United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Budd Schulberg
December 1, 2005
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PREFACE

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Budd Schulberg
December 1, 2005

Tape 1 of 3:

Q: First let me say, welcome, I'm so happy you're doing this for the Holocaust Museum.

Thank you, thank you, I'm really glad to do it.

Q: (Let's just start by you telling me your name, and when you were born, and where, and give me a little family picture.)

My name is Budd Schulberg, and I was born in really a neighborhood that is now Harlem – I was born on 120th Street, March 27, 1914.

Q: And, in a way, my parents told me I was maybe the only person who was a born screenwriter, because my father wrote a photoplay – it was on a suffragist subject. My mother was a suffragist, and he wrote a screenplay, a three-reel called "What Every Woman Wants" – I think it was called. And he got $500 for that script, which was quite a lot for those days. And he told me it was that 500 that he paid the doctor, Dr. Jellyhouse – I've always loved that name – who delivered me, at home, and so I really owe my birth to film writing, you might say. My father was one of the earliest, very early photoplay writers, as they called them then.
What else?

Q: (Take us from New York to California.)

We left when I was about six years old. And my father had been working for Adolf Zukor, Famous Players, as a writer and publicist, from about the age of 18 – he started very, very young. But by the time I was born, he decided he would like to branch out on his own. And become his own film company producer. So we went out to Hollywood very early.

I really remember the ride on that train. It was on the old Chief, Santa Fe Chief, before the Superchief, even. And I vaguely remember that, being out on the observation car, and watching the country fall away behind us.

My father and Louis Mayer, later the famous third "M" at MGM – the two of them together set up a very early film studio, way downtown, not in what we call Hollywood now, but down by the railroad tracks, way downtown Los Angeles. It was called the Mayer-Schulberg studio. So both Mayer and BP, so they both were making these early silent films. That's about it.

My father's big discovery was Clara Bow. He found her in a Brooklyn beauty contest, actually, signed her for 50 bucks a week, and brought her to Hollywood. I called Clara sort of a pre-Marilyn Monroe sex queen, sex appeal queen. She was known as the, as the "It" girl, from a famous novel of the time, and movie called "It." And she had it. Clara really did have It. She really did. She's still amazing to watch in those silent films. And that's so –

My father and Louis made their films for a few years, for about three or four years, and then Louis Mayer went to the newly formed MGM. And at that point my father went over, went back to Zukor, in a sense, and became head of the, of the west coast studio of Paramount. And so, all through my young manhood, growing up, I really grew up on the, in a way, on the backlot. I used to go there almost every day on my bike, drove through those famous gates, and roam around and play on the backlot sets, and wander into different stages where they were shooting amazing films. So all these famous stars were like old hat to us – they were more like people who just worked for my father – was the way we thought of them.

Q: (How early did you get interested in writing?)

Very, very early, I'd say I was about 9 or 10, very early. It was very much a part of our household atmosphere.

My father had started as a writer, with the, with those early photoplays. And he, also as a kid, worked on the old *Daily Mail* and a short time on the old *World* – papers that we, that we dearly miss. There used to be about ten daily papers, and now we're down to about two and a half. So, so he, he had a great interest in, aside from film, in uh writing.

And my mother was a frustrated librarian. And she set up a very big library, thousands of books, all set up like a regular library, all numbered like a library, a real library.

My father used to – Sunday morning was a ritual. He would read from the classics, aloud to us, Sunday mornings until brunch, from about 9:30 or so. It's amazing what we read. We read through Dickens and Melville and Galsworthy, and we, how we, Sunday after Sunday for years and years, we heard that. So writing was very much part of our life. So I started when I was about 9 or 10, started to write little stories, very much encouraged by my parents. So by the time I went to high school, I just thought of myself as a writer, as if it was already my profession.

And it all went – it fell in place very naturally. I edited the high school – Los Angeles High School daily paper. We had a daily paper. I laugh because these days, my kids at Westhampton High School couldn't get out a monthly paper, and the thought of a daily paper, they couldn't imagine putting it out every day. But we did.

So anyway, that's why, so we breathed that atmosphere.

My sister Sonya wrote a very good novel when she was about 19, that Scribners published, entitled, *They Cried a Little*. Sonya said that in our house, where in other homes they might have a piano and people might sit down – Sonya said, in our house, we had a typewriter, and as we passed we might type out a little jingle or something or a little story, and we all, Sonya and Stuart, Stuart wrote very well, too.

Q: (He was 8 years younger than you. That's quite a gap when you're kids.)

It was, yes.

Stuart had several short stories in *The American Best Short Stories*. He really wrote very well. If he hadn't gotten into television producing, he might very well have just gotten into pure writing also. It just ran in our family, really.

My sister is really an excellent writer. I've often said, and I mean it. She's a better writer, she's a better, delicate writer than I am. If we had a little contest, describing some Hollywood street. She can still do that better than I can; she's very, very sharp.

