

00:00:00:00 - 00:00:05:02

My name is Charles Zach.

I'm 66 years old.

00:00:05:29 - 00:00:08:21

I've lived in Burlington all my life.

00:00:08:21 - 00:00:12:19

I've had various occupations  
throughout my life.

00:00:13:18 - 00:00:14:21

Starting in Burlington,

00:00:14:21 - 00:00:19:21

my first job here was helping  
farmers pick some of their crops

00:00:20:08 - 00:00:23:09

in the summertime on Maple Avenue  
when it was still farmland.

00:00:23:23 - 00:00:26:27

My current job is,  
I'm a government lobbyist

00:00:27:19 - 00:00:30:17

for Canada's National Firearms Association.

00:00:30:17 - 00:00:33:10

I've been a H.R. manager.

00:00:33:11 - 00:00:36:08

I've been in I.T.,  
and I've been in architecture.

00:00:37:03 - 00:00:40:15

So my mother and father  
both grew up in the north

00:00:41:01 - 00:00:44:01

western regions of Hungary.

00:00:44:10 - 00:00:52:25

And it was under communist rule  
after the Second World War.

00:00:52:25 - 00:00:57:02

So during that time, Hungary  
was oppressed by the Soviet Union

00:00:57:24 - 00:01:00:02

and became very hard there for

00:01:00:02 - 00:01:03:02

for people to thrive and subsist.

00:01:04:02 - 00:01:05:25

My father's background,

00:01:05:25 - 00:01:10:01

his father was in the Hungarian army,  
and he was treated

00:01:10:01 - 00:01:14:06

with prejudice by the Soviets  
for obvious reasons.

00:01:15:02 - 00:01:19:02

He was prevented from  
going to school, upper school.

00:01:20:08 - 00:01:23:08

His family business was confiscated

00:01:24:16 - 00:01:27:16

and they endured a lot of oppression.

00:01:27:28 - 00:01:30:11

And many people there did.

00:01:30:11 - 00:01:33:29

And with that culminated  
one day in 1956, October,

00:01:34:15 - 00:01:37:14

into a full blown revolution,

00:01:37:17 - 00:01:41:01

because the Soviets were,  
and their proxies in Hungary,

00:01:41:14 - 00:01:45:09

were abusing the people up to  
and including murder.

00:01:46:17 - 00:01:50:05

So the people rose up  
and they fought against the Soviets

00:01:50:05 - 00:01:53:05

and the Hungarian proxy forces

00:01:53:17 - 00:01:56:17

and unfortunately was defeated.

00:01:56:28 - 00:01:59:28

My father took part in that revolution  
directly.

00:02:00:13 - 00:02:03:13

I'm not going to go into details, but,

00:02:04:05 - 00:02:07:08

he was part of the regional resistance.

00:02:08:22 - 00:02:12:12

So when they knew that the revolution  
was not going to succeed,

00:02:12:20 - 00:02:16:04

my father knew that his life now  
was in jeopardy and in peril.

00:02:17:06 - 00:02:20:06

So he was dating my mother at the time.

00:02:20:20 - 00:02:22:18

He was,

00:02:22:18 - 00:02:24:26

22-23 years old.

00:02:24:26 - 00:02:27:21

My mother was 18 years old.

00:02:27:21 - 00:02:31:06

He basically returned from the city  
and asked my mother whether or not

00:02:31:26 - 00:02:34:13

she wanted to escape with my father

00:02:34:13 - 00:02:37:13

across the border,

because we're still open to Austria.

00:02:37:26 - 00:02:40:02

She eagerly applied.

00:02:40:24 - 00:02:43:04

So they landed in Austria.

00:02:43:04 - 00:02:45:01

Austria gave them refuge

00:02:46:08 - 00:02:49:18

and sent them off to a  
refugee camp in Styria.

00:02:50:13 - 00:02:52:23

So at that point,

00:02:52:23 - 00:02:55:23

they contemplated immigrating as refugees.

00:02:56:20 - 00:03:00:00

So my mother had family in California.

00:03:00:01 - 00:03:02:23

My father had,

00:03:02:23 - 00:03:05:23

relatives here in Hamilton in Canada.

00:03:05:23 - 00:03:08:10

And funny story

00:03:08:10 - 00:03:11:10

is that first my mother's

00:03:12:12 - 00:03:16:00

application was accepted  
to go to California, but because my mother

00:03:16:00 - 00:03:19:02

and father weren't married at the time,  
my father couldn't go.

00:03:19:02 - 00:03:22:16

So my mother said, no,  
we're going together, not separately.

00:03:23:06 - 00:03:24:27

So they got married.

00:03:24:27 - 00:03:27:26

Right there in Styria.

00:03:28:02 - 00:03:31:14

Well, the offer to immigrate to the U.S.,  
it expired at that point.

00:03:32:03 - 00:03:35:15

So the application from Canada  
came in

00:03:35:29 - 00:03:38:23

saying you're welcome to come to Canada.

00:03:38:23 - 00:03:41:23

And my uncle,

00:03:44:08 - 00:03:47:08

they sponsored my mother  
and father to come across.

00:03:47:11 - 00:03:50:26

They landed at Pier 21 (Halifax),

00:03:50:26 - 00:03:54:24

they were processed,  
so they were checked medically.

00:03:55:13 - 00:03:58:27

And I think they were given 20 bucks

00:03:59:26 - 00:04:02:26

and train tickets to anywhere in Canada.

00:04:03:03 - 00:04:04:19

And then from there, wait.

00:04:04:19 - 00:04:07:13

And that was the extent of the support.

00:04:07:13 - 00:04:07:19

Right.

00:04:07:19 - 00:04:11:22

So you had, one suitcase  
that basically had nothing

00:04:11:22 - 00:04:15:21

but pictures and some prized linens  
that my mother had made.

