

Interviewee: Paul Herzog

Date: Oct 29, 2012

Z- Let's begin with the very beginning, the first day of your life. So if you could tell me when you were born, talk to me about your mother, your father, if you had siblings, where you're from . . .

P- Of course I don't remember the first day of my life. The earliest memory, I was maybe three years old, in the kindergarten. I still remember the kindergarten teacher, she's very very kind to me. I remember that very well.

Z- so when were you born?

P- I'm Hungarian, a fifth generation Hungarian. I go by my great great grand parents who came to Hungary in the 1750s, around there [0:01:45.4]. I grew up in Hungary in a suburb of Budapest, which is very much like in Montreal [0:01:59.5]. Very similar type of working class neighborhood, industrial. When I go to [0:02:06] I get nostalgic a little bit. It's a secular Jewish family, although I remember, vaguely, that my parents . . . the grandparents, were religious. My parents were also religious, we kept all the Jewish holidays, but we consider ourselves very very good Hungarians after so many generations. We never realized that we might be different than the rest of the population in Hungary. My father was a painting contractor. Didn't make a very good living because he . . .well . . .well I say that because those were the depression days back in 1930, 1940, in the mid 30s. Made it very difficult to make a living, but we managed somehow.

Z- when were you born? What year?

P- I'm talking about right now about, let's say, 1931 - 1932 towards those years.

Z- And what year were you born?

P- 1930

P- I remember they were very tough times economically speaking. But somehow we, my father, eked up a living like everyone else in the neighborhood. No wealth to speak of. But it was a very very pleasant time of my life. I remember that it, of course, we talk about the past when there was no television, radio maybe. Home telephones - I remember maybe one in the neighborhood, you know, so no cell phones. So we relied on ourselves to entertain ourselves. Play in the street. Play in the yard. And also which I remember [0:04:08.4] that at night, suppertime around the table we had discussions, you know we had a paper come everyday. Discuss politics, whatever. And that was probably, even thinking back today [] That I feel that was really gave me a background in everything, whatever I know about you know. We had a really good discussion of anything I can think of. I was of course very much involved in sports always. Since I was 4, 5, 6 years old, I was also out in the street of course.

Z- what did you play?

P- I was a soccer player, well it came later where it was soccer played when I played in Canada here, the national team at one point in the 50s when I came. I came here 1948, January, so those days. So I was very good in sports and in water polo, swimming. The city I come from, the suburb, was the hotbed of football, soccer, and water polo. So with kids that lived 5 blocks from [0:05:25] Naturally that was which I was [0:05:30.0]. That's how I made my friends within the sporting community amongst kids. Now . . . life was going on, not much I can say beyond that. Going back to 1935 I had school of course.

Z- Did you have any siblings?

P- I had a sister and brother.

Z- Older? Younger?

P- Much older than I am, I was the youngest. My brother was much much older, born in 1919 and my sister was born in 1922, so I was born 8 years later. So I was a late. . .and because there was a gap between my brother and myself, we didn't have a relationship so to speak. Although my sister at later years, if anything I can think of intellectually, my sister has been very very influential in my life, because she took me to theatre, she took me to movies and different places, so I have a relationship with my sister, my brother not much.

Z- and did your mother work?

P- My mother, no she did not work, she stayed at home, there's no work available you know, that's depression time. And sometimes, sometimes I remember that she got a job somewhere and she went to work sometimes, but for a period of time, it must have been part time work. You know, I was so young I don't remember exactly the way things were. I'm just trying to collect my thoughts by what I remember. So I noticed she was around, she was cooking and looking after us three kids, and my brother was working for my father at one point, an apprenticeship in painting. My father was a house painter and took up contracts painting homes, but the people had no money in those days so that's why our work was lacking for one month or two. My father did not always work. Because I remember *now* why, don't forget it from spring to fall there was no work in the wintertime for a painter like my father, because, I'm just rationalizing here, or thinking back, they had no paints that dried like today. Those you had to leave for a whole day or two or three in the wintertime, so not much work was done.

Z- oil paints

P- and therefore in the season when he accumulated a few dollars we lived off the winter, but it was never enough money, this is the truth, but we never lacked the necessities of life. So that was going on. I went to school as I told you in 1935 [0:08:19]. In Hungary at that time you had to go to school for 8 years minimum that was the law. The first 4 years you

can go to elementary school but in the 5th year from elementary you could go to higher level school and I was able to get in there so I finished only 8 years schooling and I thought that this isn't enough, but come to think of it, as I'm thinking back today, with the maturity I have, that I must have done very well because I know a lot of things about life, geography I learned about collecting stamps. Someone asked me the other day "did you hear about Canada?". The only thing I remember about Canada – the great lakes. But Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, never heard of it. Canada did not exist. I ended up [knocks on wood] and that's the luckiest break in my life in Canada, and I can't emphasize it enough how lucky I consider myself to end up in this country.

So in school, also I remember in school, in the second 4 year – I told you you have to go to [0:09:40.4] the second high school, the highest high school – that I used to belong to a self-improvement club. It used to be in the afternoon once a week for two hours, not the whole class, not the whole class, maybe 10-15 kids with a special teacher who probably enjoyed being with us and I took a liking to poetry and music. Not playing, but singing, singing in a choir and poetry, and so my friends even today, my Hungarian friends who speak the language that I do, can't understand how I can recite poems even today and I'm 84 and I recite all the poems I learned at the time. In the self-improvement club we had to perform, you know, then I as I told you I was in a choir, which was a very very famous choir. We appeared on the radio and the symphony hall and all that. That was [0:10:43.7] music [0:10:45.1] who is a famous composer and today some of the symphony orchestra play his music, he was researching folk music and we were performing only his music. I remember I was ten years old, he came to one of our concerts he composed himself, so I have very pleasant memories. . .

Z- can you sing a song?

P- pardon?

Z- can you sing a song now?

P- oh no no no, I'm a little bit shy.

Z- think about it. . .

J- she's so unfair that way . . .

P- no no no no she's fair but I'm nervous, I'm talking openly, I used to be very shy, not as much today. . .

Z- but do you remember a song from when you were ten?

P- oh I remember many, and poems, I can recite a poem, it's easier, but it's in Hungarian.

P- So that was going on until about 1939, you know, the war years come up. We hear about what's happening in Germany, not what's happened with the Jews, but we knew in

Germany things are changing to the worst . . . nationalism, socialism. Those were the discussions in the house. Those were the discussions in our kitchen table.

Z- Can I ask you a question? Did you self-identify as Jewish as a child or Hungarian?

P- I have to tell you about that, as a matter of fact at some point I was singing in the [0:12:44.9] choir when I was about 12 years old, we had a choir Friday night and Saturday mornings in the synagogue. We kept all the holidays. My mother came from a very religious family. My father was an orphan as I understand; I don't know anybody on my father's side. From my sister I know, she's only from memory, she was telling me that my father was an orphan because there's no siblings and the parents disappeared, must have died early at the turn of the century. My father was born 1892. 1892 and died 1944, which I'll tell you about later. As a matter of fact he was a soldier in the 1st world war. They treat him well for what he done for the country, but that is another issue. I just want to get the sequence; sometimes I forget things.

Z- So in '39 . . .

P- So then we knew that there were anti-Jewish laws. I was fairly young, I didn't understand it, but my mother spoke to me. My brother and sister were much older, they knew more about it. But there were anti-Jewish laws, several in 1936, 1937, more and more anti-Jewish laws. I remember my mother telling me about the Dreyfus trial, for instance, which was typically an anti-Semitic manifestation in France, and talk about Israel, Herzl who is the founder of Israel, he was a correspondent on the trial, and that was very unjust trial against a French officer in the army. And I remember mother mentioned it many times. "How can they?, how can they do that?", you know, "it's unfair" and so forth. So then the Jewish identity was brought to me. I remember first about the Dreyfus trial, this happened in, the trial was in late 1895, whatever, and my mother talked to me in 1935, so still on her mind and talking about it, she was bothered by it. And there we knew that, we were not affected by the anti-Jewish laws, my father was just a poor contractor, we were ordinary people, but the journalists, teachers, doctors, lawyers are more affected because that is what they are trying to control, because the Hungarians thought that the Jews are getting more and more, they're [0:15:34.3] about Jews taking more space than they deserve. Numerous clauses, we heard about numerous clauses, which was if the population was 5% of the country Jewish population, than in the University you can't have more than 5% Jewish students. Amazing as it may be - I don't know how much it has to do with what we are talking about, but you decide that - that most of the . . . since Jewish youth who were very much for education and wanted to go further couldn't go to the university, so what did they do, they went off to - a couple maybe the early 30s or then late 20s - went to Germany and Prague to go to the [0:16:17.6] several scientists were all Hungarians, they became Nobel Prize winners and the top scientist and musicians in the United States, conductors, or I can mention a few names I don't want to it would be too long. They were all Jews who escaped numerous clauses, went to study outside of Hungary and became very prominent Nobel Prize winners, top musicians in their countries, in the United States or in Europe, or mostly in England and the United States. So anti-Semitic laws did not curtail the Jewish students to stop studying, they went out of Hungary. [0:17:12.3] study all

these very very famous, world famous people who came out to study. The Hungarians lost more than they gained by this. Anyway, I personally didn't feel it, as I told you as a person in our financial situation we didn't feel this, except for perhaps from neighbors who would of made some remarks, but even that I don't remember. Amongst my friends which I played with, the kids on the street, I never experienced personally anti-Semitism, maybe because I was very good at sports and I was always a leader on the team etc. etc. and they wanted me. So I didn't feel that until 1939 when the war started. As you know the war started in 1939, September, although we didn't talk about [0:18:06.4] before or how it came about we have a war. We talked a lot about Germany, about Hitler, and we despised Hitler because he don't like Jews, although, but we were not aware any [0:18:18] we never heard of that, it wasn't written in Hungarian papers, because it was controlled, the papers were controlled, for things I could read about in the paper. So we were pretty sheltered, not really aware of what's happening in the world. So 1939, in 1940 the Hungarians decided they enter the war on the side of Germany, it's a fascistic government, they were not really violent anti-Semitic, but they were German speaking anti-Semitic. So the Hungarians entered the war in 1940 on the side of the Germans and there was conscription in the country, so all young men at 20 they had to go to the army. My brother was conscripted in the Hungarian army.

Z- what about your father?

P- My father was too old to be conscripted. But I come to that, it wasn't conscription later on. So they decided that the year during the war, that the Jews of course cannot be trusted, we listen to the foreign radios, we are spies, officer [0:19:44] is thought to be very very much anti-Semitic, to sort of demonize the Jewish population. I'm talking about Hungary, not about Europe. Hungary demonized the Jews within the country. So my brother is in the army, maybe the year after he joined the army, he wasn't sent to the front yet, they decided that all the Jewish soldiers would be taken out of the army who were, and at the time 10 % of the population, 9% of the population was Jewish, so in the army the same proportion existed, so they took the Jewish soldiers out of there and created a worker's brigade, labor brigades, who were with the army, at the front, but they took away their uniforms, you had to be [0:20:31.5] in the uniform with the band, yellow band, labor service, and gave them a shovel, a shovel or whatever, how do you call the . .

Z- picks, a pick . . .

P- A pick, I should know that, the pick is a Russian emblem so to speak. And they were digging foxholes and they were being treated . . . If you see the film Sunshine, I don't know, it's worthwhile to see, that depicts the story probably the most authentic way. I get away from the story, that story which is in Sunshine, is about a Hungarian Jewish Olympic champion of fencing, and he was killed of course, and his story. . . And this depicts the picture up in the front what happened to these Jewish soldiers. They were very very cruelly treated. So my brother was part of this group and later in 1942, one year in the war they conscripted more people and all males between 20 and 45 had to go and join the Hungarian army conscription. The Jewish people too, Jewish males, and my father was conscripted at that time, he was not, he was, I have to recollect this thought, I haven't

spoken about it for such a long time, I think from 20 to 50. My father fell into the group and he was conscripted into the army, but the older people were not sent to the front, they were within the country doing whatever the army had to do, with the shovel and the pick. So . . . but, this lasts only for about six months and my father came home everyday until he reached the age. I don't know why he came home, but he was also conscripted. Very important to mention this, that all the Jewish males were conscripted between 20, or 19 to 45 or 50, because later I'll tell you about when we were taken to concentration camp. At the time there is no male, we have old people, sick people, youngsters like myself, but no males from 20 to 50. In other words all the males were in the army. All the male . . . Jewish people who . . . in other words, in our group, in the camps and the [0:23:18.6] and all that, they didn't have that age group at all. So, as the war was going on and more and more and more [0:23:35.2] came against Jewish people. Very important, lawyers could not practice, doctors could not treat gentile patients. Jewish journalists were kicked off from the magazines, newspapers, whatever, and they could not practice. So that became very very serious at that point. I remember my parents talking, and in the papers, a lot of suicides from Jewish prominent people who just couldn't take it. The business people of course with money, they felt it, but if they didn't get to work they still had a livelihood, so, but the suicides or the disappointments mostly amongst the intellectuals, which I mentioned to you, what I call doctors or intellectuals or that higher echelon of labor. Do I express myself right, the higher echelon, I want to use the right words.

