

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,398

2

00:00:01,398 --> 00:00:06,060

[SIRENS]

3

00:00:06,060 --> 00:00:08,189

(flim slating)

4

00:00:08,189 --> 00:00:14,830

5

00:00:14,830 --> 00:00:21,210

All right, Mr. Bergson and

Mr. Merlin, We are in New York

6

00:00:21,210 --> 00:00:26,270

almost 40 years after the

Holocaust, the extermination

7

00:00:26,270 --> 00:00:30,210

or the destruction of

the Jews or Europe.

8

00:00:30,210 --> 00:00:33,270

And you had the chance

to be in New York

9

00:00:33,270 --> 00:00:36,760

during this whole period.

10

00:00:36,760 --> 00:00:40,230

And I would like,

first of all, that you

11

00:00:40,230 --> 00:00:45,810

try to describe to give an

idea for the people of Europe--

12

00:00:45,810 --> 00:00:50,450

because it's very

difficult to imagine even--

13

00:00:50,450 --> 00:00:55,110

what was the climate in
the United States when

14

00:00:55,110 --> 00:00:59,850

the first news about the
extermination of the Jews

15

00:00:59,850 --> 00:01:04,069

of Europe started to be known?

16

00:01:04,069 --> 00:01:10,460

What were the reactions here
in America among the Jews,

17

00:01:10,460 --> 00:01:12,628

among the general people?

18

00:01:12,628 --> 00:01:16,580

Well, the general people,
there was no such thing to--

19

00:01:16,580 --> 00:01:19,180

in a broad sense-- of
started to be known.

20

00:01:19,180 --> 00:01:23,450

It exploded one day,
at least for me.

21

00:01:23,450 --> 00:01:25,540

And I presume that
the average American,

22

00:01:25,540 --> 00:01:30,080

the average American Jew, wasn't
better informed than I was.

23

00:01:30,080 --> 00:01:33,740

In the form of a small story
in The Washington Post--

24
00:01:33,740 --> 00:01:37,160
I was in Washington at the
time-- on an inside page,

25
00:01:37,160 --> 00:01:41,090
about the 10th page,
with a headline

26
00:01:41,090 --> 00:01:44,780
which nearly knocked
me over, which

27
00:01:44,780 --> 00:01:51,460
simply said "Rabbi Wise says
two million Jews slain."

28
00:01:51,460 --> 00:01:53,920
And I just-- I read it
again and again, you know?

29
00:01:53,920 --> 00:01:55,710
I didn't believe
what I was reading.

30
00:01:55,710 --> 00:01:58,360
Rabbi Wise was the president of
the American Jewish Congress.

31
00:01:58,360 --> 00:02:00,010
Rabbi Wise was the head of the--

32
00:02:00,010 --> 00:02:01,900
he was president of
many things, I know.

33
00:02:01,900 --> 00:02:04,590
He was the poobah,
the king of the Jews.

34
00:02:04,590 --> 00:02:07,420

35

00:02:07,420 --> 00:02:10,509

And it's said that walking
out of the conference

36

00:02:10,509 --> 00:02:15,130

with Assistant Secretary
of State Adolf Berle,

37

00:02:15,130 --> 00:02:19,150

he made this announcement on the
steps of the State Department

38

00:02:19,150 --> 00:02:20,740

to reporters.

39

00:02:20,740 --> 00:02:22,600

And then he said
some blah, blah--

40

00:02:22,600 --> 00:02:26,230

something very general.

41

00:02:26,230 --> 00:02:26,730

Exactly.

42

00:02:26,730 --> 00:02:27,855

Could you say what he said?

43

00:02:27,855 --> 00:02:29,117

I don't remember, because--

44

00:02:29,117 --> 00:02:29,950

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

45

00:02:29,950 --> 00:02:31,450

He just said, it's terrible.

46

00:02:31,450 --> 00:02:34,930

He used some general
adjectives, you know.

47

00:02:34,930 --> 00:02:39,830

And since, in those
days, I, together

48

00:02:39,830 --> 00:02:41,680

with Sam Merlin and
others, were working

49

00:02:41,680 --> 00:02:44,320

on a committee for a
Jewish army of stateless

50

00:02:44,320 --> 00:02:46,150

and Palestinian Jews.

51

00:02:46,150 --> 00:02:48,820

And we have dealt and met
several times-- at least

52

00:02:48,820 --> 00:02:53,050

I have-- with Mr. Berle, the
assistant secretary of state.

53

00:02:53,050 --> 00:02:56,783

I ran to the phone and called
his secretary and said,

54

00:02:56,783 --> 00:02:57,700

did you see the paper?

55

00:02:57,700 --> 00:02:59,290

And she says,
unfortunately, yes.

56

00:02:59,290 --> 00:03:00,420

And I said, is it true?

57

00:03:00,420 --> 00:03:01,360

And she says, yes.

58

00:03:01,360 --> 00:03:02,980

And I said, I must see him.

59

00:03:02,980 --> 00:03:06,290

I must see the secretary.

60

00:03:06,290 --> 00:03:08,080

And she said, he's
at the White House.

61

00:03:08,080 --> 00:03:10,930

So I said, I'll
come over and wait.

62

00:03:10,930 --> 00:03:14,650

So I went over and
I sat there waiting.

63

00:03:14,650 --> 00:03:15,850

And then finally, he saw me.

64

00:03:15,850 --> 00:03:19,180

He had a few minutes in
between appointments.

65

00:03:19,180 --> 00:03:20,320

And he confirmed.

66

00:03:20,320 --> 00:03:21,940

I asked him the
same question again.

67

00:03:21,940 --> 00:03:24,610

In fact, he said that
the State Department

68

00:03:24,610 --> 00:03:26,710

has been urging Rabbi
Wise for a few weeks

69

00:03:26,710 --> 00:03:31,220

to make this announcement,
that he has delayed it.

70

00:03:31,220 --> 00:03:36,790

And I said, what are you
going to do about it?

71
00:03:36,790 --> 00:03:38,493
And he says, what
can we do about it?

72
00:03:38,493 --> 00:03:40,660
And I said, surely you don't
say that the government

73
00:03:40,660 --> 00:03:42,640
of the United States
is going to do nothing.

74
00:03:42,640 --> 00:03:46,720
I say, I am one individual
here, a foreigner.

75
00:03:46,720 --> 00:03:48,492
And I know that I'm
going to do something.

76
00:03:48,492 --> 00:03:50,200
I mean, what good
it'll do, I don't know.

77
00:03:50,200 --> 00:03:52,840
But I know I'm going to do it.

78
00:03:52,840 --> 00:03:56,473
And I didn't want to abuse
this-- speaking of action,

79
00:03:56,473 --> 00:03:58,390
I didn't want to start
out with the wrong foot

80
00:03:58,390 --> 00:04:01,330
by alienating the assistant
secretary of state.

81
00:04:01,330 --> 00:04:04,040

And I thanked him
for receiving me.

82
00:04:04,040 --> 00:04:06,310
And I went out and I called
Merlin, as it happens,

83
00:04:06,310 --> 00:04:09,620
who was my right hand man in
the committee in New York,

84
00:04:09,620 --> 00:04:13,690
and asked him that evening to
call all our active people,

85
00:04:13,690 --> 00:04:19,570
our little group of Palestinians
and all the Americans,

86
00:04:19,570 --> 00:04:22,540
Jews and non-Jews, who
were on the committee.

