

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:03,480
Vilna, which I think I'd
like to think bring out.

2
00:00:03,480 --> 00:00:10,960
The size-- and soon as the
Russians marched in, it

3
00:00:10,960 --> 00:00:11,510
became--

4
00:00:11,510 --> 00:00:12,760
if you push it in the middle--

5
00:00:12,760 --> 00:00:13,601
[INAUDIBLE]

6
00:00:13,601 --> 00:00:18,400

7
00:00:18,400 --> 00:00:23,471
As soon as they marched in,
it became a shortage of food.

8
00:00:23,471 --> 00:00:27,380
And we used to stand
in line, and they

9
00:00:27,380 --> 00:00:30,670
used to give you a
pound of bread a day.

10
00:00:30,670 --> 00:00:33,750
And you had to get up
like 2:00 in the morning

11
00:00:33,750 --> 00:00:38,790
to get into line, and they
would open up the bakery

12
00:00:38,790 --> 00:00:40,960

like about 7:00 in the morning.

13
00:00:40,960 --> 00:00:43,530
So you stood--

14
00:00:43,530 --> 00:00:47,570
Can you tell me
your mother's trip--

15
00:00:47,570 --> 00:00:49,910
From where?

16
00:00:49,910 --> 00:00:52,941
From Japan or Manila.

17
00:00:52,941 --> 00:00:56,540

18
00:00:56,540 --> 00:00:58,580
And then the thing
that I want is--

19
00:00:58,580 --> 00:01:00,010
What do you want to--

20
00:01:00,010 --> 00:01:01,970
The Japanese bombed--

21
00:01:01,970 --> 00:01:02,990
--bombed Pearl Harbor.

22
00:01:02,990 --> 00:01:04,870
Oh, I see, that part.

23
00:01:04,870 --> 00:01:05,370
OK.

24
00:01:05,370 --> 00:01:11,050

25
00:01:11,050 --> 00:01:17,040

My mother was in Japan, got
to Japan through the same way

26
00:01:17,040 --> 00:01:20,160
as we did, through the
Trans-Siberian railroad

27
00:01:20,160 --> 00:01:21,930
and then to Japan.

28
00:01:21,930 --> 00:01:25,020
And she had to wait
for quite a long time

29
00:01:25,020 --> 00:01:32,100
until her family were able to
make out affidavits for her

30
00:01:32,100 --> 00:01:35,430
to get a visa to
come to join us.

31
00:01:35,430 --> 00:01:40,980
And during that period,
the Japanese government

32
00:01:40,980 --> 00:01:47,490
was evacuating all refugees
from Japan to Shanghai

33
00:01:47,490 --> 00:01:52,100
since Shanghai was an open city,
and she was sent to Shanghai.

34
00:01:52,100 --> 00:01:53,820
She was there for
a number of months,

35
00:01:53,820 --> 00:01:58,050
and then finally they
were successful in getting

36
00:01:58,050 --> 00:01:58,665

her the visa.

37

00:01:58,665 --> 00:02:01,350

38

00:02:01,350 --> 00:02:04,650

And the family made
arrangements for her

39

00:02:04,650 --> 00:02:10,680

to get transportation
on this particular boat,

40

00:02:10,680 --> 00:02:18,270

and she left Shanghai
around December 1, stayed

41

00:02:18,270 --> 00:02:21,990

in Manila a few
days until she was--

42

00:02:21,990 --> 00:02:26,640

she was waiting for the boat,
which was President Pierce.

43

00:02:26,640 --> 00:02:33,450

And she left Manila
and December 5, 1941.

44

00:02:33,450 --> 00:02:42,780

And then December 7, the
Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor,

45

00:02:42,780 --> 00:02:44,070

and the war broke out.

46

00:02:44,070 --> 00:02:45,510

Could you start that over again?

47

00:02:45,510 --> 00:02:46,300

Yes.

48

00:02:46,300 --> 00:02:47,640
[INAUDIBLE]

49
00:02:47,640 --> 00:02:48,990
No, no problem.

50
00:02:48,990 --> 00:02:50,670
I'm with you.

51
00:02:50,670 --> 00:02:53,820
My saliva went
down the wrong way.

52
00:02:53,820 --> 00:02:57,930

53
00:02:57,930 --> 00:03:00,082
When my mother arrived to Japan?

54
00:03:00,082 --> 00:03:00,582
Yes.

55
00:03:00,582 --> 00:03:03,780

56
00:03:03,780 --> 00:03:08,040
My mother arrived to
Japan about a year

57
00:03:08,040 --> 00:03:12,670
later after we did,
the same way as we did,

58
00:03:12,670 --> 00:03:15,780
and she stayed there
a number of months

59
00:03:15,780 --> 00:03:17,970
while her brothers
and sisters were

60
00:03:17,970 --> 00:03:21,840

trying to make out
the affidavits for her

61
00:03:21,840 --> 00:03:25,030
to come to the United
States to join us.

62
00:03:25,030 --> 00:03:28,440
In the meantime, the
Japanese government--

63
00:03:28,440 --> 00:03:33,060

64
00:03:33,060 --> 00:03:35,640
what shall I say--

65
00:03:35,640 --> 00:03:39,930
decided to send
all the refugees--

66
00:03:39,930 --> 00:03:42,900
evacuate all the
refugees from Japan

67
00:03:42,900 --> 00:03:46,620
to Shanghai as it
was an open city.

