

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:01,885

2
00:00:01,885 --> 00:00:07,140
(film slating)

3
00:00:07,140 --> 00:00:11,330
This internal
information bulletin

4
00:00:11,330 --> 00:00:18,180
was very busy in December
'42 with sixtieth birthday

5
00:00:18,180 --> 00:00:25,330
of Professor Cohen, one of
the presidents of the Judenrat

6
00:00:25,330 --> 00:00:27,960
with Asscher.

7
00:00:27,960 --> 00:00:32,360
And Cohen was offered
an artistically bound--

8
00:00:32,360 --> 00:00:33,230
shut up.

9
00:00:33,230 --> 00:00:36,650

10
00:00:36,650 --> 00:00:39,560
Cohen was offered an
artistically bound

11
00:00:39,560 --> 00:00:47,310
first edition of the Handbook
of the Jewish Council prepared

12
00:00:47,310 --> 00:00:50,150
by the Internal

Information Bureau,

13
00:00:50,150 --> 00:00:54,900
and testifying, I quote,
"to the creative genius

14
00:00:54,900 --> 00:00:58,620
and great organizational
talent of the man

15
00:00:58,620 --> 00:01:01,490
whose birthday we celebrate."

16
00:01:01,490 --> 00:01:03,780
Professor Cohen
and was repeatedly

17
00:01:03,780 --> 00:01:07,290
compared to Moses
in the speeches held

18
00:01:07,290 --> 00:01:09,330
at the celebration.

19
00:01:09,330 --> 00:01:14,430
And the Chief Rabbi Dassberg
concluded his speech

20
00:01:14,430 --> 00:01:21,980
with a prayer that Cohen, like
Moses, would lead us past Sinai

21
00:01:21,980 --> 00:01:23,460
into the promised land.

22
00:01:23,460 --> 00:01:26,430

23
00:01:26,430 --> 00:01:29,170
It's beautiful.

24
00:01:29,170 --> 00:01:31,900

Well, I remember that
there was a lot of talk

25
00:01:31,900 --> 00:01:34,870
about the sixtieth birthday.

26
00:01:34,870 --> 00:01:38,080
And generally, the
Jews were very angry

27
00:01:38,080 --> 00:01:40,930
that such a scene was made.

28
00:01:40,930 --> 00:01:43,180
I would like to add something.

29
00:01:43,180 --> 00:01:48,160
Professor Cohen was
presented with an armchair--

30
00:01:48,160 --> 00:01:50,750
presidential
armchair, of course--

31
00:01:50,750 --> 00:01:53,500
and an album of photographs of--

32
00:01:53,500 --> 00:01:55,990
about the work of
the Jewish Council.

33
00:01:55,990 --> 00:02:00,040
On one photograph,
exhibit number 28,

34
00:02:00,040 --> 00:02:04,900
bore the legend "departure
of one contingent."

35
00:02:04,900 --> 00:02:07,250
And it shows a motor car
packed with rucksacks

36
00:02:07,250 --> 00:02:09,500
and other luggage.

37
00:02:09,500 --> 00:02:13,870
One can see there is a
destination on the luggage--

38
00:02:13,870 --> 00:02:17,830
Westerbork book was a
transit camp for Auschwitz.

39
00:02:17,830 --> 00:02:24,520
Well, if I may comment on it,
it was very badly received,

40
00:02:24,520 --> 00:02:29,380
as I say, in the
Jewish community

41
00:02:29,380 --> 00:02:36,100
that a Jewish council was
making a kind of festival

42
00:02:36,100 --> 00:02:38,110
in the middle of
the deportations.

43
00:02:38,110 --> 00:02:41,210
But that's not what is
important in the whole thing.

44
00:02:41,210 --> 00:02:43,990
Important is that the
people who were working

45
00:02:43,990 --> 00:02:52,090
there were convinced that they
had the mission in their life,

46
00:02:52,090 --> 00:02:57,410
and that what they were doing
was the right thing to do.