Z- yeah

P- So getting worse and worse and worse, but *still*, still our life was not endangered within the city except at the front where the conscripted Jewish brigades were working, they were dying like flies I found out later on. At one point my brother came home for two weeks and was telling us stories because they were right in Ukraine, in the middle of Ukraine, that in Russian what has happened. And I remember vaguely he was telling us stories. Until later on of course I have a lot of books, you can see I have a lot of books and this is my obsession what happened in history. And I picked up a lot of books even in Hungary, which tells about this time of life or age, what has happened. So I thought, I hear from my brother, which, I was young I didn't understand that much, but later reading about it I understand it much more. So, don't want to . . . I want to make it a little shorter, it comes to 1940, '41, '42. I told you about 1944 when the war, after, you know, 1942 January, Stalingrad, all of a sudden there was a watershed in the war and things have turned against the Germans. Of course all I remember that, in the paper, we are reading the newspaper at night at the kitchen table after supper. My father pulled out the paper, took a map, he was a soldier in the first world war, he went to all these places, he knew these places, he could understand more, and he reached the rank of, in the army, higher rank, corporeal. He was a soldier, but he understood a little better about what was happening. And he always used to tell me, he looked at the map sees they always came back and [0:26:32.4]. As an old soldier he understood. And these things come to me as I'm talking about it, that things were not going that well, but of course [0:26:48.9] within the country and we already knew from outside because we read the newspapers, radio we did not have, and radio to listen to foreign broadcast. Radio broadcast was against the law. You could go to jail for it, as a Jew, in jail immediately. So we heard rumors and those who used to listen to these broadcasts at

night, and the rumors went around what's happening. But we never heard anything about what happened in Poland to Jewish people or concentration camps what's happening, never heard about, I don't remember anything about it. And I know my mother was very very bright. My father was a [0:27:32.4]. My mother was very well educated and she understood much more, and even her, I can't understand even today how little we knew of what's happening in the world. Or the rumor that they didn't believe. Rumors are rumors and you don't know what's true. People talk, people talk. But 1944, this is where things have changed for the worst. The war didn't go well and the Hungarian government was thinking of getting out of the war. They'd been warned by England and the United States. They declared . . . think about it, 1940, Hungary, a country of 10 million people declared war on the United States and Russia. Russian didn't want to come to Hungary, they didn't attack us, but the communists, that's another issue. But the United States they declared a war because they tried to please the Germans. The Germans had free run of Hungary. Hungary is a good place to, you know, it's a agricultural country, they created a lot of food. So, the German army they had great factories - huge factories - to manufacture ammunition and tanks and whatnot, and it was a very very good allot to Germany. And, also, I don't know if I should get well into reasons why there was so much [0:29:08.8] Germans, because Hungary was taken apart so to speak with the Versailles Treaty after the first world war. And they wanted the territory back, which was taken from Hungary. And the Germans promised, you'll get it back when we win the war, so . . . they . . . and [0:29:26] back in 1941. So they were enthusiastic on the side of the Germans. When they realized the war's not going that well, that they've been warned, the United States, and you have Russia and England or the [0:29:41.2], they see that there's a price to pay when you don't win the war. And by then, of course, the governments knew that they're not in such a good shape and to think about the war that German might have been belittled a little bit, after signing that. So, then the Germans, and also the Hungarian government, has [0:30:08] were they were negotiating, sent negotiators out to different part of country to meet allied politicians. The Germans would want everything, but the Hungarians, half of the Hungarian even the army in the [0:30:23.8] were of German origins. Because Hungary has a large German population, Hungarianized but still German and the highest army officers were all German decent so to speak. So, this, the Germans knew about everything what's happening. They had spies in the Government and March 1944, and I have to mention this to you, March 1944, the important date, and the war finished 45' may, you talk about 14 months and this is before the war. The Germans worried about the Hungarians trying to get out of the war, which the Romanians did a few months earlier, and the Romanian army were working with the Russians army coming toward the West. I mean I don't want go into the details because it's not important to our story, but to understand what happened in 1944, March is very important. The Hungarians tried to jump out of the war, not for the German army, for their own self- preservation because the war was, at that level they knew that the war was lost, we didn't know it yet. The Germans came and occupied Hungary March 19th 1944. It's very interesting date of my life because I belonged to the Jewish boys scouts, well boy scouts, and we had a Jewish group, Jewish boy scouts, and we went on a bicycle trip about 50km, 60km outside of Budapest in the route toward Vienna. And as we were driving - we were kids, about 20 of us with a leader, all with bicycles - and see German tanks, German army coming on the road. Vienna is only 225km from Budapest, so this was the road, it was 8 o'clock in the morning, so then, by 12 o'clock they crossed the

border and came towards Budapest, both by Hungary. And I met the German army, they come in, we didn't know what was happening, we didn't know they occupied the country.

Z- You were 14?

P- Yes, going on 15. So I see this here, and as we are going towards Vienna they had a group of villagers, all German [0:32:55], it's a German who lived in Hungary for generations, but they still kept the language. As a matter of fact I had schoolmates from there, they used to come to my school and I was friends with them who lived around there. Every morning they used to commute to our school. So we went to the German villages toward the goal were we plan to go, and that was a Viennese highway coming into Budapest, so I see this army. And never thought of it, when I came home at night my parents told me that the country has been occupied. And I saw the occupation army. I was only in that position by accident as the army came in. March 1944, that, immediately the Hungarian, they appointed the Hungarian cronies to be in the government, immediately within a week. And within two weeks it came out with that all Jewish people had to wear a yellow star. You know the story; you read it all over. So we did that. We did that. We had to do. So, I remember, from personal experience, the first time I put on the yellow star and go out in the street. I was crying because my friends were not there. I don't remember anybody make a remark, [0:34:11.2], but I went out on the street and I'm different than all the others. I never knew that. I was born in that country and immersed in the culture. I was, I told you, fifth generation. My father fought in the world war first, in the Austro-Hungarian army. My great grandfather, I know, fought in 1848, the freedom . . . 1848 was a revolt in Europe and the war in different. My grandfather fought for Hungary and here I have to out with truly Hungarian. That was first. You ask me what come first, Hungarian and then Jewish. Not Jewish-Hungarian, Hungarian-Jewish. That's how I was brought up; that's how my parents were and my grandparents also. So I came home crying, and I remember that today. My mother hugged me, and I was crying "why I have to. . ." I don't know what I said at the time, I don't remember, but my mother said "I don't believe in God anymore". It's still in my mind. And, okay, two weeks: yellow star. Within another two or three weeks . . . my dates are not exact. I don't remember. I have a book that tell you the exact date it happened, what happened was a Hungarian, Braham's, Dr. Braham was a professor of [0:35:36.8] University, he wrote a book about the Hungarian genocide, and that's where I go to get dates. That's how I found out they took my grandparents and I know when they've been taken away, so I consult the book. So all Jewish people got to move in within this on top of the suburb of [0:35:59], okay, it's about the same size. Within 5 blocks, more than 10,000 Jewish people within that community of 100,000 people, give or take 1,000, from memory, and I'm very close to truth, or the exact figures. So all these have got to move in within a six or seven block of the city. So we had to go, they give us I think a week to find a place. So we went out to that area, we were only one block away from that area, our apartment were we lived. Our neighborhood was not in the ghettoized section. And we went to peek through the window, "can we move in" – actually four, five families move into one apartment. So we had to move out of our apartment, and move in to leave everything, furniture and all. We weren't very wealthy, the furniture wasn't . . . at the time was a lot of money so to speak, but it wasn't anything to speak of. We get a backpack, I know I had a backpack, luggage, my parents, and we walked. We had to walk into our new

home. In other words in that neighborhood had 10,000 people within about 5 or 6 blocks, jammed in.

Z- Kay hold on. It was you, your mother, your sister . . .

P- My sister. See, my mother, my father, myself and my sister, and myself. My brother was in the front.

Z- Yeah, and your father was back from the front?

P- By then he was back. He was away I think about in 1941, 42' for six months service. He was old already, you know, so he was over 45. Just a second, yeah, he was around 50, so they let him leave. And he served for about 6 months and came home. He was with us.

Z- and your sister was single?

P -sister was single, but what happened . . .she . . . my sister . . . When we moved she didn't move with us. She moved together with 4 or 5 friends. Or in another place where . . . I don't know how . . . But she wasn't with us, she was about three blocks away from us, but she was still in the ghetto. So, we moved to the ghetto. That was a ghetto like existed, you heard about it, not different than what was anywhere else. The details are not important because what I can tell you, you must have read million times and heard from a lot of people. The details are always the same with a little difference. And we're in the ghetto, then came . . . by the first [0:38:43.2] March 19th Germans came in with the ghetto, by mid April we're in the ghetto. And we heard that . . .see, my mother - we had no telephone of course - we corresponded with her parents. My grandfather, the family brothers, sisters, the little ones, 70 km north of Budapest and we can not send letters, we did not receive letters. We did not know what happened. We could not communicate with them. We were not allowed to leave the ghetto to go visit them like we used to do. So, we didn't know what happened in the Country. By end of April, I found out later, we didn't know that, they started to deport people to Auschwitz. We didn't know that Auschwitz existed or that concentration camps existed. We didn't know anything. But we found out later.

Z- From Budapest?

P- Yeah, we're in a suburb just around Budapest. Just like Montreal and [0:39.39.4] The Suburbs . . . even in Budapest, didn't have the ghetto yet, they were still living. But the suburbs were already ghettoized. And everything has been put in, everyone had to be put in the ghettos all over the country, a 100 cities or whatever they had. And, but, that the sequence that I'm talking about, but I didn't know anything about deportation or whatnot. So, we were in the ghetto, okay, from May to June. But in mid-June we had a meeting from the ghetto, of this called, we called it "új-pest"- "Newpest", "Newpest", "új" means "new" so that's how they called [0:40:29], "új-pest", okay, that gives you a bit of . . .

Z- Context . . .

P- . . . An indication of what type of neighborhood we were living. So, we had to, in the morning, seven o'clock, 8 o'clock, I don't remember. We had to line up outside of the homes on the street and march just about 15kms, right across the bridge on the [0:40:57] to a brick factory, it's a brick factory. It's about 15 km; we marched this. So, and the brick factory, they about 25,000 people congregated. And we didn't know why this. So all the Jews taken out of the city; there's no more Jews left. It was a [0:41:19] in Budapest or [0:41:21]. So we are in the brick factory, well we don't know what's coming to because we didn't realize it. But now after what has happened I know that railway brick factories are roofs and no side walls, okay, they would dry the bricks, which they created in the steels or what do they call them? In the space they had roof over it and railway siding, which was delivered the bricks to wherever they needed for building. We were there maybe 10 days or 12 days, I can't tell you exactly. And one morning the locomotive and the railway cars lined up and [0:42:09.9] loaded us into the railway cars. You know the story, I can repeat it, it happened to a lot of, many people. They shoved us in there, and that's important there's no male people, male between 18 . . . so they're all vulnerable people. Luckily there are some older people, they knew how to deal with it within the cattle cars, because there are a lot of things happening within the cattle cars. [0:42:35.2] a lot of old people can't stand, there's no room to . . . so they separate a certain section of the railway cart and they had two pails, one pail of water, one empty pail. I don't have to tell you what the empty pail was for. So some of the older people get some old clothing and things hung up to make some privacy a little bit. So a lot of the older people, they knew how to deal with it more than us youngsters. So, they then, we . . . they told us at the time "we take you to the country to work and we are very nice we keep the families together". So they take us out, they get the cattle cars, and we were in these cars and . . . the distance from . . . distance of suburb of Budapest that he brick factory that is also a suburb of Budapest just a little bit east of were [0:43:29.8] or Budapest existed. So from Budapest to Auschwitz to [0:43:39] is the same distance as Montreal to Toronto. That's the distance, roughly. It would take 50km, 2 full days to get to Auschwitz in that environment. A lot of old people died, I don't need to tell you 'cause you heard about it. Details, I'm not going to get into details. So that's only that distance, and why did it take to long to go, because you have to understand, we were from south to north. Budapest is near [0:44:12.7] which is near Auschwitz is north. Like Montreal - Toronto, that's about the distance, okay. But the front was east, and from west to east, all the supply went to the front. The war is going on in full force. So every-time they put us on the railway siding, stay there for maybe a day, in jammed car, no water. So I describe this as hell on wheels. That's my description for this trip. Now, we arrive in Auschwitz, I'm going into details because you heard from [0:44:48.8] that there is a selection, etc., etc., etc.. I just [0:44:52.0] from the point what happened to me personally at that moment when we arrive and get out of the cattle cars, those that were still . . . and I was a strong young man, and my friends were strong, you know. We were young. The selection takes place. "Men here". "Women here". "Men here". We're standing up. I'm with my father and my very best friend, whose [0:45:11] school mate of mine. We went to school every year and we are still like this. And the three of us, as a matter of fact, we have numbers. [0:45:23] number or prisoner number. Mine is 108641. My father's 108640, and my friend is 108642. We have our numbers in sequence. And the . . . but we get the number later. We get the number later in Dachau, but that's so . . . why I'm telling you about the selection, because you know, the selection goes on, you heard about it. The

German officer [0:45:51.2] that's all he does. And we go, my father, myself, and my friend, we get on the right. So, we found out later, this from the people who survive the selection. And I see my mother on the other side. My mother is fully bilingual, she spoke German fluently, she was from north country. I don't know where her education, but she was fluent in German. And she was translating what the Germans hollered at them and she was holding . . . my mother was in good shape, she was at the time, she was born in [0:46:22], it's about '44, '44 and 4, she was 48 years old. My mother was 48 years old and in good shape. And she was holding up old people. You know, they were very . . . she was in good shape. And that's the last time I saw her because, you know, at the selection. And I'm not telling you the detail, but you read, your child want to go with you, "no", because all those selected were on the wrong side. So my mother, not knowing what's happening, helping people and translating what they were hollering, she went to the wrong side. Could have survived if not that way . . . As a matter of fact my friend in Arizona [0:47:05], her mother was only at the time, I think, 42 years old, a beautiful lady, sister 19 years old, and the grandmother 72 years old, and the sister and the mother holding her grandmother. Both of them could have survived if not the grandmother was there. Both could have gone to the right side. And the women have a better chance to survive in the camp than men, because they were different kind of work than men, in the factories sometimes [0:47:34]. So, so, that's the last time, that's all I want to talk about Auschwitz. I tell you how I lost my mother and my father. My father was with me all the way through.

Z- But your sister survived . . .

P- My sister survived but she wasn't with us.

Z- Oh that's right.

