. The Hungarian police on horses, you know,  
16          control you, they go over people, they don't care.  
17          It's like dogs. Dogs here is a lot better. There,  
18          dogs. They are dogs.

19          So I saw no way that I can -- I can go in there,  
20          but it was too late. I was caught. I was caught with  
21          a few people and they took us straight to the virtish  
22          malty cossard, virtish malty military base. From  
23          there people never came out. That is the place where  
24          they killed all of the -- made -- you know, the  
25          company, the troops, took them out, like I told you

1 before.

2 But one of our guys escaped. He didn't -- they  
3 didn't pick him out, they picked me and a few others  
4 ones, about seven. They said, "That's it. That's the  
5 final. They said from here out is no way." He went  
6 back and told to those guys, you know, the upper  
7 Jewish guys who had money and probably they told the  
8 lieutenant commander. You know what he said? "Not my  
9 people." He said, "They won't go anywhere my people.  
10 Bring them back."

11 So we came with the anti-Semites, with the staff  
12 sergeant. I'm standing in the middle of the yard and  
13 talking there and I saw my lieutenant commander comes  
14 in the gate, and after him comes the staff sergeant.  
15 And I said, "Well, here is trouble." He goes in the  
16 office. He comes out 15 minutes later.

17 The staff sergeant comes to the middle of the  
18 yard and yells, you know, like they yell, "110/67,  
19 line up!" So we line up. He gives the command, "To  
20 the gate. Forward, march." Back to the base, took us  
21 back to the base.

22 It was passing about no more than another week.  
23 I said, "I must have those papers." I don't know what  
24 was driving me, but "I must have them and I will have  
25 them." So I am going -- I just don't know yet what

1 I'm going to do. But the meanwhile I saw a lady with  
2 on her arm with a Christian, not, you know -- on the  
3 arm carrying vegetables, things like that home. I  
4 said, "What the hell. I can do that." Just go buy a  
5 bigger one, fill them up, go right to the gate, bang  
6 on the gate and when they open the gate, I say it's  
7 vegetables for the consulate for the kitchen. That's  
8 the way I got in. They open the door, I got in .20  
9 minutes later I had my papers.

10 Q. THIS IS THE SWISS CONSULATE?

11 A. The Swiss consulate.

12 Q. DID THAT ALLOW YOU TO GO TO SWITZERLAND?

13 A. No, no. That was only a paper -- I would say it in  
14 Yiddish, but I don't want to say a dirty word.

15 Okay. The paper was good no more than three  
16 weeks. And the Hungarian notice what -- you know, I  
17 think not the Hungarian, only the top Salashe heard  
18 about what was going on, they was worth nothing. You  
19 could just go in the restroom and throw them, you  
20 know.

21 In the meantime, what I am going to do now? I  
22 saw my cousin. He says to me, you know what? I have  
23 a place for you to go. If you don't want to stay like  
24 me, you know, go there and talk to those guys. I  
25 can't recall the street anymore.



1           There was the Red Cross. I went into the Red  
2           Cross. They talked to me nice, everything. "What you  
3           want to do?" I said, "Well, I want a life." "Here you  
4           go. We give you a paper. Do you have a picture?" I  
5           gave them a picture, put it on the picture. "You  
6           go there and work for this hospital. They will give  
7           you food, the give you -- nobody will know nothing."

8           I took the paper, but I didn't go. I went back.  
9           Wasn't bad in my company for a while during that time.  
10          I had what to eat and I want to see what's going on.  
11          Meanwhile in the streets, if I'm walking in the  
12          streets I saw, you know, a lot of things. You  
13          know, like it was they would make barricades. Every  
14          block they lift up the blocks. They had in Budapest  
15          it's stones, blocks like this, and they lift it up to  
16          a meter and have, you know, on the main streets of the  
17          blocks they put them up for fighting.

