

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Henry van den Boogard

April 10, 1995

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PREFACE

The following oral history testimony is the result of a videotaped interview with Henry van den Boogard, conducted by Randy Goldman on April 10, 1995 on behalf of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. The interview took place in Washington, DC and is part of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum's collection of oral testimonies. Rights to the interview are held by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

The reader should bear in mind that this is a verbatim transcript of spoken, rather than written prose. This transcript has been neither checked for spelling nor verified for accuracy, and therefore, it is possible that there are errors. As a result, nothing should be quoted or used from this transcript without first checking it against the taped interview.

HENRY VAN DEN BOOGARD

April 10, 1995

Q: I'd like you to start by telling me your name, your date of birth, and your city of birth?

A: My name is Father Henry Van Den Boogard and I was born in Holland in _____ in 1915, so I will be 80 in August. Maybe I don't look that old, but they gave me some makeup to look a little bit younger. I don't know if it works. What else do you want to know?

Q: Tell me a little bit about your family and your background?

A: My family went from _____, a big city in the south of Holland to a neighboring town, that was smaller, and my father had a printing business there, and he started a newspaper. That is where I grew up there. I went there to grammar school. When it was over my father put me in the school in the neighbor city and he thought that is a better school for a high school, but I didn't like it there. They had brothers there, religious people teaching, and I couldn't get along with the teacher. Everything that went wrong, I was always blamed for it, so I want to get rid of that school. I didn't know how I could get rid of that school. One day it was Ash Wednesday, and we catholics go to church get a little bit of these ashes on your forehead. I thought this was a nice opportunity for me to miss the bus. So, I had to go by a later bus. In the meantime I was waiting I thought that cross that they put on my forehead was too little, so with some ashes I made it larger and each time a little larger and later it covered my whole forehead. I forgot about it and then I went by bus to school and it was a very cold day. It was in 1929. When I came in the class, all the boys started to laugh because of that cross. I had forgotten it and I told the teacher I went to church this morning to get the ashes, and he sent me out. He said get of here. I had to stay in the hallway. And there I got my vocation I always tell because then I decided I don't want to go to this school anymore, but how can I convince my father. I thought I'm going to tell him I want to go to the seminary. He listened, so we went. I didn't think that I would be accepted because everybody told me you will be back home after a few weeks. So, when I came there, I thought I will fool them a little bit and I thought all the boys will become priests but I was the only one of the class who became a priest. What else do I have to tell? I was then 13 years old. I went to the seminary. I was accepted there, but I didn't expect and I prayed a lot that I wouldn't be sent home because of my conduct. My prayers were answered I think. That's what I tell in my sermons, that the prayers are answered. I asked in my prayers that I wouldn't be sent home, so they kept me there and I became a priest after 12, 13 years. I was ordained in 1942, and that was in the middle of the war. Before the war -- during the war already, in 1940, in 1942 more or less, there was a Jewish family in Holland. They were good friends of my uncle, and this gentleman asked me if I could help him. He approached me when I was still a seminarian. He said can you do something about it. I see that it is difficult for us Jews in the country with the Nazis and I would like to go hiding. He was married, and I said I will look into if I can find a place. Then in the meantime, my uncle found already a place with his brother, Louis Haza, and he had a sister, Anna Haza, and they both were single and they took him in. There was a husband and wife and a little daughter. The wife was pregnant and in the

time they were hiding there, the little boy was born, and it was very dangerous. But what happened to them later, their name was _____, and I never found out if they survived the war or not. When I was ordained in 1942, it was the last Sunday of July then the first Sunday of August was August 2. I said my first mass in Holland and there was a big celebration in town. It was a town of about in those days about 10,000, now there's 20,000 people, but there was a big celebration, and a parade and everything. In the afternoon there was a reception, and the mayor came also to the reception and his name was John _____, and he was very anti-Nazi, anti-German, and he was very sleepy when he came to the reception. He said you have to excuse me because the whole night I had to visit Jewish families. I didn't know there were so many Jews in our home town, but he had to tell them that they had to go into hiding because that same night they would be arrested. And there was a policeman and he was in favor of the Nazis. He fought always with the mayor because they had different opinions and the mayor was very anti-Nazi so at the end of the war he had to go into hiding himself. That is why I knew there were quite a few Jews in my hometown. Then I didn't do anything until I had a brother-in-law, his father was born in Germany. He just got married, then, in those days, and his father was born in Germany, so the Nazis made all the decedents who were born in Germany, they made them German so they could serve in the military service. But my brother-in-law didn't want. He was the husband of my sister who lives here with me now and my brother-in-law, his name was Robert _____. He died already about 20 years ago. He asked me if I could help him. So, I had to find out where he could go into hiding. I found out then who the leader of the Resistance was in that area. There was _____, in Rosenthau and he said oh he can stay here. And _____, I would like to mention him because he did a lot for the Jews. He's not living anymore but in those days everything was so secret he didn't tell me that he had a Jewish family in his house too hiding. He was working with a priest who was a trappist before. He was still a trappist but they were kicked out of the monastery by the Nazis. Then he had to find a place so he became a chaplain in a very large nun's convent in Rosenthau. But he was only a name chaplain. What he did was working for people who wanted to go into hiding especially Jews. He did a lot. He was smuggling weapons and things like that and finding hiding places to keep those Jews alive. But he was not very prudent and we thought some day he will be arrested and it happened. He was arrested. His name was _____. I didn't name his full name, I knew only as Fonse, his nickname, but not his last name. I found it out later. He went to a concentration camp in _____, close to my hometown, but he was last seen in the _____, in the police office when he was arrested. But we never heard of him later. We didn't know what happened to him. Now, when the war was over, the leader of this Resistance in _____, he became the leader of this concentration camp where no Jews were anymore but were just the Nazi prisoners. I was then assistant in the North, but I went to see him in the South and I visited him, I said, did you ever find out what happened to Fonse, I said don't know, and he said I don't know either, but I know of a famous architect and he knows of somebody in the _____ who works there and he was hiding with priests somewhere in the west of _____. So, I got the address of the architect and this architect was making a model for a monument in Holland on the _____ for the freedom we got after we were freed by the Americans. He said this gentleman he works in an office in the