P- I never seen my sister after the ghetto. I have never seen . . . I thought she did not survive, until 1956 I didn't know. So, I'm in Auschwitz, I don't want to get into details, you hear a lot about it. I'm not going to get into Auschwitz situation. All I can tell is that at one point we were there for about two months, they kept about 2,000 people, people like myself together, my father and my friend. And they transported us into Dachau, from Auschwitz to Dachau. It's a pretty big distance by rail, but the trip wasn't that bad because they gave us some half of bread, and even though there may be 7 or 8 of us, but no old people and all fairly healthy people, so it wasn't that bad. I ended up in Dachau, but only for two days. They gave us a number, they didn't let us out, they let us out of the cattle cars on the siding, didn't take us into the camp. We were in the camp, but not into barracks. And immediately, two days after they directed us about 70kms to a construction site. They were building, I found out later, at the time I didn't know where I'm going, didn't know what's happened to the rest of the people from Hungary. Just to give you an indication, within two months, from March 19th when the Germans came in, 1944, two and a half months, 10 weeks, they have taken and this is I'm quoting exact figures, 437, 000 Hungarians from Hungary to Auschwitz. 437,000. The trains were going constantly, several a day, from different parts of the country. I was in second last transport, second last transport - so one more after. But then they stopped it, because, you must of heard about the, the . . . I don't recall, the Auschwitz paper whatever, in which two prisoners

escaped. Dr [0:50:04] and what's his name, I have the book over here. I cannot, forgive, who became the . . you must of heard the Dean of pharmacology at University of British Columbia. He is the one who gave the first authentic history of what happened in Auschwitz, before everything was just a rumor. They heard about it, talked about it, but no . . . and two youngster escaped. I can show you the book. He wrote it, [0:50:35], but he changed his name.

Z- We'll look it after, yeah.

P- Yeah, I give it to you, because it's a worth while book to read because it's an authentic. . .and this went to Roosevelt, to the pope, it went to Churchill. And then when Roosevelt warned the Hungarian Regent that he will be responsible after the war what has happened there, and they stopped [0:51:02] in the ghetto in Budapest, they didn't tell us what it's about. They were ready to take . . . see they started at the outside of the furthest from the Budapest, from the border areas come in closer and closer. From the country, they took the Jews out, but they never touched the Budapest ghetto. They were to be the last, we were the second last, the suburbs. And that's when they stopped the deportation of Hungarian Jews to Auschwitz and created the ghetto Budapest, which survived of course --lost a lot of people, many many thousands about 70,000, and 200,000 Jews in Budapest. They used to call it "Jew-dapest" for Budapest at one point. 'Cause that's where they congregated Jewish people because they could go to school there, they had to go school. So even at country, the youngsters who want to go to school, they came to Budapest. And there is a big population and 70,000 survived in the ghetto, which, you know, they want to destroy the ghetto, but [0:52:02] went to the German generals and warned them that you'll be responsible if you . . . after the war. And you know, the generals knew that the war was lost. They were already thinking about how to survive. So, and [0:52:15] was smart enough to utilize this, and also the delegate of the pope, who I don't have too many good things to say about the pope at the time, but the delegate in Hungary was extremely involved saving Jews. And this is true and this is not know to the majority . . . and has to be mentioned also, that this part of the pope did whatever they did. Believe or don't believe, but the pope's man in Budapest did help the Jews a lot. He gave out [0:52:57] passes. I have friends in Montreal and I can tell you [0:53:01] the papers which they survived of the papal nuncio they called them.

Z- what were they call?

P- Papal Nuncio I think that's the proper terminology. N-U-N-C-I-O, nuncio. And I have friends who got papers from him and survived, so this also has to be mentioned. Now, so, where was I, I lost the train of my thought. Am I telling you what you want to hear? Or, am I getting too much into details?

Z- It's a bit detailed, but it's still good, go ahead. So, you said you went from Dachau to . . .

P- From Dachau to the construction site, this sub-camp, they had about 4,000 people at the camp. And this is next to the highway, to a small airport. And there is a forest on the left. In the middle of the forest they were building . . . the German had the jet technology as you know that. And they were building three factories to manufacture jets, okay, and this was

one of them. And there was two or three stories underground, all - when we got there was - out of concrete. The factory was already done and they were building the arch over it, like a hanger. They planned it and I can show you because I have picture, because I've been back there, I went back there. I went back there a couple of times and I tell you the story why, because my father died there and there is a cemetery, so I go there fairly often when I have a chance. They were planned. . . I have the plans with me. A German prisoner wrote a book and I have the book here, in German. I have a Hungarian . . . the English translation and I have the plans. There was supposed to be 400, 4 football fields long hanger. But they did it in 50m increments. Once they finished it they put sand [0:55:01] on it, so from the air it camouflages it, so you cannot see a jet factory, or factory, whatever it is. They didn't know it was a jet factory, they knew there was something going on, so they camouflaged it. So, what was our work? And this is important to say. This was . . . you know how high a hanger is, you've seen it in . . .

Z- Yeah

P- Now they had us . . . when we got there, steel grit was created by then, three meters, and they had to pour cement into that. As I told you they did increments and covered it. So, then the railway siding, they did this structure. The train came in, flat-bed piled up the bags of cement. They stood this hanger on the top, the steel grit done already. The Germans put up the mixing machines on top, evidently, water, water. So, they built, from the railway siding, a very wide plank, this thick, this wide, right at the top, so one by one spread across in the sand. So you [0:56:16] as you walk. So, that was my work. And my father and my friend we stood in line every morning, every morning we start at 7 o'clock, 12 hour work day. Two prisoners put a bag of cement on your shoulder. My hands in my pocket, walked up, these two guards took the cement, pick up, put the cement in a machine, and in its own weight it flowed into the [0:56:45] three meters thick, with sand [0:56:49] at the top. [0:56:50]. So that's what we did, day in and day out. Based on the calories, and I can prove to you that, I have the book. Because I didn't know calories, I didn't count calories in those days, what did I know about calories, but now in retrospect the book tells you what we got and how much calories - about 1,000-1,100. Nobody could survive more than 6-7 weeks. People were dying from the work. People died at work, we had to take them back, because when you went out to work they come with people, you have to come back with that many bodies. So, but it was okay, 100 people died a week, Dachau was only 2 hours a way, that's a fresh supply.

Z- Fresh blood, yeah.

P- So, why I'm telling you the story, my father, you know, even me myself I was getting week, but I was okay, still a lot of muscle left, you know, I could stand it. And after, I would say . . . my father lasted a bit longer, because what sometimes we did, we got him lighter work, not to come bring the cement. He lasted about, I'd say, November . . . he lasted until November, and November even then he couldn't take that longer, winter comes, no clothing, no underwear [0:58:20] uniform. But the older people are smarter. They told us the cement bags have several layers, right. The middle layer is clean, so take the middle layer, pad yourself all around under your clothing, keeps the wind out and keeps you warm,

because the cement, certainly not that much but that protected us. So, my father was also exposed to the cold weather. I remember dreaming, when can I wash in a warm room, to sleep, 'cause I was always cold. Had to take my father into . . . they had a so-called [0:59:06] in the camp one. They had a doctor, but not that much to look after the people, but nevertheless they did the best . . . I used to go, I went out to work in the morning. They called us at 5 o'clock. 6 o'clock they are ready to march out but they had to tell the roll call [0:59:30], lasted a half an hour, 3 times, 4 times, then you get your coffee off the lined up, off to work, 7 o'clock. So it was very rough time in our lives and . . . 'cause I used to run with the coffee to say hello to my father in the morning. One morning I go there, two older gentlemen, my father was lying there, he wasn't alive anymore, he just fell asleep. He was skinny, nothing on him, just skin and bones. That's the last time I saw my father. Now, I'm not going to go beyond the camp with the details . . .but it's very important to tell you why . . . So all the death in this area, they'd been brought out of landscape somewhere I don't know where. But after liberation [1:00:20] I don't want to tell you more about this. All I can tell you is that when my father died I decided that I'm not going to do this anymore. I'm already getting weak, and one day I didn't want to work, I hid behind the latrine. It was dark in the morning, a couple of nights . . . in December, it's December. And I wasn't right, because anyone in his right mind would not hide, because that was the most punishable offense, not to go off to work. For that they shot you, or the best case, those who were caught, every Sunday when we did work, they had the roll call for the whole camp and the punishment brigade came from the [1:01:04]. Don't forget this is a small camp made just for this construction site. It holds some people, maybe 3,000 at the time, I can't tell you exactly. Fifty lashes on your behind and the whole camp sees it, one after the other, those who . . . various offenses, to tell the others what can happen if you don't behave. So, that was waiting for me. But I didn't even thought of it. I just, I don't want to work. Because how stupid I could have been, but I wasn't scared what happened. I had decided I'm not going to go. And as I came out of my hiding place, in the morning it became light, you know, after the march out 7 o'clock 7:30, it became light and you couldn't hide any longer. So I walk out, what do I hear, a German officer, an old German officer, maybe a sergeant, who was looking after [1:01:57] in the camp. This wasn't a big camp, maybe 25 barracks, you know, not Auschwitz or Dachau. And there's one main highway or main promenade and barracks on both side, so you can't hide there, it's a square, you know. So, as I come out of hiding place this German, an older soldier, because at the time they didn't have SS, they were the guards were SS but inside the infrastructure, must have been a reserve army soldier, looked old to me, with a big mustache, but to me at over 30 everybody was old at that time. So I don't know how old he was, to me he was an older man. So he confronts me as I come from my hiding place. He says "what are you doing here?". He knew all the people working, maybe 50 people doing cleaning whatnot there with him. So he recognize that I don't belong there, cause he was looking after these people and knew them. And I was stuttering, I couldn't say anything. I was scared, S-H, I don't want to say . . . out of my wits. So I said, that's all life is, whatever their going to shoot me or whatever happens. I wasn't so calm about it though, don't misunderstand me. But I had no choice. "Come with me". So I'm walking after him, you know, and as a punishment, we pass a barn, "where is he taking me?", I thought he would shoot me right there. But he took me to the kitchen. I go to kitchen, there is about 10 youngsters peeling potatoes. "That's your job from here on in". He saved my life, and I survived until liberation, peeling potatoes. It was warm. We didn't get more food, but

potato peals, you know, which they gave to the pigs, became a delicacy for me, because potato peals later here, you know, I remember a time in my life over here in Montreal, they had the potato peals baked with yogurt and all that . . . It was a delicacy, that was used to feed to pigs. And I had, but we couldn't steal potatoes, because they count you see, potatoes, that was death. But potatoes, you can hide on your body, potato peals. So, take them out, we bake it on the stove, which was [1:04:23] in each barrack, to just get the [1:04:26]. It also became a currency. I'll give you a piece of bread and you give me some potatoes. So that's how I survived, okay. . . .

J- You were liberated . . .

P- I was liberated a little while after and that's my camp experience.

Z- Who liberated you?

P- Pardon?

Z- Which nation?

P- American army. American army near Munich. As a matter of fact they were taking us from the camp, they were taking us . . . they put us into cattle cars again. Take us to the mountains the [1:05:08] German officer. 'Cause the Germans want, the SS want to make us stay there, they needed work and that is what they told us. They are taking us to mountains, but American army cut off the road. They couldn't take us to the mountains and one morning we found ourselves in [1:05:26]. Little detail, may be interesting, that we had a flat bed put to our car in the back of our train, with an anti-aircraft gun in it.

Z- With a what?

P- Anti-aircraft gun on the flat bed. After the cattle cars we were in, we were prisoners of course. By then there was no signs that, you know, the army was very very close. The allied armies were close, the American army was close. They were machine-gunning us. They didn't know that we are prisoners [1:05:59] German army. People died in our cattle car. And I think you met my friend Teddy [1:06:07], Teddy was my camp-mate, so we were together. So, but, about three days after we were liberated, and . . . that's the story of my camp life, we can deal with what happened after.

Z- So where did you go after you were liberated?

P- Where we were liberated in Germany, became one of the largest DP camp after the war.

Z- Where was that?

P- Feldafing

Z- Okay . . .

P- We were right there, 2km from Feldafing on the railway, we were liberated. That was the first major camp, DP camp. So, they took us in there. We spent several months there then we went different places. I wasn't too long in Feldafing. I remember that Eisenhower and Patton came to visit the camp in . . . must have been late July. They had either liberated me second or third, we were in Feldafing for about three months, May, June, July. Maybe end of July, I don't know the dates exactly. They came by the camp and congregated or made an assembly of all the people found in that area around Munich, in Feldafing, which became a huge camp. From there I, we have different places we went to.

Z- Who is we?

P- We, like myself and my friends.

Z- Okay.

P- You know, we were always, see so what I think . . . psychologically - explain to our survival after all these traumatic experiences we had, strictly we had no families, you know. We had no families. I was alone.

Z- And you were 15.

P- Yeah. So we friends were together. Friends were all there, no more younger. There was a couple of my years, about the same age. And this friendship sustained us. We had an extended family. This friendship, this group of people, we were a family. You would have done anything for each one of us. And you can share your burden much easier with a group than all by yourself and mourning all night. The only time I think I felt alone -when finally I went to bed, but even then we were 4 - 5 of us in a room. So we talked until we fell asleep. So I think that was our salvation, our group of friends. And I maintain today, that that was the main reason that psychologically we survived fairly normal. Not all normal because we all have our baggage. But I know in my case and in all my friends cases that we were leaning on each other.

Z- Were they all Hungarian?

P- A lot of groups were together, many maybe about 20. But about 5 - 6 or 7 of us together we are all Hungarians, but only that language is spoke. I spoke German because in school German was compulsory and I practiced with my mother, but not really well, but later I became much better at it. But with my friends we always spoke Hungarian. That was the common language. But today, in this house, with my wife, the common language is English. At the time Hungarian was amongst us until we came to Canada. Amazing as it may be, after a year or so the language became, even amongst us -English, because one got married, the wife didn't speak Hungarian so all of a sudden the common language was English. So less and less Hungarian and more and more English.

Z- So before we come to Canada, did you go back to Hungary? . . . After the war?