18          Meanwhile, the winter came in and it start to  
19          snow. Well, I got the papers. I said, "What I got in  
20          my hand, it's good for me. Let's see what it will be  
21          later." And one day -- one day I heard rumors. I  
22          wasn't sure. But I was always so suspicious, you  
23          know, if I saw something. They said they are going to  
24          take out the company to Auschwitz, but for that they  
25          have to release -- release people from the army's

1 hand. You know, we were attached to the Army. So  
2 they told us to go and to liberate ourselves, to be  
3 civil, that they can do anything they want to do with  
4 us. But they forced us.

5 So I went. I became a civil. About a few days  
6 later -- they did it on purpose. A few days later, I  
7 heard they are going to take all the company, you  
8 know, and they did. I had a friend, they called them  
9 Rogey. I didn't want to say up till now because it's  
10 a girl's name. We were just teasing him, you know,  
11 with the name. We called him Rogey. Like Raquel we  
12 call Rachael. We tease him with this name. He was a  
13 very good friend. I know when he do something he do  
14 it.

15 He said, "On this night we're not sleeping in the  
16 basement." It was abandoned house, abandoned house  
17 and we went in the basement. It was in the basement  
18 straw and we pushed ourself in the straw, in the  
19 straw. So we stayed there. We stayed there.

20 About 11:00 o'clock we hear, "Line up! Line up!"  
21 There wasn't too much to line up. There was about 50  
22 people for 360. They were not attached anymore to the  
23 Army. Civils, you, know just like me. Split. And  
24 those people, they took them out. But they not --  
25 they didn't succeed to take them out from Budapest,

1           because in the meanwhile the Russians circled  
2           Budapest. The Romanian Army and Russian Army circled  
3           Budapest. No one could go out or in, just circled the  
4           whole thing. Took them about 60 kilometers and they  
5           came back. They came back.

6           Well, I forgot something to mention here. That  
7           two weeks before they bombed -- it was a hospital,  
8           only Jews, Jewish hospital. It wasn't more than about  
9           200 yards from our base. And in the daytime the  
10          Germans came and bombed, you know, destroyed the  
11          building with the people and everything and we had to  
12          go to clean there.

13          Can you imagine? Only in the basement we could  
14          find alive somebody. It was about three stories, all  
15          people couldn't move. Destroyed the whole thing. I  
16          was wondering how come they are bombing in the middle  
17          of the day, even the siren didn't sound. And when you  
18          look up, you see the Germans are coming down, the  
19          German airplanes and destroyed the whole hospital.

20          Q.   YOU COULD TELL THEY WERE GERMAN AIRPLANES?

21          A.   Oh, yeah. We saw the signs on it. Otherwise, when  
22          the American came, you know what they did? First the  
23          siren came up. Then you could see yellow gas flares,  
24          they shoot yellow flares up into the sky.

25          Because if the Americans arrive to bomb, the

1 Hungarian planes came down to let the busfaltz and the  
2 Irko York, what they call them. The busfaltz was a  
3 weapon anti-airplane weapon what was mounted on a  
4 pickup truck. And they move from street to street.  
5 That's what they use for it. But I don't know if  
6 bullet even reached there.

7 So I'm trying to tell, it wasn't -- we saw the  
8 signs, but even if you saw the signs, you are not sure  
9 it's German, because it could be Hungarian and just  
10 put the signs on it. But American won't bomb -- you  
11 know, won't bomb a Jewish hospital. For what purpose?  
12 There is no enemy there. And the Irko York is a  
13 weapon that they used to shoot from the hip. It looks  
14 like now we see them where they shoot from the  
15 shoulders, some of the armies use them -- they used  
16 them.