_____. It was closed. So, I went there by car, that was given to me by the leader of the concentration camp. He's a soldier, so when I saw him, it was lunch time, there was nobody anymore in the office, only one gentleman and he knew me. I said how do you know me. He said do you not know me anymore? You helped me go into hiding. I said when was that? I said I have no hair I was a prisoner in _____ and they cut my hair I was bald headed and he had a prison suit on and I was going to be executed in the neighborhood of Rosenthau and they brought me there with other prisoners who were going to be executed too but then we were attacked by the English planes and we all left the cars and could go into hiding in the corn field. It was not corn, it was wheat. We could crawl through the weeds the fields to the neighbor town where I was living. It was during the hours that there was a curfew at night, so in the morning I had to go Rosenthau to bring some pictures of Jews who had to have false identification cards and there was a teacher in town who took those pictures. He was an amateur. He took those pictures, developed them at night, and early in the morning as soon as the hours were over of the curfew, then I was going to pick them up and bring them to Rosenthau to have my brother-in-law who was hiding he had to make those i.d. cards. So, when I went through the town I saw in a hallway of a house I saw somebody standing in the suit of the prisoner's bald headed and he called me. He said can you find me a place where I can stay. I brought him then to a place where the brother of Doctor DeBeer, he was a physician, and his brother was a priest, he was in hiding too. I brought him there. So, as soon as I told me who he was, I thought this is not the one who was hiding with Fonse so I was just as far as I was in the beginning. I did find out. Later on I came to Paris and I wanted to know so badly where Fonse was if he was still living or not so I had on radio his name if somebody knew about him, his whereabouts to let me know. So, I got a letter from the abbot of the monastery, he said as soon as you know let us know. We want to know what happened to him, too. I got a letter from his relative in Hague, they wanted to know also where Fonse was, if he was still living. But then I got a letter from a doctor in _____, where the concentration camp was. He said I saw when he was dead, I had to make a certificate that he was dead. He was killed on that day. It was two weeks after he was arrested. Now there is some monument for Fonse in that nun convent and he's on the list of the ones who were killed in _____. But, now we don't know much about him, but I wanted to emphasize more what _____, the leader of the Resistance. And Fonse _____, this priest what they did for the Jews because it was never recognized. Nobody knew and nobody knew the names. They never gave the names, but I know, because I worked with them that they were hiding Jews making false papers for them, i.d. cards and trying to keep them alive by finding food so I would like to emphasize that now that I have the opportunity to make it known what they did during the war. So, that is what I usually did. I didn't do much myself, only I did on my bike brought i.d. cards to people who were hiding. Once I was asked by _____ to bring a few guns in a shoe box on the back of my bike to the town where I was living for the underground. I did it and I put two Dutch catechisms on top of them so if I had to open maybe I thought it could save me. When I drove back on my bike, there were no cars on the road anymore only and I saw far away that there was control by the Nazis. People some people had some food they took the food away, and they used it for themselves. And I thought, what will they do now. When I go back they will see that I have something to hide.

Then it's more dangerous for me. So, I thought, the Lord will help me. So, I went through it and when they stopped me, what's in that box and then I got an idea. I said I don't know what's going on today but the third time I have to open that books everybody wants to know what's in that box. Then he said okay go ahead, so I was shaking very much but I saved my life. That's what I did, but it got a little bit too dangerous for me there in the South. They found out what I did, so I was advised to go into hiding.

Q: Okay, I just want to ask you a little bit more about this period in the South. I'm going to back track a bit. When the Nazis came into Holland, what happened? What was the reaction? What was going on?

A: I was in the seminary and it was before I was ordained and I remember from a window in the seminary we were watching when they marched into the town, and we were extremely mad because they invaded our country and we tried to defend it with only a few days that our soldiers could defend our country, but then they just overthrew us. There was no end to it. We were extremely mad, and then they were going to throw bombs, that was before. The older seminarians had to go into the basement and we spent their nights and days in the basement, but what was going on in other towns we didn't know too well. I only went at night, early before the other seminarians and the teachers they got up. I went already to Rosenthau on the bike after the curfew hours to bring pictures and books to the people who were hiding to keep them busy and to have their false i.d. cards made. It was all I knew about the Resistance. I didn't know what was going on in other towns.

Q: How did you know about this man who was leader of the Resistance?

A: There was a seminarian and he worked in the underground too. _____, was his name, and he had relatives in the town and they knew who their leader was, and I had to force him to let me know who he was and as soon as I knew, it was already before I was ordained, I went to see him. He was very friendly and he was living still quite a few years after we were liberated, but then he died. But his son is still living and his son is now I think he was in those days about 15 years old and he said his father was a little bit crazy. In those days he couldn't talk about anything after the liberation about then what he did during the war for the people who were hiding in the Resistance. He was so proud of it, but during the Resistance he didn't tell anybody.

Q: What motivated you? How come you decided to take this on?

A: It was just my Christian duty I thought to help people who were in trouble. I had to do what I could to help them, and it was also because it was for my relative, my brother-in-law to find a hiding place and then I thought I only have to find a hiding place and he was very intelligent. He knew several languages very well, but he didn't know Latin, he couldn't stand it so I brought him books to study Latin and books from the library that he could read and I thought that is it. But then this leader _____, he wanted little by little, more and more to do something for the Resistance, so I came very much involved in it. So,

_____ and Father Fonse. Father Fonse I saw at _____ house very often, and I knew that the only thing he did was working for the people who were hiding. He could go to Belgium. He had papers. He brought many people over the border to bring them to England and after there was a priest also in the seminary. He was a teacher, and he had a contact with the underground, but there was not a good contract because the people he recommended to bring to be brought to Switzerland, they all got caught. They all got taken prisoners, so he asked me if I could give the address, so I gave the address of the contact I had. This priest died a few years ago. Then when it got too warm for me I had to go there were many priests home because during the war we wanted to go before the war already to the Mission countries, to Indonesia or South America. I didn't care, but we couldn't leave the country because we were occupied by the Germans. They didn't let us go, so I had to find a place to work as a priest so somebody found for me a place in the northern part of Holland, _____. I became their assistant, but that was a town that was quite abandoned and there were very poor people living in huts. They were digging, one of those things used for fuel, like bread, this dried plants from centuries and they were living in huts and that was an ideal place to hide their people in that place. There I knew some people that worked with me. For example, a retired nurse. She was living across the street directly her name was Sister Nista, they called the nurses always sister. She was not a nun but this Sister Nista, and she did a lot for the people that were hiding. She helped me a lot too. The pastor he acted like he was helping a lot but he was afraid. He was very afraid so I never told him what I did during the war. One day -- can I keep it for later -- is the tape almost finished because I cannot tell too much about the time I was up north. One day I had at the beginning already several people hiding and they were from Amsterdam and one day two ladies came on a bicycle all the way from Amsterdam and I don't know how many kilometers, maybe 200 kilometers because it was close to the German border, and they came and asked me where their husbands were. They knew that they were there and that I had them hiding and I gave them the addresses. They stayed a few days and then they went back to Amsterdam, but I had a friend, who passed away in Amsterdam, Father _____, and he couldn't write, so nobody knew where I was. I said would you please give my regards to Father _____ who is in Amsterdam in the parish and tell him that I knew him well. So, they did. Father _____ asked them is there still food in that place where he is, and they said it seems so because he's providing food for our husbands. Then I got a ship of kids from people -- should I tell that later? Father _____ he collected many kids and they were catholic kids, Protestant kids and Jewish kids. He chartered a ship and he couldn't let me know but there was one nurse who came with those kids and the ones who owned the ship they went over and started to say _____, they came over canals and rivers to the town where I was. One day on the first Friday of the month, I was hearing confessions and I saw a gentleman coming in church and he looked around and he saw me and he came to me and said are you Father Henry from the beaugard and I said yes. He said I am from Itica and Itica is a town that is close to _____ where he was and he said there's a ship in Itica staying over night on the river and it's full with kids and they're starving. There was no food enough to keep them alive in Amsterdam and Father _____ collected them and he heard that there was still food so quickly I had to find all places, families who wanted to take a kid. But after that, after I had placed those kids, I didn't know their names. I

didn't know which religion they had. I didn't know anything about them. Later on, Jews came. They all got that address from Father _____, and then I got a couple of Jews and then I got another couple and then more and more and I never knew if they were Jewish or not, and I found places for them, and there was a baker. There was an organization also, an underground organization in that town and there was a Protestant Minister and he belonged to that organization and he could get the rations, the coupons, and I got from him enough coupons all the time for all the people in hiding. But one day he asked me to give him a list of all the people who were hiding and where they were. I said I'm not going to do that because we are not going to give any names and I don't know their names. Then we have to stop to get you coupons. I said then I'll have to find another way. So, I found then a group in _____, that was another town, and I got in contact with the underground there and from them I got the coupons which I needed until they changed their mind in the town where I was and I got coupons from them again.

