

Questions to Consider When Viewing Video

1. According to Erika, what were the differences between adult and child survivors during this time?
2. How did Erika react to the restrictions on Jewish children during this time?
3. Why were Hungarian Jews better off during this time?
4. Why was she given a German governess, and how did Erika react to her and why?
5. How were the Nazis officially able to take over Hungary, and what were some of the immediate actions against Jews?
6. Why were Erika and her mother forced from their apartment?
7. What happened to Erika's grandparents and other relatives during this time? What did Erika know about this?
8. Why was Erika's mother saved from a registration?
9. What were Erika and her mother forced to do? Where was her father during this time?
10. How were Erika and her mother able to escape a roundup? Where did they go?
11. What steps did it take for Erika and her parents to leave Hungary and to eventually come to Cleveland?

Holocaust Survivor **Erika Taubner Gold**

Filmed on February 16, 2006



*"America was easy to get used to.
Freedom is very good."*

- Erika Gold

Face to Face
A Holocaust Education Program at
Congregation Shaarey Tikvah
Beachwood, Ohio

Erika Taubner Gold was born in 1932 in Budapest, Hungary. When she was four years old, her parents hired a German governess. One of the governess's duties was to teach Erika to speak German. Because Erika already did not trust Germans, she did not cooperate; when her governess spoke to her in German, Erika answered in Hungarian.

Hungarian schools had a quota system for Jews. Erika's father could have enrolled her in a Hungarian school, but she insisted on attending a Jewish school. Erika's parents listened to Radio Free Europe on short wave radio; since Erika was very much aware that this was illegal, she did not tell anybody.

Erika recalls a happy childhood filled with school and other activities. By the time the Nazis took over Hungary in 1944, the borders were closed and there was nowhere to go. A few of her aunts and uncles left Hungary in time, but most Hungarian Jews did not foresee the danger.

On March 19, 1944, Germany occupied Hungary, and the Nazis started to round up Jews. By April 1, all Jews had to wear the Yellow Star. Restrictive laws were passed, and Erika's father had to close his store and go to a work camp close to Budapest. He was able to come home some weekends and felt that his life was not in danger.

In July, Erika and her mother had to vacate their apartment and move in with an aunt. There was a

"one room per family" rule, which unfortunately included all rooms, even bathrooms.

Miklós Horthy, Hungary's head of state, did not cooperate with the Nazis and was trying to help Hungary's Jews. On October 15, 1944, Horthy was overthrown and replaced with Ferenc Szalasi. Under Szalasi's regime, all women between the ages of 18 and 40 were ordered to register, including Erika's mother. The Nazis did not have time to register all the women who showed up on the first day and Erika's mother refused to return the following day.

For a number of weeks, Erika and her mother worked, lived, and slept in a factory making soldiers' uniforms. This work saved them from being sent away. Upon learning that Erika's father was going to be deported, Erika's mother saved him by sending him a false visa obtained from a diplomat in Budapest.

On December 1, 1944, Nazis came to the factory where Erika and her mother were working and took everybody away. When they stopped at a crowded marketplace, Erika and her mother jumped off the truck. They walked to the apartment of their former housekeeper, who hid them for six weeks until liberation, despite much personal danger to herself.

Erika and her mother were liberated by Russians on January 15, 1945, and after a few days, they were miraculously reunited with Erika's father. The family came to the United States in 1950.