00:04:15:21 - 00:04:19:21

And was passed down from her family,  
but otherwise they had nothing.

00:04:19:21 - 00:04:22:02

They left everything behind.

00:04:22:02 - 00:04:25:02

Property, family, and their culture.

00:04:26:01 - 00:04:29:01

So they landed in Canada,

00:04:29:04 - 00:04:32:04

not knowing the language.

00:04:32:27 - 00:04:35:03

It was a brand new start.

00:04:35:03 - 00:04:36:11

Very daunting.

00:04:36:11 - 00:04:39:18

So they landed in Hamilton and

00:04:41:09 - 00:04:44:09

my uncle tried to get my father,

00:04:44:20 - 00:04:46:19

jobs here and there.

00:04:47:17 - 00:04:49:29

So at that point, my father was,

00:04:49:29 - 00:04:53:15

working for the city, cutting trees,

doing all kinds of different things,

00:04:54:06 - 00:04:57:20

odd jobs, trying to find anything good

to support his young family.

00:04:58:24 - 00:05:01:12

One day, he heard from one  
of his friends

00:05:01:12 - 00:05:05:03

that there was a brand new brick plant  
being built on number five highway.

00:05:06:26 - 00:05:09:24

Actually, it was called Diamond  
Clay at that point.

00:05:09:24 - 00:05:13:16

And, so the middle of the winter time,  
he jumped on his bike

00:05:14:09 - 00:05:19:26

and rolled all the way from Leighland  
Avenue, up Brant Street.

00:05:20:14 - 00:05:24:07

number five highway down  
to Appleby Line on number five.

00:05:24:07 - 00:05:26:10

in the middle of a snowstorm

00:05:26:10 - 00:05:29:10

to try to apply for a job.

00:05:29:25 - 00:05:31:13

In the meantime, while he's going down

00:05:31:13 - 00:05:35:26

this road, the black car goes by him.

00:05:35:26 - 00:05:39:00

And, you know, you're kind of looking  
at him, you know, he took notice of that.

00:05:39:19 - 00:05:45:08

And he finally ended up at the plant  
and saw the same black car parked outside.

00:05:46:10 - 00:05:48:19

So he went inside and

00:05:48:19 - 00:05:51:01

he asks to see the boss.

00:05:51:01 - 00:05:55:18

Mr. Henderson came out and he looked at him  
and going how did you get here?

00:05:56:10 - 00:05:57:14

"Well, I rode my bike."

00:05:57:14 - 00:06:00:03

"Were you the guy

I passed by on the road?”

00:06:00:24 - 00:06:02:03

He said, “Yes, yes.”

00:06:02:03 - 00:06:02:29

“What do you want?”

00:06:03:13 - 00:06:05:01

“I want a job.”

00:06:05:01 - 00:06:06:19

He goes, “You’re hired.”

00:06:06:26 - 00:06:10:22

So just the pure tenacity  
of going to the plant.

00:06:10:22 - 00:06:13:22

So my dad

00:06:13:29 - 00:06:16:14

spent his entire life there.

00:06:16:14 - 00:06:17:00

Yeah.

00:06:17:00 - 00:06:19:20

Unfortunately, it ended prematurely.

00:06:19:20 - 00:06:22:09

He was in a truck crash

00:06:22:09 - 00:06:25:07

in Hamilton delivering bricks.

00:06:25:07 - 00:06:27:04

About 25 years ago

00:06:27:04 - 00:06:30:02

27 years ago. But,

00:06:30:02 - 00:06:31:20

back then,

00:06:31:20 - 00:06:34:20

we still had cradle to grave jobs.

00:06:34:28 - 00:06:38:24

And that plant was very good to my  
my dad and our family.

00:06:39:21 - 00:06:43:10

It helped us thrive and, you know,  
build our house and everything else.

00:06:43:10 - 00:06:44:18

Right. So we,

00:06:46:19 - 00:06:49:13

so in between that we  
lived on Leighland.

00:06:49:13 - 00:06:53:08

So we moved in 1960, 1420 Leighland.

00:06:53:27 - 00:06:56:27

And it was an old, farmhouse,

00:06:57:00 - 00:06:59:22

with a good acre property in the back.

00:06:59:22 - 00:07:04:11

And my family transformed it into a mini  
farm, as many families did back then.

00:07:05:05 - 00:07:11:08

So we had everything back there, really,  
from potatoes

00:07:11:08 - 00:07:16:11

to lettuce to watermelon  
to peppers to tomatoes.

00:07:16:29 - 00:07:19:02

Everything you possibly could need.

00:07:19:02 - 00:07:22:12

So me and my mother  
was very much into canning.

00:07:23:03 - 00:07:25:19

So you can imagine that well

00:07:25:19 - 00:07:28:19

in the summertime,  
when a lot of my friends were out,

00:07:28:26 - 00:07:31:23

gallivanting around the neighbourhood  
doing nothing,

00:07:31:23 - 00:07:36:00

I was helping my mother harvest  
and can the goods.

00:07:36:29 - 00:07:39:20

And back then,

00:07:39:20 - 00:07:42:06

food wasn't as expensive  
as it is now,

00:07:42:06 - 00:07:43:27

but it was still relatively expensive.

00:07:43:27 - 00:07:46:01

So we packed away a lot of things.

00:07:46:01 - 00:07:47:00

We went to the store,

00:07:47:00 - 00:07:50:23

but it was mainly for staples  
like bread, things like that.

00:07:50:23 - 00:07:55:04

Most of the stuff that we got like meats,  
we went to the farm and we got meat.

00:07:55:14 - 00:07:56:15

Meat to order.

00:07:56:15 - 00:07:59:15

And we packed that way into the freezer.