47

00:02:57,410 --> 00:03:00,610

And I would say that
without that feeling,

48

00:03:00,610 --> 00:03:04,280

they would never
have done the work.

49

00:03:04,280 --> 00:03:09,670

I think that the worst thing
in the history of mankind

50

00:03:09,670 --> 00:03:13,630

has been done by people who
believe they had the mission,

51

00:03:13,630 --> 00:03:17,500

they knew everything,
and they were the people

52

00:03:17,500 --> 00:03:24,930

chosen by somebody or
by some power above us

53

00:03:24,930 --> 00:03:27,940

to lead their people.

54

00:03:27,940 --> 00:03:31,690

And you can only see
that a thing like

55

00:03:31,690 --> 00:03:35,905

that within that framework.

56

00:03:35,905 --> 00:03:44,740

In my opinion, they were
absolutely out of touch

57

00:03:44,740 --> 00:03:45,985

with reality.

58

00:03:45,985 --> 00:03:49,120

59

00:03:49,120 --> 00:03:51,190
They felt themselves,
they wanted

60

00:03:51,190 --> 00:03:53,410
to be the leaders of the Jews.

61

00:03:53,410 --> 00:03:55,420
They felt they were the
leaders of the Jews.

62

00:03:55,420 --> 00:04:00,460
And they were convinced
that their work

63

00:04:00,460 --> 00:04:05,710
was work which was done--

64

00:04:05,710 --> 00:04:09,480

65

00:04:09,480 --> 00:04:12,810
I would almost say it
was the will of God.

66

00:04:12,810 --> 00:04:14,920
It is unbelievable.

67

00:04:14,920 --> 00:04:16,810
It is unbelievable that--

68

00:04:16,810 --> 00:04:20,829
if you today read this,
it is unbelievable.

69

00:04:20,829 --> 00:04:23,020
But when you see it within
the framework of what

70

00:04:23,020 --> 00:04:29,440

happened in '42, it
gives a just picture

71
00:04:29,440 --> 00:04:36,850
of their position with regards
to the problems which existed

72
00:04:36,850 --> 00:04:40,990
and their place in it.

73
00:04:40,990 --> 00:04:44,890
I think that the
chairman of the council,

74
00:04:44,890 --> 00:04:47,200
and perhaps the
council as a whole,

75
00:04:47,200 --> 00:04:52,180
really saw themselves as--

76
00:04:52,180 --> 00:05:01,720
in a certain sense as saviors
of whatever could be saved.

77
00:05:01,720 --> 00:05:07,690
And if you ask me
about an opinion

78
00:05:07,690 --> 00:05:13,180
about a thing like that, I
can only say that it is--

79
00:05:13,180 --> 00:05:19,810
within the framework of
their whole attitude,

80
00:05:19,810 --> 00:05:21,250
they knew better.

81
00:05:21,250 --> 00:05:27,940
They were willing to send--

82

00:05:27,940 --> 00:05:32,230

to make a list of priorities of
what Jews should be deported.

83

00:05:32,230 --> 00:05:38,350

And that the people working
in the Jewish council really

84

00:05:38,350 --> 00:05:44,830

had an kind of affection,
even, for their leaders.

85

00:05:44,830 --> 00:05:47,160

That's not against it.

86

00:05:47,160 --> 00:05:52,000

It is much worse in hindsight
than it was at that time.

87

00:05:52,000 --> 00:05:53,890

In that time, it was
within the framework

88

00:05:53,890 --> 00:05:55,630

of the whole attitude.

89

00:05:55,630 --> 00:05:58,060

And when I criticize them--

90

00:05:58,060 --> 00:06:00,910

when I criticize them today
or when I criticize them

91

00:06:00,910 --> 00:06:03,730

at that time, it was
against their attitude,

92

00:06:03,730 --> 00:06:09,040

against their opinion
about what happened

93

00:06:09,040 --> 00:06:14,815

in the world, their absolute
negation of reality.

