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HUMANITY

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Robert Holczer

Video Transcripts

Video 1 Hungary Occupied

The war came to an end in 1944, March 19th when the Germans finally sensed that the Hungary might want to leave the Nazi alliance, the Axis and join perhaps with the Allies. There were rumors flying in the air because Romania was already out of the war and they thought perhaps Hungary would do the same.

The Soviet army was coming very close to Hungary up from the North and East and the Romanian forces also joined the Soviet forces and were attacking from the East. Under the circumstances the Germans occupied Hungary, Eichmann arrived and now the deportations started.

They emptied the countryside first, I woke up one day in I think it was July, 1944 July, and realized that my mother's family who came from the country, they were gone. They were all taken to Auschwitz.

My grandparents, my cousins, my aunts, my uncles, everybody was gone and none of them came back after the war. None. Not one person of my mother's family who lived in the countryside survived. At least not to my knowledge.

In the meantime, we knew that eventually, once they emptied the countryside, which was extremely swift because in no country did the Germans get as much cooperation as in Hungary.

They practically had absolutely no manpower invested in the whole campaign because the Hungarian town and village, mayors, the [gentarmory] they were all eager to have and show their efficiency and loyalty to the cause. Finally, they came to Budapest.

Video 2 Arrow Cross

There was a splinter group, rather a fringe group in Hungary, they were called the Arrow Cross Party, and the people of that party even in the fascist regime in Hungary, the party was most of the time outlawed, this was a party made of absolutely the bottom of society, the ones who are, who were, just totally hopeless, full of hate because they have nothing, full of envy because they never amount up to anything.

These are people who couldn't even get the lowest factory jobs, because first of all they didn't want to work most of them were alcoholics, it was a terrible terrible a group of people, plus some young kids who were very impressed with the uniform.

They wore black uniforms with the arm band that had a red arm band just like the German arm band white but in the white it was not a swastika but a cross with arrows on each point, so they called themselves the Arrow Cross Party.

This party was very much on the fringe during the war years but now the Germans didn't trust anymore a legitimate Hungarian government, appointed by the region and let them out of prisons, out of the pubs and anybody who wanted basically a weapon could have one and these people created a terrible situation on the streets of Budapest, there was not more ID card no more this and that.

During a stay in this so called in that bogus hospital three times the Arrow Cross was tipped of and came to take us out of the house.

They were two possibilities, they were taking Jews into the Ghetto, they constructed a Ghetto in the center of Budapest where the old from the old Jewish District they surrounded it by wooden wall and according to the rumors It was detonated, it was delate dynamited and in case of a Soviet victory in Budapest they would have dynamite it in the last moment but luckily that never happened. But I did not want to go to the Ghetto ever, so I would do anything.

The other alternative was much worse many times they were not taking people to the Ghetto, they were taking them down to the Danube where they tide them together, make them, took their shoes off and shot them into the Danube river

Video 3 Ara saved 400 Jews

Two times our leader could talk them out of it. Could convince them that he knows exactly that these are Jews but they are working and it's for the sake of the Hungarian state.

The third time just three days before liberation a man appeared with 32 Arrow Cross, of his body guards with submachine guns. They surrounded the entire the premises and they said this time there is no mercy.

We are going to be taken down to the [denube]. Our leader just ask one thing they brought him out too, they put a revolver to his head and they said you are going to go with them.

He said before we go I just would like you to see what you are destroying here. And ask if the leader of the group can come and take a look at the situation, they were gone for about an hour and a half and when they came back he lined us up.

And said that what I had seen here is beyond my imagination, I never thought that Jews are capable of doing this and I want to thank you for your work. And I will be the minister of Jewish affairs after the war which is going to be over very soon.

Because the Germans invented the magic weapon. And then each of you will be then given the same kind of papers and identity as gentiles in Hungary, you will be honorary gentiles in the new Hungary.

Of course, this was I mean the most stupid thing we have heard in our life. We didn't of course say anything, we didn't object the fact was, we survived.

After this, 3 days after this, one morning the first little eighteen-year-old soviet soldier in his fur hat put his hat through the emergency exit in our basement where the hospital was.

And we knew that as far as we were concerned the war was over. I took my mother's hand and I ask her to lets go back and see what happened to our apartment we left our belongings there, a great deal, if there's anything left.