P- I went back for about a week. I sneak back in the State. I thought "I'm going to find somebody". I didn't find anybody. I didn't find my sister and mother at the time. So, the borders were open at the time, you could . . . Young people had no responsibility, no family, no parents, what can happen to me. And they sometimes they go back. So I went back. Officially I never went back, but I went back for a week.

Z- Did you think your sister was dead?

P- Pardon?

Z- Did you think your sister was dead?

P- I thought, but I couldn't find her, I couldn't find anybody. So I said my parent were with me, so I lost them. I don't know what happened to my brother. I don't think he survived, because very few survived, but he did. Amazing thing. That's another interesting story. He got, he . . . as the front came back towards Hungary and they were . . . anybody who sneak out from the army or escaped, they shot them on the spot. So, my brother, which told me the first time I went back in 1964 to meet my brother, I didn't see my brother since 1940 . . .

Z- And he was in Hungary?

P- In Hungary. And my brother was near Budapest, and to survive – because the Hungarians hunting the Jewish, okay, who escaped from the labor Brigade – they put on the German jacket, the German soldier jacket, the Russian caught him, took him to Russia. He was in a prison camp in 1948. Three years after the war. Would you believe it? He survived. I found this out in 1964 when he told me the story. So, I'm in Germany, forget about that week 'cause that was just a . . . you know. There's no history about that. I don't need to talk about it because I didn't already went 3, 4 days [1:11:52], because there was a chance that they were going to close the borders, the borders were open, so we took chances.

Z- So you were in Germany until 1948?

P- I think 1947, if I remember correctly, the last day of the year we got on a boat. We arrived in Canada in Halifax at 12th of January, 1948. In other words about 14 days of very bad sea, a small troupe carrier . . .

Z- Why Canada?

P- Pardon?

Z- Why Canada?

P- Well that's . . . look, like the whole life is luck. And they ask me, I go to school and talk to children . . .

-----Introductions with Paul's Wife-----

P- I try to make it short, but as I go along I . .

J- You're in Germany, you went to Hungary for a week, you came back, you're still in . . .

P- All of my friends were there, several of the friends, two or three of us went together, we came back . . .

Z- So, but why Canada? I know you said luck but . . .

P- Okay, come back to Canada, sorry. I would have gone anywhere to get out of Germany. We had applied to Australia but . . . we applied to United States. We didn't apply to Canada, because you could not apply to Canada. Canada was no immigration to Canada, where relatives and all that, you couldn't come there's no quota for Jews [1:13:54] too many, you know the story. That was, the time. But what happened is the Canadian Jewish Congress, and you must know about this, they controlled the Canadian government for 1,000 visas for those under 18 years old who survived the camps and they lost their parent. And they got 1,000 visas and we found this out in Germany. In Germany some of the camps of displacement, they went around, they had, I don't know, rumors. You had to go apply, if you belong to that group, under 18, you lost your parents, there is a chance to go to Canada. And we applied.

Z- And you were one of the few who were really under 18

J- You were actually under 18 weren't you. You were right there, you were almost legal . . .

P- But we were legal because there was no 18 year olds, that was three years after the war. So, who survived under 15, very very few. So everybody had to be over that.

Z- But you were 18.

P- They made allowances, okay.

Z- But you were really 18.

P- I was just on the borderline, okay. I was half a year older. You did whatever you could, because the United States the quota was - the Hungarian quota - maybe 100,000 Hungarians were allowed to go to the United States. Australia, I don't remember. I don't remember what was the story. And Canada came up, and I said I didn't care Canada. That's what I told you at the beginning, I didn't know where Canada. . . I knew where Canada is of course, but I didn't know anything about Canada, just what I told you at the beginning. All I remember in school was the big lakes, the Great Lakes. That's all I remember about Canada. And that goes to show you, that's how life is. I was lucky. I was lucky that I came to Canada.

Z- So, you arrive January . . .

P- January 12th or 13th. I think it's the 13th I remember.

J- 1948, on a troupe carrier.

P- 1948. We left Hamburg, [1:15:58]. On a small, small, small troupe carrier, with 400 of us in a room, you know. But who cared, who cared, we are so happy. So happy we're going out of this hellhole, which we experienced. We just want to get out of there. Very difficult to explain to you the mentality we had, just get out of here, just get out of here, we have nothing. . . We get away from these memories. Get out of here.

Z- So how did you get to Montreal?

P- See, on the transport where I go we we're about 200-250. I don't how many was in there because several transports came. I was the second transport. The first transport -which came with about 200-250 passengers- some of my friends were in it. So we knew that they were in Montreal already, okay.

J- and you landed in . . .

Z- Halifax

J- Yeah, Halifax right?

P- Pier 21.

J- Okay, alright. And you come off, you're there and you knew you were going to go to Montreal, no?

P- No, they . . . we came. . .the whole transfer boat to come on the train. From the boat we went into the train. The train was next to the pier. Into the train, and then in the train we had Mr. Ram, who was a teacher in Montreal. He was the representative of Jewish Congress in Germany. He was our guide all the way through.

J- So this was the guy who was there in Europe.

P- He came from Montreal to Germany. He took a transport, went back to the second transport. He was assigned by the Jewish Congress to look after us, okay.

J- Mr. who? A, a . . .

P- Mr. Ram. R-A-M. I think he was teaching later at Sir George University here. So, on the train, decided who . . . anybody who want to go you can go to Montreal. A few of us stayed in Halifax. Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg, Vancouver . . . He asked where you want to go. Me I selected Montreal because I had friends here.

J- Because you had friends here, and were you with any of your little cohort.

P- Yeah, yeah, yeah, there was two or three of us. So our group got together again over here, the whole group.

Z- So did most people want to go to Montreal?

P- Yeah, yeah like, you were elected, we didn't know, and he of course he made up x amount of people he knew, how much he wanted to move to Montreal. He worked it out, but first he asked your preference before he made the selection where you go. He had to make some selection, of course, not everybody had an idea where to go. In my case, I knew two of my friends are here. And not just that, the group you came with, you made a lot of good friends that were all in the same milieu, the same position. So all of a sudden there is a camaraderie with people you've never met, because we are together for three weeks before we came here, in a hotel. So we made friendship there with some of the youngsters who were designated in our transport.

Z- What did you speak to them? They were all Hungarian?

P- No, no, no they were Polish, [1:19:07]. But there already the language was different, and unfortunately we didn't speak - the Hungarian Jews - didn't speak Yiddish. I never knew Yiddish. I never spoke Yiddish. Not even my parents, even my grandparents didn't speak Yiddish. They spoke German. That's the second language.

Z- Do you speak Yiddish now?

P- I learned in Montreal [laughs]. Believe it or not. I don't speak well, but I understand. I can explain myself. I learned . . . started with answers, you know, which I came with, with Yiddish speaking with the Polish youngsters. You know we were "like this" from there. But they called us shegetz, you know, because we didn't speak Yiddish.

J- Shegetz?

Z- Shegetz, non-Jews . . .

P- That is a word for gentile youngster.

Z- [to J] You're shegetz.

J- I'm a shegetz, so they called you a shegetz?

P- And my wife is a shiksa, okay. She laughs about it, you know. I tell you to put the camera and I tell you a very interesting story with her.

Z- Okay we'll save that. You could tell me in Yiddish you know. You could tell me the story in Yiddish.

J- [laughs] But then I won't hear it. I want to hear the story.

P- See I can converse in Yiddish, but not to tell the whole story.

Z- Oh, okay.

P- Okay, to talk I can understand. I can explain myself, but it's a distorted German, which I will tell you . . .

Z- So you all spoke German to one another.

P- Not everybody, but in school, in high school, which I went you, because in Hungary the second language - like I told you, French or English - was German. Now I happen to be . . . I like the language to begin with. My mother encouraged me and I was able to speak to her. She was practicing with me. So my German became much better than a school German, which many of my friends may have learned or remembered.

J- So, you arrive in Montreal by train and what happens?

P- I arrive in Montreal, Central Station. I remember, hasn't changed. Has not changed down there, I'm telling you, I've come back from Toronto and it's just like I've just arrived here [laughs]. Immediately I know. . . maybe about 50 or 60 of us in Montreal, got out. They stayed there, I think they went . . . changed trains and went to Toronto, wherever, but late at night I remember, because the whole day, the trip lasted for a whole day. You know, we got on the train in the evening. I think it's about 20 hours. I don't how long it's takes.

Z- Oh it would have been 24 hrs then, yeah.

P- . . . Arrive in Montreal . . . and they get off. They . . . a lot of people waited for us in separate cars and brought us to the Baron de Hirsch Institute [1:21:49]. That was equipped to serve x amount of youngsters. So, I don't know how many us, I don't remember exactly slept to a room. But it was a civilized environment, good food. I remember that the next day, immediately, the first day, there's a teacher came in, taught us English, immediately, from the first day on. Every morning, two hours. Within a week or 10 days we had our mentoring, so I can go on the street and by bread or whatever I want to do. So we picked up very fast . . .

Z- So, your teacher would speak? 'Cause there was Yiddish, and there was Hungarian, and there was Polish and Russian. So she just spoke English . . . or he?

P- Well, with the Polish boys we tried to speak Yiddish as much as we learned or German, so we could exchange with German. Yiddish there's are a lot of similarities, you know that. So we distorted the German and we communicated okay. You know, very interesting, when

you . . . people in the same predicament as you are, you have, with your hands on your feet and your mouth and gestures, you can understand each other. We were all in the same predicament. And we were so happy, big smiles all over. We somehow managed. And, also, the English, in about 2 weeks or 3 weeks English became a broken English, but we could communicate much better than before. 'Cause this teacher was fabulous.

Z- Do you remember her name?

P- No I don't remember the name.

Z- Was it male? Female?

P- Male, around 35ish, you know. I must admit, everybody older. I don't remember . . . I remember the face. And I'm sorry that I don't remember his name, because it was very aggressive. We had to sit up and talk to each other, what do you do in English, what you need to get on the street. And I'm telling you, in two or three weeks we were able to get out and live. And I remember the first day after the lecture, so the first morning – fantastic breakfast.

Z- Do you remember what it was?

P- I know there's cereal, I know there's grapefruit, 'cause I'm still in love with grapefruit. I still eat grapefruit like . . . like the first day. Cereal and eggs and coffee. I remember on the train getting out in the morning, 'cause over night, we had breakfast and the grapefruits come out. We didn't know how to deal with it, we'd never seen grapefruit. In Europe grapefruit didn't exist in those day. I don't remember. So we watched each other how to eat it, we didn't know how to eat it.

Z- That's lovely.

P- There's so many lovely stories I could tell you. I should write a book of some of the experiences after, in Canada. And that was probably the most eventful and best time in my life, the first few years in Montreal. And they were . . . we didn't have anything . . . but we're free, don't have to be afraid. I can work. I went to . . . to . . . I'm then running into the third part already, that's were we are, right.

Z- Yeah.

P- You could find work. [1:25:13] First, from the Jewish Congress we had social workers, we took an aptitude test in English. Came out that I would make a good tailor. I have two left hands [laughs]. Intellectually, intellectual, I don't understand the words in the questions. So, they find us jobs too. They got me a job to go in a small little old factory and all I to do there – they're making suits – and all I have to do is, when they cut the suits, we had to [1:25:48] roll it up and they give it out to the contractor. You know, intellectually, you know, that was, that was so boring that it showed on my face, they didn't like me at the job, I guarantee you because I was . . .

Z- So they did an aptitude test in English?

P- In English.

Z- When you didn't know English?

P- That's exactly what happened. And that's how I was assigned those kinds of jobs . . .

J- Now do you know where that was? Like was that as JIAS, JBS? Do you know where?

Z- No, they came in.

J- People came in, okay people came in.

P- What was the question?

J- I was trying to think where you got that test. So someone came in and gave it?

P- In the Baron de Hirsch Institute. Right there in the place they brought us in. Where we stayed about 2 weeks or 3 weeks.

J- And they were coming to meet you . . .

P- Yeah, and a lot of them, because a lot people came in from the community, because there's war orphans coming in from Germany. When they came in they see that war orphans looked like gangsters on the street, you know, like how we looked at the time. They were surprised, not too many takers. And not too many of us want to go to anybody else, because we are independent, you know, we didn't want to be children. They thought they're going to find children here. There was no children left.

J- So that was maybe one of the things that they told you? Maybe you will find someone you want to go stay with, a family?

P- Yeah, yeah, yeah that's exactly what happened.

Z- Okay, could you just . . . let's have. . . so you start with English two weeks, at that time you get an aptitude test, and then what was the next stage?

P- Then after that stage they find you jobs and find you a room to stay where you pay for it, okay. They put you on the road to life in Canada. Find you a room with some families [1:27:41]. You know, people are poor over here, they have an extra room for 20 dollars or 15 dollars and rent out the rooms. So they found us rooms to begin with, so get out of the centre.

Z- So that was two weeks?

P- Two weeks or three weeks. I can check it with my friends, probably have better memories than I have. Then we had rooms and then a job.

Z- When would that be? About 4 weeks or 3 weeks?

P- I can't tell you exactly. I could try to remember how long . . .

Z- Yeah, But it was pretty soon?

P- Pretty soon. They wanted us to learn a few words in English to get out there, get a place with Jewish families who were happy to have us because we worked. And if we couldn't pay for the room they would pay for the room. They guaranteed it. But if you get a job you have enough money to pay for it.

Z- Who? The Jewish Congress guaranteed the room paid?

P- Guaranteed the room. I think so because the people were taking us without any . . . but we also had immediately the jobs assigned based on the aptitude test.

J- Now the aptitude test, the one that found that you were going to be a good tailor, some of your friends would have had that test.

P- They all took the test.

J- And were they recommended in other directions?

