Q (By The Interviewer) Just --
A Yes. My name is Leo Samuels. I was -- I come from a little town in Czechoslovakia, and we were the first victims of Germany after Germany itself, the Jews.
Q What town was it?
A It was Chal-ma-chek, Chal-ma-chek, Czechoslovakia. The Germans came into our country in 1939. There was a lot of (inaudible). But we were lucky, really. We were taken over by the Hungarians to some kind of a miracle.
Q Just can you tell us a little bit about your family before the War?
A Before?
Q All right.
A So my family, we come from Fee-na, Fee-na, Bill's family. My father was a baker (inaudible), but he was -- he chose business. And my father went in the flour business. We made -- we had mills. And of course, everybody need it for their bread --
Q Yeah.
A -- so everybody'd come to us for their wheat. All the farmers came --
Q Yeah.
A -- from 30, 40 miles away come to us. We were very, very warm. Everybody knew us. But very sadly about everything, right when the Czehoslovakian economy -- when the American economy folded in 1928 during the American Depression, it affected us very much on account of we had properties worth close to a million dollars in those days, and my father got involved with the Czech government to build railroad ties for railroads. And when the American reneged on their promises in American -- in there in Czehoslovakia during the American Depression when it hit the American and they reneged on everything, so we were stuck with a million dollars worth of bad debts. But, luckily, the bank didn't close us up; but anything made of flour in the fields and the mills, everything was going for the bank. So we were supposed to be the rich people; but, actually, we were very, very, very poor at home.

Q How many --

A We were ten-sha-va.

Q Ten?
Q: Huh. Were you religious?
A: My father was, yes, a lot. He had -- he had the grief of a really clean life, but he didn't like it or he wanted (inaudible). He wanted to be a Jew, and that's all he wanted to be, and in business if he hadn't.

So we were stuck with all those bills from the banks, and

we made it till it came to happen the Czechs -- the Czech government give up to the Germans. And then when the Czechs give up, this part of the country of mine -- it's called the Ca-fa-de-um -- it was taken over by a bunch of hulligans with a fellow by the name -- Vel-ish-an was his name, Ukraine, one of the biggest anti-Semites.

The biggest weather in there -- and the name of the weather is dis-a -- we've gone right to the end of an the edge battle town. And the plans were in those days for Mr. Vel-ish-an to take all the Jews and shoot them out and send them down to Budhapest in the river, kill off all the 200,000 Jews in the Ca-fa-de-um mountains and the Ca-fa-de-um cities. All the -- the cities had more Jews than Gentiles in those days.

Q: Huh.
A: So then we asked for the Americans when the Hungarians came in and took us over from the Czechs and from the Germans.

Q: Huh.
A: So the Americans -- the Hungarians are sadists in those
days, in 1940.

Q  Huh.

A  So then came the Hungarians, and they took our youth, men
and women, our whole family, and arrest them and send them down
to concentration -- not to -- labor camps throughout Germany and
in Poland in the camps. And we, the younger ones, stayed -- left
home. The most businesses were closed by the Hungarians. They'd

taken over even the Jews.

Q  Uh-huh. How old were you?

A  I was then 17.

A MAN: Were you going to school then?

MR. SAMUELS: No, we weren't allowed to go to school.

A MAN: Before, before --

MR. SAMUELS: Before that, I was a dish-e-da.

Q  (By the Interviewer) Uh-huh.

A  So my father was a very smart man. He used to say -- I had
four, four brothers, and he says, "We have not many more left."
And the other thing that he says, "If you learn a profession,
you'll have a -- you'll turn everything around." "Ma-la-ha and
ma-la-ka-esht," he said.

Q  Uh-huh.

A  So he was a very smart man. So he took all our four boys,
and he put everybody in the room to learn a profession. And this
is what saved us in this second part of the Holocaust on account
of all my brothers, we learned. We each one learned a different
profession.

Q   What was the profession you learned?
A   I learned to be a tailor, and it saved me on account I learned.
Q   Uh-huh.
A   And I make (inaudible) for the German Army in Poland. They took me from Auschwitz there, which really turned me about.

Q   Uh-huh.
A   So that for me was -- we were -- we would learn. We would learn the profession with many interruptions, because we were, again, as Jews in Hungary, and they were supposed to have been with the -- the Hungarians were together with the Germans, the Allies, you know. There were a lot of problems for the ghettos and everything else.
Q   Let me ask you. Even before that, in your early life, do you remember anti-Semitism?
A   I remember only one thing I could remember was, I did remember this. I remembered when I came from the town and we used to -- and the only incident that I remember when I was in the fifth grade, when I went to school and we had a teacher by the name of Francis Czech-mar. And this kid I knew, this kid -- this kid who was in school called me a dirty Jew. In those days, I was a very proud Jew. And I remember the kids who used to call me Jew, and I used to feel that the kids were hardened. "You can't call us Jews, dirty Jews. When we Jews have mak-fas, in
the morning, we take showers. Every morning, we take showers.

   In the showers, the showers will be going a minimum of a half an
   hour every single day."

Q    Uh-huh.

A    "And we came to school, to the school nicely dressed,
dressed in style. When you people take a shower, you don't even
have showers. You only wash from a bucket, you know. You call

us dirty? You can tell -- I'll tell the same thing to the

   teacher."

   So I told the boy, and I really let him have it. So when
the teacher -- he took me in there, and when the teacher came to
me, he grabbed me by my polos I had. He said, "You don't
realize, in Germany, they've already killed Jews, and you are
beating up on a nice Christian boy?"

I said, "The Christian boy started with me. He called me a
dirty Jew."

Q    Huh.

A    He said, "You are a dirty Jew."

I said, "Take a look at me. I take the (inaudible) to the
teacher all day." I said, "Take a look at his anus. It hasn't
been washed for a month. Take a look at mine. How can you call
me dirty, I am the dirty one, and he's the clean one? How can
you call us dirty Jews?", I said.

"That's all," he says.

Oh, I could not fight him.
So he says, "Don't do it any more."

So I didn't. And two years later, I went to another school.

Q Huh.

A So there was anti-Semitism there at our school in this country, even -- this was even into the church.

I went home and told my father about what happened in school. So my father had a lot of influence in the city, in the little town. He went to the teacher, and he told the teacher, you know, and he got him fired; but nothing happened on account of the Germans and the Hungarians were combined, and they took over everything. We lost our house after a while and everything else, and we were out of school.

So I left to learn my profession to Budapest, Hungary, which is 250 miles west of us -- no, east of Budapest 250 miles. I went there. I learned my profession in Budapest. I stayed there a couple of years. And, too, I helped out at home, for my mom.

One time my father, the Germans had forced him constantly to send food to Germany on account of he owed the bank the notes. And they differed with my father, but he knew a lot about food. He was very, very professional. So he was the life route to Germany. And they wanted to take everything away from us, in other words; so my father had to send food to Germany for everything. So he did not want to. Each time, the Kree-tas
19 arrested him, you know.
20 Q Uh-huh.
21 A So this was my father's life in all those two or three
22 years that I was away from home. He made plenty of money to pay
23 back all the money for the
24
25