End of Tape #1

Tape #2

A: When I was there up north, they asked me many times from the Holocaust, can you give any names. How people did you help? I said I didn't know. I didn't know who was a Jew or who was not a Jew, but I knew there were many Jews among them, and there were a few who got a little bit homesick, and they wanted to go close to Amsterdam where they came from. Then I there was no way to travel by train. There was no train going any more, no bus. No cars, there were no cars, only by bike. Then I found I could borrow a few bikes, and then they had little boys who were strong enough for the ride from _____. We went to _____. I don't remember, with the underground. In _____ there was a river, and it was difficult to cross that river because there was so much control from the Nazis. So, I could bring him to _____ with the bike and then those people who were hiding, those adults, riding the bike and on the back seat was a little boy but the boy was strong enough to ride back to the home town. That was a whole day riding. I think it was. I don't know how far it was. I went with six people and it was a distance of a few hundred yards between me and the next one and the next one, and I said, I was in front, when I put my hand on the lantern, that means there is danger. See that you find a hiding place. Don't continue. I'll find you later, but we didn't need it. So, I did it several times to bring people back to _____, but had to cross the river. I gave there in the hands of the underground and there was a lot of people who worked for the Nazis, the _____, and they got some tickets to cross the river in the morning and in the evening, and the underground they got hold of some of those tickets and they could give it us. So, those people were _____ and got a ticket too and walked over the bridge with those people to the other side and then they had to find their way. But they never found out who they were in the town there was a pastor from _____, and I became quite popular there because people were saying since Father is here, something is done for the people that went into hiding. It was known. I didn't tell people, but they found out anyhow. Then the pastor got a little bit jealous. He said before Father came here nothing was done, so much is done for the people that went into hiding. That is why I didn't tell the pastor anything, but later on I had no more places to hide, no more families, then I asked the pastor can I use the parish hall. The parish hall was not used for anything. He first said no and I got a little bit upset about it, and later he came to me and said it's all right, you can use the parish hall. So, I found straw to sleep on and pots and pans and everything and then I had so many people because we are close to the German border, it was at the end of the war and many people could come through -- it was a march between our countries and we were about a mile from the German border, and once I remember they told me that there were a few people they called _____, because there was a _____ before and then many people were picked up and they had to work in a factory and they could escape and then they went through the swamp to their hometown. Then they told me there are a few more, so I thought I'm going to meet them on the bridge. Then I saw them walking, and I knew one of them. He was a former seminarian. He said what are you doing here in Germany. You are not in Germany, you are here in Holland. Then they cried. They were dirty and full of lice and so on. They had gone through the march. There was a lot of water and so on. There was not a road. So, I said go into church. I come in the church through the rectory and you can take a bath. They give some clean

clothing and so on and some food and then I'll find a place for you to hide here. What the two of them were I don't know, but the other one he was a catholic. His name was Chris _____, and then there was the one I knew from the seminary. What else can I tell you? I had many kids in different places and I didn't know their names and I didn't know their religion but they had to go to school. Then I found out there were quite a few Jewish kids among them, too. There was one catholic boy and he heard two years ago when I was celebrating my golden anniversary in my hometown, he heard about, and he was one of those kids and he was now a rich guy close to Amsterdam. He was an exporter of tulip bulbs to foreign countries, and he came to the reception. Now, last year or this year he came to visit me, but I didn't like him very much because he was very egotistic and never paid anything. He was here for about six weeks. I went with him to Virginia to cut the time a little bit. I had to pay everything and he was not satisfied with the food that my sister made. He asked for other food, so I couldn't stand him any more. I was glad when the six weeks were over, but that was one of the boys. That's the only that I knew the name from. All the other ones I never knew the name. His name was Chris _____.

Q: How come you didn't know anyone's names?

A: Because you didn't want to. It was too dangerous to find out the names. The names of those kids I don't know if it was in those days that you were hiding them if I knew the names, but I don't remember any. I don't know if I got the names. I didn't know the names of the people we were hiding.

Q: Let me ask you a question. When you were hiding people, did you just hide everybody that came through, or was there a priority?

A: They had to have a note from Father _____ in Amsterdam, and he signed it only A.V., Adrian _____, and then I trusted them. But one morning, in the middle of the night one day, I heard the bell ring very little, and I had my room on the second floor of the rectory and I had my window there outside and I looked out of the window and there was a German soldier staying and they had long overcoats, and he said can I talk to you. I said what about. I would like to talk to you, so I let him in, and I thought I have to be very careful. He told me that he was a German soldier and that his family was in Germany, but he said I don't think that we will win the war. I don't want to fight any more, I want to go into hiding. He asked me if I could give him the address of the leader of the Resistance. I said I don't know. I didn't trust him. I thought maybe that the Nazis that they sent him over in the middle of the night to find out who are the ones helping the Nazis and the people were hiding. I asked to the pastor's bedroom, he said kick them out, kick them out. He was in bed. I gave him food. I gave him a sandwich. I said I'm sorry, I cannot help you. He left finally, after insisting very much about what the address is. I don't know any address. He said what do you do with people. Well, I tell them the same thing that I don't know how to help them. Later on I was very worried that maybe it is the truth that he was a real soldier that he wanted to go into hiding and my conscious was bothering me so much that I didn't help him. But I thought on the other hand maybe he would have given the names of the ones that were in the Resistance

and they all would be arrested, so I tried to forget about it, but I never could forget it. A few ladies later a policeman from the town came directly and told me that it was too much known that I did something for people who were hiding and I had to go into hiding myself. So, I went to a couple a brother and a sister. They were single, and they were already older and he was a furniture maker, and I could go into hiding there, but it was not far from the rectory. Through the window, my bedroom window I could see the rectory. I watched at night all night if I could see Germans coming to the rectory to pick me up, but I didn't see anybody, and after a week nobody came so I started again to live in the rectory. That's about all I can remember from the time I was there in the northern part. Everything was the same all the time. Helping Jews, helping other people who were hiding. People who were picked up a lot of them who had to work in factories in Germany who came through the march. I had to find places. I had to find food for them and to keep them alive. It was difficult because those people didn't get rations, and those people who got rations got very little too, so I had to go to _____ that was another town where many farmers, and I went through the fields of the moss, no, that dried stuff that they use for fuel, peat, there was only railroad track for those small railroad cars. Take a bike over those beams, and there was a shorter way too but there was no control. They went from farm to farm and back for some food. I got here potato and a little piece of meat so from a baker I got many rations from the underground. I told you that already. I did have money. I got some money from a girl who was working in the black market and her conscience was bothering her I think and she gave me sometimes 100 _____ then 200 _____, money I used because there was not enough to buy all the food. So, I said, I will pay you back after the war is over. I don't have any money now. So, when I was on vacation from the United States in Holland, I went to that town and that couple was still living, the baker. The baker's wife said are you coming to pay the bill for all the bread you got here. I said oh, I forgot all about it anymore, but she died, but he is still living, and I saw him the last time I was in that town. He was an old man in his 90s, but he was a good friend. Hartman was his name, and he helped a lot. He had also people hiding in his house. I don't know if they were Jewish or not, and I told you about the electricity. We were without electricity but we still had a line outside. Now, it's all under the ground, and the Germans they cut it all to the houses, but the baker still had electricity because he had to bake bread for the Germans. One night I could steal that electricity to have light in the rectory, but the pastor didn't want to know. One day yet very late and they went when it was already dark. They said it's now too dark to make the connection, I said no I don't want to sit by candle all night. So, but then it was in the dark and I couldn't see it too well and I missed it and it was sparking sparks like fireworks, sparks all over, and then I had to call an electrician early in the morning to restore it. The baker couldn't bake bread early in the morning for the Nazis, but they never found out. But people know now about it, but a few later last time I was in Holland I went to that town and I went to the church, this is a new church in another place and when I was there in the rectory were very abandoned. I thought I go to the cemetery to see the names of the graves of the people I knew. There was somebody working in the cemetery and I said, did you know all those people, he said yes. I said what's your name? He said are you a policeman or so? I said no I'm Father Henry Van Den Boogard. He said are you Father Henry Van Den Boogard? He hadn't seen me in 50 years and he married a girl who was a sister of the girl who worked at the rectory. He came now

too to my golden wedding anniversary to the reception. There were about 16 people from that Parish and they had to come all the way from the north. They had to drive for hours to get there and four hours to go back. I don't remember too much about those days in the north.

