

Moving From Poland to America

Michael Szadkowski
Hist-210 Modern US History
12/9/2008

In 1979 my parents got married. At this time in Poland there was a difficult political and economical time. In this year my older brother Martin was born. The stores started to run out of products to sell to the public. Coupons were given out for meat products, sugar, and gasoline. People waited in line from sunrise to wait for the food to be delivered to the store. Without the coupons people were not allowed to buy meat and other food products. This resulted in the black market, which made the prices of products five times the original price. Usually people had to wait in line on average of five hours and sometimes they went home with nothing.

At the same time the crime rate was at its all time high. People were getting their house, cars and their persons robbed. Even though universal health care was present, the only way to see a doctor was to higher a private doctor. There was a high demand for doctor visits. People waited all night to get a number and see the doctor. Only a certain amount of people were able to be seen a day.

My dad thought of the idea of going to West Germany for one month. He worked there for nine days under the table. He worked enough to make his money back for the trip. The point was to understand how people lived and work in a non-communist controlled country. Within nine days my father made as much money as someone working nine months in Poland in an average paying job. On his way back to Poland he made the decision to take the whole family and immigrate to West Germany. With lots of luck my family was given passports to go on vacation to West Germany for one month. In this time many people did not get the passport for the whole family at the same time. The Polish government did not give out many passports to whole families because they wanted people to keep living in Poland. Once over the border in West Germany they

went straight to a refugee camp, and applied for rights to stay in Germany. Also he applied for the immigration to the United States of America. After 15 months my family obtained green cards to legally move to the U.S.A.

When my family came to the US they were given around 300 dollars for a new start. In one year my father bought his first house in Chicopee. The house was not ready to move into, so my dad started to remodel the whole house. Once the kitchen, bathroom and one room were done, they finally moved in. Four years later I was born. Both of my parents worked different shifts so they could see and take turns taking care of the kids. Next my parents sold the house in Chicopee and built a new house in Belchertown. I was one year old when I moved to my new house. In this time my dad applied for citizenship. Next my dad applied my brother for citizenship.

There are many advantages to moving out of a communist ruled country. As a result of the communists, people made barely enough money to stay alive. Even if people had money they still could not use it because the stores did not keep up with the demands. The black market was the only way to survive. My parents are both extremely happy that they did what they did. Neither of them ever regretted moving to the land of the free.