

Yes, Mr. Herzberg, in private conversation before, you said something about your desire to help the morale of the German Jews through the publication of information. Can you say a little bit about that?

Yes. The question was, if people every day read or hear in the radio at that time how bad you are, what villains the Jews are, what they have done to harm the German people, the people can become very easily demoralized. And there were many suicides, no question. But it was the task the Jewish press set itself, we especially, to counter these [INAUDIBLE]. And we did it in many ways.

There were some psalms that were printed and reprinted, which in many respects gave solace to people. There was a continuous stream of Jewish information about Jewish people, about Jewish works. I, myself, published a whole series of articles about Jewish organizations abroad, in other words the organization of Jews abroad in every country, which can help people to-- whenever they emigrated, to become known. And on top of it, they saw in this manner the Jews outside were organized and led a normal life.

By the way, I always think that I have the slightest suspicion that this article series was used by the gestapo and by Eichmann when they invaded after the war Holland and the other countries, 'cause they knew then where to go. But at that time, my outlook was entirely different, as you can imagine. I couldn't prevent it. It was much more important to give to Jews something different.

And did you get that kind of feedback from the Jewish community?

I got that feedback from a man who was summoned by Eichmann in an interview-- he interviewed him-- from a leading personality. He's dead now, too.

Now, also, did you get the feedback from the Jewish community living in Germany that in fact the paper, the information, the stories that you were writing were very meaningful in their life?

Oh, yes, yes. Oh, yeah, we had letters. There was the whole thing. Rabbis tried to do their best to strengthen the morale of the people.

Naturally, the Nazis tried to tear down the values and the achievements of Jews. So whenever a Jew outside of Germany got the Nobel Prize, we mentioned it. And there was, almost in every instance, one Jew.

And there was-- we mentioned what Jews did outside in science, and so on, just to show the people that they are not half savages. There was continuous information about Jewish holidays, about Jewish customs, and about Jewish stories, Jewish-- let me see-- and Jewish stories from abroad and inside Germany. The history was emphasized.

A lot has been written about this. And I'd just like to get your own comment on it, the internalization on the part of the German Jewish community of the kinds of things that were being written about them. Now, you're writing to help counteract.

Yes.

But to what extent do you, yourself, think a lot has been written about this, about the psychological dimension involved and people beginning to accept and internalize negative stories, characteristics, et cetera, which were being--

Yes. Oh, there's no doubt about that. That has an influence on the attitudes of people and their whole outlook. But I, personally, was never affected by it, never.

Tell us the extent to which the perception of yourself is influenced and determined by the perception that you think--

Yes. I was educated as a Jew. And I still think that the Jewish religion is the most meaningful religion for an individual and the world. It has never been matched. We have created 1,000 things for the culture of the Western world. We have

actually done too much in this respect, to my mind.

And I never hesitated for one minute to see that this-- the Jews had their place in the world. And they will always have their place in the world, never mind the Nazis, or never mind other people. I'm convinced of that.

In private conversation, you also had mentioned to me something about the way in which you once were able to actually use the gestapo to--

Yes. It was prohibited to transfer any money from abroad-- to abroad.

To abroad.

And you had to have a permit. And you actually never got it. Also, we applied for it. So one day, I got hold of a correspondent of the Jewish Telegraphic Agency and asked them that the London office write us a letter that they will no longer give us any news unless we pay money, we owed them so much money. And I got that letter.

And actually, I went to the Nazi authority, the [GERMAN], which was the proper authority to deal with this question. And I told them, look, we can no longer exist if we don't get that news, because it's our main source. And the Jewish press in Germany will be completely isolated and can close its doors.

So I arranged with them that whenever a Jewish Telegraphic Agency correspondent was in Berlin, that we will get some money on account. And we would transfer every month a certain amount of money to the account of the [GERMAN]. And they, in turn, will give a check to them.

So actually, what happened? They agreed to that, 'cause in this way, no money went outside of Germany. But in effect, naturally, these correspondents could only give bad news, bring the bad news out of Germany. So they contributed to their own propaganda.

Very interesting.

It was one of my feats. I think it's unbelievable to look back, if you look back today, that they were not able to comprehend it. But this was a bureaucratic organization, more or less. They were bureaucrats there. And they simply couldn't believe it. They just were concerned with the money, where it went to. But what's beyond that, they didn't.

Let me ask you a final question-- without sounding too trite, the lessons of the Holocaust.

The lessons of the Holocaust are twofold, in my mind. And in this respect, I don't think I am very up to date with other people. I think, in the first place, it is absolutely necessary that we have a unity of purpose and a unity of organization inside the Jewish community, not only in America, but all over, because only today you can only fight if you fight together with one purpose. I think Israel has an obligation to the diaspora in this respect. And I, myself, condemn this political setup in Israel, which is only detrimental to the existence of this country, has contributed immeasurably to the economic crisis.

By the way, I first saw that crisis already in the year 1963 and published an article in this country about that. It is absolutely necessary that the [INAUDIBLE] is stripped of their powers. They will cause today a state within the state.

I think, coming back to the diaspora, we should not be so much concerned that this guy is conservative, or this guy is orthodox. I think it's outrageous if the conservatives prohibit to that-- have a ban on speakers from Israel who voted against the law of who is a Jew. I think this whole discussion is silly, absolutely silly.

And if this is not being done, I don't see that the Jews have more or less an-- I mean, have a great future. I don't think so. I, myself, wrote an article two years ago against the women's movement, which is absolutely detrimental to the future of the Jews in this country and other countries. In fact, that article was, after three years, reprinted in Australia.

Where was the article published originally?

An all-Jewish press here, people that dare to. Many, for instance, here-- here, nobody dared to.

The women's movement within the Jewish community.

Yeah.

Because it hampers-- it's detrimental as far as child rearing is concerned. The number of Jews will go down in this country. It is detrimental as far as the relationship between couples is concerned. We will have much more divorces, if we have.

It is bad for the young generation that is educated by Jamaicans, or by anybody. I don't know who-- for the kids. It is all and all over exaggerated. I can understand that people-- that a woman chooses her career above childbearing services. But we, as a community, have no business to support it.

I think this woman movement would have a tremendous influence in the future, because the Jews will-- there will be less Jews in 10, 20 years. We won't see it anymore. That means we have less political clout. There will be less influence. It will be bad for anybody concerned.

It will be-- actually, in my mind, the women's movement is the beginning of an evolution in Jewish life. So take it for what it's worth. I will be--

There was one paper. It's interesting about the reaction of people. There was one paper in the west. I guess it was in [INAUDIBLE], a Jewish paper. They brought that article.

I was swamped with letters from the readers for two weeks. I was called all kinds of names. It's unbelievable what some people called me. And there was only one letter in my favor.

Your wife wrote the letter.

My wife. Yeah. Some people said, if there a Mrs. Herzberg, I feel sorry for her. Now, she doesn't feel sorry for herself.

But these people don't realize that something can be said with a view of the future. And this is not the future of the Jewish community in this country. They have become very intolerant, very intolerant. We ask for tolerance on the outside. But we are not tolerant inside against any deviation from the accepted life.

I guess that will be my testament, so to speak. If we don't overcome that, I see very bad times, very bad times. I let everybody say what he wants to.

I was not affected by all these letters. I know I'm right, though they think they are right. But that's about all what you can do in order to further our joint cause.

OK.

Anything?

I want to thank you for coming today, coming to the college and discussing these most interesting, interesting experiences that you had. Thank you.

Yeah. Yeah. What's the name of the [? video? ?]

[INAUDIBLE]. Yeah.

[INAUDIBLE].