87
00:04:22,540 --> 00:04:24,470
And I made a speech
that evening,

88
00:04:24,470 --> 00:04:28,000
which, in essence,
said, from now on,

89
00:04:28,000 --> 00:04:31,510
we are going to get up in the
morning and go through the day

90
00:04:31,510 --> 00:04:34,285
and go to bed at night
trying to do something

91
00:04:34,285 --> 00:04:35,410
to save the Jews of Europe.

92
00:04:35,410 --> 00:04:38,370

93

00:04:38,370 --> 00:04:43,530

And fortunately,
mine, which I thought

94

00:04:43,530 --> 00:04:45,870

would be a universal
reaction-- ours, I mean,

95

00:04:45,870 --> 00:04:48,180

our friends had
the same reaction.

96

00:04:48,180 --> 00:04:49,590

We did not succeed.

97

00:04:49,590 --> 00:04:54,330

Or we discovered, to our
horror, that life went on

98

00:04:54,330 --> 00:04:55,410

without much of a change.

99

00:04:55,410 --> 00:04:58,480

100

00:04:58,480 --> 00:05:00,070

This was in 1942?

101

00:05:00,070 --> 00:05:02,185

This was November 1942--

102

00:05:02,185 --> 00:05:03,710

the 18th, I believe.

103

00:05:03,710 --> 00:05:06,670

I'm not sure about the date.

104

00:05:06,670 --> 00:05:10,000

And what do you mean when you
say that life went on without--

105

00:05:10,000 --> 00:05:12,410

Well, because we
started-- the first people

106

00:05:12,410 --> 00:05:14,690

we went is to the
Jewish establishment

107

00:05:14,690 --> 00:05:16,570

and the various
organizations who already we

108

00:05:16,570 --> 00:05:18,483

have met with them,
because they tried

109

00:05:18,483 --> 00:05:20,650

to get us not to do the
Committee for a Jewish Army,

110

00:05:20,650 --> 00:05:21,150

either.

111

00:05:21,150 --> 00:05:23,143

I mean, to do, they
weren't so much against it.

112

00:05:23,143 --> 00:05:25,060

They were against the
fact we gave a full page

113

00:05:25,060 --> 00:05:26,830

ad in the paper once.

114

00:05:26,830 --> 00:05:29,350

A couple we gave till then.

115

00:05:29,350 --> 00:05:32,480

And we met with Rabbi Wise--

116

00:05:32,480 --> 00:05:32,980

You did?

117
00:05:32,980 --> 00:05:33,760
You did?

118
00:05:33,760 --> 00:05:34,330
Before that.

119
00:05:34,330 --> 00:05:36,170
No, we met before.

120
00:05:36,170 --> 00:05:37,630
So it was easy to go now.

121
00:05:37,630 --> 00:05:38,530
Yes.

122
00:05:38,530 --> 00:05:41,300
And we said, we have to
do things, and so forth.

123
00:05:41,300 --> 00:05:42,760
We couldn't connect.

124
00:05:42,760 --> 00:05:45,670
We wasted a few
weeks running around,

125
00:05:45,670 --> 00:05:50,020
trying to get the Jewish
organizations to do something.

126
00:05:50,020 --> 00:05:52,130
And then we decided to
start working on our own.

127
00:05:52,130 --> 00:05:54,210
And we started running ads--

128
00:05:54,210 --> 00:05:56,925
Save the Jews of Europe, signed
Committee for a Jewish Army,

129
00:05:56,925 --> 00:05:59,050
simply because that was
the only instrument we had.

130
00:05:59,050 --> 00:05:59,842
We knew it wasn't--

131
00:05:59,842 --> 00:06:05,770
Yes, but how do you explain
this passivity of the organized

132
00:06:05,770 --> 00:06:07,330
American Jewry?

133
00:06:07,330 --> 00:06:09,900
Because I don't think one
can say it was in a bad way--

134
00:06:09,900 --> 00:06:10,400
Fear.

135
00:06:10,400 --> 00:06:13,050
Petrified fear.

136
00:06:13,050 --> 00:06:13,750
Totally--

137
00:06:13,750 --> 00:06:14,650
Petrified fear?

138
00:06:14,650 --> 00:06:17,530
Totally unjustified, in
my opinion, then and now--

139
00:06:17,530 --> 00:06:19,690
some 35 years later.

140
00:06:19,690 --> 00:06:20,680
Petrified fear.

141

00:06:20,680 --> 00:06:23,336

I mean, if you want a
dramatization of it,

142

00:06:23,336 --> 00:06:25,100

there's a document
lying around here,

143

00:06:25,100 --> 00:06:27,010

which a memorandum of
the State Department

144

00:06:27,010 --> 00:06:28,990

files that came out
with an interview

145

00:06:28,990 --> 00:06:31,750

with Goldman, a 3-4
page memorandum.

146

00:06:31,750 --> 00:06:33,958

And in it-- which, by the
way, all the time they ran

147

00:06:33,958 --> 00:06:36,250

to the State Department, not
to talk about saving Jews,

148

00:06:36,250 --> 00:06:37,960

but to talk about us--

149

00:06:37,960 --> 00:06:41,248

to get me deported, to get
me drafted, not to cooperate

150

00:06:41,248 --> 00:06:42,040

with the committee.

151

00:06:42,040 --> 00:06:44,260

Yes, but this was--

152

00:06:44,260 --> 00:06:47,890

But Rabbi Wise is

quoted there by Goldman

153

00:06:47,890 --> 00:06:52,420
as having said later on in
'44 to the War Refugee Board,

154

00:06:52,420 --> 00:06:54,880
to John Pehle, who was
director of the War Refugee

155

00:06:54,880 --> 00:06:57,280
Board, which, as you know,
came about as a result

156

00:06:57,280 --> 00:06:58,780
of our activities.

157

00:06:58,780 --> 00:07:02,290
And when he couldn't
convince Pehle

158

00:07:02,290 --> 00:07:05,560
that they should stop
cooperating with the emergency

159

00:07:05,560 --> 00:07:09,215
committee, and Pehle says,
after all, how can I?

160

00:07:09,215 --> 00:07:11,590
If it weren't for them, maybe
I wouldn't be sitting here.

161

00:07:11,590 --> 00:07:13,360
There would be no
War Refugee Board.

162

00:07:13,360 --> 00:07:16,870
Wise says, Bergson is
worse than Hitler, he says,

163

00:07:16,870 --> 00:07:18,700
because Hitler

brought anti-Semitism

164
00:07:18,700 --> 00:07:21,490
to Europe and Bergson is
bringing it to America.

165
00:07:21,490 --> 00:07:22,360
You?

166
00:07:22,360 --> 00:07:24,040
Yeah.

167
00:07:24,040 --> 00:07:26,260
Obviously, if I was
worse than Hitler,

168
00:07:26,260 --> 00:07:30,460
because I was screaming,
"save the Jews."

169
00:07:30,460 --> 00:07:32,740
You can imagine how
petrified they were.