P- Yes, all different direction. Mostly the needle trade, because the needle trade was a Jewish trade so-to-speak. That was a mainstay of the Jewish community. But there were people that became bookkeepers, taught them to keep books. And . . . but a lot of opportunities in that trade. You can be a presser, you can be an operator, there's a lot of things. So they tried to find jobs when they can, then they left us on our own. But, you know, how stupid I was because, you know, a lot of people took advantage. For instance even, just a little nuance, that if you smoked you got an extra five dollars, the Jewish Congress guaranteed to you. So, I didn't smoke, I didn't ask for the money. I could have said I smoke, I'd get more money. But I couldn't be dishonest about it.

Z- What was your name before? Paul is an anglicized name.

P- Paul Herzog is not anglicized, Paul Herzog is a Hungarian name.

Z- Paul is a Hungarian name?

P- Paul is Pal. P-A-L. Pal became Paul, okay. Herzig mean Herzog Hungarianized. Herzog in German is a Duke. Herzog is the thrown, like Prince Charles. In German Herzog and in

Hungarian, change the letter 'E', Herzog it's the same thing. I'm the only Jewish nobleman in Montreal. For God's sake I'm a Duke [laughs].

J- Of course.

Z- So your name stayed the same.

P- It's a Hungarian name.

Z- So just before we talk about the work, who was the family you stayed with?

P- I didn't stay with any family here. No, I didn't go to a family. I immediately got my... I asked for, and they gave me, a room. I remember the room and the lady is an elderly lady. The son was a manufacturer or something and she rented the room.

J- And what street was this?

P- And that's a very very far from my friends. My friends were all around the centre in Montreal and that area. So I found a way to move back into that area because I want to be close to the Y. We got a free membership for the Y. And I start to swim immediately and play water polo. And we created... all who arrived, this so-called orphan group. They appointed a young man, a university student, became a lawyer later, his name I will remember. And he created a group in the Y. So, we meet every night after work. We had our "happy gang". We called it the "happy gang group".

Z- So were there more men than women?

P- Pardon? More men, more men.

Z- More orphan men?

P- More men, I would say at least two-thirds or more.

Z- Really?

P- There's a few girls, still friends of mine. We meet for lunch every Tuesday. Want to meet then tomorrow, you meet them at the [] centre. You meet a few of us there, our group, you know.

Z- So why was there so many more men than women?

P- I can't tell you. That's a good question, I never thought of that. I can't answer you that.

Z- Could it be that there were more younger men that survived than women?

P- It's possible, it's possible. It's a good question and I have to think about that.

Z- 'Cause Hitler did target women. There were more women who were selected to die.

P- And more women survived.

Z- The ones who lived it, yeah.

P- But also could be possible a lot of them, the women probably went back to the old country because they're needed and met partners and got married and then stayed. So, there's an answer I can't tell you, but it's a good question and I got to look into it.

Z- Okay. So, they placed you far away . . .

-----Phone interruption-----

Z- So they first put you far away?

P- It so happened, that's by chance, you know, okay.

Z- Yeah, I know. So then you got a place where?

P- Then I came back to Saint Urbain, because I want be close by the Y first of all, and close to my friends. Because we met every night, the whole group. All of these group from the so-called orphans, they were all in this area and we used to meet with 20 or 30 of us at the Y. They gave us a room at the Y, free membership. The old Montreal Y, you know where this is?

Z- Yeah . . .

P- And the Jewish Library was on Esplanade, corner of Esplanade in Montreal. And I can go to the library to read.

Z- Yeah.

P- So that was my, my life was right there.

Z- So you moved back . . .

-----Phone interruption and car conversation-----

Z- So you moved back to the neighborhood, quickly, and you were working in this factory, which you did not like. . .

P- I didn't like it at all. And I'm sure they didn't like me.

Z- How much did you get paid?

P- I remember getting 16 dollars.

Z- A week?

P- 16 dollars a week, right.

Z- Yeah.

P- And I paid for room and board, I think, about 14 dollars. Room and board, the board was actually a sandwich and a breakfast, not supper.

Z- Yeah, so that was 14 dollars a month or week?

P- A week. 14 dollars a week, 14 dollars 4 times, every week. Every week 14 dollars. 14 dollars a week.

Z- And you made 16 dollars a week?

P- Yeah, yeah, yeah. So gives me about two bucks. But the Jewish Congress helped me with an extra five dollars or something. Because they knew the minimum and they helped me out.

Z- Okay, so, what happened then?

P- Then, I think, I must have stayed there for six weeks or so. Then we were 6 or 7 weeks, we used to smell the roses, you know. You can see there's a lot of opportunities here for work. You want to be a bus boy, you want to do dishes. You can make a few dollars. So, even while at these jobs someone told us you can go to bowling allies and you get 5 dollars a night between 8 and 12 or 7 and 12, those that didn't have these . . . which put the pins up, you know, you had to jumping up there. You know, jump up, it was not automatic. So, I can go make 20 dollars, four nights a week at work, or 5 nights at \$25. So I can find things to do. So there were alternatives. I did that. Then, about two months after, maybe I was there for two months, I don't remember the dates, it's very difficult for me to give it exactly. One of my buddies, one of the boys, George, he was my partner for 25 years after but that's . . . He was a . . . entrepreneur's mind, not like me. He always thought "what can we do, there must be opportunities". So, he found out that if you go down to Ontario, pick tobaccos, you can make 10 dollars a day. The work is hard, but young people can do that. Let's go down to Ontario. We had a few dollars saved up already, you know. We decided to go down . . . and this was in April, approximately. So, we go down to Ontario. We took a bus. We left our jobs. Each had some kind of a job. We want to do something different.

Z- So how many of you went?

P- Four. Four of us.

Z- and you were four Hungarian?

P- Four Hungarian, four Hungarian boys. And we bought bus tickets. Some of us we borrowed money, we didn't have enough.

Z- And you got rid of the room.

P- Yeah, so we went out to Delhi, Ontario. Delhi is southwest of Detroit, in Ontario. That's the tobacco fields. And they told us, as George found out, he knew everything, you know, he's the one who researched it - the love of Hungarian tobacco farmers. You can go to work for Hungarian tobacco farmers.

Z- Non-Jewish?

P- Non-Jewish. So we take the bus, took a chance, get on the bus. We go down to Delhi. Toronto [1:39:48] we went to Delhi. So, when I arrived then I realized "where do you go from here?", we weren't taking a very effective [1:39:57]. Well, we'll find a way to get through whatever. So we went into a small little restaurant, you know, 20 stools. And told them we came here to find jobs, to work on the tobacco field. And they go "sure, fantastic, but you came too early, they didn't yet plant the tobacco yet". True story. [Laughter] They plant the tobacco, I think, in May or June, and we are there in end of April.

Z- So what did you do?

P- So . . . What do we do? So, he says "stay here". All the farmers come here for coffee, you'll speak to them then hire yourself out to work for farms. There a lot of work there, besides pick tobacco, until you pick tobacco. So happened that the farmers start to come in for coffee. We get to talk to them, Hungarian. They were happy, Hungarian boys. We're hired all out to different farms, all the four of us. Now we have to think about, how long are we going to stay here. We don't want to stay here until August when you harvest. We told them we are farmers, we never heard . . . of farming [laughs]. So, I went with one our friends, Otto, who in Vancouver now, he was in Montreal but his daughter moved to Vancouver, he moved about a year ago in October. He's my age, Otto [last name], and two of us we went to a big farm and the other two went to two different farms. So four of us. So, my farm they told us, okay, tomorrow morning we'll show you what to do, you being a farmer, things not too different over here. There's two big horses, we had to put things on the horse and get us in the field, and we're off. 200 or 300 meters long, and we had to turn the sod, go after the horses. We'd never done it, that's when they realize, we are not farmers, we lied. But, they said "well, you have two hands, you learn what to do". Give very minimum wage, maybe 10 dollars a month or whatever, until tobacco. So I went with the, what do you call the thing which turns the sod, okay, after the horses. I thought okay, I can do that, it's not easy but I can do it. But when we went away from the farm, the horse behaving well, when he turned around and saw the stable, the food, the horses start a to run, so they had to hold him back. So tough job. We start to learn that we don't know much. So, but, we had no choice.

Z- So how long were you on the farm?

P- We were there maybe 3 weeks, because we want to come back. That's not what we want to do. So we coming back. We just had enough money, because we had to lie a little bit. And when you come to the situation we are in, a lot times you come up with something to cover the situation with some white lies. That were not allowed to get away from Montreal yet, but we got to go back. So that's the excuse we left the farmers. But they were nice, you know, they gave us enough for the bus to get back.

Z- So you got back to Montreal, you had to rent another room?

P- So, we're back in Montreal. So what do we want next? We look for a job. That's when you went back to bowling allies. Then I hired out to a restaurant to be a bus boy, we all did that. So George, our entrepreneur friend, "jee fantastic opportunities" "What's the fantastic opportunities?" You can go to North of Montreal, Sainte Agathe . . .

-----John returns-----

Z- So you go to Sainte Agathe?

P- So we go to Sainte Agathe. And you can become a waiter there, in the summer jobs. They don't pay you well, because 5 dollars a month, but you make, earn tips. And by then our English became a bit better, you could communicate more or less.

Z- And that's with room and board?

P- Room and board and they give you 20 buck. And you can make tips. Sounded good when we had nothing. And we were so happy to work because this was paradise for us, even in those days?

Z- So this was 1949?

P- This was back in '48, the summer. We came in January, and a lot has happened in the 3 or 4 months. The job, the farm, and now we already St. Agathe. But, so . . . But this is happening in . . . early, but the season starts only in June, but they hire early because there is a lot of work to paint the doors around the hotel. So, stayed about two - three weeks in Montreal, then some of us went out. I don't remember that much detail. We went to Sainte Agathe, we got jobs, and we all ended up at the Castle Des Monts, which is a very famous hotel at the time, in St. Agathe, and we got hired. They were looking for young men who want to work, why not. Because see . . . usually students used to work there in the summer, university students. But the university students didn't come early to do the . . .

Z- Set up.

P- Set up and painting outside. So, we got jobs, 20 dollars a month, room and board. And we did painting all over the hotel, different things at the hotel, until the season came. And

they trained us a little bit to be waiters. And through the hotel we became very good waiters. We knew enough English to communicate with our costumers, didn't have to have a difficult discussion . . .

Z- Who were the customers? Were they Jews?

P- Jews, they were the Streich sand Berger family. The hotel was at the time was one of the best hotels and I've got to tell you something very interesting. If you read Mordecai Richler's . . .

Z- Yeah . . .

P- The . . .

Z- *Duddy Kravitz* ?

P- *Duddy Kravitz*. What you see in that book, I read that book and it's all true. He must have worked there one summer. Because the stories which I read there I see with my own eyes. It's all true. Even . . . talk about the gambling czar of Montreal, who – true story, happened to my friend stationed next to me - Harry Ship was a gambler, he was ahead of gambling. A McGill University graduate, looked like a prime minister or the biggest bank manager, good-looking man, his family is there, two kids and a wife. And that's what happened, the businessmen brought the families, they left them there for a month. They came back, they came out Wednesday night and Friday night, Monday when they came back to Montreal, their family's there for a month. And they gave you a tip after four weeks or two weeks or a week, those who stayed there, guests. And Harry Ship, happened to a friend of mine, he came down it's in the book. He took a hundred dollar bill, tore it in half, gave it to him "if my family is happy, you get the other half". It's in the book and I seen it with my own eyes. I met Harry Ship many times. So a lot of stories, which you see in the book, it happened, I've seen it with my own eye. So that's why I say he must have worked there, because he describes the family, described the hotel, and some of the personalities in there. . . I met a guy and . . . I remember card playing, every night, you know, we took turns to service the card players, and we got 5 dollars a night just for that. I mean we made a few dollars there as waiters.

Z- So was the hotel owned by Jews?

P- Yeah, owned by Streichenberger family. Mr. Streich, two couples. One is Mr. Streich and Mrs. Streich, and Mr. and Mrs. Berger. Mr. Streich didn't care too much, but Mrs. Streich was a tough business women, very rough. And Mr. Berger . . . and Mrs. Berger didn't care. . . It was two couples, but one of each couple running the operation.

Z- Yeah. So there were university students waiting, working there too?

P- Well they used to, but once we were there – we were about six of us, all friends, plus two French Canadian boys – there was no more room for the university students. They got to

like us, 'cause we worked there before, painting. So they didn't have to rely on university students coming in, because we came out early. We took the jobs from those university students. But those students could go to... there's about 20 hotels around there. This was the biggest hotel. So we... we set up ourselves there very well and they liked us because we're hard working boys and the guests liked us. Well there's a lot of stories I can tell you about the details. Some funny stories, what we have done as waiters, when you have a group together and fearless like we were, lot's of humorous things would happened. I just want to tell you before I go to that, to get a decent job to come back to Montreal, where I started my career with one of my guests, in this hotel. That's when normal life started. After this episode in the summer we all came back with some opportunities open for us, with direction so to speak.

Z- So what happened to you?

P- So what happened to me... I [1:50:57] a couple humorous stories, want to hear some humor.

Z- Okay

P- This you want to hear first.

Z- Okay.

P- Humor. For instance, you know, they had a fantastic kitchen. Everybody know, because the hotel was always full. And on Sunday the special, people came in just for dinner who had chalets up there, houses, and the second term was dinner not just the guests and they were very well paid. They were wealthy people and they tipped us very well. But we had a fantastic kitchen, it's known. They had a Hungarian cook. A European Hungarian cook. He was an older Hungarian. He didn't like us young people. Whether he was anti-Semitic or not I don't know, that's, I'm not [1:51:43] I don't want to color the person, but he hated our youth. He wasn't very nice to us. We had all the junk to eat as leftovers. Of course, we got together, the whole gang. He cooked once a week the best stuffed cabbage you ever ate in your life, my mother couldn't have made... but we never had enough left. The people liked it and the few favorites. So we got together boys from the [1:52:15], would we like stuff cabbage, okay, tell the customers we had problems because the next table complained about too salty. So that there's leftovers. So we got the stuffed cabbage. So the cook finds us out, that we could select our own food. Just to give you an idea, when you are in a group and then youngsters who had nothing to lose, there's no families whatever, if you commit a crime who worries about you, I would not commit a crime because I was worried about what my mother would say, right. So, but, when in new life, you totally free. No we weren't cowards we were very very nice boys, believe me we were all honest, but we had some shticks like this, you know.