17 Well, I was open my eyes and aware of it because  
18 I have to report, all those things I had to report.  
19 Well, we cleaned them up. Those guys came back the  
20 same night it was lined up to take them out from the  
21 city out, you know, to Hedish Harlem. Me and this  
22 guy, we knew that on the other side of the ligget, it  
23 was about two kilometers, is a house for the Red  
24 Cross and it's all Jewish there. But nobody knew  
25 about it. It was hiding. I think if I remember, it's

1           Noran Chutsa Street, Noran Chutsa. But you couldn't,  
2           even in the night you couldn't go through the ligget  
3           because there was fighting going on, you know,  
4           shooting was all the time.

5           But we came to the place. And a guy is standing  
6           at the gate and we want to get in. He says, "We don't  
7           let in anybody here." I said, "What the hell? You  
8           don't let in Jewish people. We are going to save  
9           ourselves, too." He said, "No. We are full."

10          I said to my friend, to Rogey, "Don't talk to  
11          him." We went to the side. It was after a rain, you  
12          know, and the side where nobody sees, it's dark. And  
13          with our bare hands we made a hole big enough in the  
14          ground that we could slip in in the yard. And when we  
15          were in the yard everything was all right, because  
16          Jewish people -- a lot of Jews from us, from the  
17          company were there already. They knew about the  
18          place.

19          So we were very dirty, you know. They gave us  
20          some clothes. But in the morning I said to him, "We  
21          go back. We go back. I want to see what's going on  
22          there."

23          Well, how to say it? We had an interesting  
24          living, but we do -- living is nothing. It was like,  
25          I don't care. Shoot me, shoot me. What's happened?

1 I don't have anybody anymore. It wasn't. So we had  
2 the guts, you know, from there, too. You know, not  
3 everybody.

4 Because at that time if they caught a Jew like me  
5 -- because I saw it, it was a guy from Satmar, and he  
6 was a uniformed, dressed Hungarian -- I don't know how  
7 to explain it to you. They were mountain fighters and  
8 they were in all leather, all leather dressed. And  
9 they had here like this, a plaque. It said who they  
10 are, "mountain fighters" with a chain.

11 They caught this guy. They tied up his foot,  
12 both legs, tied him to the trangvar with the legs, put  
13 a sign on it he was a Jew. And they hammered him to  
14 pieces till the brain get out, you know. That's what  
15 they did to if Jews get caught. That was the  
16 punishment, because to shoot them is too easy.

17 Q. YOU SAID THEY TIED HIM TO WHAT?

18 A. A trangvar. Do you know what a trangvar is? A street  
19 car. Like in San Francisco street cars.

20 Q. CABLE CAR?

21 A. Cable car. But there they call them trangvars. The  
22 same, looks the same, just a trangvar.

23 Q. THIS HAPPENED TO SOMEBODY YOU KNEW FROM SATMAR?

24 A. Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah. But still it was plenty  
25 Jewish people who was with Christian papers and they

1           wasn't scared because they knew it was nothing to  
2           lose, nothing to lose. We even didn't know -- we knew  
3           only later. I knew because he told me, this cousin,  
4           that the Russians circled Budapest. After two weeks  
5           time they start to yell with the bullhorn, what you  
6           call them, exactly those words, "Hungarian give up.  
7           If you don't give up you will be rotten like an apple  
8           in his skin." Everyday we heard that. Everyday.

9           There was still a big resistance. It was a  
10          resistance. One day I was walking on the street on  
11          the Airjay Bacur and I saw a girl. This girl was my  
12          sisters -- she will be here -- my sister's friend.  
13          She was born from Satmar a few kilometers in the  
14          village, and the parents send her to Satmar to learn  
15          dressmaking. She was living in our house. My  
16          sister's best friend. I saw her.

17          And I told her. I told her, "Margda," that's her  
18          name, Margda. She looks to me first frightened, then  
19          she says, "Nattay," she told me, "how come you are  
20          walking on the streets?" I make a joke of it. I  
21          said, "Nothing else to do." And she said, "Come with  
22          me. I show you something."

