

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:22,210

2

00:00:22,210 --> 00:00:23,450

Good morning.

3

00:00:23,450 --> 00:00:24,730

My name is Bernard Weinstein.

4

00:00:24,730 --> 00:00:27,340

And I'm the director of the
Kean College Oral Testimonies

5

00:00:27,340 --> 00:00:30,220

Project at the Holocaust
Resource Center.

6

00:00:30,220 --> 00:00:33,010

We are affiliated with
the Video Archives

7

00:00:33,010 --> 00:00:35,980

for Holocaust Testimonies
at Yale University.

8

00:00:35,980 --> 00:00:39,220

Sharing the interview
with me is Jeannie Miller.

9

00:00:39,220 --> 00:00:43,840

We are privileged to welcome
Mr. Bernard Ahrend, a survivor

10

00:00:43,840 --> 00:00:47,080

presently living in Elizabeth,
New Jersey, who has generously

11

00:00:47,080 --> 00:00:51,640

volunteered to give testimony
about his experiences

12

00:00:51,640 --> 00:00:55,180
before the Holocaust.

13
00:00:55,180 --> 00:00:57,550
Mr. Ahrend, I'd
like to welcome you.

14
00:00:57,550 --> 00:01:00,970
And I'd like you to
tell us something

15
00:01:00,970 --> 00:01:06,260
about the place where you
came from and your early life.

16
00:01:06,260 --> 00:01:08,600
OK, thank you.

17
00:01:08,600 --> 00:01:12,100
I was born in Frankfurt am Main.

18
00:01:12,100 --> 00:01:18,410
Frankfurt am Main had a
large Jewish population.

19
00:01:18,410 --> 00:01:22,730
As a matter of fact, the
Nazis called it the Jerusalem

20
00:01:22,730 --> 00:01:26,030
on the Franconian Jordan.

21
00:01:26,030 --> 00:01:34,250
Frankfurt had a total
population in 1925 about 475,000

22
00:01:34,250 --> 00:01:39,500
and had a Jewish
population of 30,000.

23
00:01:39,500 --> 00:01:43,910
My parents belonged to a
very Orthodox congregation.

24
00:01:43,910 --> 00:01:50,186
And, of course, I was sent
to a Jewish parochial school.

25
00:01:50,186 --> 00:01:51,900
Excuse me, were
you an only child?

26
00:01:51,900 --> 00:01:54,770
I was the only child.

27
00:01:54,770 --> 00:02:01,710
And we were brought up
very strictly Orthodox.

28
00:02:01,710 --> 00:02:09,090
And first, I attended
the elementary schools.

29
00:02:09,090 --> 00:02:11,930
Then, I attended the
Jewish high school.

30
00:02:11,930 --> 00:02:14,960

31
00:02:14,960 --> 00:02:18,500
The Jewish high school, all
the high schools in Germany,

32
00:02:18,500 --> 00:02:19,380
were not free.

33
00:02:19,380 --> 00:02:21,530
You had to pay tuition.

34
00:02:21,530 --> 00:02:26,690
And, of course, the enrollment
of high schools in Germany

35
00:02:26,690 --> 00:02:33,080

cannot be compared to with
those in the United States.

36
00:02:33,080 --> 00:02:38,060
And especially the Jewish high
schools, the last three grades,

37
00:02:38,060 --> 00:02:44,180
where we are not
enough pupils, so we

38
00:02:44,180 --> 00:02:47,870
had to go to city high school.

39
00:02:47,870 --> 00:02:50,480
When you say that
the schools are not

40
00:02:50,480 --> 00:02:52,460
comparable to the United
States, in what way

41
00:02:52,460 --> 00:02:54,890
were they different?

42
00:02:54,890 --> 00:02:56,420
You had to pay tuition.

43
00:02:56,420 --> 00:02:57,680
I see.

44
00:02:57,680 --> 00:03:02,210
Besides that, I mean the
whole school system in Germany

45
00:03:02,210 --> 00:03:03,740
was completely different.

46
00:03:03,740 --> 00:03:05,660
As a matter of fact,
in whole Europe

47

00:03:05,660 --> 00:03:09,470
is completely
different with America.

48
00:03:09,470 --> 00:03:12,110
America has the
shortest school years

49
00:03:12,110 --> 00:03:15,380
in the whole world
compared to the rest.

50
00:03:15,380 --> 00:03:18,020

51
00:03:18,020 --> 00:03:18,920
Go ahead, please.

52
00:03:18,920 --> 00:03:21,740

53
00:03:21,740 --> 00:03:25,950
There was always
antisemitism in Germany.

54
00:03:25,950 --> 00:03:31,220
And when I went to city
high school, sometimes

55
00:03:31,220 --> 00:03:36,740
somebody would make
a antisemitic remark.

56
00:03:36,740 --> 00:03:40,250
But at first, nobody
would apologize.

57
00:03:40,250 --> 00:03:43,430

58
00:03:43,430 --> 00:03:47,330
Everybody knew that
sooner or later, Hitler

59

00:03:47,330 --> 00:03:50,120
would come to power.

60

00:03:50,120 --> 00:03:57,950
When Hitler came to power
on the 30th January of 1933,

61

00:03:57,950 --> 00:04:00,620
there was jubilation all over.

62

00:04:00,620 --> 00:04:03,140
And you have to
remember one fact.

63

00:04:03,140 --> 00:04:06,890
And this is, in my
opinion, one factor

64

00:04:06,890 --> 00:04:13,160
which contributed for the
rise of Hitler and Nazism,

65

00:04:13,160 --> 00:04:18,260
the professors and the student
bodies of the universities

66

00:04:18,260 --> 00:04:21,480
and the teachers
in all the schools,

67

00:04:21,480 --> 00:04:25,160
especially high schools,
were anti-democratic

68

00:04:25,160 --> 00:04:28,310
from the very beginning.

69

00:04:28,310 --> 00:04:32,390
So when Hitler came to power
there was jubilation all over.

70

00:04:32,390 --> 00:04:38,310

71

00:04:38,310 --> 00:04:43,150

We were notified
we should go home

72

00:04:43,150 --> 00:04:47,770

and for the time being
then, after everything

73

00:04:47,770 --> 00:04:52,450

will be settled, because in
Germany, the school year starts

74

00:04:52,450 --> 00:04:54,040

after Easter.

75

00:04:54,040 --> 00:05:01,720

So we were released on
the day before April 1.

76

00:05:01,720 --> 00:05:05,290

It was the Boycott Sabbath.

77

00:05:05,290 --> 00:05:12,490

And the principal was afraid
there would be some action

78

00:05:12,490 --> 00:05:15,820

against, demonstration
against the Jewish students.

79

00:05:15,820 --> 00:05:19,990

So he said, go home,
and we will see

80

00:05:19,990 --> 00:05:23,155

what will happen when
the school year started.

81

00:05:23,155 --> 00:05:26,010

82
00:05:26,010 --> 00:05:31,320
Then he got a notice school
year start on such and such day

83
00:05:31,320 --> 00:05:33,180
after Easter.

84
00:05:33,180 --> 00:05:35,880
Report at classroom so and so.

85
00:05:35,880 --> 00:05:39,450

86
00:05:39,450 --> 00:05:46,110
One of the rules was when
the teacher enters the class,

87
00:05:46,110 --> 00:05:54,000
the students have to salute
him with the Hitler salute.

88
00:05:54,000 --> 00:05:58,650
We were told, it's up to
the Jewish students to do it

89
00:05:58,650 --> 00:06:00,390
or not to do it.

90
00:06:00,390 --> 00:06:01,530
Of course, we didn't.

91
00:06:01,530 --> 00:06:04,490

92
00:06:04,490 --> 00:06:09,410
The school went on
without any trouble.

93
00:06:09,410 --> 00:06:11,450
Was there punishment
for not doing it?

94
00:06:11,450 --> 00:06:15,380
Was there any kind
of retaliation?

95
00:06:15,380 --> 00:06:25,820
You know in Germany,
obedience was the main factor.

96
00:06:25,820 --> 00:06:28,920
You have to obey if
you like it or not.

97
00:06:28,920 --> 00:06:34,340
And that was one thing that
was born into the German mind.

98
00:06:34,340 --> 00:06:39,810
It was born into from the
very youth, you have to obey.

99
00:06:39,810 --> 00:06:44,810
So there was no
protest or anything.

100
00:06:44,810 --> 00:06:52,500
Of course, most the teacher
handled it as a matter of fact.

101
00:06:52,500 --> 00:06:57,350
But one teacher was a
little crazy about it.

102
00:06:57,350 --> 00:06:58,970
He acted like a sergeant.