68
00:03:46,620 --> 00:03:48,660
And she was there
a number of months

69
00:03:48,660 --> 00:03:52,890
until she got her American
visa, and the family

70
00:03:52,890 --> 00:03:55,920
made arrangements
for her to leave.

71
00:03:55,920 --> 00:04:00,220
And she left Shanghai

on December 1--

72

00:04:00,220 --> 00:04:02,790

I'm almost sure it
was December 1--

73

00:04:02,790 --> 00:04:06,870

1941 and went to Manila.

74

00:04:06,870 --> 00:04:10,230

And then in Manila
she waited a few days

75

00:04:10,230 --> 00:04:13,980

for her boat, which was
the President Pierce.

76

00:04:13,980 --> 00:04:22,320

And she boarded the boat
on December 5, 1941,

77

00:04:22,320 --> 00:04:26,650

and they were on high
seas when, on December 7,

78

00:04:26,650 --> 00:04:30,210

the Japanese bombed
Pearl Harbor.

79

00:04:30,210 --> 00:04:34,110

And of course, they were at
war with the United States.

80

00:04:34,110 --> 00:04:37,110

And then they joined this--

81

00:04:37,110 --> 00:04:41,610

President Pierce joined
a number of other boats

82

00:04:41,610 --> 00:04:48,420

in a convoy to be protected from
being attacked by the Japanese

83
00:04:48,420 --> 00:04:56,160
and went through then the coast
of Australia all the way up,

84
00:04:56,160 --> 00:04:58,048
I guess, or down--

85
00:04:58,048 --> 00:04:58,590
I don't know.

86
00:04:58,590 --> 00:04:59,700
I guess it's up--

87
00:04:59,700 --> 00:05:01,170
to San Francisco.

88
00:05:01,170 --> 00:05:08,010
And they arrived in San
Francisco on December 25, 1941,

89
00:05:08,010 --> 00:05:09,840
Christmas day.

90
00:05:09,840 --> 00:05:13,290
And how did you find out
about your [INAUDIBLE]??

91
00:05:13,290 --> 00:05:19,770
Well, all this
time we knew that--

92
00:05:19,770 --> 00:05:26,580
we knew that Mother got on
the boat on December 5, 1941.

93
00:05:26,580 --> 00:05:29,050
When the war broke
out, of course,

94
00:05:29,050 --> 00:05:33,040
we didn't know what happened

to her for all this time,

95

00:05:33,040 --> 00:05:38,220

and then at that time,
there was a broadcast

96

00:05:38,220 --> 00:05:41,640

by the name of Gabriel
Heatter, and he

97

00:05:41,640 --> 00:05:45,300

used to have his
news program at 7:00.

98

00:05:45,300 --> 00:05:47,770

And my uncle who owned
the candy store always

99

00:05:47,770 --> 00:05:50,190

used to listen to him.

100

00:05:50,190 --> 00:05:52,740

And I was there helping him.

101

00:05:52,740 --> 00:05:55,830

When he was listening
to the broadcast--

102

00:05:55,830 --> 00:05:59,910

and he used to get out and
start his broadcast as good news

103

00:05:59,910 --> 00:06:04,620

today and as bad news today, and
when it got on the 7:00 news,

104

00:06:04,620 --> 00:06:09,000

he said, well, there's
good news today.

105

00:06:09,000 --> 00:06:15,210

A boat arrived in San Francisco
full of refugees from--

106
00:06:15,210 --> 00:06:20,610
no, I think it was, the
President Pierce arrived

107
00:06:20,610 --> 00:06:28,050
at San Francisco with a number
of refugees from Manila.

108
00:06:28,050 --> 00:06:31,320
And we knew she was on
the President Pierce,

109
00:06:31,320 --> 00:06:33,810
so we let out a scream.

110
00:06:33,810 --> 00:06:36,210
And we knew she
was alive and well.

111
00:06:36,210 --> 00:06:41,160
But until then, we didn't
know that she was--

112
00:06:41,160 --> 00:06:44,520
where she was or what
was happening to her.

113
00:06:44,520 --> 00:06:47,830
That was-- I love that story.

114
00:06:47,830 --> 00:06:49,113
Can you try it one more time?

115
00:06:49,113 --> 00:06:50,280
Because you kind of fumbled.

116
00:06:50,280 --> 00:06:50,400
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

117
00:06:50,400 --> 00:06:50,900
Yeah, I did.

118
00:06:50,900 --> 00:06:54,360
I did fumble because
I knew it so well.

119
00:06:54,360 --> 00:06:56,550
I remember that scene.

120
00:06:56,550 --> 00:07:01,590
Here we were in a
old-fashioned candy store.

121
00:07:01,590 --> 00:07:03,045
My uncle and I--

122
00:07:03,045 --> 00:07:07,290
I was helping my
uncle that time.

123
00:07:07,290 --> 00:07:11,610
OK, I'll start
from the beginning.

124
00:07:11,610 --> 00:07:13,080
Where would you
like me to start?