94
00:06:14,815 --> 00:06:19,450

95
00:06:19,450 --> 00:06:21,550
They were even,
from time to time--

96
00:06:21,550 --> 00:06:23,440
only from time to
time-- convinced

97
00:06:23,440 --> 00:06:33,160
that they would be able to
direct the German policy.

98
00:06:33,160 --> 00:06:35,830
Today, we know
that it isn't true.

99
00:06:35,830 --> 00:06:38,980
Perhaps the worst thing
was that they were--

100
00:06:38,980 --> 00:06:42,880
that they thought that they
were cleverer than Germans.

101
00:06:42,880 --> 00:06:44,560
They weren't.

102
00:06:44,560 --> 00:06:46,480
And today, we know
that they weren't.

103
00:06:46,480 --> 00:06:48,700
Today, we know that
what happened in Holland

104
00:06:48,700 --> 00:06:56,860
was a pattern which the

Germans did in the whole world.

105

00:06:56,860 --> 00:06:59,800

If I would come to a
conclusion from a thing

106

00:06:59,800 --> 00:07:03,250

which you read now, and which
I knew also in that time--

107

00:07:03,250 --> 00:07:05,320

I didn't know that
he got the chair.

108

00:07:05,320 --> 00:07:14,050

But that he had a kind of
pleasant day when Cohen--

109

00:07:14,050 --> 00:07:15,260

[INTERPOSING VOICES]

110

00:07:15,260 --> 00:07:18,785

--album of the achievements,
exhibit number 28--

111

00:07:18,785 --> 00:07:21,960

They thought that-- they
thought they had achieved it.

112

00:07:21,960 --> 00:07:25,710

And it is unbelievable
that they had the picture

113

00:07:25,710 --> 00:07:27,820

of a deportation there.

114

00:07:27,820 --> 00:07:30,790

I agree with you.

115

00:07:30,790 --> 00:07:34,870

The only thing, which we
said already at that time,

116

00:07:34,870 --> 00:07:42,280
that there were two things
which were generally accepted,

117

00:07:42,280 --> 00:07:46,450
and which were proved wrong, and
it is that the Jews were clever

118

00:07:46,450 --> 00:07:49,210
and that the Germans
were courageous.

119

00:07:49,210 --> 00:07:54,540
And already at that time, we
said, the Jews are not clever

120

00:07:54,540 --> 00:07:57,400
and the Germans
are not courageous.

121

00:07:57,400 --> 00:07:59,900
I don't want to talk
about the Germans now.

122

00:07:59,900 --> 00:08:01,440
It has no sense.

123

00:08:01,440 --> 00:08:07,360
But that the Jews fell into the
trap the Germans put for them

124

00:08:07,360 --> 00:08:08,800
I think there is no doubt.

125

00:08:08,800 --> 00:08:11,830
And I'm not saying
that in hindsight.

126

00:08:11,830 --> 00:08:16,900
I am saying that as I was
convinced in '42 and in '43,

127

00:08:16,900 --> 00:08:21,130
and I am convinced today
that in a certain sense,

128
00:08:21,130 --> 00:08:28,240
without willing it,
the Jews served,

129
00:08:28,240 --> 00:08:34,600
very efficiently, the
plan of the Germans.

130
00:08:34,600 --> 00:08:39,549
And it is to deport as many
Jews from Holland as possible,

131
00:08:39,549 --> 00:08:41,950
as quietly as possible.

132
00:08:41,950 --> 00:08:45,070
Because they knew that if
it wouldn't be quietly,

133
00:08:45,070 --> 00:08:48,130
that also the results
would be worse.

134
00:08:48,130 --> 00:08:50,250
And I'm not saying--

135
00:08:50,250 --> 00:08:51,670
I'm repeating it again--

136
00:08:51,670 --> 00:08:54,130
I'm not saying that
that's what he wanted.