00:07:59:18 - 00:08:01:29

But quasi self-sufficient.

00:08:05:03 - 00:08:08:02

Everybody was pretty much like that.

00:08:08:02 - 00:08:09:05

The zoning back then

00:08:09:05 - 00:08:12:05

in Burlington was laid out as such.

00:08:12:18 - 00:08:16:13

The old war homes had property like  
that where--you can actually

00:08:17:04 - 00:08:20:04

subsist because, things are rationed.

00:08:20:19 - 00:08:23:08

And we took full advantage of that.

00:08:23:08 - 00:08:23:25

And it was great.

00:08:23:25 - 00:08:26:03

It was good fun, lots of work.

00:08:26:03 - 00:08:29:03

Of course it was healthy,

00:08:29:07 - 00:08:32:16

non-GMO, no herbicides, all natural.

00:08:34:17 - 00:08:36:20

Well, like I said, my  
my father had to leave.

00:08:36:27 - 00:08:41:15

He was deemed a domestic

00:08:41:17 - 00:08:44:16

terrorist by the Soviets  
during the communist era.

00:08:46:10 - 00:08:49:24

The penalty for him  
coming back would have been death.

00:08:49:28 - 00:08:52:02

Would have been executed.

00:08:52:02 - 00:08:55:16

So his reason for coming here was

00:08:55:16 - 00:08:59:19

to save his life and to find new freedom  
and liberty, which he did.

00:09:02:07 - 00:09:02:23

You know we

00:09:02:23 - 00:09:06:05

said that back then,  
when he first came here, it was free.

00:09:06:20 - 00:09:08:21

And it was lots of liberty.

00:09:08:21 - 00:09:11:19

That meant a lot  
of personal responsibility,

00:09:11:19 - 00:09:16:05

because there was no big government  
offering all kinds of different

00:09:16:08 - 00:09:19:08

handouts for new immigrants  
back then, it just didn't happen.

00:09:19:14 - 00:09:22:27

You know, you might get food stamps,  
and sometimes we got food stamps,

00:09:23:26 - 00:09:26:26

but, otherwise you're on your own. And,

00:09:27:18 - 00:09:29:17

I really believe that spurred my mother

00:09:29:17 - 00:09:32:17

and father to dig deep. And,

00:09:33:13 - 00:09:35:18

you know, become self-sufficient.

00:09:35:18 - 00:09:37:10

And they did.

00:09:37:10 - 00:09:40:21

And those values and principles,  
they passed onto their children,

00:09:40:21 - 00:09:42:11

and they, me and my brother,

00:09:42:11 - 00:09:46:20

and we continue that, continue  
with those same values and principles

00:09:46:20 - 00:09:49:08

in my family.

00:09:49:08 - 00:09:50:18

But bottom

00:09:50:18 - 00:09:53:26

line, my mother and father both came here  
because they saw that

00:09:53:26 - 00:09:57:08

this was a country of opportunity, it's  
still relatively young.

00:09:57:08 - 00:10:00:14

There was

00:10:00:14 - 00:10:03:17

hope to thrive

if you worked hard and they did.

00:10:03:28 - 00:10:05:26

And that was realized.

00:10:05:26 - 00:10:07:22

And, so that's why they came here.

00:10:09:02 - 00:10:09:24

Oh, yes.

00:10:09:24 - 00:10:15:08

So they--the process

wasn't as daunting as it is now.

00:10:16:08 - 00:10:19:08

You know, the immigration process

in Canada is broken.

00:10:20:00 - 00:10:23:01

And there's people on the waiting list

now for five years or more.

00:10:23:26 - 00:10:27:16

And when they have all the credentials  
and qualifications to come,

00:10:27:16 - 00:10:30:16

but there's a backlog.

00:10:30:18 - 00:10:35:01

And even in places  
such as, a revolution from where

00:10:35:01 - 00:10:38:01

my mother and father came from,  
these people are stuck.

00:10:39:02 - 00:10:42:02

So back then,

00:10:44:04 - 00:10:44:22

I'm assuming

00:10:44:22 - 00:10:47:22

it was probably more efficient, but,

00:10:48:12 - 00:10:51:11

immigration was very tightly controlled  
back then as well, too.

00:10:51:11 - 00:10:54:14

I think that we allowed 35,000,

00:10:55:23 - 00:10:58:11

Hungarians into the country at time,  
and that's it.

00:10:58:11 - 00:10:59:06

And they capped it off.

00:11:01:01 - 00:11:04:14

Well, certainly in terms of my father,

00:11:06:19 - 00:11:08:08

the journey getting out of Hungary

00:11:08:08 - 00:11:11:08

was perilous and dangerous.

00:11:12:00 - 00:11:16:05

Like they were almost killed.

00:11:16:05 - 00:11:18:28

Now, when they ended up in Austria,

00:11:18:28 - 00:11:24:10

They were stuck in an old army  
camp and they were billeted

00:11:24:10 - 00:11:28:21

there for most of the year,

a whole bunch of other refugees.

00:11:29:08 - 00:11:31:02

So that was hard as well, too.

00:11:31:02 - 00:11:31:29

I mean, they were living in

00:11:33:12 - 00:11:36:11

bunk beds and there was no privacy.

00:11:37:07 - 00:11:40:07

You really couldn't

leave the place, you know,

00:11:40:21 - 00:11:44:20

my mother became very homesick

as well as my father.

00:11:44:21 - 00:11:46:20

You can imagine,

00:11:46:20 - 00:11:49:20

because they left everybody behind

and there was no word.

00:11:49:22 - 00:11:52:16

There's no communicating

with anybody back then

00:11:52:16 - 00:11:55:19

to see what they were okay,  
or what was going on with their family.

00:11:55:29 - 00:11:56:29

And they were very worried.

