

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. And welcome to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. My name is Ann Millin. And I'm one of the historians here. And I'm standing in today for our regular host, Bill Benson, who was unable to be with us.

We are in our ninth season of doing First Person. And our First Person today is Mr. Haim Solomon, whom we shall meet shortly. First Person is a series of weekly conversations with survivors of the Holocaust who share with us their firsthand experience associated with the Holocaust.

Each first person presently serves as a volunteer here at the museum. And some of them, in fact, have been volunteers here since before even this building existed. So they know they're part and parcel of this institution.

Next week is our last First Person of the summer. And we won't be having another one until March. But you can go to our website at [www.ushmm.com](http://www.ushmm.com). That will give you information about our next series. As soon as we know the dates and the people who will be speaking, we'll be posting that.

I hope you go to our website after your visit today anyhow and see the variety of information that we have there in The Holocaust Encyclopedia and online exhibits. Your visit, your experience here is not over when you leave the door of this museum. So please visit our website.

This 2008 season of First Person has been made possible through the generosity of Louis and Dora Smith Foundation, to whom we are grateful for once again sponsoring the First Person public series. And I'm very pleased that Mr. Louis Smith is here with us-- here we are, right here-- in the audience.

[APPLAUSE]

In a few minutes, Haim Solomon will share his first person account of his experience during the Holocaust. And as a survivor, he'll speak for about 40 minutes. But before you're introduced to him, I have several requests of you.

First of all, if it's possible, please stay in your seat during the entire program so that we minimize any disruption while Mr. Solomon speaks. And second, if we have time for questions near the end of our program, please make your questions as short as possible so that we can get in as many questions and answers as possible. And my third request, and thank you very much for doing this, is to turn off your cell phones and any pagers that you have on, please.

And I'd also like to let those of you who know who may be holding passes that they are good for the rest of the afternoon. So don't feel like you have to get up and leave in the middle of the program in order to make the time that's on your ticket. Because it'll be good when you go.

So I'm going to start with a brief slideshow introduction of our guest. But I'd like to read first to you the definition that the museum uses of the Holocaust. The Holocaust was the state-sponsored systematic persecution and annihilation of the European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. Jews were the primary victims. 6 million were murdered. Gypsies, the handicapped, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation, for racial, ethnic, or other national reasons. And millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

And here is our First Person, Haim Solomon, who was born November 5, 1924 in Bivolari, Romania. He was the youngest of five children.

And here we see Haim's parents, Bercu Solomon and Sophie Halter Solomon. This photo was taken in 1941 or 1942.

On this map of Europe, the red arrow points toward Romania. And after Germany and the Soviets signed their nonaggression pact on August 23, 1939 and divided up Eastern Europe, the Soviets occupied Bessarabia, 1 kilometer from Bivolari. The Romanian authorities, suspicious of Jewish loyalties because of the close proximity to the Soviets, ordered all Jews to leave Bivolari.

And there you see Romania. And the first arrow on this map of Romania points to the town of Iasi, where Haim and his family moved. Later, to escape the fighting and chaos that eventually erupted in the streets, Haim and his family moved to Bucharest in June of 1944. And they remained there until the end of the war. The second arrow, as you see, points to Bucharest.

In the summer of 1947, and this is an extraordinary part of his story-- and I hope you'll keep your ears open right to the end-- in the summer of 1949, as Haim, along with thousands of other Jews, made his way to Palestine by ship, the British captured his ship and took all passengers to Cyprus for internment. In this photograph, taken in Cyprus, Haim stands behind a barbed wire fence. Finally, in December 1948, Haim escaped the British internment camp on Cyprus and succeeded in reaching the new state of Israel.

Now let me tell you a little bit about our speaker since then. Haim came to the United States in 1952. Today Haim and his wife Malvy live here in the Washington, DC area. He retired January 1, 2003, following a 38-year career with the US Food and Drug Administration, where he was a microbiologist and is one of the world's experts on the microorganism that causes botulism. He has over 30 scientific publications under his name.

And in this day of bioterrorism, I have no doubt that his name is on a short list of people to call if there happens to be a major outbreak of botulism. Malvy is a physician with the Veterans Administration. And Haim and Malvy have two sons. One was awarded his PhD also in microbiology last year and is now with the DuPont in Delaware. The other is a producer of the local sports talk radio show, the one that all Washington turns to for the Baltimore Orioles baseball game. Haim and Malvy are proud grandparents of their nearly two-year-old grandson Jacob.