137
00:08:54,130 --> 00:08:55,930
But that's what he did.

138
00:08:55,930 --> 00:09:01,390
And I would say that in the--

139

00:09:01,390 --> 00:09:05,110

It's a very stupid people,
as a matter of fact, the Jew.

140

00:09:05,110 --> 00:09:05,935

That's what I said.

141

00:09:05,935 --> 00:09:09,845

142

00:09:09,845 --> 00:09:16,900

If I put-- one of the
two chairmen I knew best,

143

00:09:16,900 --> 00:09:20,890

I would say that
he was a brave man.

144

00:09:20,890 --> 00:09:27,330

He was even in principle, in
normal times, an honest man.

145

00:09:27,330 --> 00:09:29,470

But he was a stupid man.

146

00:09:29,470 --> 00:09:32,290

He didn't understand
what happened.

147

00:09:32,290 --> 00:09:35,680

And rightly, I think,
in the books which

148

00:09:35,680 --> 00:09:38,290

has been written
on it, the people

149

00:09:38,290 --> 00:09:42,160

think that Cohen,
the second one,

150

00:09:42,160 --> 00:09:49,270

was the man who was considered
to be able to think better.

151
00:09:49,270 --> 00:09:51,340
And certainly, he
had the qualities

152
00:09:51,340 --> 00:09:54,160
of being able to think better.

153
00:09:54,160 --> 00:10:02,875
But they all of them had
the illusions de grandeur

154
00:10:02,875 --> 00:10:07,840
that they were the
people who could do it.

155
00:10:07,840 --> 00:10:10,840
And without it, they would
never have started it.

156
00:10:10,840 --> 00:10:14,140
And they would certainly
never have gone on.

157
00:10:14,140 --> 00:10:17,830
They had the absolute
wrong feeling

158
00:10:17,830 --> 00:10:21,740
about the real connections
between them and the Germans.

159
00:10:21,740 --> 00:10:23,740
But they, both of them--

160
00:10:23,740 --> 00:10:26,350
Asscher and Cohen--
survived the War.

161
00:10:26,350 --> 00:10:27,430
Of course they did.

162
00:10:27,430 --> 00:10:30,190
Did you see your uncle
after the War, Asscher?

163
00:10:30,190 --> 00:10:32,950

164
00:10:32,950 --> 00:10:35,020
I met him once.

165
00:10:35,020 --> 00:10:39,820
I met him once when I visited
an aunt of mine who was ill.

166
00:10:39,820 --> 00:10:41,983
And he came in,
and we didn't talk.

167
00:10:41,983 --> 00:10:42,900
He didn't talk at all?

168
00:10:42,900 --> 00:10:46,570
No, he didn't want
and I didn't want.

169
00:10:46,570 --> 00:10:49,600
I didn't make-- I
didn't make an effort.

170
00:10:49,600 --> 00:10:52,540
I don't know if he would
have said hello to me.

171
00:10:52,540 --> 00:10:55,330
I probably would have
said hello again.

172
00:10:55,330 --> 00:10:59,470
But after-- he once--

173
00:10:59,470 --> 00:11:01,300

during the War,
after those meetings,

174
00:11:01,300 --> 00:11:04,120
I met him once at the
home of my mother.

175
00:11:04,120 --> 00:11:05,540
And we didn't talk.

176
00:11:05,540 --> 00:11:07,450
And he went away.

177
00:11:07,450 --> 00:11:12,295

178
00:11:12,295 --> 00:11:13,920
In the middle, you
are always stopping.

179
00:11:13,920 --> 00:11:21,620

180
00:11:21,620 --> 00:11:24,020
(film slating)

181
00:11:24,020 --> 00:11:31,370

182
00:11:31,370 --> 00:11:32,432
What?

183
00:11:32,432 --> 00:11:33,310
Sterilization.

184
00:11:33,310 --> 00:11:37,220

185
00:11:37,220 --> 00:11:42,050
You ask me about
sterilization in Holland.