00:11:56:29 - 00:12:01:22

So psychologically and emotionally,  
it was a taxing time for them.

00:12:01:22 - 00:12:05:03

Not to mention  
they had just gone through national trauma

00:12:05:03 - 00:12:08:03

and personal trauma  
and trauma as a result.

00:12:09:21 - 00:12:13:02

But, the process itself was,

00:12:14:18 - 00:12:16:14

the immigration process was handled,  
I believe,

00:12:16:14 - 00:12:20:11

with the Austrian-Canadian

consulate who were very good.

00:12:20:26 - 00:12:21:01

All right.

00:12:21:01 - 00:12:23:16

So they were there all the time  
checking on people.

00:12:23:16 - 00:12:25:21

You know, interviewing people,

00:12:25:21 - 00:12:28:18

making sure that people have  
things that they needed to,

00:12:29:18 - 00:12:31:16

maintain themselves while they were at

00:12:31:16 - 00:12:34:16

the camp.

00:12:35:29 - 00:12:38:29

So my mother and father landed here in 57.

00:12:41:24 - 00:12:44:24

There wasn't a lot of immigrants,  
you know.

00:12:44:27 - 00:12:46:20

There was a couple of waves

00:12:46:20 - 00:12:49:20

during the First World

War and in the Second World War

00:12:50:18 - 00:12:51:12

that had come in.

00:12:51:12 - 00:12:55:04

A lot of them had gone west,

but Burlington, per se, and Hamilton,

00:12:56:29 - 00:12:59:29

was primarily British,

00:13:01:14 - 00:13:04:14

Scottish,

00:13:05:00 - 00:13:05:29

some Germans.

00:13:05:29 - 00:13:09:16

And some Dutch.

00:13:15:12 - 00:13:18:29

I guess what surprised my mother

and father the most was, despite what

00:13:18:29 - 00:13:24:07

the promotion of Canada being welcoming  
and being the land of opportunity.

00:13:24:20 - 00:13:26:22

There was still a lot of prejudice.

00:13:27:21 - 00:13:32:00

So, my mother and father were called

00:13:32:26 - 00:13:37:27

derogatory names because, you know, it was  
the same old thing that happened before.

00:13:37:27 - 00:13:38:04

Right?

00:13:38:04 - 00:13:43:12

So they came to this country to steal the,  
you know, the jobs and, you know,

00:13:43:12 - 00:13:46:12

and there was prejudice against Hungarians

00:13:46:14 - 00:13:49:14

and that was all over the place.

00:13:49:27 - 00:13:52:02

One particular story, my dad at the time

00:13:52:02 - 00:13:56:03

working temporarily at the basket  
factory on Brant Street,

00:13:57:03 - 00:14:00:03

it was a huge enterprise way back then.

00:14:01:03 - 00:14:02:25

My father was there making

00:14:02:25 - 00:14:06:00

baskets and of course the

00:14:07:03 - 00:14:10:17

the foremen, they were all primarily  
British or Canadian,

00:14:11:08 - 00:14:14:08

and they were picking on him  
the whole time.

00:14:14:17 - 00:14:17:17

And because he was Hungarian  
in the language.

00:14:17:26 - 00:14:20:26

And, well, it culminated into,

00:14:21:07 - 00:14:24:12

the situation where it was one day  
where the foreman, you know.

00:14:24:12 - 00:14:28:10

Put a lit cigarette in my dad's  
pants, back pants, and burned them.

00:14:29:16 - 00:14:31:24

And of course, there was a big fight  
and my father got fired.

00:14:31:24 - 00:14:35:10

But, you know, the fights are  
not the issue here.

00:14:35:10 - 00:14:38:20

It was the mentality of

00:14:39:07 - 00:14:42:07

the Canadians at that point  
for these new immigrants.

00:14:42:24 - 00:14:43:00

Right.

00:14:43:00 - 00:14:45:28

So and that was pretty much everywhere.

00:14:45:28 - 00:14:49:18

On the flip side, there was people  
that were very sympathetic.

00:14:50:08 - 00:14:54:00

So when my father and mother came  
to Canada or to Burlington,

00:14:55:15 - 00:14:56:12

They actually went to the mayor's

00:14:56:12 - 00:14:59:23

office and said, "Listen,  
I've got a brand new baby boy."

00:15:00:05 - 00:15:01:16

"I have no money."

00:15:01:16 - 00:15:03:22

"I need some place to stay."

00:15:03:22 - 00:15:06:22

And the mayor was

00:15:07:26 - 00:15:08:29

The mayor

00:15:08:29 - 00:15:10:17

said, "Yeah, okay, no problem."

00:15:10:17 - 00:15:13:17

You're going to be part of the crew  
in the winter time

00:15:13:27 - 00:15:16:20

as we have storms here, as we did  
just now.

00:15:16:20 - 00:15:17:17

This is in the wintertime.

00:15:17:17 - 00:15:20:08

There's a lot of trees  
that broke down in the parks,

00:15:20:08 - 00:15:21:29

and they went in there and cleaned it up.

00:15:21:29 - 00:15:24:29

And he had that for a while. So.

00:15:25:13 - 00:15:28:13

You know, it went back and forth that way.

00:15:28:19 - 00:15:30:27

Of course, it got better over time  
because more

00:15:30:27 - 00:15:33:27

and more immigrants were  
accepted into Canada.

00:15:34:00 - 00:15:37:11

And of course, they went through their own  
little prejudicial problems

00:15:37:11 - 00:15:38:11

as well too. But,

00:15:39:20 - 00:15:42:08

it's kind of a rite of passage  
when you come here.

00:15:42:28 - 00:15:45:28

So it's the way it is. You're different.

00:15:46:06 - 00:15:48:28

You're treated differently for a while.

