

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:14,580

2

00:00:14,580 --> 00:00:17,430

Mr. Ahrend, we'd like  
to go back a little bit.

3

00:00:17,430 --> 00:00:19,230

And perhaps you can  
tell us a little

4

00:00:19,230 --> 00:00:24,300

of what you heard from  
Europe at the time

5

00:00:24,300 --> 00:00:26,460

after you left,  
regarding your family

6

00:00:26,460 --> 00:00:27,660

and people that you knew.

7

00:00:27,660 --> 00:00:31,140

8

00:00:31,140 --> 00:00:35,460

As I said, my parents were  
brought out to Belgium.

9

00:00:35,460 --> 00:00:40,540

10

00:00:40,540 --> 00:00:44,340

A sister of my mother  
and her family,

11

00:00:44,340 --> 00:00:47,070

they managed to get  
out just in time.

12

00:00:47,070 --> 00:00:49,590

13  
00:00:49,590 --> 00:00:54,660  
Friends of mine,  
their three daughters

14  
00:00:54,660 --> 00:00:58,440  
were already in America and  
they had worked feverish

15  
00:00:58,440 --> 00:01:01,500  
to get their parents out.

16  
00:01:01,500 --> 00:01:03,570  
So finally, they came out.

17  
00:01:03,570 --> 00:01:09,120  
They and their sister's  
family came out

18  
00:01:09,120 --> 00:01:15,870  
with the last ship which  
left Germany to America.

19  
00:01:15,870 --> 00:01:19,710  
One sad story is the--

20  
00:01:19,710 --> 00:01:27,600  
a cousin of my mother, her  
husband, and two daughters

21  
00:01:27,600 --> 00:01:32,880  
lived in a town, in  
a city in Bavaria.

22  
00:01:32,880 --> 00:01:37,240  
The eldest daughter came  
with the children's transport

23  
00:01:37,240 --> 00:01:42,060  
to Israel in '36.

24

00:01:42,060 --> 00:01:46,530  
In '37 her father visited her.

25  
00:01:46,530 --> 00:01:50,220  
And two of his cousins and  
families were already there.

26  
00:01:50,220 --> 00:01:56,610  
And they all pleaded with  
him, Jules, please stay here.

27  
00:01:56,610 --> 00:01:59,460  
You go back into hell.

28  
00:01:59,460 --> 00:02:01,710  
You never know if  
you will get out.

29  
00:02:01,710 --> 00:02:02,760  
Please, stay here.

30  
00:02:02,760 --> 00:02:03,570  
He would listen.

31  
00:02:03,570 --> 00:02:07,470  
He said, I have an  
obligation to my family.

32  
00:02:07,470 --> 00:02:11,460  
And he was cantor and teacher  
of the Jewish community.

33  
00:02:11,460 --> 00:02:13,365  
And I have an obligation  
to my community.

34  
00:02:13,365 --> 00:02:14,880  
And went back.

35  
00:02:14,880 --> 00:02:20,640  
Unfortunately, his wife  
and his young daughter

36

00:02:20,640 --> 00:02:22,710  
died in the concentration camp.

37

00:02:22,710 --> 00:02:27,540

38

00:02:27,540 --> 00:02:35,020  
Because most of the closest  
family were able to get out,

39

00:02:35,020 --> 00:02:38,970  
but some close relatives  
I've never heard of,

40

00:02:38,970 --> 00:02:40,710  
we found out later  
they died too.

41

00:02:40,710 --> 00:02:45,780

42

00:02:45,780 --> 00:02:48,270  
What about your own parents?

43

00:02:48,270 --> 00:02:50,605  
My parents, as I said,  
they were brought out.

44

00:02:50,605 --> 00:02:51,480  
They were bought out.

45

00:02:51,480 --> 00:02:55,680  
Brought out, as I mentioned  
before, by a confidential man

46

00:02:55,680 --> 00:02:57,360  
into Brussels.

47

00:02:57,360 --> 00:03:02,950  
My father was sent  
first to Saint-Cyprien.

48

00:03:02,950 --> 00:03:05,840

Then I sent a package there.

49

00:03:05,840 --> 00:03:11,850

And then I got a letter  
from the big camp, Gurs,

50

00:03:11,850 --> 00:03:15,960

which was one of the main camps  
where Jewish refugees were

51

00:03:15,960 --> 00:03:18,040

sent.

52

00:03:18,040 --> 00:03:24,490

And after the war, a cousin  
of my mother and her husband,

53

00:03:24,490 --> 00:03:28,590

who were fortunate to  
get out of Germany,

54

00:03:28,590 --> 00:03:31,500

they said they met  
my father in Gurs.