186

00:11:42,050 --> 00:11:45,740

We know today that only
in Holland it was done.

187

00:11:45,740 --> 00:11:47,060

We didn't know that.

188

00:11:47,060 --> 00:11:49,820

We didn't know
that at that time.

189

00:11:49,820 --> 00:11:52,400

If you ask my
personal opinion, I

190

00:11:52,400 --> 00:11:54,950

think it was perhaps
the most degrading part

191

00:11:54,950 --> 00:11:59,540

of the whole thing.

192

00:11:59,540 --> 00:12:02,460

193

00:12:02,460 --> 00:12:05,970

It was the most degrading
part, not the most--

194

00:12:05,970 --> 00:12:07,990

not the worst.

195

00:12:07,990 --> 00:12:13,610

It was in-- they said
it would be voluntary.

196

00:12:13,610 --> 00:12:16,200

No, but first of all, it
was meant for the Jews

197

00:12:16,200 --> 00:12:17,910

who were in mixed marriages.

198
00:12:17,910 --> 00:12:21,210
It was only for Jews
in mixed marriages.

199
00:12:21,210 --> 00:12:23,610
Who were protected
from deportation

200
00:12:23,610 --> 00:12:25,800
because they were
in mixed marriages.

201
00:12:25,800 --> 00:12:34,110
Who were protected [INAUDIBLE]
'til the time had come.

202
00:12:34,110 --> 00:12:37,620
And they never know
that they would be--

203
00:12:37,620 --> 00:12:41,100
they weren't taken up
'til then as a group.

204
00:12:41,100 --> 00:12:43,710
But there were already
mixed marriages--

205
00:12:43,710 --> 00:12:49,680
Jews from mixed marriages--
who were sent to Poland.

206
00:12:49,680 --> 00:12:52,080
But as a group, they were--

207
00:12:52,080 --> 00:12:56,700
they hadn't been
victims of deportation.

208
00:12:56,700 --> 00:12:59,130
But nobody promised them
that they wouldn't be.

209

00:12:59,130 --> 00:13:03,930

So they said voluntary
they could be "entjudet,"

210

00:13:03,930 --> 00:13:11,760

to be taken out of the
general Jewish community,

211

00:13:11,760 --> 00:13:17,300

if they would be willing
to be sterilized,

212

00:13:17,300 --> 00:13:22,960

and to make sure
that they wouldn't

213

00:13:22,960 --> 00:13:25,440

be able to produce other Jews.

214

00:13:25,440 --> 00:13:27,150

Exact.

215

00:13:27,150 --> 00:13:28,900

And that's what I
meant when I said

216

00:13:28,900 --> 00:13:30,630

it was the most degrading part.

217

00:13:30,630 --> 00:13:34,890

Because you would have to
acknowledge that you are not

218

00:13:34,890 --> 00:13:45,780

fit to bring children on
earth, and that with you,

219

00:13:45,780 --> 00:13:52,110

the Jewish side
of the population

220

00:13:52,110 --> 00:13:55,530
wouldn't continue to exist.

221
00:13:55,530 --> 00:13:57,780
Now, they called it voluntary.

222
00:13:57,780 --> 00:14:00,480
And they said, if you
don't do it voluntary,

223
00:14:00,480 --> 00:14:03,990
then we will deport you.

224
00:14:03,990 --> 00:14:07,440
So when you say they
were not deported,

225
00:14:07,440 --> 00:14:10,020
they were not
deported up 'til then.

226
00:14:10,020 --> 00:14:14,220
But they were told that
if they wouldn't do it,

227
00:14:14,220 --> 00:14:16,290
they would be deported.

228
00:14:16,290 --> 00:14:17,473
To use the word--

229
00:14:17,473 --> 00:14:19,640
A choice between to be
sterilized or to be deported.

230
00:14:19,640 --> 00:14:22,440
Or to be deported, so
to say it is voluntary

231
00:14:22,440 --> 00:14:27,210
is quite a question.