170
00:07:32,740 --> 00:07:34,910
What else did I do?

171
00:07:34,910 --> 00:07:37,840
I mean, what concern was
the emergency committee--

172
00:07:37,840 --> 00:07:39,940
the name of our organization
was the "Emergency

173
00:07:39,940 --> 00:07:44,240
Committee to Save the
Jewish People of Europe."

174
00:07:44,240 --> 00:07:46,640
Because there is a
bugaboo, not only in

175

00:07:46,640 --> 00:07:50,030

the tremendous literature that
has developed after the fact.

176

00:07:50,030 --> 00:07:54,530

There's still people are
repeating the nonsense

177

00:07:54,530 --> 00:07:56,480

that the United
States government was

178

00:07:56,480 --> 00:07:59,390

afraid to do something to
save the Jews in order that it

179

00:07:59,390 --> 00:08:02,420

shouldn't be said that
this is a Jewish war.

180

00:08:02,420 --> 00:08:04,130

And this argument came up then.

181

00:08:04,130 --> 00:08:07,340

And we said, who will
say it's a Jewish war?

182

00:08:07,340 --> 00:08:07,998

The Germans?

183

00:08:07,998 --> 00:08:09,290

Who cares what the Germans say?

184

00:08:09,290 --> 00:08:10,910

We are at war with the Germans.

185

00:08:10,910 --> 00:08:12,980

Who will say the Russians
who have been invaded?

186

00:08:12,980 --> 00:08:14,660

They don't know why

they are fighting.

187
00:08:14,660 --> 00:08:16,610
The British don't know
why they are fighting.

188
00:08:16,610 --> 00:08:19,280
The French don't know
they were occupied.

189
00:08:19,280 --> 00:08:20,630
Who will say it's a Jewish war?

190
00:08:20,630 --> 00:08:23,000
The Jews will say
it's a Jewish war.

191
00:08:23,000 --> 00:08:25,700
And this fear was an
inside Jewish fear

192
00:08:25,700 --> 00:08:26,720
that petrified them.

193
00:08:26,720 --> 00:08:30,640

194
00:08:30,640 --> 00:08:32,770
You are sure of what you say.

195
00:08:32,770 --> 00:08:33,700
Unfortunately.

196
00:08:33,700 --> 00:08:39,010

197
00:08:39,010 --> 00:08:45,160
You cannot explain-- you
cannot explain the passivity

198
00:08:45,160 --> 00:08:51,610
by the way we went in the middle

of this most gruesome subject,

199

00:08:51,610 --> 00:08:56,470

I believe, in human history,
which affects the lives of all

200

00:08:56,470 --> 00:08:57,670

of us--

201

00:08:57,670 --> 00:09:00,550

Jews, non-Jews alike, whether
we live in the United States

202

00:09:00,550 --> 00:09:04,060

or in Israel, as I do, or
in China, for that matter.

203

00:09:04,060 --> 00:09:12,490

I believe that the lack of
a reaction during the war

204

00:09:12,490 --> 00:09:15,610

is still functioning
because there is still

205

00:09:15,610 --> 00:09:17,353

time to react after the fact.

206

00:09:17,353 --> 00:09:19,270

There was no reaction
while the murder went on

207

00:09:19,270 --> 00:09:21,140

and there's no
reaction afterwards.

208

00:09:21,140 --> 00:09:23,860

And I think that it's
affected and will

209

00:09:23,860 --> 00:09:29,800

affect the future of humanity
all over until the process

210
00:09:29,800 --> 00:09:33,670
of fighting against this
dehumanization which

211
00:09:33,670 --> 00:09:36,730
went over and is
going over unnoticed.

212
00:09:36,730 --> 00:09:41,825
In this respect, maybe something
has moved in Germany last week,

213
00:09:41,825 --> 00:09:43,700
when there was a beginning
for the first time

214
00:09:43,700 --> 00:09:47,905
by the German government to have
a little bit of a recognition

215
00:09:47,905 --> 00:09:51,120
of some action in connection
with this 40th anniversary

216
00:09:51,120 --> 00:09:57,100
of what they call
the Kristallnacht.

217
00:09:57,100 --> 00:10:00,040
In order to get--

218
00:10:00,040 --> 00:10:03,760
I mean, we cannot
resurrect the dead.

219
00:10:03,760 --> 00:10:06,820
The Jews of Europe are dead.

220
00:10:06,820 --> 00:10:11,680
And 85% or 90% of those
that Hitler wanted to kill

221
00:10:11,680 --> 00:10:12,180
were killed.

222
00:10:12,180 --> 00:10:14,790

223
00:10:14,790 --> 00:10:18,030
And what we can do
and what we must do--

224
00:10:18,030 --> 00:10:21,690
and I think the Jews
have a bigger duty,

225
00:10:21,690 --> 00:10:28,050
not a bigger self-interest,
just a bigger duty to humanity,

226
00:10:28,050 --> 00:10:32,020
is to re-examine ourselves.

227
00:10:32,020 --> 00:10:32,520
Sorry.

228
00:10:32,520 --> 00:10:39,240

229
00:10:39,240 --> 00:10:40,850
(film slating)

230
00:10:40,850 --> 00:10:44,660

231
00:10:44,660 --> 00:10:45,960
I'm speaking?

232
00:10:45,960 --> 00:10:46,460
Yes.

233
00:10:46,460 --> 00:10:47,490
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

234
00:10:47,490 --> 00:10:56,450
I wanted to finish the idea
that we have to re-examine

235
00:10:56,450 --> 00:10:57,290
our attitude--

236
00:10:57,290 --> 00:10:59,510
I say we Jews.

237
00:10:59,510 --> 00:11:05,450
I mean, I re-examined myself
and I worked 15, 20 hours a day

238
00:11:05,450 --> 00:11:06,320
during that period.

239
00:11:06,320 --> 00:11:07,960
And yet, I re-examined
to make sure,

240
00:11:07,960 --> 00:11:11,570
can I really accuse others?

241
00:11:11,570 --> 00:11:14,390
The Jews who hardly did
anything, especially

242
00:11:14,390 --> 00:11:17,720
the Jewish leadership,
which didn't change

243
00:11:17,720 --> 00:11:20,660
its agenda neither in private
life, nor in public life,

244
00:11:20,660 --> 00:11:22,760
neither in ideals,
neither in Zionism,

245
00:11:22,760 --> 00:11:25,220

neither in political
purpose, has

246
00:11:25,220 --> 00:11:27,260
to come out with a
mea culpa in order

247
00:11:27,260 --> 00:11:31,160
to be able to come to
the rest of the world

248
00:11:31,160 --> 00:11:35,000
and accuse them of the
inaction and of the silence.

249
00:11:35,000 --> 00:11:36,710
As long as we don't
do this, I think

250
00:11:36,710 --> 00:11:40,250
that our yelling against
the fact that the Jews were

251
00:11:40,250 --> 00:11:42,150
murdered is of no purpose.

252
00:11:42,150 --> 00:11:44,330
As a matter of fact,
maybe it hurts.

253
00:11:44,330 --> 00:11:44,830
Yes.