103
00:06:58,970 --> 00:07:02,090
When he came in,
he said, Schultz,

104
00:07:02,090 --> 00:07:04,760
you are not standing in line.

105

00:07:04,760 --> 00:07:07,800

Smith, to your right, and so on.

106

00:07:07,800 --> 00:07:09,590

Of course, it was ridiculous.

107

00:07:09,590 --> 00:07:11,720

But he took it.

108

00:07:11,720 --> 00:07:18,020

But the same teacher was
a little weird all around.

109

00:07:18,020 --> 00:07:22,550

The student sitting next to
me was a very nice fellow.

110

00:07:22,550 --> 00:07:26,780

And he had, for Germany,
an unusual dark complexion.

111

00:07:26,780 --> 00:07:31,310

And this particular teacher
had the habit always,

112

00:07:31,310 --> 00:07:36,200

he pointed to him, the
black one, the black one.

113

00:07:36,200 --> 00:07:39,560

The name of the student
was [? Goerner. ?]

114

00:07:39,560 --> 00:07:44,420

One day, he had enough
of it, and he said,

115

00:07:44,420 --> 00:07:49,390

and said it loud enough to
be heard, blank blank hole.

116

00:07:49,390 --> 00:07:51,930

117
00:07:51,930 --> 00:07:56,840
So the teacher said, Ahrend,
what did [? Goerner ?] say.

118
00:07:56,840 --> 00:08:01,640
So I replied, Dr. [? Zweipel, ?]
I didn't understand.

119
00:08:01,640 --> 00:08:04,670
The whole class
roared with laughter.

120
00:08:04,670 --> 00:08:08,030
Afterwards, one of
the students said,

121
00:08:08,030 --> 00:08:10,070
I was afraid you would squeal.

122
00:08:10,070 --> 00:08:13,940
So I said to him, listen,
you don't have to be a Nazi

123
00:08:13,940 --> 00:08:17,930
to have comradeship.

124
00:08:17,930 --> 00:08:25,980
So at the end of the year,
I had decided to finish it,

125
00:08:25,980 --> 00:08:28,800
because I wanted
to get the Abitur.

126
00:08:28,800 --> 00:08:32,740
The Abitur in
Germany is this exam,

127
00:08:32,740 --> 00:08:38,850
which entitles you to
enter any university.

128
00:08:38,850 --> 00:08:42,990
So I passed, and
everything was all right.

129
00:08:42,990 --> 00:08:49,040
So, of course, since
they made the decrees

130
00:08:49,040 --> 00:08:53,640
that Jews were no more
allowed to enter universities,

131
00:08:53,640 --> 00:08:57,060
for the time being
I went to yeshiva.

132
00:08:57,060 --> 00:09:04,170
That's the Jewish
rabbinical institution.

133
00:09:04,170 --> 00:09:08,340
In the meantime, more and
more laws were passed.

134
00:09:08,340 --> 00:09:14,610
Jews were not allowed
to go to universities,

135
00:09:14,610 --> 00:09:18,585
were not allowed to
have positions in state,

136
00:09:18,585 --> 00:09:22,230
city, or federal government.

137
00:09:22,230 --> 00:09:27,360
And after that the
Boycott Sabbath,

138
00:09:27,360 --> 00:09:30,750
many Jews decided that's it.

139

00:09:30,750 --> 00:09:32,010

There will be no future.

140

00:09:32,010 --> 00:09:34,160

But some still had hope.

141

00:09:34,160 --> 00:09:36,970

142

00:09:36,970 --> 00:09:39,310

What were your own
aspirations at the time?

143

00:09:39,310 --> 00:09:40,760

What did you want to do?

144

00:09:40,760 --> 00:09:46,780

I had originally hoped to
study in medicine or dentistry.

145

00:09:46,780 --> 00:09:52,860

But this, of course,
everything was goodbye.

146

00:09:52,860 --> 00:10:06,780

And in 1935, when the Nazis who
assembled each and every year

147

00:10:06,780 --> 00:10:11,946

at Nuremberg, passed the
so-called Nuremberg Laws.

148

00:10:11,946 --> 00:10:16,110

The Nuremberg Laws,
one specific was

149

00:10:16,110 --> 00:10:21,330

the Jews are no more citizens,
but only residents of Germany.

150

00:10:21,330 --> 00:10:27,490

No Jew is allowed

to marry an Aryan--

151

00:10:27,490 --> 00:10:31,440

that's the race they called
themselves, the super race--

152

00:10:31,440 --> 00:10:37,080

or have sexual
intercourse with anybody.

153

00:10:37,080 --> 00:10:47,380

Jews were not allowed to
have maids, Christian maids,

154

00:10:47,380 --> 00:10:52,660

unless the household
consists only of women.

155

00:10:52,660 --> 00:10:56,590

Now, I have to tell
a very funny story.

156

00:10:56,590 --> 00:11:00,320

A lady worked with my
father in the office.

157

00:11:00,320 --> 00:11:02,170

Her father had died
many years ago.

158

00:11:02,170 --> 00:11:03,910

She lived with her mother.

159

00:11:03,910 --> 00:11:08,120

And her brother used to come
for the holidays to visit them.

160

00:11:08,120 --> 00:11:12,890

So she said, listen, if my
brother comes and the neighbors

161

00:11:12,890 --> 00:11:15,940

see it, there will

be some problem,

162

00:11:15,940 --> 00:11:20,320
because they might report us.

163

00:11:20,320 --> 00:11:22,870
So she went to the
police precinct

164

00:11:22,870 --> 00:11:25,310
and explained the situation.

165

00:11:25,310 --> 00:11:29,560
So the sergeant
said, sorry, lady,

166

00:11:29,560 --> 00:11:32,110
but that is not our field.

167

00:11:32,110 --> 00:11:38,950
You have to go to the
district officer of the party.

168

00:11:38,950 --> 00:11:45,590
So she went to the party office,
explained again the situation.

169

00:11:45,590 --> 00:11:48,970
So the officer
asks, lady, how long

170

00:11:48,970 --> 00:11:51,820
will your brother stay with you?

171

00:11:51,820 --> 00:11:56,600
She said, he usually stays
10 days to two weeks.

172

00:11:56,600 --> 00:11:59,380
If he doesn't stay longer than
two weeks, it's all right.

173

00:11:59,380 --> 00:12:02,300

If he stays longer
than two weeks,

174

00:12:02,300 --> 00:12:06,190

he has to stay somewhere else.

175

00:12:06,190 --> 00:12:07,240

Everybody laughed.

176

00:12:07,240 --> 00:12:09,370

It was absolutely ridiculous.

177

00:12:09,370 --> 00:12:13,210

A neighbor of her who
belonged to the party,

178

00:12:13,210 --> 00:12:15,050

he used to be a very nice guy.

179

00:12:15,050 --> 00:12:17,380

He roared with laughter
and said, listen,

180

00:12:17,380 --> 00:12:19,990

if I want to do something,
I don't need two weeks.

181

00:12:19,990 --> 00:12:21,370

I don't need even two days.

182

00:12:21,370 --> 00:12:22,870

I don't need two minutes.

183

00:12:22,870 --> 00:12:27,810

184

00:12:27,810 --> 00:12:36,910

But the antisemitism was
planted in the German people,

185

00:12:36,910 --> 00:12:40,245

especially the German youth
from the very beginning.

186
00:12:40,245 --> 00:12:45,030

187
00:12:45,030 --> 00:12:48,950
In the house next to us
lived a Jewish family.

188
00:12:48,950 --> 00:12:51,790
They had a boy, Michael,
by the age of five.

189
00:12:51,790 --> 00:12:56,160
The same house lived an Italian
family with boys the same age

190
00:12:56,160 --> 00:12:57,870
as the three.

191
00:12:57,870 --> 00:13:02,060
Across the street, a Christian
family had just moved in.

192
00:13:02,060 --> 00:13:08,740
They had a girl age of ten
and boy the age of five.

193
00:13:08,740 --> 00:13:10,830
Her mother lived with them.

194
00:13:10,830 --> 00:13:16,480
She was paralyzed and sat
the whole day at the window.

195
00:13:16,480 --> 00:13:19,740
Now, see, kids played together.

196
00:13:19,740 --> 00:13:24,270
Sometimes, the boy of
the Christian family--

197

00:13:24,270 --> 00:13:25,630

his names was Karl--

198

00:13:25,630 --> 00:13:29,880

Karl would call sometimes

Michael dirty Jew.

199

00:13:29,880 --> 00:13:33,600

But soon afterwards, he would

come back and said, Michael,

200

00:13:33,600 --> 00:13:36,150

I am sorry.