125
00:07:13,080 --> 00:07:14,190
Well, you can start
from the beginning,

126
00:07:14,190 --> 00:07:16,333
or you can include that
you were in the candy

127
00:07:16,333 --> 00:07:17,250
store with your uncle.

128
00:07:17,250 --> 00:07:17,750
Right.

129
00:07:17,750 --> 00:07:20,315

130

00:07:20,315 --> 00:07:25,770
On Christmas day, I was helping
my uncle in the candy store,

131

00:07:25,770 --> 00:07:30,870
and he used to listen to Gabriel
Heatter on the radio at 7:00

132

00:07:30,870 --> 00:07:31,770
news.

133

00:07:31,770 --> 00:07:34,110
And he used to start
up his broadcasts

134

00:07:34,110 --> 00:07:38,670
with "There's good news tonight,
and there's bad news tonight."

135

00:07:38,670 --> 00:07:42,660
And at that particular
time, he says, well, there's

136

00:07:42,660 --> 00:07:44,430
good news tonight.

137

00:07:44,430 --> 00:07:51,090
A boat, the President Pierce,
arrived in San Francisco

138

00:07:51,090 --> 00:07:52,440
with a number of refugees.

139

00:07:52,440 --> 00:07:57,450

140

00:07:57,450 --> 00:08:01,560
And my uncle and I just let
out a yell because we knew--

141

00:08:01,560 --> 00:08:06,120
a scream because we knew that
my mother was on that boat,

142
00:08:06,120 --> 00:08:10,740
and that's how we found out
that she was well and alive.

143
00:08:10,740 --> 00:08:16,810
It was a wonderful experience,
very wonderful news,

144
00:08:16,810 --> 00:08:20,370
and I ran all the way
for about five blocks

145
00:08:20,370 --> 00:08:25,830
to tell my aunt the good news.

146
00:08:25,830 --> 00:08:28,440
So was that better?

147
00:08:28,440 --> 00:08:29,615
That was great.

148
00:08:29,615 --> 00:08:32,929
That was fantastic.

149
00:08:32,929 --> 00:08:35,429
When did you find out
about the holocaust,

150
00:08:35,429 --> 00:08:38,720
and what was your reaction?

151
00:08:38,720 --> 00:08:42,740
Did you know that
all of this happened?

152
00:08:42,740 --> 00:08:50,450
Well, when we were in Vilna just
waiting around and all that,

153

00:08:50,450 --> 00:08:55,910

every once in a while, some
people used to come through,

154

00:08:55,910 --> 00:08:57,880

either they were
hiding in the forests--

155

00:08:57,880 --> 00:09:01,610

156

00:09:01,610 --> 00:09:03,890

oh, they used to just--

157

00:09:03,890 --> 00:09:07,640

158

00:09:07,640 --> 00:09:11,840

or they were just able to
get out from somewhere.

159

00:09:11,840 --> 00:09:16,070

And they used to tell us
about the concentration camps,

160

00:09:16,070 --> 00:09:22,665

but we never really knew what it
was, and about the gas chambers

161

00:09:22,665 --> 00:09:23,540

and things like that.

162

00:09:23,540 --> 00:09:26,810

We never heard about
that while we were Vilna.

163

00:09:26,810 --> 00:09:31,670

It was not until we came
to the United States

164

00:09:31,670 --> 00:09:35,360

that we were in touch

with people in Israel

165
00:09:35,360 --> 00:09:41,210
that we learned more about it
but still not the real horror

166
00:09:41,210 --> 00:09:46,540
that all of us
found out later on.

167
00:09:46,540 --> 00:09:51,190
Of course, how did
we feel about it?

168
00:09:51,190 --> 00:09:56,930
Everyone we knew-- and
everyone was part of it,

169
00:09:56,930 --> 00:09:57,850
was in the Holocaust.

170
00:09:57,850 --> 00:10:00,220
Did you feel particularly--

171
00:10:00,220 --> 00:10:03,950
what role did luck
play in your escaping?

172
00:10:03,950 --> 00:10:10,400
Oh, there's a Jewish
word, beshert.

173
00:10:10,400 --> 00:10:18,430
I don't know if
[INAUDIBLE],, meant to be.

174
00:10:18,430 --> 00:10:20,290
I'm a great believer in that.

175
00:10:20,290 --> 00:10:24,160
Luck was very much part of it.

176

00:10:24,160 --> 00:10:26,740
It was a question that--

177
00:10:26,740 --> 00:10:31,300
and perseverance, I think
that was, on our part.

178
00:10:31,300 --> 00:10:37,480
We were fighting so hard to
get out, to do something.

179
00:10:37,480 --> 00:10:39,100
It's like the trip to Kovno.

180
00:10:39,100 --> 00:10:40,180
We didn't give up.

181
00:10:40,180 --> 00:10:42,070
If we didn't try
on the third, we

182
00:10:42,070 --> 00:10:44,110
would have tried
again and again.

183
00:10:44,110 --> 00:10:46,780
Of course, we
might have missed--

184
00:10:46,780 --> 00:10:49,670
the whole thing about
getting the visa

185
00:10:49,670 --> 00:10:51,310
at that particular time was--

186
00:10:51,310 --> 00:10:54,310
we had to make that
train a certain date.