Q: Let me ask you, when you were in the north, how long were you up there in _____?

A: I tried to find out. I was there until the war was over. As soon as the war was over I wanted to go to see if my family was still living, because they fought a lot there, and there was no contact at all. So, as soon as possible, I had an opportunity once in _____ who was originally his parents were living in the Parish, but he was a soldier during the war in 1940, and he was in the south. His group had to go to England and he became an English soldier. After the war he came with the people to liberate the country and he came to visit his parents in a pick up truck. He didn't see his parents for a long time and he heard about him. I went to him and I said, are you going back, he was closer to the hometown of my parents so I could go with him in the truck and bike through the cities, which soon after the war because I remember on them there was a city that as evacuated. There was nobody living any more. It was a dead city, not even a dog you could see on the street. There we stopped for a while. Do you have any more questions? It's easy for me to talk when you ask me questions. I am now to the point where I would like to be asked. I told all I can remember more or less. This 50 years ago, my memory is not too good anymore.

Q: When you said you were in _____ until the end of the war, do you remember what year you went there?

A: Yes, I think it was in '44 until the war was over in '45. No, I was there longer, a little more than a year, I think. Very close to the Rectory there was a farmer. He had a big farm, and he was a Protestant. He was from _____, and he was a Nazi, and he watched us all the time. I knew that they had to be very careful, but I didn't know his name. I didn't know what happened to him, but after the war all the Nazis were picked up and punished.

Q: You were right near the border, so were there a lot of Germans and Nazis around?

A: No, not in the town where I was because there was a highway that went through the office where the Nazis were controlling everything that came through, and then there was a side road and maybe about two or three miles long and there was that town, along side a small canal where I lived, where all those poor people were living, and we were not bordered by Germans at all. Only they tried to find out later when I found that German soldier in the middle of the night standing there in front of the rectory. I wanted to have some names.

Q: What about Dutch Nazis?

A: Oh, yeah, they were hidden by the people. After the war they were picked up and they had to parade through the streets with their hands on their head and soldiers surrounding with their

rifle and the people were shouting at them and so on. Also, the girls who dated German soldiers their hair was cut off completely. They were bald headed, and so I had some books with a lot of pictures but I lost them all in Chile, pictures about the concentration camps and so on. During the war I didn't know too well what happened to the Jews. I knew that that they were put in concentration camps, but I didn't know that they were killed. I heard it after the war.

Q: When you were going around this area looking for food, going to farmers, did they know why?

A: Yes, I had to tell them, but I didn't tell them for Jews because that was too dangerous. When they would know that you were helping Jews they would put you in a concentration camp and kill you, but I said certain people a lot of them were picked up on the street and in the churches to work in factories in Germany. I acted like it was all for them. The Hollands were very helpful when a priest came there to ask for food, sometimes they got one potato. Sometimes I got a little piece of bacon and so on, but it all added up. But I didn't want to bring it to the rectory because the pastor had two sisters living there that took care of him but they want to have as much as possible for themselves, so I went first to Sister Nista across the street, that nurse, and I stored them there. At once she helped people who went into hiding, Jews or no Jews, and there was a guy who came there and he was hiding there in her place and the pastor and the people didn't know if he was a traitor or not. So, some from the underground came there and interrogated him and they acted like they were Nazis and he said I'm Nazi too, and he showed them the papers. Then finally he said we are not Nazis, we are from the underground too, and then he showed papers that he was from the underground, so they didn't know, but they let him smoke a cigarette and took him outside and killed him with a hammer, and they buried him in the peat and that happened before I came there. I knew exactly where he was buried and the companies were digging for that peat, they were getting close to that grave and I was afraid that they would find him, so I told him they had to go to another place. I don't know how I told them, but they didn't dig there further, so they didn't find the body. I don't know what happened with that body later either because when the war was over, I had a lot of people in the parish house.

Q: How many?

A: Sixty, I think, to eighty, and then they left and then the new ones came in and I told one of the guys to put all the names down, but they never got the paper with all the names. It was difficult to keep them alive to find food. When the war was over we just said, I told the pastor I think we are liberated. They didn't come to us. They forgot us. They went to towns, the Allied and I think ring the bell and we are liberated too and then the pastor and I went on the bicycle over the border there was no control any more but there were some Canadians on the other side in German and I didn't remember much English but I tried to talk to them a little bit and they asked me for an i.d. card. They didn't know if I was safe or not, but we went to the pastor to get some mass wine and candles. In Germany they had everything planned here we didn't have anything. That's what happened after the war. Then there was a

band but here you have high schools with band, but there they are adults and they don't have uniforms. They just get together and form a band, and they came to bring a serenade to the Jews who were hiding in the Parish hall. I remember that they standing there in their sloppy clothes. Their overalls are dirty. They are standing there all in line, but soon when I found out that it was a soldier from the Allies, he was a Hollander, and he was also at my reception a few years ago. I still have pictures of him here and I could just go with him to my home town, then the Pastor who was a little bit jealous of me because I was getting too popular he got a letter that I was appointed for Chile and he arranged right away for my farewell party. When I came back there was a farewell party and I didn't know where all those people who went into hiding where they went. They didn't know my name either, so I don't know, I went to the south and had a vacation and prepared to go to South America. So, I don't know what happened later. Only one I found and he had tuberculosis and he was in one of the provinces laying in bed. I went to see him. I think he got t.b. in the concentration camp. I don't know what happened to him either. I don't know his name. I can't remember. I did remember it because I went to see him and it was far away from the town where I was assistant. It was between him and my parents in _____.

Q: These people who were hiding there, did they hide for a few months and then move on?

A: Some did. Some did until the end of the war. Some got homesick and it was difficult for the Jews because they were told they couldn't go out. They were locked up day and night for a long time, and I remember that once, one of the assistants came and he said this Jewish family and they can't stand it any more and they get out at night and walked around and that is so dangerous they bring the people where they are hiding in danger too, and we have to kill them. But I didn't want to have them killed, so there was one of the Resistance to save those people where they were hiding. So, I went to those Jews and told them to be careful and said you bring those people who are helping you into danger. I can't understand why you are getting so restless. If you stay day in night in that hiding place you ought to have some friends once in a while. That was the end of it.

Q: Were some of them trying to go through Holland and go south through France and Spain?

A: Yes. That was in the beginning when I was working in the south. Fonce he brought many over the border and _____, too. There I knew that many people went into hiding. They wanted to go to England and they couldn't go via Switzerland to England. I don't know how many but I know that they were helped by the Resistance.