201

00:13:36,150 --> 00:13:39,960

So the grandmother saw

it that the kids played.

202

00:13:39,960 --> 00:13:41,490

The mother saw it.

203

00:13:41,490 --> 00:13:42,740

Even his sister saw it.

204

00:13:42,740 --> 00:13:43,680

Didn't say nothing.

205

00:13:43,680 --> 00:13:46,650

One day I just came home.

206

00:13:46,650 --> 00:13:50,430

And the father, he

apparently was nothing

207

00:13:50,430 --> 00:13:56,130

before he joined the party, came

walking haughtily to the house.

208

00:13:56,130 --> 00:13:59,227

He looked over, saw the

kids playing, and yelled,

209

00:13:59,227 --> 00:14:00,810

Karl, how often do

I have to tell you,

210

00:14:00,810 --> 00:14:04,140

you shouldn't play

with this Jewish boy?

211

00:14:04,140 --> 00:14:10,170

That shows how viciously

some of these people were

212

00:14:10,170 --> 00:14:15,900

and how these

innocent children who

213

00:14:15,900 --> 00:14:20,610

didn't know from

better or wrong were

214

00:14:20,610 --> 00:14:24,930

forced to accept this

vicious concepts.

215

00:14:24,930 --> 00:14:27,710

216

00:14:27,710 --> 00:14:32,060

We had a cleaning woman.

217

00:14:32,060 --> 00:14:35,660

And they had a boy who just

started elementary school.

218

00:14:35,660 --> 00:14:37,970

One day she came

in and said, Mrs.

219

00:14:37,970 --> 00:14:40,820

Ahrend, can you believe that?

220

00:14:40,820 --> 00:14:45,410

Peter came home and
said, we are told

221
00:14:45,410 --> 00:14:49,310
you should report everything
what you see at home.

222
00:14:49,310 --> 00:14:55,280
So his mother said to my mother,
so my husband and I don't

223
00:14:55,280 --> 00:15:00,470
talk until Peter is asleep.

224
00:15:00,470 --> 00:15:04,130
That shows how the
youth of Germany

225
00:15:04,130 --> 00:15:07,280
was poisoned from
the very beginning.

226
00:15:07,280 --> 00:15:13,866
And this hatred was
implanted in them.

227
00:15:13,866 --> 00:15:25,350
And there were Germans who
in their heart didn't agree,

228
00:15:25,350 --> 00:15:30,570
but they didn't have the guts
or the courage to stand up

229
00:15:30,570 --> 00:15:33,630
or to speak up.

230
00:15:33,630 --> 00:15:38,050
Did you experience any kind
of personal attacks or--

231
00:15:38,050 --> 00:15:38,550
No--

232
00:15:38,550 --> 00:15:39,420
Vilification?

233
00:15:39,420 --> 00:15:41,160
No.

234
00:15:41,160 --> 00:15:44,840
Until Kristallnacht.

235
00:15:44,840 --> 00:15:46,241
Till Kristallnacht.

236
00:15:46,241 --> 00:15:49,980

237
00:15:49,980 --> 00:15:57,330
What about your parents, your
father able to stay in his job

238
00:15:57,330 --> 00:15:58,440
and do the--

239
00:15:58,440 --> 00:16:00,900
he was a bookkeeper, was he not?

240
00:16:00,900 --> 00:16:10,230
Yes, the company he worked with
was an export-import company

241
00:16:10,230 --> 00:16:15,360
in metals and chemicals.

242
00:16:15,360 --> 00:16:20,560
The owners of the
company had a vision

243
00:16:20,560 --> 00:16:25,740
and were smart enough to move
the office out of Germany

244

00:16:25,740 --> 00:16:27,555
in 1930.

245
00:16:27,555 --> 00:16:30,910
But they kept an
office still there.

246
00:16:30,910 --> 00:16:34,810
And my father was one of them
and was still working there.

247
00:16:34,810 --> 00:16:37,630

248
00:16:37,630 --> 00:16:44,200
And eventually,
in 1937, they had

249
00:16:44,200 --> 00:16:46,880
to close it too, because there
was no more business there.

250
00:16:46,880 --> 00:16:49,580

251
00:16:49,580 --> 00:16:54,610
And what happened
to his occupation?

252
00:16:54,610 --> 00:16:59,170

253
00:16:59,170 --> 00:17:00,355
He looked for a job.

254
00:17:00,355 --> 00:17:08,290

255
00:17:08,290 --> 00:17:11,589
The yeshiva needed somebody
to take care of the building,

256

00:17:11,589 --> 00:17:15,380
because the Christian
couple had retired.

257
00:17:15,380 --> 00:17:18,540
And they wanted to
employ some Jews.

258
00:17:18,540 --> 00:17:21,890
So my father took the job.

259
00:17:21,890 --> 00:17:27,810
That was in late 1937.

260
00:17:27,810 --> 00:17:31,260
Was there any outcry within
the Jewish community about what

261
00:17:31,260 --> 00:17:36,810
was happening in this period
of time from the synagogues

262
00:17:36,810 --> 00:17:40,670
or from the Jewish
community as a whole?

263
00:17:40,670 --> 00:17:44,320

264
00:17:44,320 --> 00:17:48,580
Of course, the Jews
were very upset

265
00:17:48,580 --> 00:17:53,110
about all the developments
and all the laws.

266
00:17:53,110 --> 00:17:58,240
But they were-- as
a matter of fact,

267
00:17:58,240 --> 00:18:01,570
they didn't have

enough representation.

268

00:18:01,570 --> 00:18:05,650

I mean, they were forced
that the different Jewish

269

00:18:05,650 --> 00:18:11,050

organizations formed into a
Reichsvertretung für Juden

270

00:18:11,050 --> 00:18:11,740

Deutsche.

271

00:18:11,740 --> 00:18:20,950

That means the representation
of the Jews of the German Reich.

272

00:18:20,950 --> 00:18:24,180

They voiced their
opposition sometimes.

273

00:18:24,180 --> 00:18:29,740

For instance, there was
a man, Julius Streicher,

274

00:18:29,740 --> 00:18:34,810

he published a
publication, The Stürmer.

275

00:18:34,810 --> 00:18:39,370

And that was full of bigotry
and viciousness and lies.

276

00:18:39,370 --> 00:18:44,410

And in one special
number, he published

277

00:18:44,410 --> 00:18:50,750

before Passover in which he
said the Jews slaughter children

278

00:18:50,750 --> 00:18:53,290

and use the blood for Passover.

279
00:18:53,290 --> 00:18:58,830
Of course, at that time,
they sent a telegram,

280
00:18:58,830 --> 00:19:06,700
protested to Hitler that this
publication should be banned.

281
00:19:06,700 --> 00:19:09,535
But there was little response.

282
00:19:09,535 --> 00:19:14,480

283
00:19:14,480 --> 00:19:16,130
Shall we get to Kristallnacht?

284
00:19:16,130 --> 00:19:19,270
Can you tell us what
you remember about that?

285
00:19:19,270 --> 00:19:22,850
Yes, I remember very well.

286
00:19:22,850 --> 00:19:26,330
As I said, my parents
worked at the time

287
00:19:26,330 --> 00:19:28,220
at the yeshiva building.

288
00:19:28,220 --> 00:19:32,465
That was next to one of the
largest synagogues in Frankfurt

289
00:19:32,465 --> 00:19:34,025
as a matter in Germany.

290
00:19:34,025 --> 00:19:36,830

291
00:19:36,830 --> 00:19:39,590
When I heard the news--

292
00:19:39,590 --> 00:19:43,820
not only I, but all
of us heard the news--

293
00:19:43,820 --> 00:19:49,850
that vom Rath, the attache to
the German embassy in Paris

294
00:19:49,850 --> 00:19:53,643
was assassinated by Herschel
Grynspan, all of us said,

295
00:19:53,643 --> 00:19:59,260
that's bad, something
bad will happen.

296
00:19:59,260 --> 00:20:02,560
Of course, nobody
knew what then.

297
00:20:02,560 --> 00:20:06,460
In the middle of the night, my
parents woke me up and said,

298
00:20:06,460 --> 00:20:09,080
the synagogue is burning.

299
00:20:09,080 --> 00:20:15,010
And I looked out the window,
and flames were leaping out

300
00:20:15,010 --> 00:20:18,340
of the windows of the towers.

301
00:20:18,340 --> 00:20:25,150
The synagogue was very
solidly built at the first.

302
00:20:25,150 --> 00:20:29,900

And they wouldn't have
couldn't have started the fire

303
00:20:29,900 --> 00:20:33,720
without straw or paper.