Haim serves as a museum volunteer. And as a volunteer, he translates Holocaust-related documents from Romanian into English. And since the fall of the Berlin Wall and the opening of the East, we've had a flood of Romanian-Holocaust-related documents come into the museum. And were it not for people like Haim, these might not be available for use by other survivors, and for the public, and for scholars.

He does this each Tuesday and Thursday. And he does it for eight hours. So he's very committed to volunteering. And with that, I would like you to join me in welcoming our First Person, Haim Solomon. Haim.

[APPLAUSE]

Thank you.

Thank you for joining us. This is a real honor for me. When we've talked, you described your early years before Germany and the Soviet Union signed their nonaggression pact as almost idyllic. Can you tell me why that was so? And what was life like for you and your family in the years before 1939?

My odyssey during the Holocaust in Romania consisted of moving from place to place, hiding, bribing, surviving. It all started, as you could see, in that little village called Bivolari on the northeastern part of Romania. To the east one kilometer, ran the river Prut that separated us from the province inhabited by a Russian-speaking population. The little village consisted of one long, unpaved street. And at the middle point, another shorter street that we will discuss in detail.

Along the principal street, Jews had different stores and a variety of workshops for every need, tailors and bakers and carpenters and butchers, et cetera. On the shortest street that ran east-west, the Jewish community built a Israelita Romana school, an elementary school, built a communal bath, a matzo factory, and several other institutions. On the east side of the shorter street, there was an empty space where peasants would bring their produce to market and where, in the summer, the circus would come for a month and put up its large tent.

The community of 200 families, about 1,200 people, was well-organized and well-managed. We had four synagogues with one rabbi. We had a slaughterhouse for kosher meat. We had a slaughterer, a shochet.

And after the elementary school fourth grade, the same teachers would prepare a small group of us during the year. Twice during the year, we would travel to a larger city, Iasi-- it's shown on the map-- pass various exams and be advanced to the next grades.

Surrounding our village were 5, 6,000 peasants. And behind them was a large grassy field where they send their animals to pasture and where we engaged in sports activities. Relationships with them was very cautious. And nobody ventured out at night or by himself.

All this came to an end in 1939. August 23, Hitler and Stalin signed a nonaggression pact. And they divided Eastern Europe by ethnicity so that Bessarabia, populated by Russian-speaking population, became part of Russia. They moved up to the border at the river and brought their armies up there.

Suspicious of our allegiances, the Romanians asked all Jews to leave Bivolari and move west to [INAUDIBLE]. So starting with a main street, mostly the merchants packed up and moved. When I saw Fiddler On The Roof and saw Tevye, packing and moving, I thought it was not Hollywood fiction. It was real. And we couldn't take everything. So we took only what we could and left the rest right in the house.

And we traveled to, moved to Iasi, 50 miles south and 20 miles west. And yes, we immediately found an apartment in a building on a corner of three streets. And we settled down in Iasi. My parents had a store in Bivolari. So they opened a similar store in Iasi.

What kind of store was it? What kind of a store was it?

Oh, that store was of yard goods. Nothing was ready. You could not find any item that was ready made to wear. But you buy the garment and take them right next door to a tailor or seamstress. And they complete the item.

Iasi was a larger city of 100,000 people. And half of them were Jews, plus the newcomers from all the border towns raised the Jewish population to about 60,000.

This went on till 1941. June 21, 1941, Germany invaded Russia. And German tanks and soldiers passed through Iasi, singing, advancing to the border. That wasn't too far. We stayed indoors and watched the thing passing by. And we hoped things would quiet down.

But six days later, June 26, the Russian Air Force bombed the train station in Iasi, killing many Romanian and German soldiers. And a day or two later, on the pretext that the Jewish communists signed or pointed to the aviators where to put them, where to drop their bombs, a vicious pogrom was initiated that resulted in 13,000 dead.

The exact scenario was like this. The Romanian policemen would come to Jewish neighborhoods and ask them to go to the municipal police station and exchange their ID cards with new ones. Once they got there, the German Todt, military took over. And instead of the police, they pushed them into a large yard surrounded by a wall, a stone wall, after beating and stabbing the people entering there.

My elder brothers, for security reasons, slept in the store. And they decided to go to the police station. But my younger brother lost the old ID card. So he stopped at an uncle, who convinced him to stay, not to go anyplace.