End of Tape #2

Tape #3

Q: Tell me a little bit more about what you actually did. I mean you went to look for food. You went to the local farms. What other kinds of responsibilities did you take on and also did you sort of invent what you had to do or were you working with other people?

A: I did all on my own. I worked a lot with that nurse across the street. She was a retired nurse, Nista, and I remember her name very well, but I don't remember the name of that nurse that came with all those kids. She was staying with the nurse, Nista. That's what I remember. I did it all on my own. I didn't want to tell anybody. I didn't even want to know the pastor or his sisters or the girl who worked there. The girl who worked there remembers still many things that I was a signet because she was about 17 years old at that time, I think, she came here last year. You have seen her I think. _____, she was here for a vacation for three weeks when I met her in Holland I heard her brother-in-law worked in the cemetery where I went and he said he was the brother-in-law of _____. He told me where she worked. So, I went to see her. She was a widow now, and when he came -- in Holland we don't wear a collar. It's just a tie, and she didn't recognize me. When I finally said who I was oh, she was so surprised after so many years to see me again and then I invited why don't you come to the United States. So, she did later. She came for three weeks, and she writes me now, long letters with all nonsense.

Q: But you were hiding many people in the Parish hall so obviously the other people in the Rectory knew?

A: Oh, yes, they knew that yes. But they didn't know they were Jews among them. That had to be the most secret thing that we had to keep about Jews because that was too dangerous for the people who were helping them and the Jews themselves. Because the Jews were the enemies of the Nazis, but there were many people who went into hiding because they didn't want to work in Germany or they were picked up and were sent to factories and they ran away from there and came back to Holland and had to go into hiding. So, they were in Holland and hiding together with the Jews.

Q: Did the local people who were not actively involved in Resistance or underground activities, were they supportive?

A: Yes. In the town where I worked it was quite catholic town. In the area where most of the people were not catholic. But almost everybody I asked to hide a couple didn't know many times they were Jews or not. They were always willing to share whatever they had with the people who were in trouble. In those days, the people had pig and somebody came to slaughter the pig and then they used to bring a piece of the pig to the pastor, those women. They were very uncivilized and they were talking about they called the Nazis the Poopers, I believe, it's better to give it to the pastor than the Poopers. I knew they had killed a pig and I went there and I said can you give me a piece too for the people who were hiding. I got some meat sometimes, but the meat had to be cut into small pieces to make soup, because it was

too valuable to give big pieces to people separately and a lot of bread from Baker Hartman.

Q: Did you have to find clothing?

A: I went to the south one time and got a whole truckload of clothing and bed in the south from my home town. There was a hospital in Tillburg and one of my relatives was the head nurse there and they got all new beds and I got about 50 beds and it was too much to bring them -- I had to rent a truck to bring them. Then I said to the pastor you divide it because I couldn't keep a secret that I had a truck coming, and then he acted like he was giving it all to the people. Sometimes the people asked me they came to the door and said, can I talk to the pastor, okay, but they didn't want to tell me that they want to get some of the clothes that I got to the parish, but the pastor acted like it was all from him because he said nobody's supposed to know it, but he was not very cooperative.

Q: So, he took some of this for his own purposes?

A: Yes, food more, and clothing, they gave some clothing to that girl that was working there, _____. I remember they selected -- I had an uncle who had a factory in Tillburg. He had a very large textile factory and I got a lot of stuff from him, rolls of material and I brought only a bike and I thought after the war I thought I have to travel so much I have to get a motorcycle, but I got papers that I was working in the underground as chaplain, so I could get gas because it was all rationed, and then I got a motorcycle from somebody who had the motorcycle hiding because they were afraid it would be taken in, but it didn't have tires. But a boy worked in Germany and he came back with some tires and I gave him a roll of material instead and then I got from him the tires for the motorcycle. Then I went around in one of those little motorcycles, and I got more rations for gas than I needed. I could help other people.

Q: So, there was a lot of bartering?

A: Yes. Those things I never thought of it anymore. Now, you asked me and it comes back in my mind, those things. There were many, many things which happened and that I don't remember, but sometimes something comes up and I remember other things connected with it.

Q: There was an active black market?

A: Yes. There was a girl close to the rectory and that girl did a lot of black market and she thought it was sin and then she wants to buy her sins off by giving money to me to help the people who were hiding. Everybody knew that I was hiding people but it was not too dangerous. Only a policeman he came to the rectory once and said he has to be more careful because he will be arrested and then I went into hiding.

Q: So, the local police helped you as well?

A: No, they were too afraid, not very much. Not very much, I got in touch with only one policeman, and I remember that when I told those people hiding in the parish hall that there was one guy and the other guy, former prisoners, they said he was helping the Nazis and they called it a _____, the one who tortured people to get secrets out of him, but he was a prisoner himself. Then I went to the local police to have him arrested, but when I came back, he disappeared, had disappeared already. He knew that probably I was going to do something about it.

Q: Now, weren't you afraid?

A: I don't remember, maybe I was sometimes, but maybe not. I had sometimes people hiding in the rectory and then we were told there will be in the rectory to come to control and then we didn't have time to hide those people so we were wearing a cossack in those days and we gave them a cassock and a prayer book and said walk in the church up and down like you're saying your prayers. You are assistant here. But I didn't know what religion he was, but I said act like you are a priest.

Q: Now, some of these Jewish people, some you knew, some you didn't, did you have to teach them how to act like Christians, how to cross themselves?

A: No,

Q: None of that?

A: I think the people where they were hiding told them.

Q: The other people?

A: Yes. Because most of the people who were hiding Jews they were all catholic and they knew how to handle them and they knew how careful they had to be because their own life was in danger. They lived very poorly. In the town where they were cutting that peat they had piles like bread and high as a house piled up and there they made a hole in it and people were hiding and families were living in those holes so they couldn't be found. They never got caught. I never lost anybody as far as I know.

Q: Do you have any sense whether some of these Jewish families could in any way practice their religion?

A: No, no they couldn't.

Q: You're positive?

A: Later, after the war was over we had a meeting in a Protestant church for the people who

worked among the people in the Resistance. There were several priests and I asked them about it too, and we couldn't. We didn't have any rabbis.

Q: What do you think when you were working, doing all of this, was your biggest difficulty?

A: I think to keep everything secret. Not to talk about it at the table with the pastor and his sisters what I was doing. But they knew that I was working, helping people when they were in hiding, but they didn't know exactly what I did and who I was helping, where they were. I had to keep my mouth shut. This is sometimes difficult when you get along with those people every day. Oh, I fooled them a lot. I tell a joke, this Baker Hartman, the pastor and his sisters had a little dog, and the dog died and then they got another dog the same size and the same kind. But the dog was not house broken and when you came in the rectory there was a stairway and then the landing and every morning on the landing there was some dog droppings, so I asked the bakers I said can you make some droppings from bread, dog droppings, they look dog droppings like bread. He said, oh yeah I can do that. He enjoyed it I thought I want to fool the pastor and his sisters so I put it there on the landing and then that girl that came here for vacation _____, she came down and we were going from the kitchen to the dining room and she had on a duster and had those dog droppings which was bread. I said what do you have there? Oh, Micky did something again, and I took one and I said it don't look too bad to me and I took a bite of it and those sisters -- oh, that I was eating dog droppings. I said it's good do you want to try too? I thought the pastor was going to call the Bishop. I don't want an assistant who eat dog droppings so I told him it's just bread. I had it made. I did those things to add a little bit of entertainment.

Q: Did you ever find yourself in a position besides providing the sort of logistical support for these people to have to give them some sort of emotional or psychological?