00:15:50:00 - 00:15:51:22

Well,

00:15:51:22 - 00:15:55:01

the Central Europeans are a special breed of cat.

00:15:59:00 - 00:16:01:22

My mother and father and their family.

00:16:01:22 - 00:16:04:22

You know,  
they went through the First World War,

00:16:05:02 - 00:16:09:29

a major world depression, a Second World  
War that swept through their country,

00:16:10:14 - 00:16:13:05

Communist control and oppression,

00:16:13:05 - 00:16:15:19

and then finally revolution.

00:16:15:19 - 00:16:18:19

So these people are steel

00:16:18:29 - 00:16:22:02

mentally and emotionally,  
yes, traumatized.

00:16:22:02 - 00:16:26:21

But out of that, that trial by fire  
and the experience of,

00:16:28:11 - 00:16:31:11

pain, national pain, continental pain.

00:16:31:13 - 00:16:33:15

Right.

00:16:33:15 - 00:16:36:14

They become very tough people.

00:16:38:11 - 00:16:41:11

A lot of people wouldn't understand  
the kind of mentality they had

00:16:41:11 - 00:16:44:11

because they've never experienced  
that kind of trouble.

00:16:44:17 - 00:16:44:24

All right.

00:16:44:24 - 00:16:49:00

So new immigrants who come from war  
torn places certainly do.

00:16:49:11 - 00:16:51:28

And we have kind of  
a kinship with those people.

00:16:53:01 - 00:16:53:12

I didn't

00:16:53:12 - 00:16:58:06

experience it myself, but of course,  
through my mother and father's testimony,

00:16:58:20 - 00:16:59:18

I have an appreciation

00:16:59:18 - 00:17:03:09

for what they endured,  
the people that they become because of it,

00:17:03:26 - 00:17:06:25

and the strength  
that they drew from it to actually prosper

00:17:06:25 - 00:17:09:25

in Canada.

00:17:11:00 - 00:17:14:06

So I'm a really good cook and that I got  
to give that to my mother and father.

00:17:15:23 - 00:17:18:23

And I almost exclusively cook Hungarian.

00:17:19:18 - 00:17:23:25

So, and the reason I do  
that is because food

00:17:23:25 - 00:17:27:17

and language are at the core of culture.

00:17:28:27 - 00:17:32:02

And that's a universal thing.

00:17:32:02 - 00:17:35:15

If you're French,  
you speak French and you cook French.

00:17:36:14 - 00:17:38:00

So when I was growing

00:17:38:00 - 00:17:41:00

up, I didn't even know English  
until I went to grade one.

00:17:41:01 - 00:17:44:20

I just spoke Hungarian because  
my mother and father couldn't teach me,

00:17:45:29 - 00:17:48:29

which was a problem.

00:17:49:02 - 00:17:50:26

So the traditions that my mother  
and father

00:17:50:26 - 00:17:54:01

kept going here

was, of course, Hungarian foods.

00:17:55:00 - 00:17:58:00

We spoke the language and,

00:17:58:11 - 00:18:00:10

when I became a little bit older,

00:18:00:10 - 00:18:03:10

like I mentioned, there was a community  
of people here that were Hungarian's.

00:18:04:27 - 00:18:07:27

A lot of young couples  
with young children my age.

00:18:08:04 - 00:18:11:04

And we spent a lot of time at  
the church.

00:18:11:27 - 00:18:16:00

I eventually,  
I was recruited into the Hungarian Scouts.

00:18:17:07 - 00:18:17:15

Right.

00:18:17:15 - 00:18:21:18

So I spent a lot of time there. And,

00:18:22:20 - 00:18:25:20

I spent a lot of time at Hungarian  
school every Saturday while my

00:18:25:27 - 00:18:26:28

friends who were off at,

00:18:27:29 - 00:18:30:05

you know, hockey practice or whatever.

00:18:30:05 - 00:18:33:04

I was in Hungarian school  
learning Hungarian language.

00:18:33:12 - 00:18:35:09

And then right after that,  
there was a Boy Scout.

00:18:35:09 - 00:18:38:09

So it was a pretty,

00:18:39:12 - 00:18:41:28

pretty intense thing for me growing up.

00:18:41:28 - 00:18:45:22

As much as I was  
in the English school system

00:18:45:22 - 00:18:49:21

here, I was also in the Hungarian school system elsewhere.

00:18:51:12 - 00:18:54:12

This is very come from my observations and it's that

00:18:55:05 - 00:18:58:22

I was first generation immigrant from an immigrant family.

00:18:58:22 - 00:18:59:00

Right.

00:18:59:00 - 00:19:03:08

And I was totally immersed in the culture that my mother and father

00:19:03:08 - 00:19:04:06

brought from their country.

00:19:06:19 - 00:19:08:04

I have children as well, too.

00:19:08:04 - 00:19:12:04

And as much as I've talked to them in Hungarian, they don't know Hungarian.

00:19:12:22 - 00:19:14:28

Right.

00:19:14:28 - 00:19:16:13

I cook Hungarian food.

00:19:16:13 - 00:19:18:10

They love my Hungarian food.

00:19:18:10 - 00:19:24:03

But they are now a generation  
removed from the original homeland.

00:19:24:03 - 00:19:26:22

They're Canadians.

00:19:26:22 - 00:19:29:01

And that's the way they behave.

00:19:29:01 - 00:19:31:04

But they don't forget their roots, right?

00:19:31:04 - 00:19:34:17

So they know that they know  
the story of their mother

00:19:34:20 - 00:19:38:10

or the grandmother and their

grandfather and before that.

00:19:39:03 - 00:19:42:06

So, you know, they honour that,  
you know, that lineage,

00:19:42:19 - 00:19:45:19

but they are truly Canadians, right?