254
00:11:44,830 --> 00:11:45,980
I agree with you.

255
00:11:45,980 --> 00:11:50,660
But the real point is the
following, according to me.

256
00:11:50,660 --> 00:11:54,740
Why-- how can you explain this--

257

00:11:54,740 --> 00:11:59,810

how do you explain this lack
of reaction, this inaction?

258

00:11:59,810 --> 00:12:04,580

You say that it was
a petrified fear.

259

00:12:04,580 --> 00:12:07,406

Do you think that it is enough?

260

00:12:07,406 --> 00:12:08,600

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

261

00:12:08,600 --> 00:12:09,411

Go ahead, please.

262

00:12:09,411 --> 00:12:12,500

263

00:12:12,500 --> 00:12:21,170

Of course fear was an
important ingredient

264

00:12:21,170 --> 00:12:25,280

that made up the
attitude of the Jews

265

00:12:25,280 --> 00:12:27,590

in this country
during the Holocaust.

266

00:12:27,590 --> 00:12:31,380

267

00:12:31,380 --> 00:12:38,505

But fear in itself is not
always a negative reaction.

268

00:12:38,505 --> 00:12:41,160

269

00:12:41,160 --> 00:12:46,924

Often there are justifications
to be frightened.

270

00:12:46,924 --> 00:12:50,880

271

00:12:50,880 --> 00:12:58,350

The reaction of
the Jews in America

272

00:12:58,350 --> 00:13:04,750

was a result not only of fear.

273

00:13:04,750 --> 00:13:13,030

Fear itself was a result of
prior psychological and mental

274

00:13:13,030 --> 00:13:15,010

attitudes.

275

00:13:15,010 --> 00:13:20,050

It was a result of certain--

276

00:13:20,050 --> 00:13:26,245

of a certain way of thinking,
of certain traditional concepts.

277

00:13:26,245 --> 00:13:29,140

278

00:13:29,140 --> 00:13:43,750

The Jews in America, they
believed that, first of all,

279

00:13:43,750 --> 00:13:49,170

they have to be concerned
with their own welfare,

280

00:13:49,170 --> 00:13:50,280

with their own status.

281

00:13:50,280 --> 00:13:56,430

282

00:13:56,430 --> 00:14:01,920

And they were extremely
satisfied and happy

283

00:14:01,920 --> 00:14:03,960

in this country.

284

00:14:03,960 --> 00:14:05,610

They were not frightened people.

285

00:14:05,610 --> 00:14:10,740

They were happy people
because the majority of them

286

00:14:10,740 --> 00:14:13,480

came from Eastern Europe.

287

00:14:13,480 --> 00:14:19,740

And they felt here
for the first time

288

00:14:19,740 --> 00:14:26,460

as people who are not being
persecuted because of race,

289

00:14:26,460 --> 00:14:28,960

that they are being
treated with dignity,

290

00:14:28,960 --> 00:14:32,520

they are being
treated with equality.

291

00:14:32,520 --> 00:14:37,700

292

00:14:37,700 --> 00:14:45,140

When we came to this country as
representatives of the Irgun,

293

00:14:45,140 --> 00:14:54,390
we were motivated and
driven by a sense of urgency

294

00:14:54,390 --> 00:14:58,560
and a sense of emergency
that we brought

295

00:14:58,560 --> 00:15:03,930
from Palestine and from
Europe, which was completely

296

00:15:03,930 --> 00:15:09,300
lacking in this community.

297

00:15:09,300 --> 00:15:16,290
On the contrary, they continued
the traditional Jewish attitude

298

00:15:16,290 --> 00:15:20,460
of eternity, that
time is for the Jews,

299

00:15:20,460 --> 00:15:24,300
that God saved and
protected the Jews for 4,000

300

00:15:24,300 --> 00:15:26,820
years, that there
were persecutions

301

00:15:26,820 --> 00:15:28,410
in every generation.

302

00:15:28,410 --> 00:15:31,630
We always prevailed.

303

00:15:31,630 --> 00:15:35,320
That's a feeling that
every day we which was--

304

00:15:35,320 --> 00:15:39,652
that every day which passed
doomed the Jews of Europe

305
00:15:39,652 --> 00:15:40,410
to their deaths.

306
00:15:40,410 --> 00:15:48,400
They were educated-- in as
much as they were educated--

307
00:15:48,400 --> 00:15:55,900
that Jews will prevail because
Jews is an eternal people.

308
00:15:55,900 --> 00:16:01,700
One has to take
into consideration

309
00:16:01,700 --> 00:16:07,520
that now all kinds of books
appeared, probably a thousand

310
00:16:07,520 --> 00:16:13,070
books or 20 books, a score
of books, that later stress

311
00:16:13,070 --> 00:16:14,335
that the Jews were afraid.

312
00:16:14,335 --> 00:16:17,090

313
00:16:17,090 --> 00:16:20,103
And if you say that
the Jews were afraid--

314
00:16:20,103 --> 00:16:20,603
Which Jews?

315
00:16:20,603 --> 00:16:21,103
You mean--

316

00:16:21,103 --> 00:16:21,990

The American Jews.

317

00:16:21,990 --> 00:16:23,210

American.

318

00:16:23,210 --> 00:16:29,450

If you say that they are afraid,
then to a certain extent,

319

00:16:29,450 --> 00:16:33,230

you exonerate their behavior.

320

00:16:33,230 --> 00:16:35,870

321

00:16:35,870 --> 00:16:42,410

What is important-- again,
there is another problem here

322

00:16:42,410 --> 00:16:46,820

that the books writing
about this period

323

00:16:46,820 --> 00:16:51,320

say that the Jews of
America were divided.

324

00:16:51,320 --> 00:16:54,890

And because of the
internal bickerings,

325

00:16:54,890 --> 00:16:58,430

they couldn't be
effective in action

326

00:16:58,430 --> 00:17:00,080

in order to save the Jews.

327

00:17:00,080 --> 00:17:04,670

But the truth of the matter is
that the Jews were not divided.

328
00:17:04,670 --> 00:17:09,440
They were united in a
certain indifference.

329
00:17:09,440 --> 00:17:12,760

330
00:17:12,760 --> 00:17:15,040
There were not
many organizations

331
00:17:15,040 --> 00:17:16,810
in the United States.

332
00:17:16,810 --> 00:17:21,550
The dominant organization
was a Zionist organization.

333
00:17:21,550 --> 00:17:24,069
And all the other
organizations, like

334
00:17:24,069 --> 00:17:27,040
the American Jewish
Congress, the American--

335
00:17:27,040 --> 00:17:31,390
the World Jewish
Congress and later

336
00:17:31,390 --> 00:17:34,060
the American Jewish Conference--

337
00:17:34,060 --> 00:17:38,270
they were all front
organizations of the Zionists.

338
00:17:38,270 --> 00:17:40,270
So one cannot say there
were many organizations.

339

00:17:40,270 --> 00:17:44,470
Of course, among the leaders
there were certain squabbles.

340
00:17:44,470 --> 00:17:47,110
There were personal rivalries.

341
00:17:47,110 --> 00:17:51,980
But ideology-- from the point of
view of ideology, of politics,

342
00:17:51,980 --> 00:17:52,900
they were united.