The older brother found himself at the wall. And as the day got shorter, it got darker, he and a few others jumped the wall and looked for shelter, preferably a non-Jewish family. They found a shed with firewood stacked all the way to the ceiling. And they removed the upper part, they crawled in, and replaced the firewood. So that some soldiers came to look and saw the wood up to the ceiling and left.

The shooting and stabbing lasted about two days. After two days, they marched all the Jews from the police yard to the train station and there loaded them into boxcars, 120 or more people per car that wouldn't hold more than 50. And they started on a long, arduous trip back and forth in the July heat with no water or food except stopping to remove the dead and refilling the train, or the cars, with more from the-- they emptied the back cars to in order to, again, fill up the front

cars.

After five, six days, the Germans went on eastward. And we started coming out of the houses. The streets were still deserted and eerie, except for dogs lapping or licking blood puddles. My brother in that group, they sent someone to us to tell where they are. And the mother and the sisters went to pick them up. Women, somehow, were respected more.

All of your family survived the pogrom?

Yes.

OK.

Following that, they asked every Jewish family to submit, send one person to do forced labor. In my family, I was that volunteer. And first, you came to a place where they asked for specialties. And when they asked for a bookkeeper, I raised my hand. And the officer took me to a hospital to help him with his bookkeeping.

But there were wounded soldiers, Romanian and German. So my first instructions were not to move out. You are not to go anyplace. You stay in this office.

Because of the curfew, he would pick me up in the morning and bring me back at night. He kept me there for almost two years.

By 1944, the Russians advanced and pushed back. And they came up to the river Prut and stopped there for an extended period for no good reason but just to indicate that battles will be harsh and street by street.

So to prevent any such occurrences, we, again, packed up. Again, whatever we could, we took and moved to Bucharest. We arrived in Bucharest late in 1944. The atmosphere was tense. And everybody knew that the Russians are about to come.

So by January 1945, the Russians really came and liquidated the Romanian government, opened the jails, and released all the communists, and made a new government. They insisted that all minorities be represented in that government and insisted that all Jews go back to their stores, open up the stores, and promote commerce, and bring the city back to life. So I went back to school and completed and graduated from high school.

Our representative was Rabbi È~afra, who protected us and fought for our rights. But he also suggested that we better leave Romania. So in 1947, a big aliyah going to Israel--

That's the Hebrew word for going to Israel. It means to go up.

Yeah. I joined such a group. And by December 21, we boarded trains to take us to the port city of Romania on the Eastern part of Romania by the Black Sea. We were still in the trains when the British authorities, British ambassador, stressed or insisted on Romania to not participate in such an illegal move.

Let me just stop and explain for some of the people who may not know. In 1947, there was no state of Israel. The land area that is today the state of Israel was under the control of the British. They had been assigned the supervision of that part of the Middle East after World War I.

And so the British knew that the survivors of the Holocaust very much wanted to come to what was called at that time the mandate, or Palestine. And the British were concerned to not have too many come at once. And so pick up the story from there.

Well, they were involved or were supportive of Arab forces who did not want to see any British or any Jewish immigrants come to Israel, especially the young ones who would become part of the Israeli military. So they insisted on Romanian and the Romanian foreign minister suggested to them, or quieted them down, that no such immigration would

leave Romanian ports. So the trains, instead of going East to the port city of Constanta, turned South to Bulgaria, while the ships sailed South, too.

And we traveled by train for 10, 12 hours to a city in Bulgaria called Burgas, right on the Black Sea, just like our Constanta. And that's where the ships waited for us. And in 10 hours, we were 16,000 people in those two ships, mostly Romanians, but also some from the surrounding countries.

And this was part of a legal or illegal--

Illegal.

Illegal? Because yeah. Why was it illegal? And who was running this immigration, these ships?

Israelis and the Jewish agency. There was lots of friction, even on that to do it or not to do it. But we did it. They did it.

We started out from Burgas. It's almost at the end of the Black Sea. And we get to the Bosphorus. In such interior places, the British Air Force would not come to look for us.

So we could pass the Bosphorus, sailed through the Marmara Sea, and by Dardanelles into the Aegean, and finally into the Mediterranean, where the British Navy picked us up. And the orders were not to put up any resistance. These two ships came just six months after the exodus that was fought harshly.