Z & J- Yeah

P- We had friends coming up on Sunday, friends from Montreal. We had ordered extra, we take it out to feed them, were we stayed in the stable. So we did some . . . My personal history, I love orange juice, I loved orange juice . . . and those days, then I come back to real so this is the last funny story I'm going to tell you. They had a walk in Frigidaire, where they had the gallon jars to squeeze orange juice. Every morning, 4 or five kids, two for the waiters get up at 5 o'clock, squeeze it, you know, with the little machine, one by one, not like today, and put them in gallon jar. So I think it was a Saturday or Sunday, I don't remember, I walk into the Frigidaire, I take a gallon jar and I'm drinking out of it. It's a no no. And the boss caught me. He fired me on the spot.

Z- He fired you?

P- Fired me on the spot.

Z- And the boss was Jewish?

P- Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah. They didn't care. They wanted performance and they're business people. They didn't have too much [1:54:07] or feeling for us. That didn't come into the picture. So, fine. So I go back to . . . we had a stable there, there's our building outside from the hotel where we had our accommodation. Each had bunk beds and all that. And the gang comes together, "what are we going to do?". So we decided, my friends decided, that "we got to get Paul back", "we can't let you go". So, this is a true story. There's the dining room about quarter to 12, we had a black tie, white little jacket. Everyone comes to Mr. . . . Mrs. Berger or Mr. Berger, "we decided that we suffer, we're leaving". "What to you mean you're leaving?". "We came with Paul, we go with Paul". So he calls me in and I promise that I never again walk close to that foggy Frigidaire. He takes me back.

J- [laughing] I will never go near that

P- And we come back and trust me, I was a good boy. I never touched it. So there's two issues. I can tell you stories like this, apropos at Duddy Kravitz [1:55:23]. We were all many Duddy Kravitzs there at that time. I was also, I was a little bit. See I was a very good swimmer. I told you I was good at sports. But between 3 and 5 we had our free time because the dinner was ready, we set the tables, 5 o'clock went back, start. And I used to go on the beach and teach kids to swim, youngsters. And the women, three or four of them, they loved me because I looked after their two kids or four kids and they could have the two hours with their friends. They saw us, but I was teaching swimming. I made extra by teaching swimming. So it was . . . Tell you, by end of the season, 30th of September, I had about \$400 saved up.

Z- Wow

P- And all of us. That was a lot of money. So, but, if you go back and you don't have a job, it doesn't last very long. So you have to get to be able to maintain that savings you have to find a job, right.

Z- Yeah

P- Otherwise it takes you two, three, four weeks to spend your saving, and then you didn't get ahead. We always thought "what are we going to do later on". So one Sunday a family came, and I can't tell the name, my guests on the second term, not the guests from the hotel, they had a beautiful home further up but they came for dinner. And every weekend they wanted me to serve them, they got to liking to me. I was a young man, fairly decent, you know, I spoke a broken English. I serviced them the best way I knew how. And he asked me, "Paul what are you doing when you go back to Montreal?". I thought "What? I don't know I'm thinking about, I don't know yet". He says "when you go back, come and see me, I have a job for you". He gave me a card. Came back to Montreal, September, go up to Mr. Nemerov. He's a member of a very wealthy family.

Z- Nemerov, right?

P- They had five-and-dime stores. They had about 70 five-and-dime stores. One in St. Catherine, the head office is in St. Catherine. And he said I can use a young man whose a healthy young man, you look to me a nice boy. So he hired me for 27 dollars a week. That was pretty good wage in 1948, fall. I got a job with a future.

Z- At a five-and-dime store.

P- He put me to the warehouse, just a joe boy in the warehouse.

J- And where is the warehouse?

P- That was at St. Catherine's at the time I can tell you were Marshall Fabric is. One of those old buildings, all of them they went of there 40 years ago. Don't forget I'm talking about 1948. And they sold the stores to Zellers 8 years later.

Z- They were like Woolworths.

P- And at the five and dime store, five and dime store. So I wasn't aware, [] the man told me to [] so I did that.

Z- Where did you live?

P- Pardon?

Z- Did you get another room?

P- No, I stayed in the same room [1:58:13], because I had my friends there. Every night we met. We had supper together, the whole gang, here or there. We met at the Y almost every night, swimming and all that. We had a great time. The group had a great time. So we had a family, we had jobs.

Z- What about girls?

P- Well that's another story. I'll tell you humorous story also, girls. Girls were very hard to come by, because we were not [1:58:45] to an extent, okay. We were the [1:58:48] so to speak. The greens were one notch below anybody else. And the girls weren't very very eager to meet . . . go out with us. Because that was going down to a certain level.

Z- So this is a Canadian Jewish girl?

P- Yeah, Jewish girls.

Z- Canadian?

P- Jewish girls. Also, I'm talking about my own personal experience, okay. Because some of the boys are real gung ho guys. They didn't care. They were good with girls. Me, I was tongue tied with a girl. I could not talk to them. Very very tough. When dances we went, when I took a girl to a dance, I didn't know what to say. I was very shy. Not like I'm today. Was very shy, so I told when asked me these questions, I told, I don't know how many years later, "Paul how about girls?". Well, I said they told us, Mr. Ram told us, when you come to Canada, based on statistics there's four girls for everyman after the war. So I used to say someone had eight, had my four.

J- Someone had taken your four.

P- [laughing] That's my story in a nutshell and that's a true story, 'cause I was shy. Some of my friends were successful, went to dances here or there, got . . . I never could have been because I was shy and couldn't talk.

Z- So the Canadian Jewish girls didn't want anything to do with you?

P- No, the Jewish girls some of them not. Some of my friends married a Canadian girl, but not very many. But later on became some of the, you know, three, four, five, six, we became part of this community. We had decent jobs. We were able to speak English with so much more eloquently than at the begin broken English, became part of a community. It was much easier, then you met girls, we became part of the community. Not at the beginning.

Z- What about the Jewish immigrant women, girls?

P- Not a lot, but there were a few. They all hooked up with some of our boys. But not that many. As I told you, as for the question you posed. Amazing it never came up to my mind and I'm going to look into that. You know, I offer my own experience, my own information what happened. But I think that a lot of girls went back, they didn't come out. Later they came out with married, with their spouses, because immigration became much easier to Canada. A lot of them came to Canada, but a few years later. Some of these girls went back, they found spouses from the returning men, they married and they came with families. So that's one of the answers. But the single girls were maybe 10% or 15%, 85% boys, 15%

girls. I would guess that. So that's my story. I was a very very unsuccessful young man, I had to make it.

Z- So did you have anything to do with the established Jewish community?

P- Nothing at all.

Z- Why not?

P- No because . . . see we didn't feel welcome. We felt welcome by the Jewish Congress. Absolutely. They did everything in their power, I can only compliment them totally. But beyond that, with the community . . .

Z- Why not?

P- Nobody really tried to make friends with us and they're a little bit scared of us, you know. We're the unknown quantity, unknown ability, unknown. They never knew, they felt . . . later on I read some books about it and talked to people, that they were a little bit scared of us. Anybody who survived had to be a manipulator or something. So there was a feeling that we are not the best of the group, the survivors. They had . . . "How could this survivor survive". We weren't [2:02:51] or cheeky or whatever. But they didn't realize, and I even today I tell everybody, something tells you how you survive, not because whatever you were, it was only a four letter word.

Z- Luck.

P- Luck. Only luck, nothing else. You can be a manipulative or smart as you can be, means nothing in the camps, trust me.

Z- So was that painful, having Jews here in Canada not wanting much. . .

P- It had a psychological effect on us, you know, but . . .

Z- What type of psychological effect?

P- so what I mean that we are not wanting, we felt a little bit, you know. . . they . . . what happened to us is one of my friends, we went to the houses, showed him, "this is the light to put the light on". They think we are idiots, or we're not educated. But we had our own values, we were fairly well educated. Even with 8 elementary schools. I was very well versed in culture, you know, I don't remember how much I knew. I knew a heck of a lot more, because, how do I put it to you? I was very studious at home. I read my first book I read, in full length was Les Miserable, from Victor Hugo, you know, Victor, okay. So I read classics as a 13 year old 13, thanks to my sister. She is the one that found me those kinds of things. And I could discuss literature and also I read all the time. When I came here, I was sitting in the library, 4 hours at the Esplanade, you know. I . . . my English was good enough to read books and if you didn't understand half of it, it was worthwhile to read it, even if a

classic. But I got immersed in culture here and I think that I was up to par with any Canadian boy at that level. Not education wise, because I didn't go to school. I went to school later on, at night school. I went to Sir. George at night school, when I could. Not for degree just subject I'm interested in I had to get some education. I have an incredible thirst for knowledge, even today, even today. That's why at my age I still . . . I'm not a broken down old man.

J- A have a few questions . . .

Z- Hang on. Hold on to your questions. What about the religion and how the synagogues or the Jewish religious community welcomed?

P- Well, I . . . I didn't see any welcome. I've seen over church, to come, to pray, you know. And at that time, again, speak for myself not for group as a whole, because we all ended up . . . [2:05:47] is my age, he became a religious man, you know, and I know him since he was a friend of mine here. His sister was a friend of mine in [2:05:56] over here. He became religious and I became a non-believer, I became an atheist. I don't believe in religion. I believe I'm a Jewish person. I was born Jew, I die Jew. I believe in the traditions. I thought they wonderful that has helped . . . this traditions which kept me out of trouble. Always true. But religion is not for me. So, I became in years [2:06:22] to my life, I get married, family. I became agnostic, a fence sitter. Because . . . but I've got what I've seen. I didn't . . . I never talk about it because that's horrors, I don't have to bore people with horrors, they know, they read about it. But I've seen. I said "How could it happen". I said at the camp . . . whose, "can this happen?". So that has an effect on a young man -15, 16, 17, 18 year old - that if there's a God the way we believe in it, can't happen. Although, I believed in the Wasp culture. I thought, work hard, everything [2:07:03] Protestant, but the Wasp culture is to work hard [2:07:09] I can't in the short term tell you what it means, but I believe that's what I found in Canada. Canada was different at the time than it is today. It's more multicultural, at the time more English. And that lifestyle appealed to me.

Z- So the Synagogues or the . . .

P- I come back to that. So I became an agnostic. I wasn't too much going to synagogue. They had [2:07:35] come pray with us and all that. I didn't do that. So I fought with the . . . even today I fighting, since that day when I came out of camp I'm fighting with myself. Religion or Atheism. And I ended up in the middle. They tell me that there's no Atheists in the foxholes, since I'm getting towards the end of my life, the last stage, maybe something will change. But I tell you what changed me from Atheism to agnosticism. I was traveling on the Fraser River with my wife 25 - 30 years ago, maybe more. Coming down we went to Calgary, drove around the mountains and the river and facing . . . we're about five hundred kilometers from Vancouver North, there was a museum on the Fraser River, a fish museum. And, you know, as I told you I have the thirst for knowledge, I want to see what's happening. I look in the museum and I see the museum is built right on the river, and there's a glass window as big as that wall, maybe bigger. And there are pictures and I'm looking at it and you see in the river there's a waterfall about a meter high, like this one here. The water coming down the Fraser River, and the salmon is trying to get back to were

they lay their eggs, right. And I see these salmon jumping and then I read about it and they go back after 40 years, 1200 km, lay their eggs and they die. I've seen films, the bears come and eat them. Christ almighty, that's . . . something, my disbelief and this is the difference, so that sort of . . . and saw the Rockies and I was fascinated, you know. I spent several days, the first time in my life, you know. That the second time I fell in love with this country, the third time, whatever, and I see the mountain and lakes. And then I go . . . I see this . . . who arranges this? This fish comes down, goes, swims around for 40 years then goes back. Something's gotta be there. So, my thoughts start to come about religion. And also, another thing, was the glacier. The big glacier with the bus, you go up there, up there past . . . you know, in the Rockies, a glacier. And I see about the [2:10:24] below about 10km ice. And I see in the bottom of the glacier, the water's dripping. Then I go 50 km, see a little river, then a bigger river starts with that little drip. Then I go near north of Calgary, the lake is on the . . .

Z- Banff? Ah, no Lake Louise?

P- Lake Louise, Lake Louise, you know. I go with my wife and little creek goes two ways and says "this goes to the Atlantic, this goes to the Pacific". I mean the whole thing, you know, look at, Jesus, maybe I was wrong my whole life not to believe. But still I cannot explain what happened to us. But at the same time see another end of it. So, this can be arranged by God or whoever, I don't know. So then I became a doubter, I became an agnostic. This is the story when it comes to religion. But the Jewish community, the religion was a lot of people from home they were religious, especially from the country where any council that was the Yiddish speaking part of the Hungarian Jews, but we are, the city folks we're a little bit different.

Z- So the Jewish religious community, like the synagogues, didn't open up?

P- Not very noticeable.

Z- Okay. Because one of the things that I have found, and I ask this question because we've been looking at archives at J.I.A.S, we've been looking at things at the congress, I've been doing a lot of interviews and the synagogues, Rabbis, religion - nowhere, no mention, nothing.

P- They didn't . . . you know, talk from my memory, I can only talk about my own personal experience or those of my close friends. Those who had religiously committed from before, they somehow found their own way. But nobody came to encourage us to come . . .

Z- Or to help you?