00:19:46:25 - 00:19:49:15

So I've been back

00:19:49:15 - 00:19:51:05

about 3 or 4 times now.

00:19:51:05 - 00:19:53:27

So the first time I went back,  
I was around 12

00:19:53:27 - 00:19:56:27

and it was still Communist controlled.

00:19:57:07 - 00:19:58:29

So the

00:19:58:29 - 00:20:02:07

Communist Hungary  
had declared an amnesty

00:20:02:07 - 00:20:05:07

for all the rebels of the revolution.

00:20:05:20 - 00:20:08:02

So my father was now

00:20:08:02 - 00:20:11:02

he was no longer

under threat of execution and arrest.

00:20:11:17 - 00:20:16:12

So we went back, you know, to visit the family.

00:20:17:22 - 00:20:19:17

When I was there,

00:20:19:17 - 00:20:22:17

and I know a lot of people don't

00:20:22:23 - 00:20:25:15

can understand this kind of thing,

but it was

00:20:25:15 - 00:20:30:15

it was communist rule... so very

authoritarian, very controlled.

00:20:31:04 - 00:20:36:06

And of course, with that kind of communist

economy, there was shortages.

00:20:38:02 - 00:20:40:05

The quality was poor.

00:20:40:05 - 00:20:44:21

People lived in fear of,  
you know, people ratting on each other.

00:20:44:21 - 00:20:46:08

And that happened all the time.

00:20:46:08 - 00:20:49:06

And, it was just  
a very oppressive thing that I learned

00:20:49:06 - 00:20:53:21

that from a young age,  
you know, that where I lived was free.

00:20:54:21 - 00:20:56:21

Like I said, my mother  
and father were

00:20:56:21 - 00:20:58:27

deeply involved with the church.

00:20:58:27 - 00:21:00:11

So that was huge.

00:21:00:11 - 00:21:04:11

But my father

00:21:04:11 - 00:21:07:10

was also involved  
with some community things here.

00:21:08:20 - 00:21:09:29

My dad was very much involved

00:21:09:29 - 00:21:13:01

with youth soccer  
when he first started up here.

00:21:15:04 - 00:21:17:26

At one point, there was no soccer.

00:21:17:26 - 00:21:21:22

And then, it was in the late 60s.

00:21:21:22 - 00:21:24:22

It started up  
under the police association,

00:21:24:26 - 00:21:29:29

and my father was helping to coach  
and refs and do lines and things.

00:21:30:15 - 00:21:34:14

My dad was a semi-professional soccer  
player back in Hungary, in Austria.

00:21:34:24 - 00:21:36:27

So it came naturally to him.

00:21:36:27 - 00:21:40:19

Of course, he spurred me on  
to be a soccer player as well.

00:21:40:19 - 00:21:42:14

And I did become that.

00:21:42:14 - 00:21:45:14

I also want to play hockey,  
but he had no idea what that is.

00:21:45:26 - 00:21:47:08

But I do know that my mother and father

00:21:47:08 - 00:21:50:29

both were part of like the  
couples club at the church,

00:21:51:12 - 00:21:55:13

they got to help other young couples, sort of,

00:21:56:25 - 00:21:57:11

I guess,

00:21:57:11 - 00:22:01:10

you know, immerse themselves in the community.

00:22:01:10 - 00:22:04:15

Not the Canadian one,

but where the Canadian one and Hungarian one

00:22:04:15 - 00:22:07:14

as well, too. So.

00:22:07:16 - 00:22:09:25

Well,

I kind of followed my father's footsteps.

00:22:09:25 - 00:22:13:17

I've coached and played in

00:22:15:09 - 00:22:17:24

the Burlington,

00:22:17:24 - 00:22:19:24

Soccer League here.

00:22:19:24 - 00:22:23:19

I played in the Premier Division

until I got too old

00:22:23:19 - 00:22:26:19

to play that anymore.

00:22:26:27 - 00:22:29:27

I'm very politically active now.

00:22:30:19 - 00:22:33:18

I've actually ran for,

00:22:33:18 - 00:22:36:27

provincial office here in Burlington

as a libertarian twice

00:22:37:29 - 00:22:38:11

Unfortunately,

00:22:38:11 - 00:22:41:19

that didn't come to any fruition,

but it was a great experience.

00:22:41:19 - 00:22:45:23

I got to meet a lot of my Burlingtonian's,

red door through canvassing.

00:22:46:21 - 00:22:48:11

So I continue to do that now with

00:22:50:02 - 00:22:51:00

to the conservatives.

00:22:51:00 - 00:22:54:25

I've been on many conservative

00:22:54:25 - 00:22:58:14

electoral district boards,  
probably for 25, 30 years now.

00:22:59:03 - 00:23:02:02

And, so supporting the candidates

00:23:02:02 - 00:23:05:02

and doing outreach and community.

00:23:07:17 - 00:23:09:13

And of course, I belong to the

00:23:09:13 - 00:23:11:25

Burlington gun range as well, too.

00:23:11:25 - 00:23:13:22

I'm a relatively new, new member there.

00:23:13:22 - 00:23:17:13

But when you would still shoot at  
the Silverdale gun range,

00:23:17:13 - 00:23:21:07

I would always take new people

there to shoot.

00:23:22:24 - 00:23:24:19

Burlington has changed

00:23:24:19 - 00:23:27:19

radically since I've been here.

00:23:27:29 - 00:23:30:29

So when I was growing up

here, Burlington was,

00:23:32:15 - 00:23:35:20

semi-rural in a small little downtown,

00:23:36:07 - 00:23:39:07

but everything else was,

00:23:39:22 - 00:23:43:03

orchards and quasi little farms

00:23:43:21 - 00:23:46:21

and green areas.

00:23:48:02 - 00:23:49:18

And it was beautiful.