Let me just stop for a moment here. This is another part of history that a lot of people don't know about, that there was a whole series of these ships that took Jewish refugees, Jewish survivors of the Holocaust from Europe to Palestine at this time. And they had to run a British blockade. And this is what Haim is describing. The British ships followed you all the way from Romania--

No.

--into the Mediterranean.

Only in the Mediterranean, where they were able to surround us and give us a choice. So the choice was to follow their instructions. And they turned us around and took us to Cyprus.

Before I leave Romania, two years ago, I took my son to Bivolari to show him all the things that I knew about. But I didn't know that in the 1980s, then prime minister Ceausescu wanted to make Bivolari into a model village. So he first destroyed all the houses, absolutely everything except the church. So today, Bivolari is a big pasture for cows and goats and sheep. And there was no more Bivolari.

Now our ship gets to Cyprus. And because Her Majesty's army didn't have 16,000 beds, they had to bring him from another area. We were kept on the boats for four, five, six days.

Could I just-- why would they take you to Cyprus?

Other places were filled up already.

Other places that the British controlled? So they were constantly taking people off these boats, right?

Right.

And taking them to--

Well, ours may have been the last ones.

Mhm.

Upon arrival in Cyprus, I joined the Haganah. That was the predecessor to the Israeli army. And in it, all the other feuding Zionist organizations were accepted as equals.

Though myself, we were placed in this summer camps. Because in our camps, we lived in tents. And 20 miles south of us was where the winter camps, where they lived in Quonset houses.

Your camp was not in Quonset huts? Can you describe the camp?

Tents.

Just tents? And was there a barbed wire perimeter--

Yes.

--like we saw here?

The camps were surrounded by double fences, two fences. And in between, they had rows of barbed wire called concertina. We had small tents for individuals, larger tents for schools, children, and even adults, and very large tents for big meetings.

The British did not come into the camps. But Greek laborers were servicing our camps on a daily basis. The camps were supervised or managed by the Joint Distribution Committee, together with some locally elected representatives.

But we in the Haganah were managed or supervised by Shlichim, emissaries sent from Israel, like, as doctors and nurses and some other specialists. But in reality, they were well-trained military experts. So they divided our days into three activities. One was sports and paramilitary exercises. The other one was study of Hebrew, Bible, and literature. And the most important one, the third one, was learning how to escape from the camps.

So I became partner to a pair that approached the fence, cut a hole in the fence, crawled into the concertina. Because if you split that it starts running and alerting the guards. Then open the other fence and pass through 8 or 9 youngsters. Then we tie up the front and the middle and the last and retreat to a point to observe the results.

How often did you help people escape? Was this a weekly, or--

Two or three days, two or three times a week.

That many times a week? There must have been a lot of planning that went into it.

Absolutely.

Because there were guards on the perimeter.

Every night we studied the British behavior outside. And we were guarded by observation towers every 200 yards where we had to know when they change guards and what happens to the guards. Many times, they fall asleep. But we needed to know where the moon is and which part of the fence is in the dark. So that's the one we picked.

Once the eight youngsters came out and instructions were if caught during the operation, they should surrender. And the British guards would take them to their headquarters. And they would investigate them and wanted to know who organizes these things and how it is done, et cetera.

But the punishment, the final punishment was to transfer them to the other camps. If this happened in the summer camps, they would transfer to the winter camps, and vice versa.

Did you ever try to escape? Were you ever one of the--

Yes. You did?

If the process was peaceful and things were right, the escapees were to crawl for a while, then get up and walk to the road a mile away, and lie in the grass. About 1:00 in the morning, a truck would pass, come, approach the camp, or the place where most probably the youngsters would be, and turned off the lights. And one passenger would come out and whistle an Israeli song.

Then all the escapees would run into the truck. And they were driven to a warehouse in an orange grove and joined-- placed in there together, they joined youngsters from a previous night. When 80, 90 youngsters were ready, or put together, Israeli fishing boats would come with licenses to fish in Turkish waters. Cyprus, if you could envision it, looks like a gun pointed at Syria. But it's only 10, 15 miles from Turkey at the North and 80, 90 miles from Israel.

So if everything was right, the Israeli fishing boat would come close to the northern border of Cyprus. And by flashlight signs, would send out rubber rafts and pick up the youngsters that were dropped by the same trucks that brought them there, picked them up the first time.

And very rare occasions, the truck didn't come, or the youngsters couldn't be there at 1 o'clock. So instructions were given that they must find shelter during the day. And at night, return to the rendezvous place to wait for the truck.