304
00:20:33,720 --> 00:20:38,070
And it took a long time
until a fire engine came.

305
00:20:38,070 --> 00:20:41,640
And when the fire
engine came, they just

306
00:20:41,640 --> 00:20:44,460
stood there and
sprayed the water

307
00:20:44,460 --> 00:20:48,500
to the building next
to the synagogue.

308
00:20:48,500 --> 00:20:56,900
Then a few hours later he heard
steps coming up the staircase.

309
00:20:56,900 --> 00:21:02,000
Four guys, husky fellows,
grabbed me and my father

310
00:21:02,000 --> 00:21:04,010
and pulled me down.

311
00:21:04,010 --> 00:21:08,360
And they brought me
down the street, streets

312
00:21:08,360 --> 00:21:13,460
where people are holding,
screaming, dirty Jews and so

313
00:21:13,460 --> 00:21:14,390
on.

314
00:21:14,390 --> 00:21:17,840
And they brought me to an
office, not the regular police

315
00:21:17,840 --> 00:21:19,310
precinct.

316
00:21:19,310 --> 00:21:27,020
And I was amazed to see a
huge stack of forms piled up

317
00:21:27,020 --> 00:21:27,980
on the table.

318
00:21:27,980 --> 00:21:30,390
And I said to myself--

319
00:21:30,390 --> 00:21:34,310
and remember at that time,
there were no Xerox machines--

320
00:21:34,310 --> 00:21:36,920
how could they have
all these forms?

321
00:21:36,920 --> 00:21:41,390
This must have been
planned way in advance.

322
00:21:41,390 --> 00:21:47,480
And the whole action
must have been,

323
00:21:47,480 --> 00:21:53,090
they waited for the right moment
in their mind for an incident

324
00:21:53,090 --> 00:21:59,010
and they would call it action.

325
00:21:59,010 --> 00:22:02,060

Did the forms contain the
names of Jews in the district,

326
00:22:02,060 --> 00:22:03,080
in the area?

327
00:22:03,080 --> 00:22:08,590
No, they filled out a form
for each and every one.

328
00:22:08,590 --> 00:22:13,520
Of course, Jew and so on.

329
00:22:13,520 --> 00:22:16,970
And then a few of
us were put in a van

330
00:22:16,970 --> 00:22:20,720
and brought to the city jail.

331
00:22:20,720 --> 00:22:24,687
I and a few others spent
the night over there.

332
00:22:24,687 --> 00:22:26,270
Many of the officers
who were arrested

333
00:22:26,270 --> 00:22:29,480
were right brought to
the railroad station

334
00:22:29,480 --> 00:22:32,550
and sent to a
concentration camp.

335
00:22:32,550 --> 00:22:36,320
So the next morning,
we were brought

336
00:22:36,320 --> 00:22:44,180
to the convention center, where
all the Jews had to report.

337
00:22:44,180 --> 00:22:45,890
They didn't report
by themselves.

338
00:22:45,890 --> 00:22:50,400
They were brought there
by these party gangsters.

339
00:22:50,400 --> 00:22:56,060
And so you had to
report to an officer.

340
00:22:56,060 --> 00:23:00,980
He was turning around like a top
spin, face to me, face to me,

341
00:23:00,980 --> 00:23:02,750
face to me.

342
00:23:02,750 --> 00:23:06,200
Report-- and I said my
name a couple of times.

343
00:23:06,200 --> 00:23:07,700
Louder and so on.

344
00:23:07,700 --> 00:23:12,440
Then he stopped and he turned
to the few Jews who were already

345
00:23:12,440 --> 00:23:15,300
present, how has it you report?

346
00:23:15,300 --> 00:23:17,900
Jude, Jew.

347
00:23:17,900 --> 00:23:21,650
So you had to report,
Jew, Bernard Ahrend.

348
00:23:21,650 --> 00:23:25,820

So this went on with each
and every new arrival.

349
00:23:25,820 --> 00:23:28,120
Were you separated from
your father at that point?

350
00:23:28,120 --> 00:23:28,880
Yeah.

351
00:23:28,880 --> 00:23:30,703
I didn't know what had happened.

352
00:23:30,703 --> 00:23:32,120
What was the name
of the synagogue

353
00:23:32,120 --> 00:23:34,670
that was saw being burned?

354
00:23:34,670 --> 00:23:36,230
Friedberger Anlage.

355
00:23:36,230 --> 00:23:39,080
It was a beautiful
synagogue, one of the most

356
00:23:39,080 --> 00:23:42,155
beautiful in Europe.

357
00:23:42,155 --> 00:23:45,170
Was it completely destroyed?

358
00:23:45,170 --> 00:23:51,170
No, as a matter of fact, because
it was built by huge stones,

359
00:23:51,170 --> 00:23:54,620
like the government buildings,
like the courthouse, and so on.

360
00:23:54,620 --> 00:23:58,990

This huge-- I don't know, is it
basalt stone or what is this?

361
00:23:58,990 --> 00:23:59,870
Basalt, yes.

362
00:23:59,870 --> 00:24:01,340
Basalt stone.

363
00:24:01,340 --> 00:24:04,910
They took down stone by stone.

364
00:24:04,910 --> 00:24:07,130
As a matter of fact,
when I came back

365
00:24:07,130 --> 00:24:09,410
from the concentration
camp, they still

366
00:24:09,410 --> 00:24:10,370
took down the stones.

367
00:24:10,370 --> 00:24:13,020

368
00:24:13,020 --> 00:24:19,440
They used it for
themselves for buildings.

369
00:24:19,440 --> 00:24:21,060
And how old were
you at this time?

370
00:24:21,060 --> 00:24:24,290
23 years.

371
00:24:24,290 --> 00:24:34,040
So by late afternoon, the hall
had filled up pretty well.

372
00:24:34,040 --> 00:24:37,980

And the high press
of the party came in.

373
00:24:37,980 --> 00:24:42,620
Then one fellow reported to
one of the top officers, Herr

374
00:24:42,620 --> 00:24:45,860
Gruppenfuhrer,
everything is ready.

375
00:24:45,860 --> 00:24:49,340
Attention, forward, march.

376
00:24:49,340 --> 00:24:55,550
And then we had to sing a folk
song, that says, [NON-ENGLISH]..

377
00:24:55,550 --> 00:24:58,670
It means, when I leave
this little town,

378
00:24:58,670 --> 00:25:01,730
I leave my beloved back.

379
00:25:01,730 --> 00:25:07,100
When I return, I hope
to greet you again.

380
00:25:07,100 --> 00:25:12,170
The mob lining the walls
roared with laughter.

381
00:25:12,170 --> 00:25:16,490
We all knew we would go
to a concentration camp.

382
00:25:16,490 --> 00:25:18,980
We didn't know where.

383
00:25:18,980 --> 00:25:21,740
We report to a suburban station.

384

00:25:21,740 --> 00:25:24,650

And there the
railroad was standing.

385

00:25:24,650 --> 00:25:27,770

386

00:25:27,770 --> 00:25:29,840

When we were on the railroad--

387

00:25:29,840 --> 00:25:32,240

the train had already started--

388

00:25:32,240 --> 00:25:35,540

an officer came in, a
regular police officer.

389

00:25:35,540 --> 00:25:40,370

He said, listen,
folks, you apparently

390

00:25:40,370 --> 00:25:44,720

know by now that
where you will go.

391

00:25:44,720 --> 00:25:48,500

You will have very rough
times ahead of you.

392

00:25:48,500 --> 00:25:52,280

Try to sleep a little
bit, and God bless you.

393

00:25:52,280 --> 00:25:56,390

After we passed a certain
railroad junction,

394

00:25:56,390 --> 00:26:00,830

we knew the destination
was Buchenwald.

395

00:26:00,830 --> 00:26:06,485

It was late at night when
we arrived at Weimar.

396
00:26:06,485 --> 00:26:11,370
That is the station
nearest to Buchenwald.

397
00:26:11,370 --> 00:26:17,465
Army trucks with special SS
units were waiting for us.

398
00:26:17,465 --> 00:26:20,630
They shoveled us
into the trucks.

399
00:26:20,630 --> 00:26:25,850
And we had to sit there with
our heads between our knees.

400
00:26:25,850 --> 00:26:27,980
We didn't want to see
where we were going.

401
00:26:27,980 --> 00:26:29,630
Of course, everybody knew.

402
00:26:29,630 --> 00:26:30,630
Why see?

403
00:26:30,630 --> 00:26:35,600
This was absolutely
ridiculous, in the pitch dark,

404
00:26:35,600 --> 00:26:40,500
we wouldn't recognize
anything to begin with.