343
00:17:52,900 --> 00:17:57,340
Then there was a small group,
the American Jewish Committee

344
00:17:57,340 --> 00:18:01,450
of plutocrats, of rich Jews.

345
00:18:01,450 --> 00:18:04,090
They had some contacts and
influence with the government.

346
00:18:04,090 --> 00:18:06,610
But they were not a
mass organization.

347
00:18:06,610 --> 00:18:12,220
And then there were
the religious people.

348
00:18:12,220 --> 00:18:14,080
They were an exception.

349
00:18:14,080 --> 00:18:19,130
The religious orthodox
people, they really cared.

350
00:18:19,130 --> 00:18:21,490
They were emotionally involved.

351

00:18:21,490 --> 00:18:24,910

And they cooperated with
us to the full extent.

352

00:18:24,910 --> 00:18:29,020

Who were the people for whom
it was the first priority,

353

00:18:29,020 --> 00:18:33,236

the priority number one, to save
the Jews of Europe, at least

354

00:18:33,236 --> 00:18:35,737

to try to save the
Jews of Europe--

355

00:18:35,737 --> 00:18:36,570

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

356

00:18:36,570 --> 00:18:37,270

Only we.

357

00:18:37,270 --> 00:18:38,880

Only we.

358

00:18:38,880 --> 00:18:40,810

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

359

00:18:40,810 --> 00:18:42,390

Only we.

360

00:18:42,390 --> 00:18:43,720

And you have to--

361

00:18:43,720 --> 00:18:45,760

We did it from a
political point of view.

362

00:18:45,760 --> 00:18:48,550

The religious did it
only from a narrow point

363

00:18:48,550 --> 00:18:50,410
of view of saving
lives, not that I'm

364

00:18:50,410 --> 00:18:52,630
trying to knock them down.

365

00:18:52,630 --> 00:18:56,560
I think that their reaction
was much healthier,

366

00:18:56,560 --> 00:18:57,790
as Merlin pointed out.

367

00:18:57,790 --> 00:19:00,370
But in my opinion,
if you want to dig

368

00:19:00,370 --> 00:19:03,760
into it, what you're coming to
is to a question of identity,

369

00:19:03,760 --> 00:19:04,930
because the Jews--

370

00:19:04,930 --> 00:19:09,070
the Jewish unity that is so
spoken about couldn't cope.

371

00:19:09,070 --> 00:19:11,350
It could cope with
philosophy, with theology,

372

00:19:11,350 --> 00:19:12,790
and with abstractions.

373

00:19:12,790 --> 00:19:15,310
It couldn't cope with
a cataclysmic event

374

00:19:15,310 --> 00:19:17,560
as the extermination

of the Jews of Europe

375

00:19:17,560 --> 00:19:21,700

because in reality, the
Germans were killing Jews

376

00:19:21,700 --> 00:19:23,440

in Europe and not in America.

377

00:19:23,440 --> 00:19:26,560

Not a single American Jew
in America was killed.

378

00:19:26,560 --> 00:19:31,240

And therefore, the talk of
[NON-ENGLISH],, we Jews united,

379

00:19:31,240 --> 00:19:33,020

one people, didn't
make any sense.

380

00:19:33,020 --> 00:19:35,740

And it never made sense
before in a political sense.

381

00:19:35,740 --> 00:19:38,080

I mean, our great
innovation was that we

382

00:19:38,080 --> 00:19:41,200

realized this was a war.

383

00:19:41,200 --> 00:19:43,720

A war of extinction was
a matter of principle,

384

00:19:43,720 --> 00:19:47,650

of a political action,
that the Germans decided

385

00:19:47,650 --> 00:19:52,390

that their war aim include
the extermination of the Jews.

386
00:19:52,390 --> 00:19:54,320
And therefore, there
was only one answer.

387
00:19:54,320 --> 00:19:56,260
And this is to convince
the United States

388
00:19:56,260 --> 00:19:58,310
government and the other
Allied governments--

389
00:19:58,310 --> 00:20:00,880
since we were here, we
concentrated on the Americans--

390
00:20:00,880 --> 00:20:04,240
to convince them that it
has to become their war aim

391
00:20:04,240 --> 00:20:05,680
to save the Jews.

392
00:20:05,680 --> 00:20:07,983
And this-- the
Jewish organizations,

393
00:20:07,983 --> 00:20:09,400
the Jewish leaders--
couldn't even

394
00:20:09,400 --> 00:20:11,410
understand till this very day.

395
00:20:11,410 --> 00:20:14,090
They don't understand what
we were talking about.

396
00:20:14,090 --> 00:20:17,140
And so much so-- and we couldn't
break the American government.

397

00:20:17,140 --> 00:20:20,410
When we introduced our friends
in Congress a resolution

398

00:20:20,410 --> 00:20:23,500
that there should
be an agency made

399

00:20:23,500 --> 00:20:25,840
by the president, a
presidential agency

400

00:20:25,840 --> 00:20:29,260
to save the remnants of the
Jewish people of Europe,

401

00:20:29,260 --> 00:20:31,630
eventually we won and we lost.

402

00:20:31,630 --> 00:20:35,050
We won because the president
formed such a commission called

403

00:20:35,050 --> 00:20:36,560
War Refugee Board.

404

00:20:36,560 --> 00:20:37,060
Why?

405

00:20:37,060 --> 00:20:37,893
Because of the Jews.

406

00:20:37,893 --> 00:20:40,750
They were afraid to
say Jew Refugee Board,

407

00:20:40,750 --> 00:20:42,280
not to say it's a Jewish war.

408

00:20:42,280 --> 00:20:44,080
What did they do the next day?

409

00:20:44,080 --> 00:20:46,870

When we, in cooperation
with the staff,

410

00:20:46,870 --> 00:20:50,710

had already 65 million
dollars of presidential funds

411

00:20:50,710 --> 00:20:53,290

earmarked, all the
Jewish organizations

412

00:20:53,290 --> 00:20:56,530

came and brought checks
to the War Refugee Board

413

00:20:56,530 --> 00:20:59,370

and gave them contributions
to the American government,

414

00:20:59,370 --> 00:21:00,162

you see?

415

00:21:00,162 --> 00:21:02,620

So it shouldn't be said that
the American government spends

416

00:21:02,620 --> 00:21:04,580

money on Jews.

417

00:21:04,580 --> 00:21:09,220

I mean, the word "Jew"
was not even uttered.

418

00:21:09,220 --> 00:21:12,030

As much as they could
help it, they did--

419

00:21:12,030 --> 00:21:13,660

as they could help
it, they avoided it,

420

00:21:13,660 --> 00:21:17,380
because we have to go back,
really, to dig into this thing,

421
00:21:17,380 --> 00:21:18,610
I mean, because Hitler--

422
00:21:18,610 --> 00:21:21,820
everybody thinks if you
take a young guy today,

423
00:21:21,820 --> 00:21:24,550
he thinks Hitler came
to power and started

424
00:21:24,550 --> 00:21:25,540
killing all the Jews.

425
00:21:25,540 --> 00:21:28,270
Well, Hitler came
to power in 1933.

426
00:21:28,270 --> 00:21:30,970
And the killing of the
Jews started in 1942.