P- Yeah, no I didn't say that. Actually, the Jewish Congress 110%. 110% they did everything in their power. But then after 6 months they didn't have any problems with us. And I can tell you, and know a lot of these folks, every single one of them created a life for themselves, got married, raised families, raised children. I wish you were here just 4 weeks ago. We have a reunion. And I think you should look, we had a reunion 5 years ago, and it

went . . . so happened that I organized it with [name] a friend of mine, we organized it. We know the boys. And we phoned them all and we made it in a . . . on of the condo apartments, they have a party room. And the boys come, they happy to come. Now, the Jewish Congress [2:13:29] that we did that and they called me, "Paul, we'd like to talk to you about it". Which they did. I was in charge of the press and all that. And [2:13:40] asked me, whose in the reunion, this is the so-call war orphans reunion, we do it every 5 years, we're a group here in Montreal. Oh they were happy, we would like to help us, not at all, we don't want anything. We would like to publicize it. "Welcome to it". So happened that every newspaper, the La Presse in Montreal, the Gazette, the Globe and Mail, The National Post and the T.V. station sent their reporters. So I had to deal with them. This came up on me. I didn't expect it.

Z- We should look that up.

P- Look it up in the archives, it was on the T.V. stations. I can tell you here some of the newspaper clips about the reunion, and you would be interested for your project to see it. And I can tell you the date because I have the newspaper articles here. A couple of the girls who were there, I have a folder here, if you are interested I'll show it to you. I've been working with the Jewish community, not the Jewish community, but with the museum quite extensively as you know.

Z- Okay, well do that after, 'cause I still have more questions.

P- And you know more about that. All of [2:12:04] all, if you call it, every single one of them is successful, not financially, but in lifestyle. They all raised families. Created a very good group of children, educated. So, they brought a lot to this community, a lot. And I'm very very proud to say this and I can prove this to you 'cause I can tell you stories. One of the girls met one of the boys had two children, both of them doctors . . . Lawyers, teachers, all successful and excellent citizens in the country.

Z- Okay, but you did it on your own. You go the help initially from the Jewish Congress. After 6 months you were on your own.

P- We were not need, we did not need them. Some, who could not hack it, they got help much much longer. But must of us, I would say 95%, we didn't need because we all found jobs. Jobs was plentiful if you want to work. I know we worked as party waiter, bus boys, bowling alley. We made enough money to make a living, even save a few dollars.

Z- So it was your own determination.

P- But not just Paul Herzog, I'm bragging here. One I know, only one I know who got into jail and he was the smartest of us all. He's in Toronto. Trust me. And he's a great guy because he is the one who in Budapest, he's older than us. He put on the German uniform, walked around and saved a lot of people. And here, he married a girl, had children, didn't work out, and he became a thief in Toronto. So only one I know of. He used to come to

Montreal, to all his friends, needed money, we all put together money. We tried to save him, but he managed. So everyone of us except this one.

Z- Okay, so what did you do? You certainly didn't make it working 27 dollars a week at the five-and-dime.

P- No I . . . Well that's a long story, you know, because once you work yourself up, I worked with federal stores.

Z- So you stayed with the . . .

P- Federal five-and-dime stores. Within 5, 4 years I became a manager of a small store. Because I worked myself up. I was fairly . . . how would I put it to you? I was a hard working man. I understood what they taught me. They paid me school, when I went to Sir George they paid my schooling and all that. But what happened is that then they from a small store I went to Kingston, Ontario. I was in Kingston. I was an assistant manager. I was able to go at night school at Queens. So everywhere I went, I went to night school. To just . . . how would I put? Fulfill my curiosity. I want to be educated. I didn't have that much education. Then they put me into a store, a bigger store, assistant manager at the bigger store in Hamilton, Ontario. But they sold out to Zellers. The chain sold out to Zellers. They were an old people, they decided, then Zellers took over. So, the rumor went around that with Zellers for a Jewish man like myself, the future is not very very rosy.

J- What year is this?

P- I tell you exactly. 1952. 1952 or something. And it may not have been true. It was rumors, you know, rumors were going around. And we were a little bit sensitive to this. We were prone to these rumors because of our experience. So I cannot say this is true, but that went around. So I decided, no, no, no I'm not going to stay with Zellers. Although, I talked to the big manager at the bigger store downtown Hamilton. And I told him I decided when I left. "Paul you have future with us". "No I think my future not very secure". He said "Paul it's all rumors" he told me. He was an Irish man, Ryan, I remember his name. "Paul" he said. But no, I want to come back to Montreal, to all my friends who were in Montreal. So I needed an excuse. So that's why I'm telling you, I'm not stigmatizing him to be anti-Semitic. It was very good excuse for me to come back to Montreal.

Z- That was your family right?

P- Yeah. So I came back to Montreal. I floated around for a year or so. I had three or four jobs. I made a living but I said I don't have anything stable. So that's about the time in '54 or something. Then I joined them, already I got tired of this uncertainty. I go back to which I learned, marketing five-and-dime store, chain-store marketing. That's the only thing I knew. And I'm not a good businessman, but good marketing, it's a little bit of brain you apply and do it. You know, if you're not stupid you can do it. So I joined another company here in Montreal [2:20:04 EL?] Grain Limited. EL Grain, they had 15 stores, and the main

store on St. Catherine street, so I joined them, get a steady job. I worked with them. I worked myself to be a manger, again.

Z- How much did you make a week?

P- Already I was making \$100. As a manager I made already 200 dollars, so I made good wages. But in 1958 I got married. 1958 I met a young lady, a very beautiful lady.

Z- Canadian?

P- I was married for 35 years, and I'm still not over it, I want you to know. Very good marriage. We have a daughter in Montreal, she's 50 now.

Z- She's a Canadian?

P- The girl was coming in 1956, the Hungarian revolution.

Z- So was she Jewish?

P- She was Jewish. Came with her parents. Luckily, she's . . . I've already lost a lot of my Hungarian, I speak Hungarian, my mother tongue, but English was much easier for me to communicate because I already lived here for so many years. And I was away for Montreal, I was away. And even with the boys in Montreal, we spoke English, we didn't speak Hungarian unless we won't to make a good joke. So, English was our . . . became our mother tongue, although we speak with a heavy accent and sometimes we don't find the words, but that was the most comfortable language for us to speak with. So, and my wife, my late wife, a young lady, she was 18 years old when she came here, '57.

Z- What was her name?

P- Judy Singer. And she spoke beautiful English. Her parents were smart. For four or five years [2:21:36] in Hungary taught her English, and English woman living there. She spoke fluent English. She was a translator on the ship and every camp she was in Hungary. So, instantly we communicate. Three weeks after she was working with Bell Telephone. She was 18, 19 years old, she had a job.

Z- How did you meet her?

P- Well, one of our gang, one of our group, he had a cousin who came in 1956 and was friends with the parents. With my late wife's parents, okay. And they told the . . . "this is a young lady [2:22:15]" he was a friend of mine today, "you gotta show her the city, she's a nice girl, who knows". He finds out she's only 19 years old [2:22:24], "I don't want to meet with her". She barely used a word, a little picture, "I don't want to go out with . . .", you know, he was three years older then I am. So call up Paul he's younger than I am. So I met this young lady, took her around the city, and became friends. Became friends and out of this became a very success marriage. Not just a successful marriage. And I'm so happy to

talk about this sometimes because – I may over stay your limit – but I inherited a mother. The mother in-law was nicer to me than my grandmother [? 2:22:59]. We had such a great relationship with my mother in-law. I consider today, she had four elementary school, more brains than all of us combined. Intelligence, natural intelligence, she had style, and what can I tell you. Just the greatest lady I met in my life, four elementary school. And we got along very well, and also my late wife and her, the relationship between her parents was so beautiful that every time I saw them together I had tears in my eyes. That's what I expect, me losing my parents, and I see this relationship. My wife "oh that would look good on my mother". Next day she took her and later we had only a few dollars to buy it for her, and that's a beautiful relationship, and that made up for what I have lost. I've seen it. Now, my mother in-law if she told me "jump", I always say "how high?". There's nothing I could not do for her. She was the greatest lady. I still talk about her everywhere. My daughter loves her because . . . my daughter learned Hungarian from her, because my wife and I we spoke English at home. Sometimes if we didn't want her to hear it then we spoke Hungarian, our mother tongue, Hungarian. But my mother in-law, the first grandchild, and my father in-law, they loved her and she was the apple of their eye, and they didn't speak English at the beginning.

Z- Is this a picture of your daughter?

P- No, this is Inna's daughter. I have a lot of other pictures, I show you for my daughter. That's her daughter. So, as I told you this is my second marriage, because 1958, in 1995 we had a problem, she got brain cancer, and she lived with it for 10, 11 months. It was the toughest time in my life because some very intelligent lady, she knew everything, when the operation, the first, the doctor, you can't hide it from her or anything. And 10 months I had breakfast everyday with her, but I can't tell her you're going to get better. She knew exactly because she found the longest anybody lived with that condition was 18 months, she knew it. And to do that for months and months and months, to see the deterioration, it was not a pleasant . . . time of my life. But the legacy she left is great and I appreciate it and the whole family they took me in. And I became . . . After 1944 when I lost my parents, I had another family, so I was a very fortunate person. I had to . . . My mother in-law, just to give you an idea what kind of lady she was, we sitting Shiva, you know, after the funeral, and I was of course depressed, and she lost her daughter. And now I complaining, she said "what are you complaining about, look at your friends. How many of your friends had 35 years of good marriage?". "Not many, you're right. Mother, you're right". But how about you, you lost a daughter. I lost a daughter, it's true. But 1940, she was born in 1940, in 1944 she was 4 years old - '45, and they found her in an orphanage because they put her away because the ghetto, they were worried about taking her out, she was in an orphanage and they found her. And they didn't know in 1945, January, when the city got liberated in Budapest, the ghetto, she was in the ghetto in an orphanage, and they didn't know whether she was alive or not. They had put a mirror over her mouth, is she breathing or not. And they brought her back to life, and she was 55 years old when she died. And "50 years God gave me", she says. And she could rationalize. I could not. This is my mother in-law, she worried even then about me "go make a life for yourself, you have nothing to worried about, take what you've had". And she lost a daughter. She was stronger than I was, that kind of a lady. So I'm telling you she . . . I had the good fortune to be able to make her old

age very good. Trust me, I'm not going to tell you what . . . I would have done anything I could. And my brother-in-law, a good son, [2:27:32] everything he was very good to her, but they were [2:27:35] and I was living two blocks from them in [2:27:38], so I looked after her. She was semi-blind and I went shopping with her and all that. I was anxious to do something for her, that kind of a person. She elicited from me that feeling that I want to do things for her, can you imagine. So, then I met this lady, so I've been with some very nice ladies. So I have been a very blessed person. A lot of bad times in my life, but basically I can't complain.

Z- So you have one daughter only?

P- One daughter, yeah. I didn't want any children.

Z- Why?

P- I tell you why not. I said, what I've gone through . . . don't forget it was only 10 years after the war, and still what I experienced, I didn't talk about it, but I said for this kind of world I don't want children. And I said to my late wife that I think I could not live with a problem with children. If any problem happens, I had enough. The glass is full, I don't think I could cope with it. And I don't want to . . . but she wanted a child, we had a child, so this satisfy both of us. She had a daughter and I had to accept responsibility. And we never had any problem about it. But that . . . I didn't want any children . . . at that time. Later I realized the value of children, but at that time I was young and still all this that had happened in my mind and my experience that's a package, a baggage I'm talking about. We all have our baggage but you have to learn to live with it, and I managed. I don't have any hatred towards anybody. I maintained my sanity, I maintained my ethics. [Laughing] expect when we were waiters, we did do tricks, you know, but that's youthful . . . how would you explain that, can you a good word? Youthful exuberance, let's put it this way [Laughter]. But I live with a very very strong ethics all my life. You don't know me, but trust me that I can . . . whenever my time comes I'm going and I have no regrets. I think I left a legacy, which will be valuable.

Z- Do you have grandchildren?

P- Two. A granddaughter, 18 and a 21 year old grandson, he's at second year in McGill. And my daughter is a wonderful daughter. She's a journalist. She was on the CBC for many many years, she used be on camera everyday in Ottawa defenses. She is a documentary producer, she has 8 international awards, but she left the CBC. They wanted her to go to Toronto, her husband didn't want to go, so she left the CBC. Left a 10 year . . . Wasn't a smart move, but she's freelancing, she writes. She's a good daughter, I have no complaints.

Z- What's your daughter's name?

P- Lynn Herzog. [Discussing Lynn's career]

Z- So what did you end up doing Mr. Herzog?