187
00:10:54,310 --> 00:10:56,710
Otherwise, our family
would have lost the money

188
00:10:56,710 --> 00:10:58,510
that they paid in for us.

189
00:10:58,510 --> 00:11:00,040
That was the thing.

190
00:11:00,040 --> 00:11:02,320
So if we didn't get
it, they probably

191
00:11:02,320 --> 00:11:06,470
would have lost the money, and
they would have done it again.

192
00:11:06,470 --> 00:11:10,930
They would have
probably paid again

193
00:11:10,930 --> 00:11:14,830
because they were so wonderful
and so helpful to us.

194
00:11:14,830 --> 00:11:19,300
But luck had a great
deal to do with it.

195
00:11:19,300 --> 00:11:23,740
We were not any
smarter than some

196
00:11:23,740 --> 00:11:27,970
of the other people
that didn't survive.

197
00:11:27,970 --> 00:11:30,790
Getting the visa was certainly--

198
00:11:30,790 --> 00:11:34,750
I think that was the
luckiest thing that happened

199

00:11:34,750 --> 00:11:36,910
to us during our escape.

200
00:11:36,910 --> 00:11:38,760
We couldn't have
done it without it.

201
00:11:38,760 --> 00:11:43,220

202
00:11:43,220 --> 00:11:45,360
We have an airplane, so.

203
00:11:45,360 --> 00:11:48,380
Were we OK for that [INAUDIBLE]?

204
00:11:48,380 --> 00:11:49,040
Yeah.

205
00:11:49,040 --> 00:11:49,880
It was all right.

206
00:11:49,880 --> 00:11:50,630
There was an airplane,
[? though. ?]

207
00:11:50,630 --> 00:11:52,326
You would have
preferred [INAUDIBLE]??

208
00:11:52,326 --> 00:11:55,080

209
00:11:55,080 --> 00:12:00,580
Can you tell me about getting
that Sugihara visa that day?

210
00:12:00,580 --> 00:12:02,826
Could you tell me
that story again,

211
00:12:02,826 --> 00:12:04,905

why it was so important
to get it that day?

212
00:12:04,905 --> 00:12:09,360

213
00:12:09,360 --> 00:12:15,240
On the third try that we went
to Kovno to get the visa,

214
00:12:15,240 --> 00:12:19,590
it was so important for
us to get it at that time

215
00:12:19,590 --> 00:12:23,490
because it was coming
very close to the date

216
00:12:23,490 --> 00:12:28,770
that our family arranged for
us to get the particular train,

217
00:12:28,770 --> 00:12:31,110
the Trans-Siberian train.

218
00:12:31,110 --> 00:12:33,900
You had to make
reservations because it only

219
00:12:33,900 --> 00:12:35,670
went once a week.

220
00:12:35,670 --> 00:12:39,100
It only left Moscow once a Week

221
00:12:39,100 --> 00:12:43,080
Had we not gotten on that train,
they would have lost the money,

222
00:12:43,080 --> 00:12:47,800
and I believe it was \$750.

223

00:12:47,800 --> 00:12:54,180
That was like \$375 a person,
I think, as I recall.

224
00:12:54,180 --> 00:12:55,500
That was an awful lot of money.

225
00:12:55,500 --> 00:12:58,260
We're talking about 1940.

226
00:12:58,260 --> 00:13:02,260
And people who
were not of means--

227
00:13:02,260 --> 00:13:04,440
so they would have
lost the money.

228
00:13:04,440 --> 00:13:07,380
And there would have been
probably a whole chain

229
00:13:07,380 --> 00:13:11,430
of circumstances that might
have gone wrong as far

230
00:13:11,430 --> 00:13:18,860
as getting our papers in Japan
and a lot of other things.

231
00:13:18,860 --> 00:13:22,410
So that's why it was
so important for us

232
00:13:22,410 --> 00:13:26,350
to get the visa that time.

233
00:13:26,350 --> 00:13:28,900
Had we not gotten
that, we probably--

234
00:13:28,900 --> 00:13:33,300
I know we would have tried again

and again until we got there.

235

00:13:33,300 --> 00:13:35,880

But on the other
hand, there was very

236

00:13:35,880 --> 00:13:41,580

little time left because
I believe on August 18--

237

00:13:41,580 --> 00:13:44,070

we got our visa on the 12th--

238

00:13:44,070 --> 00:13:50,100

they shut Mr. Sugihara's
office down, and he left.

239

00:13:50,100 --> 00:13:52,530

They made him leave Kovno.

240

00:13:52,530 --> 00:13:57,420

So had we not gotten
it on that day,

241

00:13:57,420 --> 00:14:01,710

who knows if we would have made
it during the next few days.

242

00:14:01,710 --> 00:14:04,570

And then we wouldn't
have gotten it.

243

00:14:04,570 --> 00:14:08,640

So it was luck
and circumstances.

244

00:14:08,640 --> 00:14:12,490

245

00:14:12,490 --> 00:14:14,440

Did many of your
friends not make it?

246

00:14:14,440 --> 00:14:17,935

247

00:14:17,935 --> 00:14:21,560

Did you lose a lot of family
and friends in Poland?

248

00:14:21,560 --> 00:14:24,650

Family-- sorry.