405
00:26:40,500 --> 00:26:43,730
So when he arrived
at Buchenwald,

406
00:26:43,730 --> 00:26:45,050
it was late at night.

407
00:26:45,050 --> 00:26:51,770
The whole place was light,
flood lighted all over.

408
00:26:51,770 --> 00:26:53,510
You had heard of
Buchenwald before--

409
00:26:53,510 --> 00:26:54,140
Oh, yes.

410
00:26:54,140 --> 00:26:58,400
As a matter of fact,
in June of '38,

411
00:26:58,400 --> 00:27:01,700
certain choose, amongst
them, one of my uncles

412
00:27:01,700 --> 00:27:05,630
were arrested and
sent to Buchenwald.

413
00:27:05,630 --> 00:27:10,800
These Jews had
certain police record.

414
00:27:10,800 --> 00:27:16,880
For instance, the
case of man uncle's,

415
00:27:16,880 --> 00:27:21,560
the children were a little noisy
and one neighbor complained.

416
00:27:21,560 --> 00:27:26,060
If you had any police record,
you were bounded up in June.

417
00:27:26,060 --> 00:27:29,220

418

00:27:29,220 --> 00:27:32,850

So when we arrived
at Buchenwald,

419

00:27:32,850 --> 00:27:40,200

the commander, stockily
built man, stood at the tower

420

00:27:40,200 --> 00:27:43,210

and barked at us,
you Jewish pigs,

421

00:27:43,210 --> 00:27:46,100

you are now here in Buchenwald.

422

00:27:46,100 --> 00:27:50,507

You have to obey the
rules and regulations.

423

00:27:50,507 --> 00:27:51,840

Otherwise, you will be punished.

424

00:27:51,840 --> 00:27:54,300

Heil Hitler.

425

00:27:54,300 --> 00:27:59,520

Then we were shoved
into wooden barracks.

426

00:27:59,520 --> 00:28:02,820

And for a couple
of days, we didn't

427

00:28:02,820 --> 00:28:05,130

know what will happen then.

428

00:28:05,130 --> 00:28:09,450

A few hundred of us
were put into uniforms.

429

00:28:09,450 --> 00:28:11,670

And we were afraid.

430

00:28:11,670 --> 00:28:17,070

Oh, my God, now it means
hard work at the quarries.

431

00:28:17,070 --> 00:28:25,490

But to our amazement, all we
did was marching and exercising.

432

00:28:25,490 --> 00:28:29,690

And we, the uniformed,
at that time,

433

00:28:29,690 --> 00:28:37,850

housed in nice brick buildings,
clean beds, decent food.

434

00:28:37,850 --> 00:28:40,700

And it was amazing.

435

00:28:40,700 --> 00:28:43,970

And, of course, you have
to remember one thing--

436

00:28:43,970 --> 00:28:46,690

the concentration camps
after Kristallnacht

437

00:28:46,690 --> 00:28:52,080

were in no comparison to the
ones during the war years.

438

00:28:52,080 --> 00:28:56,360

As a matter of fact,
after a week or so,

439

00:28:56,360 --> 00:29:00,680

all veterans of World
War I were released.

440

00:29:00,680 --> 00:29:04,460

And then little
by little, people

441
00:29:04,460 --> 00:29:06,500
were released who
could prove they

442
00:29:06,500 --> 00:29:12,380
would emigrate within a
certain time from Germany.

443
00:29:12,380 --> 00:29:19,100
So as time went on,
after about three weeks,

444
00:29:19,100 --> 00:29:21,230
we were put again
in civilian clothes.

445
00:29:21,230 --> 00:29:24,800

446
00:29:24,800 --> 00:29:27,290
It was amazing that
amongst the group who

447
00:29:27,290 --> 00:29:31,100
had been put in uniforms,
there was a group

448
00:29:31,100 --> 00:29:33,320
from the same congregation.

449
00:29:33,320 --> 00:29:39,560
And we are secretly at night,
we huddled together and prayed.

450
00:29:39,560 --> 00:29:45,620
Now, it was five weeks and
for the eve of Hanukkah.

451
00:29:45,620 --> 00:29:51,620
And all of said, how
can we obtain a candle.

452

00:29:51,620 --> 00:30:01,940

Somehow we should have the
opportunity to lit a light.

453

00:30:01,940 --> 00:30:04,260

So that was Friday--

454

00:30:04,260 --> 00:30:06,890

455

00:30:06,890 --> 00:30:09,350

Saturday was the
eve of Hanukkah,

456

00:30:09,350 --> 00:30:12,560

the same like this year.

457

00:30:12,560 --> 00:30:17,060

On Saturday morning, every
morning, over the loud speaker,

458

00:30:17,060 --> 00:30:20,960

they made the announcement,
will the following people

459

00:30:20,960 --> 00:30:24,470

with their belongings
report to the main gate?

460

00:30:24,470 --> 00:30:28,580

Because my name starts with
A, I was one of the first.

461

00:30:28,580 --> 00:30:31,950

I was very happy of course.

462

00:30:31,950 --> 00:30:37,310

We were giving our original
clothes and belongings.

463

00:30:37,310 --> 00:30:40,220

And we were shaved.

464
00:30:40,220 --> 00:30:43,130
Our heads were shaved
like when we came in.

465
00:30:43,130 --> 00:30:46,336

466
00:30:46,336 --> 00:30:48,510
What was the purpose of
the shaving of the head?

467
00:30:48,510 --> 00:30:50,060
We should look like criminals.

468
00:30:50,060 --> 00:30:52,770

469
00:30:52,770 --> 00:30:57,872
They had the habit to shave
the heads of all prisoners.

470
00:30:57,872 --> 00:31:00,770

471
00:31:00,770 --> 00:31:08,055
So before we
departed for Weimar,

472
00:31:08,055 --> 00:31:10,400
the vice commander came--

473
00:31:10,400 --> 00:31:13,940
a very vicious guy,
a type of Eichmann--

474
00:31:13,940 --> 00:31:18,560
and he said, I have to say
something before you leave.

475
00:31:18,560 --> 00:31:24,940
And he said, I don't blame you

that you were are happy now

476

00:31:24,940 --> 00:31:28,340
to leave this place.

477

00:31:28,340 --> 00:31:32,180
You know, you have been
released under the conditions

478

00:31:32,180 --> 00:31:35,870
that you will leave Germany
within in a short time.

479

00:31:35,870 --> 00:31:41,390
If you don't, you will come
back here and for good.

480

00:31:41,390 --> 00:31:44,660
Now, while you are
here in Germany,

481

00:31:44,660 --> 00:31:46,930
your main concern is to get out.

482

00:31:46,930 --> 00:31:49,850
And we won't talk
much about here.

483

00:31:49,850 --> 00:31:51,890
Once you're out
of Germany, don't

484

00:31:51,890 --> 00:31:55,970
think you can tell horror
stories about this place.

485

00:31:55,970 --> 00:31:59,120
Of course, we can do
nothing about you to you.

486

00:31:59,120 --> 00:32:04,940
But we can terminate on
your families and friends.

487
00:32:04,940 --> 00:32:07,760
What this means I hope
you have learned here.

488
00:32:07,760 --> 00:32:10,250
Heil Hitler.

489
00:32:10,250 --> 00:32:14,690
Did you see any brutalities
there while you were there?

490
00:32:14,690 --> 00:32:18,448
I personally didn't see it.

491
00:32:18,448 --> 00:32:19,490
Did you hear of anything?

492
00:32:19,490 --> 00:32:23,990
But to hear, for
instance, one man,

493
00:32:23,990 --> 00:32:29,750
his son were amongst
the same group.

494
00:32:29,750 --> 00:32:33,650
One day, he was told
his father had died.

495
00:32:33,650 --> 00:32:37,030
Cause, of course, unknown.

496
00:32:37,030 --> 00:32:39,430
So he said, Kaddish.

497
00:32:39,430 --> 00:32:43,990
While we were secretly praying,
he was able to say Kaddish.

498
00:32:43,990 --> 00:32:47,980
Of course, he never knew

what happened to him.

499

00:32:47,980 --> 00:32:54,040

We heard from how many
that they were whipped.

500

00:32:54,040 --> 00:32:58,340

Besides the death penalty,
they had the book.

501

00:32:58,340 --> 00:33:10,345

It was a chair without a back
to which the prisoner was bound

502

00:33:10,345 --> 00:33:18,930

with leather, and said
two of these officers

503

00:33:18,930 --> 00:33:25,910

beat him with a horse whip,
I think, 40 times or what.

504

00:33:25,910 --> 00:33:30,800

And every night was
a roll call that

505

00:33:30,800 --> 00:33:36,890

happened to us when we were
in uniform too and the check

506

00:33:36,890 --> 00:33:38,870

if everybody was there.