55

00:03:31,500 --> 00:03:36,390

That was in 1941.

56

00:03:36,390 --> 00:03:42,030

Late in 1942 I got a  
letter from my father.

57

00:03:42,030 --> 00:03:43,530

I didn't get the letter--

58

00:03:43,530 --> 00:03:46,410

I had sent a letter  
to my father and it

59

00:03:46,410 --> 00:03:49,470

came back much, much later.

60  
00:03:49,470 --> 00:03:54,060  
Stamped on it was  
deported without address.

61  
00:03:54,060 --> 00:04:00,510  
And that mean that's the end.

62  
00:04:00,510 --> 00:04:04,680  
Of course, nobody knew at  
the time what was going on.

63  
00:04:04,680 --> 00:04:06,510  
You heard reports.

64  
00:04:06,510 --> 00:04:09,840  
You heard-- you read papers.

65  
00:04:09,840 --> 00:04:16,560  
But I have to say the American  
media purposely suppressed

66  
00:04:16,560 --> 00:04:17,880  
the news.

67  
00:04:17,880 --> 00:04:23,340  
And Walter Lippmann, the dean of  
the press corps, in particular,

68  
00:04:23,340 --> 00:04:27,960  
I say was much  
responsible for it.

69  
00:04:27,960 --> 00:04:32,310  
And Jewish people  
in the limelight,

70  
00:04:32,310 --> 00:04:36,540  
they were afraid to  
touch the subject.

71  
00:04:36,540 --> 00:04:43,590

They didn't want to stir up  
any controversial reaction.

72  
00:04:43,590 --> 00:04:48,090  
Because there was  
still depression.

73  
00:04:48,090 --> 00:04:53,010  
And they were afraid if  
they would admit Jews,

74  
00:04:53,010 --> 00:04:55,770  
then the American people  
would say, listen,

75  
00:04:55,770 --> 00:04:59,490  
we are without jobs and  
you leave these people in,

76  
00:04:59,490 --> 00:05:00,450  
take our jobs.

77  
00:05:00,450 --> 00:05:03,060

78  
00:05:03,060 --> 00:05:06,060  
A lot could-- see, not  
only to Jewish people,

79  
00:05:06,060 --> 00:05:11,010  
but the whole government,  
and not only the American

80  
00:05:11,010 --> 00:05:14,580  
government, the  
whole world was--

81  
00:05:14,580 --> 00:05:18,490  
is responsible.

82  
00:05:18,490 --> 00:05:22,960  
There was silence,  
indifference, and apathy.

83  
00:05:22,960 --> 00:05:25,570  
They could have  
done many things.

84  
00:05:25,570 --> 00:05:29,410  
They could have saved  
thousands of Jews,

85  
00:05:29,410 --> 00:05:31,630  
but they locked the doors.

86  
00:05:31,630 --> 00:05:35,470  
They could have bombed the  
railroads to Auschwitz,

87  
00:05:35,470 --> 00:05:38,860  
but they bombed TerezÃn,  
the TerezÃn force,

88  
00:05:38,860 --> 00:05:40,420  
of no significance.

89  
00:05:40,420 --> 00:05:43,150  
I'm not sorry that  
they bombed TerezÃn,

90  
00:05:43,150 --> 00:05:49,960  
but there were much more  
strategically important centers

91  
00:05:49,960 --> 00:05:51,905  
in Germany to be  
bombed than TerezÃn.

92  
00:05:51,905 --> 00:05:56,320

93  
00:05:56,320 --> 00:05:59,830  
How do you feel  
now when you think

94



00:05:59,830 --> 00:06:07,810  
about how much attention, and  
it's obviously good attention,

95  
00:06:07,810 --> 00:06:10,690  
the Holocaust receives?

96  
00:06:10,690 --> 00:06:16,360  
Do you-- does it make you a  
little bit angry or resentful

97  
00:06:16,360 --> 00:06:17,830  
that more wasn't done then?

98  
00:06:17,830 --> 00:06:22,180  
Or does it-- are you gratified  
to see this response?

99  
00:06:22,180 --> 00:06:25,690  
It's good to see that  
they pay attention to it,

100  
00:06:25,690 --> 00:06:30,430  
that they see to it that  
it should not be forgotten.

101  
00:06:30,430 --> 00:06:36,130  
Unfortunately, in America,  
America forgets very quickly,

102  
00:06:36,130 --> 00:06:39,820  
no matter if it's  
Holocaust, if it's

103  
00:06:39,820 --> 00:06:45,610  
the killing of the  
Marines in Beirut,

104  
00:06:45,610 --> 00:06:49,720  
if it's the hijacked jetliner.