427
00:21:30,970 --> 00:21:32,690
'41.

428
00:21:32,690 --> 00:21:33,820
'41.

429
00:21:33,820 --> 00:21:35,800
This is not '33.

430
00:21:35,800 --> 00:21:37,510
I mean, there was a period.

431
00:21:37,510 --> 00:21:39,610
And in order to
understand, Claude,

432

00:21:39,610 --> 00:21:44,177
what happened when the
massacre was known after Rabbi

433
00:21:44,177 --> 00:21:46,600
Wise' press conference--

434
00:21:46,600 --> 00:21:52,090
(film slating)

435
00:21:52,090 --> 00:21:52,590
Yes.

436
00:21:52,590 --> 00:21:57,210
But I think that
your accusations

437
00:21:57,210 --> 00:22:03,330
against the balkanized
American Jewry and the Zionist

438
00:22:03,330 --> 00:22:07,440
establishment are very sharp.

439
00:22:07,440 --> 00:22:10,620
In spite of everything you have
said-- in spite of the fear,

440
00:22:10,620 --> 00:22:14,972
in spite of the fact that
they felt very well in America

441
00:22:14,972 --> 00:22:16,680
and that they didn't
want to have nothing

442
00:22:16,680 --> 00:22:23,160
to do in what way with
their own past in Poland,

443
00:22:23,160 --> 00:22:29,297
it's very difficult to imagine
what the average Jew is

444
00:22:29,297 --> 00:22:29,880
going through.

445
00:22:29,880 --> 00:22:32,280
I mean, the Jew on the street.

446
00:22:32,280 --> 00:22:33,420
What was his feelings?

447
00:22:33,420 --> 00:22:36,003
This I would like to understand,
because there are two things.

448
00:22:36,003 --> 00:22:39,880
There is the common Jew
and there were the leaders.

449
00:22:39,880 --> 00:22:42,420
And I would like that we
elaborate more on this.

450
00:22:42,420 --> 00:22:47,130
What were thinking the Jews of
Orchard Street, for instance?

451
00:22:47,130 --> 00:22:49,890
What did they know,
and afterwards that you

452
00:22:49,890 --> 00:22:53,820
passed with the leadership?

453
00:22:53,820 --> 00:22:59,220
The Jews then especially
were very disciplined people.

454
00:22:59,220 --> 00:23:00,720
They always were
disciplined people.

455
00:23:00,720 --> 00:23:04,600

They followed their leaders,
certainly on such an issue.

456
00:23:04,600 --> 00:23:07,710
And I think that there
was a marked distinction.

457
00:23:07,710 --> 00:23:11,460

458
00:23:11,460 --> 00:23:18,750
The masses, the average
Jew, reacted properly

459
00:23:18,750 --> 00:23:20,678
and would have
reacted magnificently

460
00:23:20,678 --> 00:23:21,720
if he was given a chance.

461
00:23:21,720 --> 00:23:23,880
I mean, when we
had the beginning,

462
00:23:23,880 --> 00:23:27,930
we organized the pageant at
Madison Square Garden called

463
00:23:27,930 --> 00:23:30,660
"They Should Never Die,"
which Ben Hecht wrote,

464
00:23:30,660 --> 00:23:34,110
a big pageant at the theatrical
sort of memorial thing.

465
00:23:34,110 --> 00:23:35,250
And we were petrified.

466
00:23:35,250 --> 00:23:38,040
The people made me sign
so if we go broke--

467
00:23:38,040 --> 00:23:40,473
you know, bankrupt, not to
be able to pay the expenses--

468
00:23:40,473 --> 00:23:41,640
I was the official producer.

469
00:23:41,640 --> 00:23:43,800
Officially on the marquee
there were big names.

470
00:23:43,800 --> 00:23:44,973
But I signed the things.

471
00:23:44,973 --> 00:23:45,640
And I said, why?

472
00:23:45,640 --> 00:23:47,265
He says, because he
doesn't want to pay

473
00:23:47,265 --> 00:23:49,140
the money if it goes broke.

474
00:23:49,140 --> 00:23:50,640
We didn't know we'll
fill the whole.

475
00:23:50,640 --> 00:23:52,020
They were afraid.

476
00:23:52,020 --> 00:23:52,617
We sold out.

477
00:23:52,617 --> 00:23:54,450
We had to pay tickets,
even though everybody

478
00:23:54,450 --> 00:23:55,230
was a volunteer.

479

00:23:55,230 --> 00:23:58,380

But still, it costs a lot
of money, a thing like this.

480

00:23:58,380 --> 00:24:03,960

Two weeks before the evening,
every single of 22,000 tickets

481

00:24:03,960 --> 00:24:05,220

were sold.

482

00:24:05,220 --> 00:24:07,800

And we decided to chance it.

483

00:24:07,800 --> 00:24:11,020

You know, we felt that there
is a surge of interest.

484

00:24:11,020 --> 00:24:14,220

And we issued an
announcement that the thing

485

00:24:14,220 --> 00:24:15,930

will be an hour earlier.

486

00:24:15,930 --> 00:24:18,210

And we made another one
at 10:30 in the evening.

487

00:24:18,210 --> 00:24:20,340

And the police wouldn't
give us a permit.

488

00:24:20,340 --> 00:24:22,740

They say there's never
been so many people there

489

00:24:22,740 --> 00:24:24,040

on a non-sporting event.

490

00:24:24,040 --> 00:24:26,220

Of course, we overcame

them and they gave us.

491

00:24:26,220 --> 00:24:29,880
We filled Madison Square
Garden twice in the same night.

492

00:24:29,880 --> 00:24:33,840
And this was early '43--

493

00:24:33,840 --> 00:24:36,510
January, February '43.

494

00:24:36,510 --> 00:24:37,860
And who were we?

495

00:24:37,860 --> 00:24:39,660
Unknown people.

496

00:24:39,660 --> 00:24:41,252
I mean, we used
big, big, big names.

497

00:24:41,252 --> 00:24:42,960
But it wasn't the
names that pulled them.

498

00:24:42,960 --> 00:24:45,810
I mean, masses of Jews streamed.

499

00:24:45,810 --> 00:24:48,888
I say that if Rabbi Wise
and the other Jewish leaders

500

00:24:48,888 --> 00:24:50,680
would have called on
a March of Washington,

501

00:24:50,680 --> 00:24:53,130
they could have mobilized
half a million Jews.

502

00:24:53,130 --> 00:24:54,930

Yeah, but the question
is why didn't they.

503
00:24:54,930 --> 00:24:56,820
Yes, this is the question.

504
00:24:56,820 --> 00:24:59,820
I never escape-- and
nor will Mr. Lanzmann

505
00:24:59,820 --> 00:25:05,190
escape this question,
because these people were not

506
00:25:05,190 --> 00:25:06,950
vicious people.

507
00:25:06,950 --> 00:25:07,780
No, they were not.

508
00:25:07,780 --> 00:25:10,770
They were not wicked people.

509
00:25:10,770 --> 00:25:16,740
There are deeper reasons,
fundamental reasons.