P- Well, I see, Okay. I got sent out to Sudbury, they opened a big store in Sudbury, so I went out with my wife there. My daughter was born there. She carried the stigma forever [laughter]. We tease her, make her careful of the world, okay. She was one year old. This was a big store and I did extremely well as a manager and it was big at the time. I remember \$12,000 a year. That was good in 1956. That was a good wage, you know. And I got bonuses because I created the Wolco the big Wolco opened up the trial store right next to me, right next to the first Wolco store in Canada, Sudbury shopping centre. And it died, so they fired me. They didn't think, so fired me with a one-year-old child. So, what did I do, I'm looking for a come back to Montreal, for a job. I came back to Montreal, but they gave me a job, which I didn't want to take, after come back to start all over again. But one of my colleagues worked in Ottawa for a department store, and coming back from Sudbury and going back, because I came home to Montreal to establish, I said what am I going to do. My family stayed there, moved back to Montreal. I went in to see him. And he was with his boss and he was doing well there. Former colleague of mine also from the same firm, and when he tells the story, on camera, I'm telling stories now . . . So introduces to the boss, he comes into his office. "This is Paul Herzog" and he said "what do you do?". I told "I'm in between jobs". He said "we have an opening here, are you interested?". Of course, I had nothing. So he hired me for the same wage, which I made there. So I had a job in Ottawa and Ottawa I liked. So I moved to Ottawa. I spent 9 years there with this company. I made a decent living. I bought myself a house. So that took me up, took me in the right direction. And from there, after 9 years, unfortunately it's a very fine company, very fine company, but they are only one department store and no future there. [2:34:27 – 2:34:30] The head of [2:34:31] at that time, my former boss, an American, Arnie Anderson, he's Danish American, and he liked me because I was his assistant and he says "Paul, come work for us". I liked the people. "Paul you have no future, here with us you have a future, you can grow with me". So he enticed me to come back to Montreal, work for [same as 2:34:31]. I became a divisional manager at [same as 2:34:31], marketing etc., etc.. Even travel to Europe and all that for them. And I stayed there for about two years, but then I realized that Mr. [2:35:01] had died and also something's going in the wrong direction. [2:35:05] all the big time operators, and two American who knew this business. They come from . . . with experience from the States. They come to . . . and they told me it's not working. Well one of them resigned. They said there's no future for me. I made a bad mistake to come here and Arnie also resigned. My friend also resigned. He was an army major during the war. He was General Patton's supply agent and he taught me everything that I know in this industry. He was the best organizer, because I was not a good merchant. I had never been in that. I come from a poor family. My father was a painter. But this guy knew how to organizer and he taught me everything I know. And I became a much better person in my trade after being with this man for so many years. So, I had a chance to go my own business, or with some friends of the group, in the business again. Two of my friends and that was a fairly good business, but I was . . . it was a retail operation. Maybe you remember, Princess Silks, they used to be fabric stores, and they needed expertise, and I was expertise. I come from that background. Not fabrics, but retail operations, chain-store operations. Chain-store operations itself is thing, you got to know how to operate a chain-store. There's a lot of things to know about, operational aspect of many many multiple stores. So, I became an expert and my friends, my friends had their own business but they made an investment

with some partners. They brought me in as an expert. But those who were there they didn't want any new system. They liked the old system. They didn't want to modernize and they wanted to make . . . expand, bought another company. I said you buy that company you go bankrupt. You're not ready for it. I knew a little bit more about his. It would be very complicated to tell you to run a chain-store operation. If you add more, you just kill yourself. You got to build a pyramid, solid base, but an inverted pyramid, bound to fall. And I explained this to them and my friends too, and I left them. I said "no I'm not going to be a part of a failure", and they paid me out. And I had . . . because I was [2:37:38] to bring me in they gave me x percentage, they paid me out, so I had a little bit of money in my pocket and I always saved money, we always saved. My wife was an accountant, she had a good job, so we had a little bit of a nest egg, we weren't desperate financially so I could take a chance. So I left that and with one of the boys again, George, my partner, died 7 years ago, we were partners for 25 years. And what happened, he was a salesman, a born salesman, and I was all organized and I didn't know anything about . . . I could not sell. He could sell cold to, how do you say, there's that saying in English, that's what I'm looking for . . . But he was a fantastic personality, a great guy, honest. We became . . . we were partners and did different things you know. Then we made a little firm. He was selling electronics, he had connections there, and I came in as an expert to organize things. So we became a very small import company in electronics and we built it and made a decent living out of it. So much so that he became . . . we were partners for 25 years, friends and partners. Teddy [2:39:04 Bolgart?]'s cousin by the way. And, you know, we were the same age. We knew the same songs. We grew up the same area, so we were a lot in common. It was a great relationship, and we traveled a lot together and whatnot and he died 7 years ago. So we built a small company and at one point he had heart problems. He got to Florida every year and all that, he had to go. So he said, "Paul I want out, want to buy me out". I even bought him out. I remained for an extra 7 years in the business. I didn't make millions and millions, but I'm, how would I put it to you, I became self-sufficient and a decent retirement. I'm not wealthy, wealthy, but I'm comfortable. I don't want any more, this is beyond my expectations in life. Much beyond. I never expected. But I was a good organizer, he was a fantastic salesman. He was out there. Me, I had to select the lines, create, organize it, everything. I'm a good man in the back, not in the front. He was a front man, I was a back man and we were successful.

Z- Can we go back to the 1950s for a second. And this question, John likes to ask, but I'll ask it. Talk to us about Fletcher's field.

P- Fletcher's Field, okay. You know, I played soccer for the . . .

J- That's why I was going to ask. That was my question. Tell us about soccer and Fletcher's field.

P- Okay, well, you know, when you walk by everyday, the water polo team and the soccer team. The Jewish . . . That was a place to organize Jewish sport activities. Now, I was always sports crazy and I was very good. So happened I was very good at sports. So, Fletcher's field it was our playing field. In Montreal they had a very good strong soccer league in Montreal. An Italian team, an English team, the English team was in Porte St.

Charles, [2:41:17] and the beaches that's were the soccer field that belonged to the Irish team [2:42:24] field was Italian field, and Fletcher's field was a Jewish field. And I've seen, you know, I know, even the movie Duddy Kravitz I see [2:41:33], it's all true. I've seen those things, didn't have to see the film. They reproduced what happened, what life was going on. So we were at Fletcher's field every second day. We played soccer there for the league, 5-600 people just standing around waiting and they only went around with a hat to collect money, it was no . . . and that was the finest team. And this went on for many many years. I played every year. I was selected at one point for the Canadian National Team. One of the English teams used to come every year here.

-----phone interruption-----

J- Now when you were on the field, at Fletcher's field, you would have been playing a game and you would have been looking around, so what did you see, who did you see on the sidelines, people, who was there?

P- Mostly immigrants, of course, who were interested in soccer. Only immigrants. But each immigrant team had their following. So the Italians came here, the Italians came here. When we played the Italian at Faillon field, you know were Faillon field is. Faillon Field is were the tennis courts are today were the tennis tournaments take place near [2:43:25]. That used to be Faillon Field. Even today Faillon Street, that was Faillon Field. F-A-I-L-L-O-N Field. That's Italian team, that's' Italian section.

Z- That's Jarry Park area

P- Yeah, Jarry Park. So we went there to play and the Italians. . . and the Jewish supporters came, so it was a very strong league. And, a couple of years, that English teams in the summer came here to play from England. The Celtics are from Scotia, I remember the [2:44:00] came here and I played against them. They beat us of course, but that doesn't matter, it was great. I will show you a picture when we finish, I'll show the picture of the Canadian National Team that I have here. So that was our life around that area. The Library on Esplanade and corner of Fletcher's field on the East corner and Mont Royal, Fletcher's Field and that was Esplanade, the library. Two blocks from there is the Y, the swimming pool and all the activities and Fletcher's field. And the mountain there, if you walked over to the mountain.

Z- And that was your life . . .

P- That was good. Life was good.

Z- And that was a Jewish community of immigrants. The gathering.

P- Very strongly Jewish in this neighborhood.

Z- Do you have pictures from then?

P- I have a few pictures from those days, you know. I . . .

Z- I would love to see those.

P- I'm going to pull out some, when you're finished with this. If it's okay, I bring some evidence [laughs].

Z- I have another question. So, you talked about how the Jewish community, the established Jewish community, they really didn't. . .

P- They were stand offish . . .

Z- What changed? And why did it change? Because now it's not that way in terms of the Holocaust.

P- No it's not that way. And also, they . . . you know, the community I think they grew together at some point maybe, is that a good word to say they somehow got together . . . Don't have to distinguish different people. But maybe the immigrant groups who feel the same way as I did at the time. I don't see what happens to the Russians, I have no idea. The Russians were coming, a lot of Russian come in, Jewish Russians. And I know the Community looks after them. I know so because I some ideas because I'm involved in different things. But I don't meet them and don't speak with them. I don't know how they feel when they are here 1,2,3,4 or 5 years, because I'm a little but remote. I came here to live around here [2:46:05] basically, you know, I had a home in Port St. Luc and too many good memories there and I felt that, how would I put it to you, I have a new relationship, that it's a little bit uncomfortable so I sold the house and start a new life with this lady. But I'm not remote from the community because I'm every week there. I can meet my friends every Tuesday we have lunch, okay, and I go to the museum quite often. I work for the museum, that's my . . . I go out to a lot of high schools, sometimes universities to speak and different venues.

Z- So what do you think changed in the Jewish community? You talked about moving together, but how did that happen?

P- Well, that again, you know, they moved the new immigrants, which I don't. . . I know what's happening but I didn't meet. It's more cohesive somehow, that's my felling. You ask me why I feel that way, I could not explain to you. But I know I don't feel like an immigrant, I don't feel like a lower ranked person when I meet anywhere in the Jewish community. There is probably an issue in the wealthy, semi-wealth classes. So happened my daughter, divorced and married again, so the family, the parents are very wealthy, I don't feel anything common with them. I don't meet them that often, very nice people, I don't them. This is about two years I know them, but never asked me about my background, where I'm a survivor or how I . . . and it's strange that they wouldn't be interested in . . .

Z- Even now

P- Even now

Z- Are they Jewish?

P- They are Jewish, yeah. They're very Jewish. They're very prominent in the community, in one of the synagogues, but they never . . . I met them maybe 4 or 5 times, okay, they're very nice there's no problem.

Z- They are your age?

P- No they are Canadian, born here.

Z- But they are your age?

P- My age, a little bit younger, not much, a little bit young. And me I would be interested if I would meet a Russian, "how did you come here?," "how did you find it?." I would be more interested in the question you asked, which I'm not that much aware of. So I don't know, I can't tell you on that level, the wealth level. But where I know people . . . I don't like to use the phrase middle-class, there's no difference, there's a lot of cohesion, then understanding. And I see a lot of good things. But there again, don't know what brings people together. Sometimes danger brings people together. I do feel a lot of anti-Semitism in the world, there's certainly some in Canada, but there's a lot of it. And I'm frightened sometimes, because a lot of demonizing is going on and I can . . . there's a very famous author just came out from Hungary. They chased him out of there because he said something bad about Hungarians, their behavior. And "dirty Jew", they chased him out, they beat him on the street practically. There's a very famous radio personality who now teaches at Concordia here, Hungarian, and they had to leave because of anti-Semitism, very strong strain. And when in Parliament, in some Parliament come up with the blood [2:50:05], it's coming out again in Europe. Can you imagine that this is believable? Is it believable? My wife can't read it, she puts away papers so I can't read it, she starts to get panicky, and she is not Jewish, but she . . . and this is part of demonization. And when I was young, I went through this . . . I remember these things, and that bothers me. So, maybe, I'm getting to the political aspect here, that talk about how a community gets together, maybe the danger brings them together. But this can be applied to any small community, immigrant community, not necessarily the Jews, the same applies to others.

Z- Any questions? Your turn.

J- No, no, I mean yes, but no.

P- I exhausted you, I talked to much?

Z- No, I think it's been amazing. Just quickly, this is not really related but, just interest, how did you find out your sister was alive?

P- Well 1956, the Revolution in Hungary, okay, at 12 o'clock I got a telephone call, it's my sister on the telephone from Hungary. See she could not reveal that she has a relative out West, under that strict communism, Stalin's communism, that if you had a relative out there you were suspect. And she has some good jobs and she was worried, so she didn't reveal that she had a relative out there. She knew about me, but I didn't know about her, I guessed it. She is the one that tell me about my brother is alive. See 1956, toward the end of the Revolution, maybe first month of '57.

Z- So did she come here?

P- Oh many times. See what happened, this was in 1957, we started corresponding, talked on the telephone quite often. In 19... a year before expo 1966, I paid her way, she came here, she stayed with us for a month, got to know my daughter, my family and all that. And again during expo next year she came out.

Z- Did she have kids?

P- She wasn't married, she remained single. She never married. My brother on the other hand ... I found out . . . I went back the first time in 1964 by the way, I missed the sequence there. I got to know about them in '57. The revolution was October, November '56, '57 I remember January I got the telephone call. In 1964 I went back with my late wife. First time I seen my brother since 1940, and my sister since 1944. That's the story.

Z- Are they still alive?

P- No, my brother died in '89 I think. My brother was born in 1919, he went through a rough time in the war and all that and he was very very sick, very sick for the last 10 years of his life. He had two children, one of them died in an accident. The other one is alive, he is a nephew of mine. That is the only relative I have left. My sister died in 2000, she was 82 I think. So I'm the only one left from the family. But the truth is I didn't have that much in common with my brother and my sister. My sister a little more than with my brother because I remember her when I was 12, 13 years old because she took me places. But you could not recreate that relationship I had with my friends. My friend's family was my family, trust me. Still today. You know, Teddy's son is a psychiatrist in Conneticut or in Westchester NY. When my late wife died, because we used to spend, stayed together, you know, the family were together. Every Sunday he called me for three months, talked to me, "what's happening", gave me advise, Paul don't worry about . . he's a psychiatrist, he's like my son. So I didn't lack family. Like I told you, my mother in-la, a great lady. Even today I just, I'm so happy I was able, my wife and I when she was still alive, she treated them like on a pedestal, you can't expect more. And when she died I took over that role and she was such a great lady. And I'm telling you my mother could not have been nicer to me. And you know I don't remember too much about my father, my father took me here, took me to the movies, took me to patisserie and all that. But my mother is very very vividly in my mind. Every time . . .you know I always said if I could remain by integrity or ethics in my life, it's thanks to my mother. Everything that I do in my life I always say "would it please my mother?". Everything I did, always said that "would it please my mother?". And that kept

me the person I am. Just to give you an idea about my mother, you know, I was 6 years old I remember I was coming home from first elementary and on the road there was a , no what kind of flower . . .the tree with flowers hanging out in the Spring, okay. So I climb out and break a branch to bring it to my mother . . .Lilac tree, lilacs tree, okay. And I go and give it to my mother, my mother looks at me, smiles, says to me “thank you very much, but you know that is not yours. Not allowed to take some one else’s. I appreciate, thank you very much”. She taught me that . . you know that was 6 years old, that was how many years ago and I remember that moment when she taught me that it’s not nice to pick some else’s. And also she told me that ‘ you know that you hurt the tree, the tree is alive and you hurting the tree. She give me a little extra emphasis that I should not do it again. And that was my mother. My mother was very very bright, much more so than my father. I’m not degrading my father, don’t misunderstand me but my mother was a role model, and this lady, my mother in-law, so I had several good ladies in my life who made me what I am. And what I am right now, my dear late wife has a lot to do with it, because what I have, we both created it, and I’m here to enjoy it and she is not here to enjoy it. And that still bothers me, but life is such and I can’t hold back from life because of that. That’s my story.