A: Oh yes. I had to talk to them a lot and then they were all right as long as I was talking to them, but I don't know later. Like I talked about that family who were almost going to be killed because they were restless, getting restless. Almost everybody was restless in those days and it was a great difficulty to keep them quiet. Then to talk to those people, the pastor didn't go over, they had to go to bring communion to those people on first Friday and those people were hiding and they had to go through the snow. You couldn't see where the road was because the snow was blowing and those dikes and so on and sometimes I fell in the snow up to here in the snow, and then I had to visit those people. I had food with me for those people and rations. It was difficult to keep them alive, but I don't remember too much about difficulties any more. You forget about that.

Q: Did you have time for your regular priestly duties?

A: Yes, I didn't have too much. I had to visit people regularly and I did it and confessionals all at the same time. The people who were hiding, and I had to say mass on Sundays and during the week I had to preach and prepare a sermon and so on, but before that there was no assistant at all because it was a small parish. But then I came and the pastor knew what I was

doing and he let me do it and he didn't bother too much. He didn't ask too much either.

Q: Now, when you were getting food coupons for example, from these other organizations, I'm curious about systems, how you knew about each other, how many organizations there were?

A: I knew only very few of the organization in the place where I was working. I knew them through a Protestant minister and he got the rations, and I knew also especially in the south when they were preparing theft to steal those coupons which were stolen, taken away from the Hollanders and they were stolen by people from the resistance and they gave them to us and we could give them to people who were hiding. That helped a lot.

Q: How did you know these other organizations? Were you coordinated?

A: I don't know. The guy in _____, a guy I got to know through the pastor and also in _____ the pastor of _____ was arrested too. We never knew what happened to him if he was killed, but there were two _____ priests who took care of the parish and they knew who was the leader there in _____. I went to him and I told him that they want from me a list of all the people who were hiding and where they were hiding and I don't want to give them, and they said we will take care of them. Then I got coupons from them.

Q: Early on, a few years before this, didn't the catholic church in Holland really come out and protest against the Nazis?

A: More or less after Cardinal DeYoung had a letter read in all the churches.

Q: When was this?

A: It was, I think, '42 and at that time all the priests were in favor of helping Jews, but not all. I remember in _____ when we brought some people there to go give in hands of the organization there to cross the river, then I had to stay over night in _____. I had an address from the pastor where I could stay but the next morning I wanted to say mass and he told me to go to that pastor. He said no the other one. There were two catholic priests, but I did remember which one was right and which one not, so I went to the pastor and I said I have to bring some people who are hiding. Oh, you are one of those, he said, I said the priest _____, do you want to be arrested, too? I said who pays for the wine and the candles and so on. I just wanted to walk away but he let me say mass and I thought I will not go there any more. He was not very cooperative, but that was an exception.

Q: Do you remember sort of the general reaction when the Cardinal wrote this letter?

A: I remember that the Nazis, the Dutch Nazis when they found out about it, they went to the rectory and the man did the letter, but they got several letters in case they had to give one to

the Nazis then they had another letter to read at the next mass. That was very dangerous too, because there many times they were asking us in the church, the Nazis came into the church and arrest all the men in the church and brought them to the railroad station and the cattle cars, they were sent to Germany. And they had to stand there so close to each other and when they had to go to the bathroom they had only a bottle to pass from one to another and they had to pour it out. That was difficult. The Jews the same way. They were arrested by large groups.

Q: Do you think that the Dutch Nazis were more tolerant of priests who did not support them?

A: No.

Q: You were in the same boat as every one else?

A: Yes. They were very anti-religion. Against the catholics, they were more or less the scum of the town. They were not the well education people, the Dutch Nazis.

Q: Do you think that the clergy was very instrumental in terms of the underground efforts in Holland?

A: As far as I know yes, but I don't have much experience of other parishes because we kept everything so secret. We didn't talk to each other about when we were helping people. Sometimes we found out but many times we didn't even know, but we could, if we had to tell something we could trust them. Many priests were arrested. Many priests were sent to concentration camps. You heard about the priest who took the place of one who was going to be killed and he will be canonized _____ was his name. He was a polish priest. I remember also that there was a _____, he was arrested too and killed and his ashes are now kept in the cathedral in _____, and I knew him personally. I had once dinner with him. He is much older than I am. I was just a seminarian when I knew him. _____ will be canonized too, I think, because he is considered as a saint.

Q: Was the reaction more anti-German or did people really want to save Jews?

A: Both. They felt sorry for the Jews and they found it very that they were persecuted so much, and we hated the Nazis. In the school we had to learn many languages, French, German and English. The kids didn't want to learn German any more so it was out of this, and many schools give up to teach German because people didn't make the home work, because they didn't want to out of the hatred for the Germans. This all now changed because the Germans they come to Holland for vacation, to the beach, but in those days -- but still many are very anti-German because of the war.

Q: Prior to all of this was there any sense of anti-semitism in Holland among church people among regular people?

A: Not that I know of. Before we had very little contact with protestants but during the war we were fighting the common enemy, then we got together and I got to know many Protestant ministers and we worked together and they tried to help and during the war they were brought together, the clergy of the different denominations. In Europe you don't have so many denominations, not in those days, as you have here. You had the Dutch Reformed and the _____, translated is also a reformed, but it is two groups and they are very, very Protestant. They don't do anything on Sundays. You can't play cards, so they're reformed. I don't know about the rabbis. I don't know many of them because in the south there were not many. I didn't know there were so many Jews in my home town until this mayor told me that in the whole night he was working on finding those Jews to tell them that they had to go into hiding that they would be arrested.

Q: Were you -- I guess you were in the seminary, but I'm wondering in the early years, were you aware of all the decrees against the Jews that restricted them and all of that?

A: That came little by little. Also, we were rationed little by little. First you couldn't get this, then you couldn't get that. Later on, if we all came to the same time we wouldn't have survived. You couldn't buy soap. You couldn't buy tooth paste. You couldn't buy shoe shine, nothing, clothing, and you had to wait when you want to buy for example toothpaste, you had to give first the empty tube to get a new one. Then they make jokes that when you want to have a new child you have to turn in an old man because they saved everything. They made soap from many dirty things and so on. There was nothing. You had to wash clothing with no soap.

Q: Now, you went to _____ probably around 1944 so you were in the southern area before that. Were there other activities there that you haven't told me about?

A: No, there was more people that I had to contact but I didn't know--we had sometimes English flyers who were shot down and they were arrested and we had sometimes in the seminary hiding, and then we had also one of our seminarians was very good in astronomy. He started a university and he built -- what do you call it to look at the stars?

Q: A telescope?

A: Yeah, a big one, and we had a tower which you could open and the Germans they occupied it and they used it to look around for the telescope to see if they could find people that were hiding or something, I don't know. We were in the studying and those marble steps those Germans with those heavy shoes, they came in with the steel under the shoes and we could hear them fall sometimes and then we were happy.

Q: How did you know who to trust?

A: We trusted many people. We trusted Hollanders and we knew who were the Nazis, the Dutch Nazis. They were very disliked by the people. Soon everybody knew who was in

favor of the Nazi and favor of Germany.

Q: People were taking big risks so some people weren't willing to do that. I'm sure there were informers?

A: A few or so but you knew soon what they had done to other people and then like I talked about Father Fonse _____ he was very imprudent. He was very hard working. He didn't do anything than hiding people, finding food and smuggling weapons and so on, but he talked very freely but he never told me any names. But I found out many things after the war. I have a niece in Holland, she married my nephew and I asked her, because from the Holocaust they were asking for me about details about Father Fonse and she investigated everything and she went everywhere. She went to Belgium and Holland and to meetings and so on, and see I have those papers some where and I looked for them and I can't find them. They are _____, she did a lot, but she was not born during the war, she was born later, but she did a lot to find out about Father _____.