23          She took me in the Moda Utsa by the ligget, by  
24          this big apartment I told you. And in a big house in  
25          the yard was a smaller house -- a small house, not a

1 smaller house. And this house was special for  
2 Niloshes, for Hungarian SS. And she was living in  
3 this yard. Guts, huh?

4 And she was living there in this little house,  
5 rented this little house there with another girlfriend  
6 and she had a husband to be. You know what? This  
7 husband to be was daytime in the bed, lying in the bed,  
8 and everything -- like in Hungary with this big on the  
9 bed they used to -- what they call them? Covers, you  
10 know, what we have with goose feathers, you know,  
11 thick.

12 Q. FEATHER BED?

13 A. Feather bed. I say it because here there is no such  
14 things and there it was cold, you know. And he was  
15 daytime lying there and nighttime coming out and  
16 sitting in the dark all the time.

17 And later on I used to go there a lot, but I  
18 almost paid my life.

19 You know, I told you about this little airplane.

20 (END OF TAPE ONE.)

21 Q. AND YOU ARE -- EXPLAIN HOW YOU WERE LIVING AND WHERE  
22 YOU WERE STAYING AND WHAT YOU WERE DOING THERE.

23 A. Well, at one time what I did -- I didn't want to  
24 bother my cousin, because I wasn't sure with him, you  
25 know. I was working with him. I didn't know somebody



1           else, only him. So what I did, I used to go and buy  
2           newspapers, you know, a pack of newspapers and put on  
3           this band with the Red Cross and actually go in the  
4           ghetto.

5           First time in the ghetto was, it was a guard and  
6           the Archo Utsa. I told you Utsa was a street. On the  
7           block on the corner was one gate. And there always  
8           the first times was a guard, Nilosh guard with  
9           weapons. But later on, they didn't care anymore.  
10          They were everybody for himself. They could see even  
11          -- of those people under the uniform, you could see  
12          the civil uniform, the civil clothes and when they are  
13          in trouble, just throw it down. But later on we  
14          didn't have Niloshes.

15          So I was going right from the gate about 50 feet  
16          was the hospital I was working. I was -- no, I was  
17          sent there. And I used to take the newspapers in --  
18          buy them outside, take them in, and make a profit on  
19          it. And I had a little money. But food actually I  
20          had from the hospital. And there was a doctor, doctor  
21          Loeffler. Actually two doctors, one small hospital.  
22          It was a hospital, but no medicine, just doctors. No  
23          medicines.

24          Well, only this doctor knew that I'm a Jew.  
25          Nobody, nobody in the world knew that I was a Jew. I

1 had to have somebody, you know, older than I am to --  
2 sometimes to tell me if I'm doing right and I'm doing  
3 wrong. And this man was, to me, the one what I was  
4 trusting in.

5 Q. WAS HE HUNGARIAN?

6 A. What?

7 Q. THIS DOCTOR, WAS HE HUNGARIAN?

8 A. Loeffler? Hungarian Jew.

9 Q. ALSO A JEW?

10 A. Yeah. In the ghetto, in the ghetto. Well, that's the  
11 way I had a little money or I had other things.

12 But it was a girl there. She came in with TB,  
13 you know, tuberculosis. And she had to eat something  
14 good. She told me that if I go, she will give me some  
15 of the food too, go out to Kobanger. That was about  
16 20, 25 kilometers. I have to go with the trangvar.  
17 There was a policeman, neighbors of hers. She said,  
18 "Don't worry. You go in there and just tell them my  
19 name and they will give you anything you ask for."  
20 And it was true. I was going every week twice there.  
21 And she gave me some food.

22 For money -- I tell you the truth, for money you  
23 couldn't buy too much in that time because even the  
24 Hungarian already didn't have food. The Russian  
25 didn't let in anything, even not the airplane to throw

1 something, you know.

2 What they eat at that time, I remember they eat  
3 vegetables, dry vegetables that they cooked and they  
4 eat. And Norang Utsa there was, I think, Budapest's  
5 the biggest temple. There they made on one side of  
6 temple a bakery, Jews. I'm talking about in the  
7 ghetto.