510
00:25:16,740 --> 00:25:20,660
But one is afraid to touch
them because they are

511
00:25:20,660 --> 00:25:22,350
of a controversial character.

512
00:25:22,350 --> 00:25:24,930
But I believe that they are
of a much less controversial

513
00:25:24,930 --> 00:25:29,580
character than just to indicate
that this particular Jew,

514

00:25:29,580 --> 00:25:32,460
another particular
Jew, is guilty

515
00:25:32,460 --> 00:25:39,027
or was an accomplice of the
murder of millions of Jews.

516
00:25:39,027 --> 00:25:39,860
[INTERPOSING VOICES]

517
00:25:39,860 --> 00:25:41,680
There are several things--

518
00:25:41,680 --> 00:25:46,590
First of all, I would like
to say there is a kind of--

519
00:25:46,590 --> 00:25:50,250
that's a metaphysical question.

520
00:25:50,250 --> 00:25:56,670
What is the meaning of
Treblinka, of Auschwitz,

521
00:25:56,670 --> 00:26:02,430
from New York, seen from
New York or from Washington?

522
00:26:02,430 --> 00:26:05,820
In spite of the fact
that people knew,

523
00:26:05,820 --> 00:26:08,330
what is the meaning of knowing?

524
00:26:08,330 --> 00:26:11,280
And I would like to ask
you if yourself, even--

525
00:26:11,280 --> 00:26:14,380

526

00:26:14,380 --> 00:26:16,110

what did you have in mind?

527

00:26:16,110 --> 00:26:18,450

What did you imagine?

528

00:26:18,450 --> 00:26:19,980

What did you see?

529

00:26:19,980 --> 00:26:24,610

What did you think when you were
talking about the destruction

530

00:26:24,610 --> 00:26:27,178

of the European Jewry?

531

00:26:27,178 --> 00:26:27,720

I don't know.

532

00:26:27,720 --> 00:26:28,690

We were at at least--

533

00:26:28,690 --> 00:26:30,030

I speak for myself.

534

00:26:30,030 --> 00:26:33,240

I mean, as far as I
remember that period,

535

00:26:33,240 --> 00:26:36,930

I was driven by an instinct.

536

00:26:36,930 --> 00:26:42,200

And the instinct was to save
as many people as possible.

537

00:26:42,200 --> 00:26:44,970

And I knew there was
one way to save people

538

00:26:44,970 --> 00:26:47,640

and this is to make it
hard for the Germans

539
00:26:47,640 --> 00:26:49,290
because if you
would have reduced--

540
00:26:49,290 --> 00:26:52,445
I mean, the big question is,
could the Jews have been saved?

541
00:26:52,445 --> 00:26:53,820
Of course, the
Jews couldn't have

542
00:26:53,820 --> 00:26:55,890
been saved, because by the
time I, for instance, heard

543
00:26:55,890 --> 00:26:57,970
about it, there were already
two million dead supposedly.

544
00:26:57,970 --> 00:26:58,470
Yes.

545
00:26:58,470 --> 00:26:59,160
[INAUDIBLE]

546
00:26:59,160 --> 00:27:02,580
I say Jews could
have been saved.

547
00:27:02,580 --> 00:27:03,720
Jews could have been saved.

548
00:27:03,720 --> 00:27:05,880
A lot of Jews were saved.

549
00:27:05,880 --> 00:27:08,740
I mean, the fact is that not
every single Jew in Europe

550

00:27:08,740 --> 00:27:09,240
was killed.

551

00:27:09,240 --> 00:27:11,440
There were Jews left
even in the camps,

552

00:27:11,440 --> 00:27:13,320
even next to the crematorium.

553

00:27:13,320 --> 00:27:15,810
Hundreds of thousands
of Jews saved.

554

00:27:15,810 --> 00:27:18,267
And there could have
been, by a few steps,

555

00:27:18,267 --> 00:27:20,100
which I hope we'll have
a chance to discuss,

556

00:27:20,100 --> 00:27:23,670
there could have been two
or three million Jews saved.

557

00:27:23,670 --> 00:27:25,800
This is what makes
this so gruesome.

558

00:27:25,800 --> 00:27:28,260
And the subject
coming back before

559

00:27:28,260 --> 00:27:32,430
is that if you go back
prior to the extermination,

560

00:27:32,430 --> 00:27:37,290
between '33 to '41,
the Jews-- and that's

561

00:27:37,290 --> 00:27:38,670
what became clear to me.

562
00:27:38,670 --> 00:27:42,210
I ceased being a
Zionist in 1943 when

563
00:27:42,210 --> 00:27:45,240
I realized what was going on.

564
00:27:45,240 --> 00:27:47,370
And I didn't get into
any arguments or fights.

565
00:27:47,370 --> 00:27:50,910
But I inside-- to me, being a
Zionist is like for the pope

566
00:27:50,910 --> 00:27:52,440
to convert to Judaism--

567
00:27:52,440 --> 00:27:54,150
to stop being a Zionist.

568
00:27:54,150 --> 00:27:56,640
To me, it was a traumatic
experience of my life,

569
00:27:56,640 --> 00:27:58,140
because I was born a Zionist.

570
00:27:58,140 --> 00:27:58,950
Yes.

571
00:27:58,950 --> 00:28:00,750
And I ceased being a Zionist.

572
00:28:00,750 --> 00:28:03,630
And I have very bitter
feelings towards Zionism

573
00:28:03,630 --> 00:28:08,340

because Zionism with its
confusion of identity

574
00:28:08,340 --> 00:28:11,140
as a political
movement did not--

575
00:28:11,140 --> 00:28:17,230
it failed because it didn't
clarify the national identity

576
00:28:17,230 --> 00:28:19,210
of those Jews who
needed Palestine

577
00:28:19,210 --> 00:28:21,400
as against those Jews
who don't need it.

578
00:28:21,400 --> 00:28:22,710
And that was the whole issue.

579
00:28:22,710 --> 00:28:25,840
When they went to the Å%ovian
conference in '38, they were

580
00:28:25,840 --> 00:28:28,420
concerned with the internal
affairs of Germany.

581
00:28:28,420 --> 00:28:30,820
They were concerned that
the German Jew is a German

582
00:28:30,820 --> 00:28:33,100
because an American Jew
is an American first,

583
00:28:33,100 --> 00:28:37,600
always and foremost, as Rabbi
Wise says, and rightly so.

584
00:28:37,600 --> 00:28:46,420

And it is this lack of clear
identity of the victim--

585
00:28:46,420 --> 00:28:49,030
I mean, Hitler was not
killing American Jews.

586
00:28:49,030 --> 00:28:50,620
Hitler was killing
European Jews.

587
00:28:50,620 --> 00:28:53,200
We had a different
characteristic

588
00:28:53,200 --> 00:28:55,960
and a different
political existence.

589
00:28:55,960 --> 00:28:58,367
And this was basically a
political issue which was

590
00:28:58,367 --> 00:29:00,200
handled-- if you ask
me how to summarize it,

591
00:29:00,200 --> 00:29:05,620
I say the tragedy was that a
political war of extinction,

592
00:29:05,620 --> 00:29:09,250
of extermination-- the greatest
and the only one for the time

593
00:29:09,250 --> 00:29:11,050
being of its
magnitude in history--

594
00:29:11,050 --> 00:29:13,180
is of a different
character because it

595

00:29:13,180 --> 00:29:17,305
was a war of total
annihilation for no purpose.