00:23:49:18 - 00:23:50:15

It really was.

00:23:50:15 - 00:23:53:14

You know, we would go running  
off into the woods.

00:23:53:14 - 00:23:56:23

We'd be out there  
all day building forts and digging

00:23:56:23 - 00:23:59:23

tiger pits and,  
you know, having all kinds of fun.

00:23:59:26 - 00:24:00:17

Right? So,

00:24:03:11 - 00:24:06:11

of course,  
over time, I think it was

00:24:06:15 - 00:24:09:17

probably in the mid 70s, things switched.

00:24:10:15 - 00:24:13:15

A lot of developers  
came and knocked down a lot of the farms.

00:24:13:15 - 00:24:18:01

Bought up a lot of the

farmland and Burlington

00:24:18:07 - 00:24:21:07

was on its way to being transformed  
from a town

00:24:21:18 - 00:24:24:18

to a fully urbanized city.

00:24:26:18 - 00:24:30:00

How would I put this? You know, I mean,  
I've lived here all my life, right?

00:24:30:00 - 00:24:33:28

Burlington has lost a little bit of its soul

00:24:35:03 - 00:24:38:03

because it's become big.

00:24:38:17 - 00:24:42:27

When I was a young man,  
I could go to the Burlington Mall

00:24:42:27 - 00:24:45:27

because there was only one mall,  
and I was there for the opening.

00:24:46:23 - 00:24:48:15

If you ever went to the mall,

like a lot of young

00:24:48:15 - 00:24:51:15

kids do now, I'd see all my friends there.

00:24:51:19 - 00:24:54:19

I'd see all my friends parents there.

00:24:55:00 - 00:24:57:20

Now, when I go to the  
Burlington Mall and to the,

00:24:58:19 - 00:24:58:26

you know,

00:24:58:26 - 00:25:02:00

Mapleview Mall and all the other malls,  
I don't see anybody.

00:25:02:19 - 00:25:04:04

All right.

00:25:04:04 - 00:25:06:08

You know, sadly, a lot of,

00:25:06:08 - 00:25:09:08

Burlingtonian's from my generation

00:25:09:24 - 00:25:12:10

a lot of them are dying off,  
but a lot of them left.

00:25:12:10 - 00:25:15:10

But even the ones that remain here  
are now,

00:25:15:26 - 00:25:18:25

you know,  
they've been dispersed amongst all the

00:25:18:25 - 00:25:21:25

the new Burlingtonian's  
that have come here in the last

00:25:22:10 - 00:25:24:22

several, several decades.

00:25:24:22 - 00:25:27:22

Right. So, you know,

00:25:29:00 - 00:25:30:11

That's a very poignant question

00:25:30:11 - 00:25:33:11

to ask me right now.

00:25:34:19 - 00:25:37:19

Because we are

00:25:38:23 - 00:25:41:23

bringing in a lot of people  
into this country right now.

00:25:42:00 - 00:25:44:12

Like I said before, Canada

00:25:44:12 - 00:25:48:29

was very welcoming at one point in time,  
but they were also reserved with

00:25:49:01 - 00:25:52:29

how many people they would absorb  
in society so it wouldn't cause disruption.

00:25:54:09 - 00:25:57:14

Sadly, our federal government

00:25:58:20 - 00:26:00:27

has missed that lesson.

00:26:00:27 - 00:26:03:07

And we are.

00:26:03:07 - 00:26:04:24

And it's not just me saying this.

00:26:04:24 - 00:26:07:14

There's a lot of people  
that are coming here.

00:26:07:14 - 00:26:08:24

And we're letting them in.

00:26:08:24 - 00:26:09:29

A lot of them are unvetted.

00:26:12:28 - 00:26:15:27

My sister-in-law was part of  
the immigration process,

00:26:15:27 - 00:26:19:03

and she testified to this, that  
they're all fast tracked to get in here,

00:26:19:18 - 00:26:22:18

and they come, right?.

00:26:23:23 - 00:26:25:26

It's not like it was, right?

00:26:25:26 - 00:26:26:13

They can't be.

00:26:26:13 - 00:26:32:07

They can't be absorbed so readily  
as previous waves of immigrants have.

00:26:32:28 - 00:26:35:27

They're finding it hard to find work.

00:26:36:00 - 00:26:39:00

They're finding it hard to find  
housing, doctors,

00:26:40:11 - 00:26:41:11

everything else. Right.

00:26:41:11 - 00:26:44:14

Even community. So.

00:26:46:23 - 00:26:49:23

Probably not going like this, but,

00:26:50:05 - 00:26:50:26

I'm not sure.

00:26:50:26 - 00:26:52:23

I'll turn this around. Okay.

00:26:52:23 - 00:26:55:27

So there's a lot of young people here  
that grew up here,

00:26:57:00 - 00:26:57:19

okay?

00:26:57:19 - 00:27:00:07

They're leaving.

00:27:00:07 - 00:27:02:10

They're going to the States

00:27:02:10 - 00:27:03:22

or elsewhere.

00:27:03:22 - 00:27:07:10

My own daughter has said,

"I can't thrive here anymore, Dad."

00:27:07:28 - 00:27:10:07

She's right.

00:27:10:07 - 00:27:13:20

My house in the orchard

is now over \$1 million.

00:27:14:21 - 00:27:17:07

There's no way, my young daughter,

00:27:17:07 - 00:27:20:24

even if she's married at this point, if time's going to be

able to afford a million dollar home.

00:27:21:15 - 00:27:23:11

And sadly, Burlington.

00:27:23:11 - 00:27:25:22

That's the average price.

00:27:25:22 - 00:27:28:22

There is no more affordable housing,

00:27:29:13 - 00:27:32:05

You know, according to the circumstance,

00:27:32:05 - 00:27:33:28

nobody's against immigration.