507

00:33:38,870 --> 00:33:43,760

And just a few nights, we were
already no more in uniform,

508

00:33:43,760 --> 00:33:47,070

the roll call and
two were missing.

509

00:33:47,070 --> 00:33:52,210

And it was already pretty

cold, because Buchenwald

510
00:33:52,210 --> 00:33:56,210
is located in Thuringia Hills.

511
00:33:56,210 --> 00:34:00,860
And it's very harsh
and long winter.

512
00:34:00,860 --> 00:34:05,990
And they had to stay at
attention the whole night.

513
00:34:05,990 --> 00:34:08,300
At the end of the
night, a few died.

514
00:34:08,300 --> 00:34:09,690
I don't know how many.

515
00:34:09,690 --> 00:34:13,139
But there were about
two dozen frostbitten

516
00:34:13,139 --> 00:34:15,110
with hands and feet.

517
00:34:15,110 --> 00:34:19,739

518
00:34:19,739 --> 00:34:22,020
So how long were you
there all together?

519
00:34:22,020 --> 00:34:24,280
5 weeks.

520
00:34:24,280 --> 00:34:32,550
So when we left Buchenwald,
this time we left by buses.

521
00:34:32,550 --> 00:34:34,920

And we went to Weimar.

522

00:34:34,920 --> 00:34:38,380

And Weimar, was the city
of Goethe and Schiller.

523

00:34:38,380 --> 00:34:41,639

And there's a big monument.

524

00:34:41,639 --> 00:34:47,219

When we passed this, I said
to myself, what a mockery.

525

00:34:47,219 --> 00:34:52,070

And Weimar, the city of
freedom, of literature,

526

00:34:52,070 --> 00:34:56,850

of Goethe and Schiller,
both expressed

527

00:34:56,850 --> 00:35:01,590

in their writings
freedom and liberty,

528

00:35:01,590 --> 00:35:05,590

and Weimar and Buchenwald.

529

00:35:05,590 --> 00:35:07,510

So when he came to
the railroad station--

530

00:35:07,510 --> 00:35:08,660

Was your father with you?

531

00:35:08,660 --> 00:35:09,160

No.

532

00:35:09,160 --> 00:35:13,720

My father was released
because he was a veteran.

533

00:35:13,720 --> 00:35:16,795

When we came to the railroad
station, the station master--

534

00:35:16,795 --> 00:35:19,630

535

00:35:19,630 --> 00:35:24,580

the Jewish community had
rented one of the waiting rooms

536

00:35:24,580 --> 00:35:27,820

and had made a little
cafeteria sale.

537

00:35:27,820 --> 00:35:33,470

So the station master
came in and said,

538

00:35:33,470 --> 00:35:36,010

the commander of
Buchenwald told us,

539

00:35:36,010 --> 00:35:38,500

you should take only
the local trains.

540

00:35:38,500 --> 00:35:41,350

As long as we run
the German railroads,

541

00:35:41,350 --> 00:35:44,940

you take the train
which comes first.

542

00:35:44,940 --> 00:35:48,290

It was three days before
Christmas and the trains

543

00:35:48,290 --> 00:35:50,670

were packed--

544

00:35:50,670 --> 00:35:56,010

vacation all over, universities,
schools, the armed forces.

545
00:35:56,010 --> 00:35:59,730
But we didn't mind standing.

546
00:35:59,730 --> 00:36:08,990
So the German rail cars at that
time were differently arranged.

547
00:36:08,990 --> 00:36:12,930
They were compartments
with rolling doors

548
00:36:12,930 --> 00:36:17,570
and a little hallway, corridor.

549
00:36:17,570 --> 00:36:22,430
So the conductor
came for the tickets.

550
00:36:22,430 --> 00:36:26,870
And he looked at one compartment
and said, is this seat free?

551
00:36:26,870 --> 00:36:30,890
And young fellow, not in
uniform, but with the party

552
00:36:30,890 --> 00:36:34,370
pin snapped, this is my seat.

553
00:36:34,370 --> 00:36:40,070
Excuse me, sir, said, I
thought, this old gentleman

554
00:36:40,070 --> 00:36:41,825
wanted to get a seat for him.

555
00:36:41,825 --> 00:36:45,920
Did he ever have pity
with us, he snapped.

556

00:36:45,920 --> 00:36:50,090

So the conductor looked to him
from top to bottom and said,

557

00:36:50,090 --> 00:36:54,150

they are human beings too.

558

00:36:54,150 --> 00:37:00,040

There was a high
officer of the SR.

559

00:37:00,040 --> 00:37:04,640

I checked it because they had
so many ribbons and stars.

560

00:37:04,640 --> 00:37:06,550

And when one of
the stewards came

561

00:37:06,550 --> 00:37:12,560

with coffee and sandwiches,
he said to him, hold a minute.

562

00:37:12,560 --> 00:37:15,130

And he turned to
me, may I buy you

563

00:37:15,130 --> 00:37:18,040

some coffee or some sandwich?

564

00:37:18,040 --> 00:37:20,590

And I said to him, thank
you, that's very kind,

565

00:37:20,590 --> 00:37:25,030

but we just had our
refreshments in Weimar.

566

00:37:25,030 --> 00:37:27,580

As I said before,
there were people

567

00:37:27,580 --> 00:37:33,980
even in the high echelon of the
party who didn't agree with it.

568
00:37:33,980 --> 00:37:38,200
But as I said, they didn't
have the guts or the courage

569
00:37:38,200 --> 00:37:42,756
to act and to do something.

570
00:37:42,756 --> 00:37:45,510
Mm, hmm.

571
00:37:45,510 --> 00:37:47,120
Yeah.

572
00:37:47,120 --> 00:37:49,440
Now did you spend
time in Weimar?

573
00:37:49,440 --> 00:37:52,320
No, we took the first train.

574
00:37:52,320 --> 00:37:58,470
When I came home, it was
the first night of Hanukkah.

575
00:37:58,470 --> 00:38:00,690
I lit a candle.

576
00:38:00,690 --> 00:38:03,370
And for the first
time in my life,

577
00:38:03,370 --> 00:38:07,410
I realized the meaning
of the benedictions.

578
00:38:07,410 --> 00:38:13,470
You say, Lord of the
universe who does miracles,

579

00:38:13,470 --> 00:38:16,500
in those days and nowadays.

580

00:38:16,500 --> 00:38:20,000
And that was a miracle.

581

00:38:20,000 --> 00:38:24,570
And how long did you stay
in Germany after that?

582

00:38:24,570 --> 00:38:29,060
I was supposed to
stay only four weeks.

583

00:38:29,060 --> 00:38:36,290
But I had to report each and
every day to the Gestapo.

584

00:38:36,290 --> 00:38:38,870
But the Gestapo
officer, listen, he

585

00:38:38,870 --> 00:38:42,130
said, I give you an extension.

586

00:38:42,130 --> 00:38:46,930
But if you don't be out
after the extension, back.

587

00:38:46,930 --> 00:38:51,490
But fortunately, it worked out.

588

00:38:51,490 --> 00:38:56,260
So I left in the first week of
February and went to London.

589

00:38:56,260 --> 00:38:59,890
The former boss of my
father was kind enough

590

00:38:59,890 --> 00:39:03,940
to give me a permit

to stay in London.

591

00:39:03,940 --> 00:39:09,040

Otherwise, I doubt if I
would have ever have got out,

592

00:39:09,040 --> 00:39:13,510

because the American
government didn't

593

00:39:13,510 --> 00:39:17,440

increase the quarter by one.

594

00:39:17,440 --> 00:39:21,460

And people had to wait years
until their number was up.

595

00:39:21,460 --> 00:39:24,090

596

00:39:24,090 --> 00:39:26,670

Your parents, of
course, stayed behind.

597

00:39:26,670 --> 00:39:29,580

My parents stayed behind.

598

00:39:29,580 --> 00:39:32,700

So one day when I was not--

599

00:39:32,700 --> 00:39:33,990

it was May.

600

00:39:33,990 --> 00:39:35,860

I got a card from Belgium.

601

00:39:35,860 --> 00:39:38,980

And I was surprised, who
writes me from Belgium?

602

00:39:38,980 --> 00:39:40,890

And I saw the handwriting

of my parents.

603

00:39:40,890 --> 00:39:43,620

And I said, what is that?

604

00:39:43,620 --> 00:39:48,870

And I called up the office of
the former boss of my father.

605

00:39:48,870 --> 00:39:52,000

And he assured me
everything is fine.

606

00:39:52,000 --> 00:39:57,120

And later, my parents
wrote me, everything is OK.