105  
00:06:49,720 --> 00:06:53,020  
For a short time,

it's headlines.

106  
00:06:53,020 --> 00:06:57,910  
And we will repeat it again,  
and again, over radio, TV,

107  
00:06:57,910 --> 00:06:58,850  
and so on.

108  
00:06:58,850 --> 00:07:02,140  
After a while,  
gone and forgotten.

109  
00:07:02,140 --> 00:07:09,340  
Unfortunately, this is the  
concept of the American people.

110  
00:07:09,340 --> 00:07:15,670  
And the American people as a  
whole, including some Jews,

111  
00:07:15,670 --> 00:07:18,730  
they say, for  
Heaven's sake, it's

112  
00:07:18,730 --> 00:07:25,360  
happened more than 40 years  
ago, why all the fuss about it?

113  
00:07:25,360 --> 00:07:29,170  
And when, for instance,  
certain people

114  
00:07:29,170 --> 00:07:33,400  
were arrested after they found  
out they came to this country

115  
00:07:33,400 --> 00:07:39,220  
illegally under false  
names, and they found out

116  
00:07:39,220 --> 00:07:42,790  
they participated

in the Holocaust,

117

00:07:42,790 --> 00:07:47,680

actively, at certain  
concentration camps.

118

00:07:47,680 --> 00:07:51,880

And the people of the  
neighborhood where

119

00:07:51,880 --> 00:07:55,390

they live right now  
say it's impossible,

120

00:07:55,390 --> 00:07:58,330

these are such nice people.

121

00:07:58,330 --> 00:08:02,680

Yes, they said about the  
German people as a whole, oh,

122

00:08:02,680 --> 00:08:04,210

such things cannot happen.

123

00:08:04,210 --> 00:08:14,230

And people with such high  
intelligence, high people who

124

00:08:14,230 --> 00:08:15,760

have--

125

00:08:15,760 --> 00:08:19,610

to point out, for  
instance, Goebbels,

126

00:08:19,610 --> 00:08:22,810

one of the top  
leaders of the Nazis,

127

00:08:22,810 --> 00:08:28,360

he graduated from college from  
university summa cum laude.

128

00:08:28,360 --> 00:08:33,049

But he was the devil in person.

129

00:08:33,049 --> 00:08:37,000

As a matter of fact,  
they make joke about him.

130

00:08:37,000 --> 00:08:41,200

They say it's-- the folklore  
in Germany says the devil has

131

00:08:41,200 --> 00:08:45,100

a clubfoot and Goebbels  
had a little club foot.

132

00:08:45,100 --> 00:08:49,480

If you didn't know,  
you hardly did

133

00:08:49,480 --> 00:08:52,750

see that he was  
limping a little bit.

134

00:08:52,750 --> 00:08:55,000

But he was the devil in person.

135

00:08:55,000 --> 00:08:58,960

He had a well-moderated  
voice and was

136

00:08:58,960 --> 00:09:10,670

able to convey the poison and  
hatred to the masses of people.

137

00:09:10,670 --> 00:09:19,300

And if you combine the  
intelligence, the knowledge

138

00:09:19,300 --> 00:09:23,920

with the satanic  
and perverse mind,

139

00:09:23,920 --> 00:09:28,060  
the result will be something  
so awful, so horrible,

140  
00:09:28,060 --> 00:09:31,870  
it's hard to describe.

141  
00:09:31,870 --> 00:09:35,290  
Did people want to hear  
what you had to say?

142  
00:09:35,290 --> 00:09:37,310  
Or did you want to talk  
about your experiences

143  
00:09:37,310 --> 00:09:38,560  
once you came to this country?

144  
00:09:38,560 --> 00:09:42,700

145  
00:09:42,700 --> 00:09:49,720  
People had different troubles  
and different worries.

146  
00:09:49,720 --> 00:09:52,630  
They knew about it.

147  
00:09:52,630 --> 00:09:55,780  
And some of them said,  
why stir up the wounds?

148  
00:09:55,780 --> 00:09:58,390

149  
00:09:58,390 --> 00:10:07,330  
Some people-- certain people  
ask, how is it that people

150  
00:10:07,330 --> 00:10:09,700  
go back to Germany?

151

00:10:09,700 --> 00:10:12,310

I, myself, I couldn't  
go back to Germany.

152

00:10:12,310 --> 00:10:16,220

I would be haunted  
by the memories.