249

00:14:24,650 --> 00:14:29,860

250

00:14:29,860 --> 00:14:32,950

We didn't have too much
family left in Poland

251

00:14:32,950 --> 00:14:35,230

because all of my
mother's and father's

252

00:14:35,230 --> 00:14:37,390

family were in
the United States.

253

00:14:37,390 --> 00:14:42,880

We had some distant, distant
relatives like distant cousins.

254

00:14:42,880 --> 00:14:45,910

They were all gone.

255

00:14:45,910 --> 00:14:48,160

None of them survived.

256

00:14:48,160 --> 00:14:51,760

None of my friends,
our friends, survived.

257

00:14:51,760 --> 00:14:56,140

I have pictures of a
group of boys and girls,

258
00:14:56,140 --> 00:15:00,940
and my sister and I
were the only survivors.

259
00:15:00,940 --> 00:15:06,550
No one that I call, that I
know who was in Vilna with us

260
00:15:06,550 --> 00:15:10,970
survived because then the war--

261
00:15:10,970 --> 00:15:13,790
the Russians were
fighting the Germans,

262
00:15:13,790 --> 00:15:15,290
and Germans occupied Vilna.

263
00:15:15,290 --> 00:15:18,890
And they the Vilna Ghetto,
and nobody survived

264
00:15:18,890 --> 00:15:26,210
the Vilna Ghetto, very
few, none of my friends,

265
00:15:26,210 --> 00:15:32,180
of our friends or
relatives survived.

266
00:15:32,180 --> 00:15:41,270
And one of the things is that
you sometimes wonder, why you?

267
00:15:41,270 --> 00:15:44,790
Why did you survive?

268
00:15:44,790 --> 00:15:46,420
Do you have the answer?

269
00:15:46,420 --> 00:15:49,900

No, I really don't
have an answer to that.

270
00:15:49,900 --> 00:15:52,420

271
00:15:52,420 --> 00:15:58,340
A friend of mine, a
rabbi, said to me, maybe

272
00:15:58,340 --> 00:16:04,630
you survived in order to do the
good that you've been doing.

273
00:16:04,630 --> 00:16:08,520

274
00:16:08,520 --> 00:16:11,050
I really don't have
an answer for that.

275
00:16:11,050 --> 00:16:12,600
It was meant to be, beshert.

276
00:16:12,600 --> 00:16:18,300

277
00:16:18,300 --> 00:16:19,980
Why don't we take a
little break here?

278
00:16:19,980 --> 00:16:24,470

279
00:16:24,470 --> 00:16:30,449
And there was one incident
where we had a pogrom.

280
00:16:30,449 --> 00:16:32,261
We'll start with that.

281
00:16:32,261 --> 00:16:36,200

282
00:16:36,200 --> 00:16:38,100
OK.

283
00:16:38,100 --> 00:16:42,570
Pretty good all this
time and no tears.

284
00:16:42,570 --> 00:16:43,830
Where shall we start?

285
00:16:43,830 --> 00:16:46,590

286
00:16:46,590 --> 00:16:48,700
Tell us about the pogrom.

287
00:16:48,700 --> 00:16:49,200
The pogrom?

288
00:16:49,200 --> 00:16:51,420
The cultural pogrom, I guess.

289
00:16:51,420 --> 00:16:54,945
A pogrom is-- you
know what a pogrom is?

290
00:16:54,945 --> 00:16:55,567
Well, tell--

291
00:16:55,567 --> 00:16:56,400
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

292
00:16:56,400 --> 00:16:58,200
Oh, I see.

293
00:16:58,200 --> 00:17:02,250
Well, how should I explain that?

294
00:17:02,250 --> 00:17:03,090

Yeah, take a second.

295

00:17:03,090 --> 00:17:06,329

296

00:17:06,329 --> 00:17:09,210

Most of the time when
a pogrom happened,

297

00:17:09,210 --> 00:17:13,810

it was some instability
in the country,

298

00:17:13,810 --> 00:17:20,490

and there were always
some disenchantment

299

00:17:20,490 --> 00:17:25,630

with the government, or
with maybe unemployment,

300

00:17:25,630 --> 00:17:29,130

or with whatever was
happening in the country.

301

00:17:29,130 --> 00:17:33,660

And the easiest way to
take out your frustration--

302

00:17:33,660 --> 00:17:41,220

it was through anti-Semitism
and through attacking the Jews.

303

00:17:41,220 --> 00:17:43,950

That was in Russia, and
then it was in Poland,

304

00:17:43,950 --> 00:17:46,260

in Poland as well.

305

00:17:46,260 --> 00:17:50,430

During the war, there was
a lot of disenchantment

306
00:17:50,430 --> 00:17:55,300
and frustration for the Polish
people for losing the war,

307
00:17:55,300 --> 00:17:57,720
and they were unhappy.

308
00:17:57,720 --> 00:18:00,850
And most of the time,
it used to happen--

309
00:18:00,850 --> 00:18:05,640
it used to get
organized by students,

310
00:18:05,640 --> 00:18:10,590
the more intellectual
people, and they

311
00:18:10,590 --> 00:18:13,580
used to organize it through--

312
00:18:13,580 --> 00:18:21,070
the students just used to go
out into the streets rampant,

313
00:18:21,070 --> 00:18:28,080
and if they'd find Jews,
they beat them up, sometimes

314
00:18:28,080 --> 00:18:29,700
killed them.