607

00:39:57,120 --> 00:40:00,580

They had gotten to--

608

00:40:00,580 --> 00:40:05,010

The former boss of my father
sent two confidential men

609

00:40:05,010 --> 00:40:09,690

to Frankfurt in April.

610

00:40:09,690 --> 00:40:15,540

And he told my parents, we
will bring you out of Germany.

611

00:40:15,540 --> 00:40:19,150

It will involve some risk.

612

00:40:19,150 --> 00:40:24,320

We give you a few days to think
it over and then let us know.

613

00:40:24,320 --> 00:40:32,450

So they brought my
parents and another family

614

00:40:32,450 --> 00:40:35,150
with a man that worked
with the same company

615
00:40:35,150 --> 00:40:40,800
by the cover of night
in Belgium, Brussels.

616
00:40:40,800 --> 00:40:45,070
Of course, nobody
knew at the time

617
00:40:45,070 --> 00:40:47,760
that this was not safe either.

618
00:40:47,760 --> 00:40:51,590

619
00:40:51,590 --> 00:40:56,660
In 1940, of course,
as you know, the Nazis

620
00:40:56,660 --> 00:40:58,570
made the second big move.

621
00:40:58,570 --> 00:41:06,170
They invaded France, Belgium,
the Netherlands, Luxembourg,

622
00:41:06,170 --> 00:41:08,870
and Norway.

623
00:41:08,870 --> 00:41:14,850
For a couple of weeks, I didn't
hear any news from my parents.

624
00:41:14,850 --> 00:41:20,440
Then I got a letter from my
father from southern France,

625
00:41:20,440 --> 00:41:23,300
Saint-Cyprien.

626

00:41:23,300 --> 00:41:26,060

The French government
had established

627

00:41:26,060 --> 00:41:31,550

some camps, not concentration
camps, camps for refugees.

628

00:41:31,550 --> 00:41:38,300

They had hoped it would save
the Jews from the Nazis.

629

00:41:38,300 --> 00:41:42,920

But unfortunately, as it turned
out, it was only temporarily.

630

00:41:42,920 --> 00:41:46,720

631

00:41:46,720 --> 00:41:48,710

What happened to
you in the meantime?

632

00:41:48,710 --> 00:41:49,300

Pardon me.

633

00:41:49,300 --> 00:41:51,080

What happened to you?

634

00:41:51,080 --> 00:41:53,980

I was in London.

635

00:41:53,980 --> 00:41:57,130

One of the conditions
with the permit

636

00:41:57,130 --> 00:42:00,880

was you were not
allowed to work.

637

00:42:00,880 --> 00:42:06,010

You shouldn't take away a

job from the English people.

638

00:42:06,010 --> 00:42:10,490

With it was-- the
person whoever it was

639

00:42:10,490 --> 00:42:14,470

had to submit a
certain sum of money

640

00:42:14,470 --> 00:42:16,990

to enable the person to live.

641

00:42:16,990 --> 00:42:19,960

642

00:42:19,960 --> 00:42:26,110

So I rented a small attic room
in the Finsbury Park section

643

00:42:26,110 --> 00:42:28,110

of London.

644

00:42:28,110 --> 00:42:32,830

And I ate with friends.

645

00:42:32,830 --> 00:42:40,170

So I managed to go through
with very little of money.

646

00:42:40,170 --> 00:42:43,990

Then finally, in November,
I got the message

647

00:42:43,990 --> 00:42:47,380

from the American Embassy--

648

00:42:47,380 --> 00:42:52,280

report for physical examination.

649

00:42:52,280 --> 00:42:54,050

The examination was fine.

650
00:42:54,050 --> 00:42:56,160
Everything was OK.

651
00:42:56,160 --> 00:43:02,270
Then I was told, go in
touch with the Cunard lines.

652
00:43:02,270 --> 00:43:06,320
They will take care
of the passage.

653
00:43:06,320 --> 00:43:12,850
And here they told me,
because in the meantime,

654
00:43:12,850 --> 00:43:18,320
on September 1, the Nazis
have invaded Poland.

655
00:43:18,320 --> 00:43:23,470
And, of course, that means
France and Great Britain

656
00:43:23,470 --> 00:43:26,890
declared war on Germany.

657
00:43:26,890 --> 00:43:32,290
And because of war time,
everything had to be secret.

658
00:43:32,290 --> 00:43:38,084
So the Cunard line told
me, we will let you know--

659
00:43:38,084 --> 00:43:41,290
we send you first notice.

660
00:43:41,290 --> 00:43:47,080
That means prepare yourself,
get ready to leave.

661

00:43:47,080 --> 00:43:53,260
At the same time, send a cable
to your relatives in America.

662
00:43:53,260 --> 00:43:58,060
Just cable, go Cunard.

663
00:43:58,060 --> 00:44:01,930
Nothing more was allowed.

664
00:44:01,930 --> 00:44:05,620
When my cousin went to the
Cunard office in New York,

665
00:44:05,620 --> 00:44:10,870
we was told, we let you know
when the ship will come.

666
00:44:10,870 --> 00:44:17,290
So it's the last
week of January,

667
00:44:17,290 --> 00:44:21,280
I got a telegram from Cunard--

668
00:44:21,280 --> 00:44:28,120
report at Liverpool
on January 27.

669
00:44:28,120 --> 00:44:31,300
When I left London,
it started to snow.

670
00:44:31,300 --> 00:44:35,420
And it turned into a snow storm.

671
00:44:35,420 --> 00:44:38,860
And we arrived in Liverpool,
Liverpool at the time

672
00:44:38,860 --> 00:44:44,470
was busy, because one of the
main parts for the British Navy

673
00:44:44,470 --> 00:44:53,230
and besides that, now we see
snow storm, people got stuck.

674
00:44:53,230 --> 00:44:55,840
And we couldn't
get a hotel room.

675
00:44:55,840 --> 00:45:00,940
So we stayed at the waiting
room of the railroad station.

676
00:45:00,940 --> 00:45:08,050
Next day, we boarded the
liner, the ocean liner.

677
00:45:08,050 --> 00:45:11,860
The ocean liner was painted
gray because of war time.

678
00:45:11,860 --> 00:45:16,695
So it couldn't be detected
so easily as usual.

679
00:45:16,695 --> 00:45:20,140

680
00:45:20,140 --> 00:45:21,700
We didn't know exact time.

681
00:45:21,700 --> 00:45:24,160
When we were sitting
at dinner, we

682
00:45:24,160 --> 00:45:27,070
heard rumbling of the
engines and suddenly we

683
00:45:27,070 --> 00:45:29,950
were on the ocean.

684

00:45:29,950 --> 00:45:33,130

The weather was
first very rough.

685

00:45:33,130 --> 00:45:38,260

Some minutes it turned out
nice, we went up on board.

686

00:45:38,260 --> 00:45:40,230

And suddenly, I noticed
one of the officers

687

00:45:40,230 --> 00:45:42,190

took out his telescope.

688

00:45:42,190 --> 00:45:46,390

And a tiny object
was on the horizon.

689

00:45:46,390 --> 00:45:48,580

And we all was a little afraid.

690

00:45:48,580 --> 00:45:50,410

What will it be?

691

00:45:50,410 --> 00:45:53,620

But fortunately, it turned out
to be a Scandinavian merchant

692

00:45:53,620 --> 00:45:55,550

ship.

693

00:45:55,550 --> 00:46:02,110

So we landed, ironically, on
Lincoln's birthday, February

694

00:46:02,110 --> 00:46:05,630

11, in New York.

695

00:46:05,630 --> 00:46:07,080

And it was because
of your cousins

696

00:46:07,080 --> 00:46:11,310

that you were going there,
coming to the United States.

697

00:46:11,310 --> 00:46:15,060

My cousins went first.

698

00:46:15,060 --> 00:46:23,670

They left in-- was
it, I think '37?

699

00:46:23,670 --> 00:46:27,655

They left in '37.

700

00:46:27,655 --> 00:46:29,790

The one in '37.

701

00:46:29,790 --> 00:46:33,720

The other left on the
very day when my uncle

702

00:46:33,720 --> 00:46:37,050

was arrested in June '38.

703

00:46:37,050 --> 00:46:40,860

And my mother-- he went
through Frankfurt--

704

00:46:40,860 --> 00:46:44,530

and my mother cried,
and said, Abe,

705

00:46:44,530 --> 00:46:52,400

do everything possible to get
Bernard out and everybody out.

706

00:46:52,400 --> 00:46:57,020

So my cousin got--

707

00:46:57,020 --> 00:47:00,470

you know, at that
time, there was still

708
00:47:00,470 --> 00:47:06,950
depression in America and
still plenty unemployment.