00:27:33:28 - 00:27:37:08

But when it's causing chaos,  
you know, and,

00:27:37:08 - 00:27:40:08

despair, especially for people  
that are coming here.

00:27:40:11 - 00:27:41:13

Right.

00:27:41:13 - 00:27:45:23

And that's wrong,  
that needs to be addressed.

00:27:48:22 - 00:27:51:16

Totally. Like people come here--

00:27:51:23 - 00:27:54:19

The great denominator is hope.

00:27:54:19 - 00:27:56:26

So they lost hope where they were.

00:27:56:26 - 00:27:59:14

They came to Canada.

To fulfill that hope.

00:28:01:01 - 00:28:02:16

And for

00:28:02:16 - 00:28:05:15

decades, that hope was real.

00:28:06:03 - 00:28:08:27

It was fulfilled.

00:28:08:27 - 00:28:10:04

I believe that

00:28:10:04 - 00:28:13:04

that hope now is in jeopardy here,

00:28:13:28 - 00:28:16:09

especially on the trajectory that we're on.

00:28:16:09 - 00:28:19:09

If we continue to do what we're doing,

00:28:19:16 - 00:28:22:00

you're not going to see people  
wanting to come here anymore.

00:28:22:00 - 00:28:24:18

Despite what,  
you know, the government says.

00:28:24:18 - 00:28:26:27

Yes, we are this  
and that and the other thing.

00:28:26:27 - 00:28:29:26

I mean, that's propaganda  
from the 50s, right?

00:28:29:26 - 00:28:32:04

They're not telling them  
that there's no houses here.

00:28:32:04 - 00:28:34:18

They're not telling them  
that they're gonna be stuck into a,

00:28:34:18 - 00:28:37:17

you know, a low paying job  
where they can't even

00:28:37:27 - 00:28:38:28

pay their hydro bills.

00:28:38:28 - 00:28:43:15

Or they'll have to choose between  
eating and medication maybe, right?

00:28:44:12 - 00:28:46:17

Sadly, that's what it is.

00:28:46:17 - 00:28:48:26

A lot of them  
end up in the outside of the,

00:28:48:26 - 00:28:51:25

the, you know, the  
the whole network of things.

00:28:52:02 - 00:28:55:02

And they end up in tent cities.

00:28:55:02 - 00:28:58:12

I've never seen this in  
my life in Canada until now.

00:28:59:18 - 00:29:00:23

I went to Hamilton a couple times.

00:29:00:23 - 00:29:02:25

There's whole parks that have been

00:29:02:25 - 00:29:05:25

been inundated  
with people living in tents.

00:29:06:12 - 00:29:09:12

I have never, ever, ever  
seen that in Canada.

00:29:11:03 - 00:29:13:07

That's not a good thing.

00:29:13:07 - 00:29:17:05

Now, if I think if you showed immigrants  
trying to come to Canada

00:29:17:05 - 00:29:20:08

a couple of these tent cities, I think  
they'd probably rip up their application.

00:29:23:02 - 00:29:24:00

Despite

00:29:24:00 - 00:29:27:03

my lamenting about  
and I've been here okay.

00:29:27:03 - 00:29:30:03

So I've seen the evolution

00:29:30:17 - 00:29:33:17

and the de-evolution in terms of immigration

00:29:34:24 - 00:29:37:24

and life here in Canada.

00:29:38:10 - 00:29:41:07

We used to have  
a thriving middle class and

00:29:42:15 - 00:29:44:11

it was expanding.

00:29:44:11 - 00:29:49:15

But now, because of political  
ideology, I guess you want to put it that way.

00:29:49:26 - 00:29:52:26

The middle class is shrinking again,  
right?

00:29:52:27 - 00:29:55:27

That is the engine of Canada,

00:29:56:01 - 00:29:58:04

the middle class.

00:29:58:04 - 00:30:01:04

So now we're ending up with people  
that are very rich.

00:30:01:12 - 00:30:06:00

And the ones that are very poor  
and a shrinking

00:30:06:00 - 00:30:08:18

middle class that's footing the bill.

00:30:08:18 - 00:30:11:18

It's a formula for disaster.

00:30:12:17 - 00:30:14:21

Now, having said that,

00:30:14:21 - 00:30:17:16

I'm a true staunch Canadian

00:30:17:16 - 00:30:20:16

and a lot of my friends have already left.

00:30:21:09 - 00:30:24:15

You know, they're living in Costa Rica,

Portugal,

00:30:25:19 - 00:30:26:10

all over the world.

00:30:26:10 - 00:30:28:19

They just had enough.

00:30:28:19 - 00:30:32:09

A couple of friends that left to B.C,  
they couldn't sustain there anymore.

00:30:32:24 - 00:30:34:06

Right. And they came to Ontario,

00:30:34:06 - 00:30:37:06

now they can't even buy a home here!

00:30:38:16 - 00:30:39:24

Here's what I got to say.

00:30:39:24 - 00:30:41:06

I'm a Canadian.

00:30:41:06 - 00:30:44:11

And, just two things  
that you can do when you're,

00:30:46:06 - 00:30:48:10

in a difficult situation.

00:30:48:10 - 00:30:51:22

You can run away and leave that problem  
behind, hoping that there's

00:30:52:00 - 00:30:55:04

greener pastures someplace else,  
which is rarely the circumstance,

00:30:55:28 - 00:30:58:07

or you can stay and fight  
and make it better.

00:30:58:07 - 00:31:02:03

And that is my promise  
to the next generation

00:31:02:03 - 00:31:07:02

that I am going to stay here  
until we turn back things the way it was.

00:31:07:02 - 00:31:09:24

So that when immigrants  
look at Canada again.

00:31:09:24 - 00:31:12:24

They can look at it with hope.