315
00:18:29,700 --> 00:18:33,990
Or they used to go in the
neighborhoods where Jews lived

316
00:18:33,990 --> 00:18:42,750
and try to destroy the homes
and, oh, beat people up.

317

00:18:42,750 --> 00:18:44,990
And one of the--

318
00:18:44,990 --> 00:18:48,020
in the small towns, they
didn't have it as much.

319
00:18:48,020 --> 00:18:53,270
You used to have it more
in the bigger cities

320
00:18:53,270 --> 00:18:57,290
where there was more of
an intellectual society

321
00:18:57,290 --> 00:19:02,780
like college students,
mostly college students.

322
00:19:02,780 --> 00:19:06,340

323
00:19:06,340 --> 00:19:09,100
I lived through one of them.

324
00:19:09,100 --> 00:19:13,210
When we were living
in the boarding house,

325
00:19:13,210 --> 00:19:18,790
during that period,
all of a sudden,

326
00:19:18,790 --> 00:19:22,600
word got around there
was a pogrom going on

327
00:19:22,600 --> 00:19:26,170
in a few streets away.

328
00:19:26,170 --> 00:19:27,760
And where we lived--

329

00:19:27,760 --> 00:19:30,160

Vilna was built like--

330

00:19:30,160 --> 00:19:34,300

they had clusters of
homes or buildings,

331

00:19:34,300 --> 00:19:36,970

and there were gates.

332

00:19:36,970 --> 00:19:40,900

Like they would say
a gated community,

333

00:19:40,900 --> 00:19:43,540

but this is how the
buildings were built.

334

00:19:43,540 --> 00:19:47,530

There were like three or
four buildings of the street,

335

00:19:47,530 --> 00:19:50,740

and there would be a gate.

336

00:19:50,740 --> 00:19:54,730

They came-- and we
all, of course--

337

00:19:54,730 --> 00:19:59,560

the people used to put
furniture against the doors

338

00:19:59,560 --> 00:20:03,040

or against the windows so they
wouldn't be able to get in.

339

00:20:03,040 --> 00:20:07,030

They boarded up-- well, we
were at the boarding house.

340

00:20:07,030 --> 00:20:10,270

We brought up all the
furniture, and beds, and things

341
00:20:10,270 --> 00:20:13,270
against the windows
and against the doors,

342
00:20:13,270 --> 00:20:16,990
and we all sort of were
sitting and practically

343
00:20:16,990 --> 00:20:19,180
waiting for them to come.

344
00:20:19,180 --> 00:20:23,650
And they closed the gates,
and they were able to--

345
00:20:23,650 --> 00:20:26,530
they couldn't open up the gates.

346
00:20:26,530 --> 00:20:28,300
They were just wild.

347
00:20:28,300 --> 00:20:31,030
There was no rhyme or
reason for doing it.

348
00:20:31,030 --> 00:20:34,480
They were just so
frustrated and angry.

349
00:20:34,480 --> 00:20:37,820
And they couldn't get--
they were iron gates,

350
00:20:37,820 --> 00:20:39,080
so they couldn't open them.

351
00:20:39,080 --> 00:20:43,420
So they climbed through around
the buildings, over the roofs,

352

00:20:43,420 --> 00:20:46,990

and they were able to get
into one of the buildings

353

00:20:46,990 --> 00:20:49,060

where they broke windows.

354

00:20:49,060 --> 00:20:52,930

And the people from
the particular--

355

00:20:52,930 --> 00:20:56,830

either they were hiding--

356

00:20:56,830 --> 00:21:00,210

maybe they went into the
cellar or something like that.

357

00:21:00,210 --> 00:21:04,030

So there were no people in
that particular apartments

358

00:21:04,030 --> 00:21:09,580

on the top floors, so they
took feather pillows--

359

00:21:09,580 --> 00:21:11,650

that's what they used to use--

360

00:21:11,650 --> 00:21:15,130

and they just tore them
up and just threw them

361

00:21:15,130 --> 00:21:16,540

through the windows.

362

00:21:16,540 --> 00:21:23,470

So it was like snow in the
middle of-- it was spring or--

363

00:21:23,470 --> 00:21:24,730

it was not wintertime.

364
00:21:24,730 --> 00:21:25,675
Were you terrified?

365
00:21:25,675 --> 00:21:26,260
Were you--

366
00:21:26,260 --> 00:21:27,760
Oh, were we terrified.

367
00:21:27,760 --> 00:21:31,040
We were under the beds.

368
00:21:31,040 --> 00:21:33,640
We were hiding, all of
us, and we were just

369
00:21:33,640 --> 00:21:39,040
waiting for them to come
through to the next house.

370
00:21:39,040 --> 00:21:44,920
There was like four houses
in sort of a semicircle.

371
00:21:44,920 --> 00:21:49,420
And lo and behold,
either they got too tired

372
00:21:49,420 --> 00:21:51,970
or they saw there were
nobody in that buildings.

373
00:21:51,970 --> 00:21:57,070
They just turned around and
went to the next street.