This happened to me on my second attempt. And we found a large grotto, a large hole in the ground where we descended and waited for the night when two British patrols passed by, kicking a can as a football, as a soccer ball. The ball falls right into our home. And they shout and scream and shoot.

And we come up. And they take us to the headquarters. There, the investigation was a little harsher. They used beatings. They said to clarify, to remind us about our experiences and the organization.

When my turn came, after a little beating, they put me into a dark, cold room. And I started feeling better after a while. And suddenly, I started to sing.

And a British officer was impressed, I guess. Because he came in with a bag of my clothes and asked me to dress up. Well, his immediate expression was you bloody Jew, you love life. And I like that. So he gave me a bag with my clothes and asked me to dress up and wait in the next room.

Finally, they send us back to the summer camp where I originally came from. And on a third attempt, I was successful. And a boat came after three days in that warehouse where I waited. And the boat came by the name of Karish and took us back-- and took us to Israel.

And by the time you arrived, Israel was already a state.

That was the main reason we were so mad at them. Because in May 1948, Israel declared independence and opened its gates to any newcomers. But the British would keep us in Cyprus because the Arabs wouldn't let them open it up.

So after having been in camps under the Germans during World War II, Jews were then-- who tried to get to Israel on these ships-- ended up, again, in camps. This time under the British. In fact, these camps were the same camps where Britain kept the German prisoners.

Ah, yeah. So what was your first memory of setting foot in Israel?

Arriving in Israel?

Yes.

Just-- nobody asked us. But everybody kissed the ground. And the buses took us immediately to the military induction center.

So you went right into the army?

Yes.

Yeah.

And that's the story of Romania and Cyprus. And I'm not sure why that British officer came in. But I was singing a specific song.

What was the song?

The song was "Am Yisrael Chai," the people of Israel lives. Because we were mad at them. And we had to tell them that we are. And we are not going to give up.

It's an extraordinary story. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

We have some time for questions about any part of the story. Yes, right over here?

While you worked in the hospital for two years, did you ever fear for your life? And did your whole family survive the war?

When you worked in the hospital for two years, did you ever fear for your life? And did your entire family survive the war?

Yes.

[WHISPERING] Don't forget to speak in the--

As I indicated, he would pick me up in the morning, the officer. He knew nothing about what was supposed to do. And he put me in the office and disappeared. Or he came in later to see what happens.

And we had to-- the books, he couldn't satisfy or clarify. And when he came and took the notes and went to report, and he maintained his position. Ultimately, at some point later on, in '42 or '43, he stopped coming for me. And I stopped my forced labor.

The family survived. We never slept together. I mean, in the same place.

Yes, back there?

Can you tell us a little about how the members of the family kept in contact with one another during the war and how they were finally reunited?

How did the members of your family keep in contact with one another during the war? And then, how did you find one another afterward and reunite?

Well--

I think the extended family, probably.



--we were spread out. We had Christian friends. And one of us was their guest.

But if not every Friday or Saturday, every other week, we would get together. The sisters stayed with the parents. It was the men that needed cover, protection. Here's somebody.

Yes, and then you.

Were you aware of the existence of the death camps while the Holocaust was going on? Or did you learn about them after the war?

Were you aware of the existence of the death camps during the war?

No.

How did you learn about them afterward?

After the war.

What did you learn about them through newspapers or through people telling you about them? How did you find out about them?

Again, after the war, survivors from Hungary and Poland and some other country, Austria, came back to Romania. It was a crazy arrangement with the Germans. A Romanian Jew that lived in Germany or in Hungary was protected, just like Jews from Germany if they came to-- lived in Romania, they were out of the harsh rulings imposed on Romanian Jews.

So those Jews came back to Romania to look for their families and told us. It's published already, stories of Auschwitz, Treblinka.

There was a gentleman right here. Yes?

It was the same question.

OK.

Oh.

Another?

[INAUDIBLE].

Yes?

I guess I'm not really clear why the British made the Jews prisoners.

Could you speak into the microphone? He wants to know, he's not really clear on why the British made the Jews prisoners. Could you speak right into the microphone, Haim?

They abided by the wishes of the Arab countries who supplied them the oil. And it wasn't just now, went back a long time that the British sided with the Arabs against the Jews.