596
00:29:17,305 --> 00:29:19,810

597
00:29:19,810 --> 00:29:23,800
This political
act par excellence

598
00:29:23,800 --> 00:29:26,980
committed by an
entire war machine

599
00:29:26,980 --> 00:29:31,030
was treated as an emotional
metaphysical issue

600
00:29:31,030 --> 00:29:34,210
by the confusion of
so-called Jewish unity

601
00:29:34,210 --> 00:29:35,290
that we are one people.

602
00:29:35,290 --> 00:29:38,110
We are one, as they say today.

603
00:29:38,110 --> 00:29:40,330
And we came-- and
that's where we came out

604
00:29:40,330 --> 00:29:42,790
to try and give
them a definition

605
00:29:42,790 --> 00:29:44,560
and call them Hebrews.

606
00:29:44,560 --> 00:29:46,450
Today they are called
Israelis, because when

607
00:29:46,450 --> 00:29:51,940
it comes to practical things,
they had to change the name.

608
00:29:51,940 --> 00:29:53,950
And today they are
facing the issue again.

609
00:29:53,950 --> 00:29:56,860

610
00:29:56,860 --> 00:29:57,978
There was a period--

611
00:29:57,978 --> 00:29:59,020
maybe it'll dramatize it.

612
00:29:59,020 --> 00:30:00,533
What happened when
the war was over.

613
00:30:00,533 --> 00:30:02,200
It's a pity we don't
have the documents.

614
00:30:02,200 --> 00:30:03,430
We lost them.

615
00:30:03,430 --> 00:30:06,670
We had correspondence-- the
Hebrew Committee of National

616
00:30:06,670 --> 00:30:11,200
Liberation-- with a Russian
general who occupied Romania--

617
00:30:11,200 --> 00:30:14,010
or liberated Romania, rather--

618
00:30:14,010 --> 00:30:18,450
because UNRRA, which already

existed and functioned--

619

00:30:18,450 --> 00:30:23,070

had a rule that they are not
supposed to help enemy aliens.

620

00:30:23,070 --> 00:30:27,570

So the Jew in Romania who was
hiding somewhere in the cellar

621

00:30:27,570 --> 00:30:29,880

so he wouldn't be caught by
the Romanians and the Nazis

622

00:30:29,880 --> 00:30:33,420

to be deported and killed, the
next day when the Russians came

623

00:30:33,420 --> 00:30:34,680

in, he became an enemy alien.

624

00:30:34,680 --> 00:30:37,410

He became a Romanian.

625

00:30:37,410 --> 00:30:40,390

And he took us nearly a year
to have the charter of UNRRA

626

00:30:40,390 --> 00:30:43,620

amended to enable
them to include

627

00:30:43,620 --> 00:30:47,210

these people as a beneficiary.

628

00:30:47,210 --> 00:30:49,490

This is the inner confusion
of the whole subject,

629

00:30:49,490 --> 00:30:52,110

in my opinion.

630

00:30:52,110 --> 00:30:56,970

Yes, but you-- but you were
talking about the beginnings

631

00:30:56,970 --> 00:31:02,190

prior to the examination and
about the Å%ovian Conference,

632

00:31:02,190 --> 00:31:04,980

while I think that this
is completely true,

633

00:31:04,980 --> 00:31:11,790

but in the Å%ovian Conference
I don't see this question

634

00:31:11,790 --> 00:31:14,360

of identity as relevant.

635

00:31:14,360 --> 00:31:18,480

No, I say because it
was there was not known,

636

00:31:18,480 --> 00:31:21,720

because at the Å%ovian Conference,
everything was nice and smooth.

637

00:31:21,720 --> 00:31:24,270

Everything was polite.

638

00:31:24,270 --> 00:31:29,310

And then with the extermination
came, not realizing, not

639

00:31:29,310 --> 00:31:32,010

being organized to
really counter it,

640

00:31:32,010 --> 00:31:34,060

they continued as if
everything is the same.

641

00:31:34,060 --> 00:31:37,230

I mean, they were afraid
to do things which did not

642
00:31:37,230 --> 00:31:41,370
fit the concept of the
leaders of American Jews

643
00:31:41,370 --> 00:31:43,020
as to what Jews--

644
00:31:43,020 --> 00:31:45,230
American Jews should
behave as Americans.

645
00:31:45,230 --> 00:31:46,750
Here I said they're afraid.

646
00:31:46,750 --> 00:31:48,430
They were afraid,
and unjustly so.

647
00:31:48,430 --> 00:31:51,580
They didn't give a political
answer to a political--

648
00:31:51,580 --> 00:31:52,080
Right.

649
00:31:52,080 --> 00:31:55,302
Because they had to pressure
the American government,

650
00:31:55,302 --> 00:31:57,010
which would have
yielded, in my opinion--

651
00:31:57,010 --> 00:31:59,620
I don't think there's
any question about it.

652
00:31:59,620 --> 00:32:02,670
But if the proper pressure
would have come up

653
00:32:02,670 --> 00:32:05,580
that Roosevelt and the
American administration,

654
00:32:05,580 --> 00:32:09,300
despite the British, who
exerted very strong counter

655
00:32:09,300 --> 00:32:11,370
pressure because of
Palestine, I think

656
00:32:11,370 --> 00:32:14,220
that Roosevelt would have taken
the necessary steps exactly

657
00:32:14,220 --> 00:32:17,580
as he finally took a step of the
War Refugee Board, which wasn't

658
00:32:17,580 --> 00:32:19,860
the answer, but was something.

659
00:32:19,860 --> 00:32:21,770
A lot more could have been done.

660
00:32:21,770 --> 00:32:23,312
This was extremely
late, the creation

661
00:32:23,312 --> 00:32:24,354
of the War Refugee Board.

662
00:32:24,354 --> 00:32:24,900
I know.

663
00:32:24,900 --> 00:32:28,260
Because as horrible
as it sounds,

664
00:32:28,260 --> 00:32:30,510

as horrible as it
sounds, a resolution

665
00:32:30,510 --> 00:32:34,260
introduced in both
houses of Congress

666
00:32:34,260 --> 00:32:36,450
urging the president
to establish an agency

667
00:32:36,450 --> 00:32:39,540
to save the remnants of
the Jewish people of Europe

668
00:32:39,540 --> 00:32:44,400
was pigeonholed by the Jewish
chairman of the Foreign Affairs

669
00:32:44,400 --> 00:32:48,030
Committee of the House at the
request of Jewish leaders.

670
00:32:48,030 --> 00:32:50,580
And Rabbi Wise
testified at hearings,

671
00:32:50,580 --> 00:32:52,080
which was a tactic to delay it.

672
00:32:52,080 --> 00:32:54,510
And he said-- he didn't
say it shouldn't be done.

673
00:32:54,510 --> 00:32:57,330
He said, it's not enough,
because the big issue is

674
00:32:57,330 --> 00:32:59,900
opening the gates of Palestine.

675
00:32:59,900 --> 00:33:17,000