153

00:10:16,220 --> 00:10:21,310

I might go back for few days  
just to visit, but that's all.

154

00:10:21,310 --> 00:10:25,480

But unfortunately, there  
are people who are--

155

00:10:25,480 --> 00:10:28,570

I don't know.

156

00:10:28,570 --> 00:10:34,030

A cousin of mine,  
he was in Israel.

157

00:10:34,030 --> 00:10:37,810

Two of his brothers and  
his sister in Israel too.

158

00:10:37,810 --> 00:10:42,430

And he was a member of  
the top delegation which

159

00:10:42,430 --> 00:10:48,980

was sent by the government of  
Israel in 1954 to West Germany

160

00:10:48,980 --> 00:10:56,410

to initiate that talks  
about restitution

161

00:10:56,410 --> 00:11:00,880

by the state of West Germany  
to the state of Israel,

162

00:11:00,880 --> 00:11:03,534  
not the individuals one, but  
just from state to state.

163  
00:11:03,534 --> 00:11:04,510  
Nation to nation.

164  
00:11:04,510 --> 00:11:06,190  
Nation to nation.

165  
00:11:06,190 --> 00:11:09,100  
And he was one of  
the top officials.

166  
00:11:09,100 --> 00:11:12,040  
After three years,  
he got in conflict

167  
00:11:12,040 --> 00:11:15,670  
with some of the persons  
of the Israel government.

168  
00:11:15,670 --> 00:11:19,900  
Got mad, left them,  
and stayed in Germany.

169  
00:11:19,900 --> 00:11:23,380  
He works for International  
insurance company.

170  
00:11:23,380 --> 00:11:25,620  
And he's very happy.

171  
00:11:25,620 --> 00:11:27,400  
I cannot understand it.

172  
00:11:27,400 --> 00:11:30,127  
And his sister and brothers  
cannot understand it.

173  
00:11:30,127 --> 00:11:31,960  
I just got a letter  
from one of his brothers

174  
00:11:31,960 --> 00:11:39,160  
that said we still are very sad  
that Richard doesn't go back

175  
00:11:39,160 --> 00:11:41,410  
to Israel.

176  
00:11:41,410 --> 00:11:49,960  
And I was told by people who  
visited Germany, they are most,

177  
00:11:49,960 --> 00:11:54,760  
I have to say, the overwhelming  
majority of the Jews

178  
00:11:54,760 --> 00:11:57,160  
who are now in--

179  
00:11:57,160 --> 00:12:04,120  
live now in Germany are from  
Eastern Europe and some of them

180  
00:12:04,120 --> 00:12:05,630  
from Israel.

181  
00:12:05,630 --> 00:12:08,180

182  
00:12:08,180 --> 00:12:14,980  
These people are-- their  
mind is money, money, money.

183  
00:12:14,980 --> 00:12:18,130  
And they don't care  
where they get it.

184  
00:12:18,130 --> 00:12:24,670  
And they are the  
people of Israel

185  
00:12:24,670 --> 00:12:27,495



who go to Germany  
to certain spas.

186  
00:12:27,495 --> 00:12:34,150

187  
00:12:34,150 --> 00:12:38,190  
Are there any closing thoughts  
that you would like to--

188  
00:12:38,190 --> 00:12:41,440  
Closing thoughts--  
as I mentioned

189  
00:12:41,440 --> 00:12:46,150  
before, it is  
something so unique

190  
00:12:46,150 --> 00:12:48,880  
in the history of mankind.

191  
00:12:48,880 --> 00:12:52,580  
I mean, there were pogroms.

192  
00:12:52,580 --> 00:12:57,510  
There were the  
persecution in Spain.

193  
00:12:57,510 --> 00:13:00,220  
There were the crusades.

194  
00:13:00,220 --> 00:13:08,140  
There were other slaughters,  
mass slaughters of non-Jews,

195  
00:13:08,140 --> 00:13:14,200  
but none in such an extent.

196  
00:13:14,200 --> 00:13:22,000  
The enormity, brutality, and  
perversity of this particular

197

00:13:22,000 --> 00:13:27,670  
event cannot and should  
never be forgotten.

198  
00:13:27,670 --> 00:13:32,790  
We have to remind future  
generations of it.

199  
00:13:32,790 --> 00:13:36,820  
We read in the Torah,  
"remember Amalek,"

200  
00:13:36,820 --> 00:13:39,760  
and we should  
remember Holocaust.

201  
00:13:39,760 --> 00:13:42,640  
Thank you very much, Mr. Ahrend.

202  
00:13:42,640 --> 00:13:55,000