And so there was an agreement that from 1939 on, just when Jews desperately needed to get out of Europe and into other countries, especially into the mandate where many of them wanted to go, there was an agreement that a very

limited number would come in, and only a certain age group, and only if they had certain credentials, so at the time when Jews desperately needed a place to go. And I think this is something that's often difficult for us to understand, when we say, well, why didn't they just leave? Well, you have to have a place to go to. And countries were closing their doors, slamming their doors around the world. And among the areas that Jews had a great deal of difficulty getting into was the British mandate, the area known as Palestine. Yes?

Have you ever returned to Romania, your former home? And do you still family in Romania?

Yes, two years ago, after 50 some years, I took my oldest son to show him all the points I mentioned. And that's where I found people are not to be there anymore. And that courtyard where they assembled all the Jews and yes, they broke up all the walls, it's different. But it's there.

Our building in Iasi, in the corner of three streets, had a basement with three entrances. That building was demolished. Because whenever they came to look, ask for us, we would exit another entry. It also had small windows where we looked out and saw Jews marched to the police station and hurried and beaten and killed on the street if they couldn't run or walk fast.

As you tell your story, and every time I hear a survivor tell a story, I hear you're made a refugee. You lose your rights. Then, in fleeing before one great army, the Soviets, you are subject to what was one of the most terrible pogroms of the Holocaust, the Iasi pogrom.

Then you're essentially imprisoned, and then imprisoned again. And then the war is over and you're imprisoned by one of the victors.

Yes.

Why didn't you just give up? What kept you going? Was it that made you want to go on?

No, no, no, no. Basically, they were cowards.

Who were cowards?

The oppressors.

All right.

And it was necessary to outsmart them. And just like one or two of them were able to destroy so many of us, one or two of us could survive all of this. And no question, it was family by family that had these meetings of all the members and planned and made sure that where we go and where we stay is safe.

And our family made that, did that. And as I said, we were distributed to various families, elder families. And there was no question that survival is the 11th commandment.

You had a commitment to doing it?

Yes.

And what was your hope? That if you survived, what was your hope?

To do something to protect or to prevent anything like this. The famous never again saying is correct, not just to the Jews, to anybody that understands that this is not human behavior. And this is not where we aspire to be.

Yes?

What happened to the rest of your family, your parents, your older brothers, your sisters? Did they stay in Romania or did they also emigrate to Israel?

Did your family stay in Romania or did it go to other countries?

No. They stayed in Romania. In our family discussions, I was the only one who insist we meet to move, to leave, to go. The elders thought that things will pass by and we'll be back to where we were. And so I left. And slowly, they came after.

And your brother, after the war, came to Detroit, wasn't it?

Yes.

And then you followed him--

Right.

--to Detroit?

And the rest of the family stayed until '52 or something in Romania.

Yes, in the middle here?

You said you went back with your son back home, right? What was your emotion? What were you thinking about when you went back home with your son?

When you went back to Iasi-- or to your hometown in Romania and you saw it destroyed, what was your emotion in being there with your son? What went through your mind and your heart?

Well, we were surrounded by many peasants and referring to us with that illustrious name, Zhyd, Kike. They said when you were here, at least we knew where to go to find bread or anything. Now we have nothing. And you are in America.

So at that point, I gave up all my feelings against them. They really miss us.

[LAUGHTER]

But there are only 4,000 or 5,000 Jews in Romania now and all live on pensions supplemented by American organizations. In the bigger cities, they are trying to bring back Jews, or they would like to. They learned something about the free world.

Whatever I saw, I recognized this is where I was on January 1940, right in that spot. The place stays the same. And we moved around and escaped and survived. And they are worse for it.

Think I saw a hand back here? Yes?

Saying that you moved around a lot, how do you begin to even rebuild another life in another city with your entire family? What were the first things that your family do when you got to a new location?

When you moved from your hometown to Iasi and then from Iasi to Budapest, what were the things you had to do to rebuild your life each time?

As I mentioned, in Bivolari, my parents had a store of dry goods. And then when we moved to Iasi after the pogrom, they opened another store of yard goods. And all the customers in Bivolari, they would come all the way to Iasi. In fact, we-- my parents, my brothers-- taught them how to become merchants themselves.

So they came, bought items in the next city. And they went back to distribute them or sell them to others.

I'm afraid we're going to have to end. But Haim, I want to thank you so much for sharing your story with us. And thank all of you for coming and for your good questions. Thank you very much.

[APPLAUSE]

We good? OK. And I'm going to put these in here. So you can have those.

Oh.