709
00:47:06,950 --> 00:47:12,440
And for someone who had
no professional experience

710
00:47:12,440 --> 00:47:17,250
or background, it
was very tough.

711
00:47:17,250 --> 00:47:20,570
Especially if you
were an observant Jew,

712
00:47:20,570 --> 00:47:22,490
it was very tough to find a job.

713
00:47:22,490 --> 00:47:25,550
How much education
and what field

714
00:47:25,550 --> 00:47:27,840
did you have your education?

715
00:47:27,840 --> 00:47:30,170
I had a complete high school.

716
00:47:30,170 --> 00:47:35,540
And the high school in
Germany, the last few years

717
00:47:35,540 --> 00:47:41,530
are almost equivalent to the
first two years of college.

718
00:47:41,530 --> 00:47:48,280
As a matter of fact, when later,
when I wanted to start again

719

00:47:48,280 --> 00:47:51,820
and I went to high school,
they gave me credit

720
00:47:51,820 --> 00:47:56,810
and I had to do only
two years of high school

721
00:47:56,810 --> 00:48:00,090
here in America,
because I wanted

722
00:48:00,090 --> 00:48:03,720
to get American high
school, so that if I

723
00:48:03,720 --> 00:48:07,780
would have the opportunity
to go to college.

724
00:48:07,780 --> 00:48:13,530
So that would be easier
if you have a diploma

725
00:48:13,530 --> 00:48:15,660
from American high school.

726
00:48:15,660 --> 00:48:19,320
Did you have the opportunity
to do further study?

727
00:48:19,320 --> 00:48:20,340
Unfortunately not.

728
00:48:20,340 --> 00:48:23,430
I didn't have the money.

729
00:48:23,430 --> 00:48:29,460
But I was able to work
in the medical field.

730
00:48:29,460 --> 00:48:34,290
And somehow, I worked in a

laboratories of a hospital.

731

00:48:34,290 --> 00:48:35,910

And it was rewarding.

732

00:48:35,910 --> 00:48:40,400

And it gave me satisfaction.

733

00:48:40,400 --> 00:48:42,230

It was not a physician.

734

00:48:42,230 --> 00:48:48,200

But it was a late start,
and I was satisfied.

735

00:48:48,200 --> 00:48:52,913

When you landed here,
did someone meet you?

736

00:48:52,913 --> 00:48:53,580

Yeah, my cousin.

737

00:48:53,580 --> 00:48:54,440

Your cousin.

738

00:48:54,440 --> 00:48:57,350

And did they have a
place for you to stay?

739

00:48:57,350 --> 00:49:04,280

Yeah, I stayed with my aunt
and her family had come before.

740

00:49:04,280 --> 00:49:06,350

And I stayed with for
a couple of months.

741

00:49:06,350 --> 00:49:07,790

Where did you live?

742

00:49:07,790 --> 00:49:10,280

At the time, it was in Brooklyn.

743
00:49:10,280 --> 00:49:14,150
I don't know, the
Flatbush section.

744
00:49:14,150 --> 00:49:18,320
I don't know which part of
Flatbush, but it was Flatbush.

745
00:49:18,320 --> 00:49:21,850
What were your first impressions
of the United States?

746
00:49:21,850 --> 00:49:25,680
Of course, you are awed.

747
00:49:25,680 --> 00:49:29,220
You see these
gigantic buildings.

748
00:49:29,220 --> 00:49:33,640
And it's a different
life, you see.

749
00:49:33,640 --> 00:49:36,390
The subways-- of
course, I experience

750
00:49:36,390 --> 00:49:37,800
the subways in London.

751
00:49:37,800 --> 00:49:42,900

752
00:49:42,900 --> 00:49:46,830
The subways in London
are very really nice.

753
00:49:46,830 --> 00:49:51,300
And that was not so
much impressive, but

754

00:49:51,300 --> 00:49:57,780
the hugeness of New York
City, the multitude of people,

755
00:49:57,780 --> 00:49:59,910
and the--

756
00:49:59,910 --> 00:50:01,710
of course, at a
time, we are not so

757
00:50:01,710 --> 00:50:10,200
many are Blacks and especially
Hispanics or Asiatic,

758
00:50:10,200 --> 00:50:17,140
but nevertheless, it was a
completely different world,

759
00:50:17,140 --> 00:50:21,035
a world so different
in every respect.

760
00:50:21,035 --> 00:50:23,790

761
00:50:23,790 --> 00:50:25,290
You had to adjust to it.

762
00:50:25,290 --> 00:50:31,990
I mean, it was--

763
00:50:31,990 --> 00:50:37,240
Do remember personal
difficulties you had adjusting?

764
00:50:37,240 --> 00:50:40,360
Oh, not so much.

765
00:50:40,360 --> 00:50:45,650

766

00:50:45,650 --> 00:50:52,360

So I worked for
a couple of years

767

00:50:52,360 --> 00:50:55,045

on a chicken farm
in south Jersey.

768

00:50:55,045 --> 00:50:59,250

769

00:50:59,250 --> 00:51:03,060

My physical condition at
the time were not the best.

770

00:51:03,060 --> 00:51:10,290

I was examined by the
Army and classified 4F.

771

00:51:10,290 --> 00:51:17,790

So I worked on a chicken farm.

772

00:51:17,790 --> 00:51:20,340

And a neighbor said
she knows somebody

773

00:51:20,340 --> 00:51:23,810

in the Catholic hospital.

774

00:51:23,810 --> 00:51:33,110

And I went to there in Hoboken,
and I worked as a helper

775

00:51:33,110 --> 00:51:36,470

and I worked in the laboratory,
not as a technician,

776

00:51:36,470 --> 00:51:40,580

but just cleaning
glassware, paraphernalia,

777

00:51:40,580 --> 00:51:43,560

and cleaning the place.

778
00:51:43,560 --> 00:51:47,010
And I got in touch with the
principal of the high school.

779
00:51:47,010 --> 00:51:50,760
And he said you should
definitely go to high school.

780
00:51:50,760 --> 00:51:53,130
Of course, they didn't have
an evening high school.

781
00:51:53,130 --> 00:51:56,520
I went to the evening high
school in Jersey City.

782
00:51:56,520 --> 00:52:03,440
I didn't have looked at
textbook for many years.

783
00:52:03,440 --> 00:52:06,030
The last time I was in '34.

784
00:52:06,030 --> 00:52:08,340
And that was '48.

785
00:52:08,340 --> 00:52:12,270

786
00:52:12,270 --> 00:52:15,450
So I got top grades.

787
00:52:15,450 --> 00:52:20,490
I graduated with honors and
was awarded the American Legion

788
00:52:20,490 --> 00:52:23,040
school award.

789
00:52:23,040 --> 00:52:32,560
Then I went to school

especially which

790

00:52:32,560 --> 00:52:38,140
teaches medical technicians,
X-ray technicians, anyhow,

791

00:52:38,140 --> 00:52:41,740
people in the medical field.

792

00:52:41,740 --> 00:52:43,720
And then applied
for a job, and I

793

00:52:43,720 --> 00:52:49,300
was lucky to get another
job at the Beth Israel

794

00:52:49,300 --> 00:52:52,270
Hospital in Newark, New Jersey.

795

00:52:52,270 --> 00:53:00,430
And I worked there from
'53 until December 31, '82.

796

00:53:00,430 --> 00:53:09,070

797

00:53:09,070 --> 00:53:13,880
So it was a late start.

798

00:53:13,880 --> 00:53:18,340
But it was at least
some satisfaction.

799

00:53:18,340 --> 00:53:20,890
Some people had it worse.

800

00:53:20,890 --> 00:53:27,370
I met people-- one
person was working

801

00:53:27,370 --> 00:53:31,510

in the storeroom
of the hospital.

802
00:53:31,510 --> 00:53:37,160
He was a judge in the superior
court in Breslau, Germany.

803
00:53:37,160 --> 00:53:40,670
One man was an orderly.

804
00:53:40,670 --> 00:53:45,580
He was a member of the
Vienna Symphony Orchestra.

805
00:53:45,580 --> 00:53:50,800
So I felt myself lucky to
have a position like I had.

806
00:53:50,800 --> 00:53:54,710
We're going to pause for a few
minutes, and we'll continue.

807
00:53:54,710 --> 00:53:57,790
I'd like to go back and hear
more about what happened

808
00:53:57,790 --> 00:54:00,700
and what you heard from
Europe during this time.

809
00:54:00,700 --> 00:54:02,250
Thank you.

810
00:54:02,250 --> 00:54:10,027