Q: Did you distinguish at all between Jewish people who converted to Christianity or catholicism?

A: I know a few. One Jew became a trappist and then a girl also became a nun and they were also arrested and killed. I knew about them. I didn't know them personally.

Q: But it didn't make any difference in terms of who you were trying to help?

A: Oh, no we helped everybody who was in need of help, and we didn't ask what religion they were, we just helped them. We trusted them too, we trusted people so much, maybe too much, but we were very lucky. I had a few times that I for example, when I had that control in the road when I had that shoebox with guns then things like that when my life was in danger, but not very much.

End of Tape #3

Tape #4

- Q: All of these families who helped you hide people, helped you in your work, were they compensated?
- A: I don't know if they were compensated after the war, but not during my time, and I didn't tell them that they were going to be compensated, no, nothing. They didn't ask for money. They did it to help people. In the south, my brother-in-law did a lot for the people who helped him to hide. He sent them gifts all the time and things like that after the liberation.
- Q: When you think of your work with the underground, your own work, what do you think it's greatest failures were, if any, any weaknesses?
- A: I think in my hometown I heard later that sometimes things were discovered, and there was a group working had a book laying and was edited the anniversary, 75th anniversary of the paper that my father founded and there I read a lot about what people did during the war in my hometown, but I didn't know it in those days, but I was not living there. I was living in the seminary, and I was ordained during the war, and during the war we could not go to the missions where I was going to appointed later for South America. I didn't know during the last years of the war where I would go, so I knew that I had to do something in Holland and by coincidence in touch with the underground and that is why I started to work for them, but after the war, so many people in Holland talked oh I was in the underground too. Everybody wanted everybody to know that they worked with the underground, but many people made up things. Then we didn't care about it anymore. We didn't want to talk too much about it. For example, this lady, she's here in the United State, she wrote a book and she talked to many groups, _____, you heard of her I guess. They worked, they did very much for the underground and the father had to watch the store or something. He had a few daughters. They were helping people and the sisters were killed in a concentration camp and she got -- many people ask me do you know her, because it goes around here and talks all the time. I thought many times I did the same thing, but I don't talk too much. But she has written books and she's on t.v. sometimes and it is like she was the only one who worked in the underground, but so many people -- but many people talk about it that didn't do anything during the war. They were afraid, but after the war everybody worked in the underground.
- Q: Did you ever have second thoughts about what you were doing? Was it really burdensome?
- A: No. I was proud of it, but I couldn't tell anybody, only after the war, and then I didn't tell too much because so many people were telling stories that I thought, my story doesn't make any impression. My family knew about it, and when I came here to the United States, I had a parish in Virginia, close to Williamsburg in West Point and sometimes people asked me what about during the war, and then I told them stories sometimes, and they were more interested, and I don't know, I think that some time people were asked if they knew somebody who helped Jews during the war to write to Washington, and there was a lady parishioner and her name was O'Connor, Sam O'Connor's wife, Helen O'Connor and she

didn't write her name but she wrote the Post Office Box 53 and I remember that I found out who that was, it was Helen O'Connor and she worked that I did work for the Jews during the wars. That is why they contacted me from Washington with the _____ or something in Richmond. You know him, because you talked about him. I was in correspondence with him for a while, and through him I got that award.

Q: Was there a sense of adventure about this that you were really combating the Nazi?

A: Yes. We were glad to do something about it, to fight the Nazis. We hated the Nazis so much and there is still a lot of hatred in Holland. They hate the Germans because of the war and that was so many years ago. And then they say we must forget it it is so long ago, but some people can't forget, especially the older people, but many young people there now today and that is why I'm glad to have the opportunity to tell something who don't believe in the Holocaust. They say it didn't happen. It's impossible.

Q: What do you consider your greatest accomplishment during all of this?

A: That was the contact I think with Father Fonse and _____ and also what I did in _____, but the South I was more indirect helping by bringing photographs at night as soon as the curfew was over to Rosenthau, and then I came back on my bike and before they got up in the seminary I walked like nothing happened. I walked through the chapel for the morning prayers and I had been already in Rosenthau a half an hour driving, riding on a bike. So, I was proud of that and later on when I had to go into hiding in the north, I had to abandon all that work I did in the south, I told the director of the seminary, I said I have to confess something. I worked in the underground. He was glad to hear it but he didn't know it. I said now I have to have a successor and I wanted to have Father _____. I said I told him already about it, and he said I don't want him to do it, because he's not secretive enough, but I said I told him already and I gave him the address and he goes if this my brother-in-law and the leader of the underground nothing could happen. So, when they war was over they made him chaplain, Army chaplain, and then he went with the Dutch Army to Indonesia and then he came and they didn't know what to do with him so they sent me to the United States but I didn't do anything here. So, I was the assistant of provincial. They said we have to send him back to Holland then they made a pass through Germany, and he died last year.

Q: During this period of time, did you do things that you never would have imagined you were doing?

A: Yes, all those things. I would never have imagined that I would have worked in the underground and helping people to hide. We were not prepared for that, and I had to do it all on my own almost, especially in the north. There was not very much organization. That's what our people said, when the Father came, Father Henry, something is done for the people in hiding, but the pastor didn't do anything, and that is why the pastor became jealous. It was not a happy time there in _____. _____ means Black Sea. That was

the name of the town, and the pastor -- he had no sense of humor and so on and I had to hide many things from him and he let me do things, but I don't know if he agreed on it.

Q: What was it in your makeup that enabled you to do what you did? What prepared you, I mean you weren't prepared to go into the underground, but what drove you that didn't drive that pastor and some other people in your background?

A: I think the pastor was too afraid.

Q: What about you?

A: I was young. I was in the late twenties and I had everything. I didn't care. I was glad that I got that appointment is what made it a good covering to hiding there. I was proud of it, but I didn't tell anybody, but there was still a train going, but it took me a whole day, and I took my bike on the train, and after a while, it was a little bit before they called it _____. It was the day that the Allies started to invade Europe. A few weeks before I went to the north and there if you can find out when it was, when the Allies landed in Europe, was it '44? Then I went to _____, and I stayed there until the war was over.

Q: Did you need special skills to do what you were doing?

A: I thought everybody was doing it. Every priest. It was not so, but many priests were doing it. We were in the opportunity to do something, they did it.

Q: It didn't require any special talents or personality?

A: No, you had to be proud of doing something, to fight the Germans and to help the people who were in need. I have been all my life helping the poor. I went to South America and I was pastor there in the slum area. I worked first among the Indians, always among hungry people and then because there was so much trouble and poverty in South America that is why I came to the United States to find help for the poor. I went around here for many years to make appeals everywhere for the poor in South America. Then I became pastor in West Point, because I asked for a parish that I had to establish an office, and that's expensive, you have to rent a house. You have to pay the bills for lights and water and so on. I thought I better ask for a parish and have an assistant who would do that work and then we can continue the work for the poor. So, I asked for a parish and then I got first a parish in Portsmouth, Virginia, and the Bishop asked me you can make a choice. There was one parish, it was a black parish for Negroes and nobody wanted that. It had big debts. They let me take that. I had to make appeals to take the debt off. Then I started this discrimination to have a special parish for black people so I eliminated with the help of the bishop _____ the bishop was afraid that there would be some trouble but I asked the bishop let us find out what the people want. If they wanted to have another parish in an area where the Negroes are living because I had a parish in a white area and they had to pass

many white churches to go to their own, so we started first with the school to eliminate the school and that went through without any difficulty. Then we give them the parish and they had to pay off the debt. It was \$250,000 and I paid it off by begging and so on, and then I got a parish in West Point. I talk to people sometimes when they ask me about the war, there was a guy --.