374
00:21:57,070 --> 00:21:59,650
And then when it
quiet down, we all

375
00:21:59,650 --> 00:22:06,280

got up and put everything back,
tried to put back everything

376
00:22:06,280 --> 00:22:08,080
the way it was.

377
00:22:08,080 --> 00:22:13,270
And we went on, go and
started the next day.

378
00:22:13,270 --> 00:22:18,100
But it was a horrible, horrible,
very terrifying experience,

379
00:22:18,100 --> 00:22:20,950
just waiting there for them to--

380
00:22:20,950 --> 00:22:23,245
and there's nothing you
could do because it's a mob.

381
00:22:23,245 --> 00:22:24,444
Yeah, it sounds horrible.

382
00:22:24,444 --> 00:22:30,100

383
00:22:30,100 --> 00:22:34,375
They had no guns, sticks, bat.

384
00:22:34,375 --> 00:22:37,210

385
00:22:37,210 --> 00:22:39,490
And that was the--

386
00:22:39,490 --> 00:22:46,768
it was a frightening experience,
but we lived through it.

387
00:22:46,768 --> 00:22:48,310
Can you tell me

about the bread lines

388
00:22:48,310 --> 00:22:50,492
and what it took to
get a loaf of bread

389
00:22:50,492 --> 00:22:51,492
while you were in Vilna?

390
00:22:51,492 --> 00:22:54,250

391
00:22:54,250 --> 00:22:56,590
Well, when we were--

392
00:22:56,590 --> 00:23:00,970
during the period that we--
that was also during the period

393
00:23:00,970 --> 00:23:06,340
that we were in
the boardinghouse.

394
00:23:06,340 --> 00:23:09,040

395
00:23:09,040 --> 00:23:11,090
There was a shortage of food.

396
00:23:11,090 --> 00:23:12,160
I couldn't get any.

397
00:23:12,160 --> 00:23:13,690
Of course, there
was some food to be

398
00:23:13,690 --> 00:23:17,750
gotten on the black market,
but we had no money for that.

399
00:23:17,750 --> 00:23:20,530
So you got along

with what you were

400
00:23:20,530 --> 00:23:23,890
able to pick up in the lines.

401
00:23:23,890 --> 00:23:27,940
But every day they
would have bread,

402
00:23:27,940 --> 00:23:32,240
and they'd give you a
pound of bread a person.

403
00:23:32,240 --> 00:23:37,000
And so we'd get up real early
in the morning, 2:00 3:00

404
00:23:37,000 --> 00:23:40,840
in the morning, and go
out, and form the line,

405
00:23:40,840 --> 00:23:44,530
and get into line at the bakery.

406
00:23:44,530 --> 00:23:47,830
And the bakery wouldn't open
up until 7:00 in the morning.

407
00:23:47,830 --> 00:23:51,430
2:00 or 3:00 in the morning
they were first baking it.

408
00:23:51,430 --> 00:23:55,480
And when they opened up, the
bread was hot out of the oven,

409
00:23:55,480 --> 00:24:00,520
and they would slice it,
cut it up in pound pieces

410
00:24:00,520 --> 00:24:04,780
and give everybody
a pound of bread.

411
00:24:04,780 --> 00:24:07,180
And then the next day,
we would go again.

412
00:24:07,180 --> 00:24:10,570

413
00:24:10,570 --> 00:24:14,380
And we'd usually they were
to find something, maybe.

414
00:24:14,380 --> 00:24:17,080
Sometimes we'd find some eggs.

415
00:24:17,080 --> 00:24:19,150
Sometimes we'd find--

416
00:24:19,150 --> 00:24:21,880
I don't recall even
finding any-- milk,

417
00:24:21,880 --> 00:24:24,820
we used to be able to get some.

418
00:24:24,820 --> 00:24:27,840
And we got along.

419
00:24:27,840 --> 00:24:33,040
Then when we moved to the
internat, to the hostel,

420
00:24:33,040 --> 00:24:37,930
it was better
because, by that time,

421
00:24:37,930 --> 00:24:44,350
the relief organizations
were able to get food,

422
00:24:44,350 --> 00:24:47,800
and they opened up kitchens.

423
00:24:47,800 --> 00:24:49,330
So it was much better.

424
00:24:49,330 --> 00:24:52,620

425
00:24:52,620 --> 00:24:56,230
So I just had a question
about your family.

426
00:24:56,230 --> 00:24:58,530
You grew up-- and
you'll talk to John.

427
00:24:58,530 --> 00:25:02,500
And you were raised pretty
much by your mother.

428
00:25:02,500 --> 00:25:04,770
Your father had died and--

429
00:25:04,770 --> 00:25:07,230
Three months [INAUDIBLE].

430
00:25:07,230 --> 00:25:09,160
I really-- yeah, go ahead.

431
00:25:09,160 --> 00:25:11,430
So really my
question has to do--

432
00:25:11,430 --> 00:25:18,200
and your mother made a very
bold, dramatic decision,

433
00:25:18,200 --> 00:25:22,040
and I'm curious to know
what kind of words or acts

434
00:25:22,040 --> 00:25:27,280
of encouragement she gave

you before you took--

435
00:25:27,280 --> 00:25:29,290
in this process.

436
00:25:29,290 --> 00:25:31,540
Can you tell us
anything about that?