232

00:14:27,210 --> 00:14:31,920
But still then,
when they took Jews

233
00:14:31,920 --> 00:14:38,100
they had already in their power
in Westerbork, when they made

234
00:14:38,100 --> 00:14:43,410
and told those Jews that they
could be sterilized and go back

235
00:14:43,410 --> 00:14:48,750
to their homes are
not, only half of them

236
00:14:48,750 --> 00:14:51,820
agreed to be sterilized.

237
00:14:51,820 --> 00:14:56,460
And I don't want to say
anything about it today.

238
00:14:56,460 --> 00:15:00,180
I have the feeling
that only a man who

239
00:15:00,180 --> 00:15:06,810
has been in that position,
being told that or he

240
00:15:06,810 --> 00:15:09,690
will be deported or
he will be sterilized,

241
00:15:09,690 --> 00:15:14,110
I don't know how anybody of us
would have taken that decision.

242
00:15:14,110 --> 00:15:17,980
I have never been in
a situation like that,

243

00:15:17,980 --> 00:15:21,270
and I don't want, 40 years
later, to say anything

244
00:15:21,270 --> 00:15:24,610
about it-- nothing, nothing.

245
00:15:24,610 --> 00:15:33,403
But when you mention the fact,
I would say it is almost no--

246
00:15:33,403 --> 00:15:38,490

247
00:15:38,490 --> 00:15:42,240
almost understandable that
they only tried it in Holland.

248
00:15:42,240 --> 00:15:47,760
Because it was a
kind of laboratorium

249
00:15:47,760 --> 00:15:52,774
of how you can act with Jews
without anything happening.

250
00:15:52,774 --> 00:16:07,350
And I must say that at the
time, we thought it terrible.

251
00:16:07,350 --> 00:16:14,670
And I knew of a Jew who
I liked very much who

252
00:16:14,670 --> 00:16:18,440
told me that he
had been sterilized

253
00:16:18,440 --> 00:16:26,280
and would be going without
a yellow star from now on.

254
00:16:26,280 --> 00:16:29,730

And I never asked him
how he felt about it.

255
00:16:29,730 --> 00:16:33,150

256
00:16:33,150 --> 00:16:35,610
It is perhaps more
unbelievable than anything

257
00:16:35,610 --> 00:16:38,490
else what happened.

258
00:16:38,490 --> 00:16:42,600
But perhaps the worst
thing is that they

259
00:16:42,600 --> 00:16:46,020
said they wanted to have
it done by Jewish doctors

260
00:16:46,020 --> 00:16:50,340
and by Dutch doctors, and that
the Germans shouldn't do it

261
00:16:50,340 --> 00:16:55,545
at all, which is unbelievable
in another sense.

262
00:16:55,545 --> 00:16:59,930

263
00:16:59,930 --> 00:17:04,859
I would say that,
from a personal point,

264
00:17:04,859 --> 00:17:06,480
was perhaps the--

265
00:17:06,480 --> 00:17:14,130
it happened late in the time
that the Jews were still there.

266

00:17:14,130 --> 00:17:18,329

And I would say it was
really the last thing

267

00:17:18,329 --> 00:17:19,650

anybody could think about.

268

00:17:19,650 --> 00:17:29,770

269

00:17:29,770 --> 00:17:41,290

(film logistics)

270

00:17:41,290 --> 00:17:42,190

I must say--

271

00:17:42,190 --> 00:17:45,190

272

00:17:45,190 --> 00:17:47,290

[CAR ENGINE REVVING]

273

00:17:47,290 --> 00:17:50,590

274

00:17:50,590 --> 00:17:52,690

[BACKGROUND CONVERSATION]

275

00:17:52,690 --> 00:17:56,890

276

00:17:56,890 --> 00:18:00,240

[AUDIO OUT]

277

00:18:00,240 --> 00:18:03,024