Q: So you integrated the parish?

A: No, yes the other parish was integrated in Portsmouth but many left the church because they didn't want to. There was a guy in Virginia, he was a German, his name was Kyle Rudolph and he was a Nazi. I didn't know that, but I found out later, and he was very rich. He was a multimillionaire. He had a business in West Point. I can tell it now because he died two years ago, and he had a big business in _____ a factory in West Point. He gave a lot of money to the church, and his sister came once and she didn't like it too much. She said it's to buy off his sins because he did a lot of sins and he was living with a woman but he gave her \$1,000 for the new church I was building. I didn't know he was a Nazi but I knew that he went every year to Europe but he never went to Germany. He went always to Austria. He had a house there. Then I found out he didn't have to go to Germany anymore because he thought he was sought because he was a Nazi. When I gave up the parish I started an organization to fight hunger in the world and then I went to live with my sister, but this guy, this multimillionaire was 75 years old and the personnel of the factory want to give him a party, and they ask me to come and give a speech because they thought I was a good friend of his. So, before the party it was in West Point at the house of one of the people who worked for him. He had a visitor over from Germany and he introduced me to that German. He said that is that priest who fought us during the war. I said what fought, what I did in war was helping Jews. Then he said, they should have killed them all. And that is the last thing I heard of him. He didn't want to have anything to do with me, but he continued to support the parish and my successors, they got money from him, and now I told him don't do it, because he is a Nazi and he is afraid to go to Germany and I think that some day he will be discovered by Nazi hunters and then he will pay for what he did, but he invited him to Bocco Raton where he had a big house. He invited those priests there and I had already three successors there and now he died, and they buried him in the cemetery, the catholic cemetery in the middle where the old pastors are buried and I protested. I told a priest who was my successor I said they shouldn't have buried him there. That's for a priest but not for an ex-Nazi. Then he said I will show you and he was dug up and put in another place. The pastor heard about it that I complained that he was buried there which was reserved for priests. An ex-Nazi to be buried there because they were very fond of him because he got money from him. That is the experience with Karl Rudolph. Then he was his enemy. He didn't want have anything to do with me any more after this surprise party.

Q: So you carried this with me in the United States.

A: That was at West Point.

Q: Let me ask you a question about Holland right after liberation. I suspect there were a lot of adjustments after the war between people coming back and the people who were in hiding and the economy and everything.

A: It was a little difficult for many people.

Q: As a priest, what was your experience after the war?

A: Now, I don't have much experience because as soon as the war was over I went with this soldier in a pick up truck to _____. It took a whole day, and then I heard there I went to the seminary and they said congratulations I said for what. They said you're appointed for Chile. They sent a letter to the pastor when I was on my way to the south, so then I found out I got my letter there that I was appointed for Chile. Then I prepared myself more to go to Chile then I had to because in Holland you couldn't get any textile or so, but I got it in Belgium and I can tell many stories about that, too, how we got all that stuff and I had to smuggle it through Holland. Then I went soon to South America, so I don't know too much. I heard several things for several people it was difficult to adjust. They were used to adventures during the war, and then life was so quiet and calm and so that is why when I came to Chile I was also a little bit restless. I couldn't get used to that life not to keep any secrets so I asked for a difficult place so I went to the South of Chile and worked with the Indians for a while until I became an appointment for pastor in Santiago in a slum area. I worked again amongst the poor. Then they had to build a church. There was no income at all. There was no schools in the whole area. There were 30,000 parishioners so I was sent by the cardinal of Santiago, Cardinal--- I don't remember his name to the United States to see if I could find help for the poor in Latin America. So, I go to church with Bishop _____, you heard about him I guess and he invited me to dinner and each time I was in New York and he gave me some financial help too, and then I got a lot of parishes where I could make appeals and that's why I came here to the United States. Later it was difficult to make all the arrangements from Chile for the appeals. I had to come every year, so I established an office first in Portsmouth and then in West Point.

Q: Is there anything else that you want to say about your work or the situation, your motivations, your church, any of this?

A: Yes, because as a priest we are I wanted to be a priest first to get rid of that high school, but then later on I got my vocation during the seminary years, I just wanted to help people, people that were in trouble. So I worked almost all my life among the poor until I came here, but I worked a lot among the poor, and that is why I got involved in the underground I think. I got involved there without asking for it, but I welcomed the opportunity to do something especially for people who had to hide from the Nazis. The first thing I heard was from this Mr. _____, the Jew in my hometown with his family which was helped by uncle, and then by the mayor who came to my reception and he told me in secret he said I'm so sleepy. I didn't sleep a moment because I had to go out and find Jews, and then I found out that there were quite a few Jews living in my hometown.

Q: Did you know them?

A: No, because I was in the seminary. I didn't know much about my hometown. I was 12 or 13 when I went to the seminary and I went there only for vacation. I know only Mr. _____ and his family who were friends of my uncle, and I heard later that they went into hiding but the brother of my uncle and his sister and that their child was born there. That was dangerous. But that is what I knew of my hometown. I was glad when the opening came for a pastor there in the north _____ wanted to have an assistant because it didn't cost him anything. I would say mass and he could keep the money and I did work and he didn't have to pay for it. I didn't get any pay.

Q: Did you know when you were going north that you would continue your underground activities up there?

A: I was hoping that I would have an opportunity. I didn't know that I would have much more opportunities up north than I had in the south and up north I was more active directly. I found people and I had to keep them alive and I had found work and rations and food and money and places where they could stay. I enjoyed doing that. I was glad that I had that opportunity. In the south I worked more indirectly.

Q: Anything else you want to say?

A: I'm empty I think. I told everything I remember. Maybe later on I think I could have told that, but at the moment. The last days I have tried, before you came, I knew that you were coming and I was glad to have the opportunity because so many young people don't believe in the Holocaust so they now have an opportunity to tell from my own experience that the Holocaust really existed and I was trying to remember things but it is so many years ago, and I'm bad at remembering the names. I remember couldn't remember the names in the south of _____, who did so much for the Jews, but in the north I don't remember the Protestant minister who brought very regularly the coupons to the rectory. I remember he had on a bicycle and he had a basket in front of his bicycle where he had the coupons always. I remember those things when I talk about it.

Q: Did you get any sleep?

A: Yes, I got some, yes, but always that I could be arrested and so on. I knew someday whatever it never came but close. When that guy came, that German soldier at the door at the middle of the night I never knew maybe he was trying to hide and that he didn't want to fight anymore and I don't know if he got killed or not, but when I think about it I feel a little bit sorry that I did that, that I didn't try to find out more. If it was real what he told me or that he was making up things. I didn't trust him. But now after so many years, the people in that town, _____ they talked about things which happened during the war which happened to me and that is why 16 people, they are poor people, they came all the way to my

reception to the south, and they had to drive several hours, maybe three hours to get there.

Q: Do you have anything else that you want to add?

A: No, I'm glad that I have this opportunity. But I was afraid that I would not remember enough. I thought you came all the way from Washington and I have so little to tell. Do you think it is worthwhile?

Q: Absolutely.

End of Tape #4

Conclusion of Interview