437
00:25:31,540 --> 00:25:36,570
Well, I really would like to
say something about my mother.

438
00:25:36,570 --> 00:25:37,960
Would you like to hear that?

439
00:25:37,960 --> 00:25:38,460
Sure.

440
00:25:38,460 --> 00:25:41,590

441
00:25:41,590 --> 00:25:44,050
When my father died--

442
00:25:44,050 --> 00:25:51,280
my father was a jeweler, and
he had a man working for him.

443
00:25:51,280 --> 00:25:54,910
And when he took sick, the
man was running the business.

444
00:25:54,910 --> 00:25:59,560
When he died, my mother
took over the business

445
00:25:59,560 --> 00:26:04,840
with a man working there,
and she tried to run it.

446
00:26:04,840 --> 00:26:09,880

And she was a very, very strong, unbelievable woman.

447

00:26:09,880 --> 00:26:14,710

She was only 28 when she became a widow.

448

00:26:14,710 --> 00:26:19,900

So she ran that business for quite a while, and then

449

00:26:19,900 --> 00:26:22,660

the young man decided to get married.

450

00:26:22,660 --> 00:26:26,590

And there was not enough for two families,

451

00:26:26,590 --> 00:26:28,720

so he took over the business.

452

00:26:28,720 --> 00:26:33,040

And my mother was left without any source of income,

453

00:26:33,040 --> 00:26:36,280

but her family used to send her some.

454

00:26:36,280 --> 00:26:40,420

She decided at that time to go to Vilna and learn to become

455

00:26:40,420 --> 00:26:47,360

a corsetiere, and it became very fashionable in Europe to wear

456

00:26:47,360 --> 00:26:48,620

girdles and [NON-ENGLISH].

457

00:26:48,620 --> 00:26:52,340

They used to be custom-made.

458

00:26:52,340 --> 00:26:56,360

And she was away for six months and learned the trade,

459

00:26:56,360 --> 00:27:01,095

and the family housekeeper was taking care of us.

460

00:27:01,095 --> 00:27:06,240

Then when she came back, she opened up a business of that,

461

00:27:06,240 --> 00:27:11,120

and she was able to support us and to have

462

00:27:11,120 --> 00:27:17,550

a very nice middle-class type of existence.

463

00:27:17,550 --> 00:27:24,345

But not only that, she was strong in other ways.

464

00:27:24,345 --> 00:27:29,240

In Europe, in those days anyway, a widow

465

00:27:29,240 --> 00:27:32,610

was almost like the stigma.

466

00:27:32,610 --> 00:27:34,590

You were treated differently.

467

00:27:34,590 --> 00:27:37,560

You were referred to as "poor widow,"

468

00:27:37,560 --> 00:27:41,620

"the poor widow" because usually a widow was very poor.

469

00:27:41,620 --> 00:27:43,200

She had no means of--

470

00:27:43,200 --> 00:27:45,480

but my mother was
strong enough to be

471

00:27:45,480 --> 00:27:48,330

able to earn her own living.

472

00:27:48,330 --> 00:27:51,840

She was very active
in the school board.

473

00:27:51,840 --> 00:27:56,010

She was active all
places where women didn't

474

00:27:56,010 --> 00:27:58,680

have much of a role,
but she insisted

475

00:27:58,680 --> 00:28:02,910

on being very independent.

476

00:28:02,910 --> 00:28:12,700

And she raised us that
way, to be independent,

477

00:28:12,700 --> 00:28:20,700

to be self-sufficient,
to strive for better.

478

00:28:20,700 --> 00:28:27,470

And when it came
time to let us go,

479

00:28:27,470 --> 00:28:34,680

when she sent us
away, the first time--

480

00:28:34,680 --> 00:28:41,070

there was all this
decisions, should she,

481
00:28:41,070 --> 00:28:45,660
or shouldn't, and asking
for advice, and all that.

482
00:28:45,660 --> 00:28:51,060
And I don't think there was
enough time for her to even--

483
00:28:51,060 --> 00:28:53,460
as I told you, there
was not enough time

484
00:28:53,460 --> 00:28:56,290
even for us to say
goodbye to each other.

485
00:28:56,290 --> 00:29:02,820
The second time, when we left
her on the railroad in Vilna,

486
00:29:02,820 --> 00:29:10,110
she said to us, never
give up, and always

487
00:29:10,110 --> 00:29:12,950
take care of each other.

488
00:29:12,950 --> 00:29:15,460
Those are my only advice she--

489
00:29:15,460 --> 00:29:19,520
take care of each other,
and don't give up.

490
00:29:19,520 --> 00:29:20,395
Those were her words.

491
00:29:20,395 --> 00:29:23,060

492

00:29:23,060 --> 00:29:26,540

And that's the way--

493

00:29:26,540 --> 00:29:30,800

that's the way we

lived, my sister and I,

494

00:29:30,800 --> 00:29:35,180

and to tell you the

truth, I still do that.

495

00:29:35,180 --> 00:29:37,820

I don't give up.

496

00:29:37,820 --> 00:29:40,430

497

00:29:40,430 --> 00:29:41,310

Why do you--

498

00:29:41,310 --> 00:29:43,410

[INAUDIBLE]

499

00:29:43,410 --> 00:31:13,000