8 So nobody had the guts to walk on the streets,  
9 because there was shooting, there was bombing in the  
10 ghetto too. I went and brought in the bread, you  
11 know. It wasn't bread already, it was corn bread.  
12 You got four decagram of corn bread a day. Do you  
13 know how much this is? A piece like that. That's  
14 what they give even the sick. That's the way I had  
15 here and there to, you know, support myself. Later on  
16 I had everything with my cousin.

17 Q. WE'LL STOP IN A MOMENT. BUT ONE LAST QUESTION. AT  
18 THIS POINT THERE WAS STILL MANY PEOPLE IN THE GHETTO;  
19 AM I RIGHT?

20 A. In Budapest was 80,000 people in the ghetto.

21 Q. THE SHIPMENTS OF PEOPLE TO --

22 A. Get to nobody. Got out nobody.

23 Q. BECAUSE THE RUSSIANS WERE AROUND AT THAT POINT?

24 A. Yeah. But before -- before if they caught Jews in the  
25 street or they went to the ghetto and picked up some

1 people on the street, they still took them out to  
2 the Duna, you know, the big river there. And put them  
3 on the bank of the river, hundreds of them, and just  
4 shoot them all with the machine guns. They fell in  
5 the river.

6 Q. DID YOU EVER SEE ANY -- DURING ALL THOSE YEARS PEOPLE  
7 JUST BEING SHOT?

8 A. Oh, yes, I did.

9 Q. DID YOU?

10 A. Not particularly the Jews. Christian too. Oh, yes.  
11 And Budapest, they were lying the bodies in the street  
12 in the snow. In December a big snow, they were lying  
13 the bodies face down.

14 I want to tell you that when I went to the  
15 bakery, not the bakery. The main point, that was a  
16 temple. In the front yard, but it had a gate a fence,  
17 when I stepped in the gate, what I saw the first time  
18 in my life, bodies were lined up like wood. You know,  
19 wood? Firewood? Like this, like that. They couldn't  
20 bury them. It was winter snow, you know, frozen  
21 everything. They couldn't bury them.

22 I remember in the hospital they took the bodies  
23 that died, put them in a little locker closet, you  
24 know, and couldn't even lie them down. They had to  
25 stand them up. They were standing bodies like that.

1 Q. HOW WOULD THEY DIE?

2 A. From diseases, older people. In the ghetto nobody got  
3 killed.

4 Q. AND STARVATION PERHAPS?

5 A. Yeah, lot of starvation.

6 Q. NOT ENOUGH FOOD?

7 A. Not enough food. Once I was with my best friend  
8 outside walking on the Airjay Utsa and it was the  
9 siren come up and the American came to bomb, and I  
10 never forget that.

11 Two Hungarian soldiers with the carriage of bread  
12 packed up with bread, you know, to take it to some  
13 unit. The two soldiers jumped down, ran in the  
14 shelter in the basement, and me and my friend said,  
15 "We don't need a shelter. Let's go take this in the  
16 ghetto." The ghetto wasn't too far. It was about  
17 maybe 500 meters, half kilometer. We just took the  
18 horses and everything in the ghetto inside.

19 In one-half hour you couldn't see no horses, no  
20 wagons, no bread. That all my life takes me to the  
21 grave and I will remember that.

22 Q. MAYBE WE SHOULD BREAK?

23 A. The horses, they eat the horses.

24 Q. THE HORSES TOO?

25 A. Yeah. Yes, sir.

1 Q. I THINK WE HAVE TO LET THE OTHER LADY COME IN.

2 A. Sure.

3 Q. SO WE'LL DO THIS ANOTHER TIME. YOU HAVE A LOT MORE TO  
4 SAY?

5 A. Yeah.

6 Q. I KNOW YOU DO.

7 (END OF TAPE TWO.)

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18

19

20

21

22

23

24

25