The difference was that I made, I made much more of a job of it, an everyday job. And Sonya is so finicky that nothing ever satisfies her. She'll take a short story and work on it for a year, and still not want to show it to anyone. She's a perfectionist. But in the real life of writing you can't do that. You'll spend the rest of your life polishing one thing. And Sonya tends to do that.

Q: (Were you and your siblings very competitive?)

Not really. I was so much the elder of the three. And with my father and my mother divorcing when I was a teenager, 17 or 18, and Sonya and Stuart younger, uh, I was very worried about them. I sort of uh, took on my father's failed responsibilities. I was worrying about their school and how they would react to a divorce, and all of that. So I wouldn't say we were very competitive, no.

Q: (You were born just at the time that the First World War started. Do you have any memories of the First World War?)

It's funny, I do have. One memory was being on a train going west, this was in 1918. It's almost the first memory I have, being on a train. And I was about four years old. And, and my father's partner, Harry Abrams, his daughter was about eight, and the two of us were in a bunk together. And we stopped in a station, and a train full of soldiers was just opposite the platform. And I remember looking at them and they were sort of jeering and making sort of lewd remarks about, I don't know what they were saying, but I remember that moment.

And I remember being with my mother on a as the soldiers were, had just come back from World War One and were marching down 5th Avenue, and I've got just a glimpse of a memory of that. It's almost my earliest memories of World War One. I also remember collecting silver tinfoil, balls of it that somehow were being given for the war effort. I don't know exactly how they used it, but those are the, those are about the only ways I relate to World War One.

Q: (Let's jump forward to the approach of World War II. Now you have sudden success writing, right? Why don't you tell us about that period and give us a sense of Hollywood when the war started.).

Well, 19 –, let's see. When I got out of college in 1936, David Selznick, who had been my father's assistant, had now set up his own studio, and was planning independent films, one of which of course became *Gone with the Wind*, and the first *A Star is Born* – which was the daddy of all those later Star is Borns.

And, let's see, I came back and started working for David as a young screenwriter. And I had a seven-year contract – it started at 50 and went to 75 a week. At the end of seven years, I would have been making $500. And, uh, but he, but even, a year and a half into it, I would write screenplays that David, I don't think ever read; he was so busy making the films he was already planning.
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And then they would call us in – I thought of it as being a, sort of like being a pinch hitter who comes in off the bench. If there was some immediate problem, David would call Ring Lardner and me – we were a writing team. We were both about 21, 22 years old. We were just out of college.

And he would call us in on –like on *A Star is Born*. They couldn't figure out the ending of *A Star is Born*, and we wrote the ending of it, that one where Janet comes out of Grauman's Chinese and sees her husband's footprints and handprints, and when she's asked her name. She's now a big movie star, and he's gone down, and in fact he committed suicide because he couldn't stand his failure while she's gone up. And she looks down, and when they ask her on the radio, she says, "This is Mrs. Norman Maine." – and it's a big ending in the movie. Things like that, little bits and pieces. It wasn't awfully satisfying.

By the time he was about to pick up my third option, I went in to David and I asked David – I'd known him so well for years and years – my mother even put him, my mother really stage managed his wedding to Irene Mayer, my mother really sort of put them together, encouraged them. And I'd known him since I was a kid, and I said, "David, do me a big favor, please, don't pick up my option." And David was really very hurt. He said – he felt really insulted, and he said, "Well, I have great plans for you. I was thinking that as I get older, I may retire, and you might be ready to take over for me, and then my young son Danny, Danny would work for you the way you work…." You could see this going on until the 21st century – a dynasty of the Selznicks and the Schulbergs.

And I said, "Well, I appreciate that, David, I really want to be a writer, and not really a big producer, like you." And David said, he said, "Well," he said, " I know we carry you on the payroll as a writer" – and that hurt my feelings a little bit, but that's exactly what he said – he said, "I know we carry you on the payroll as a writer, but," he said, "I figure that sooner or later your producer's blood would begin to assert itself and that would kick in."

I told Scott Fitzgerald that anecdote, and he used it in *The Last Tycoon*. It's in *The Last Tycoon*.

So anyway, to cut this a little shorter, I finally did get out of there. I started writing short stories for Liberty and Colliers and for all the slick magazines. And I was doing very well with that. And one of the short stories was *What Makes Sammy Run?* And I then decided that I'd like to put, work out there and try to develop that as a novel. And that, that caused me quite a bit of trouble. Because for one thing, I was, I was, I was a young member of the Communist Party (drinks) – (PAUSE)

Q: (Let's start that sentence again.)

We met secretly every week, once a week, and we all had lots of assignments. We were very busy infiltrating different organizations, the Screenwriters' Guild and the Anti-Nazi League – all kinds of things, the Democratic Party and Young Democrats, and we would try to infiltrate them, to influence them toward the communist program. So I asked at the meeting if I could be excused from my regular assignments in order to – I'd like to stop and write this book.

The answer was, "I guess you'll have to talk to Jack Lawson about that" – Lawson was the head of the communist party – "to decide whether the book would be valuable enough to the party to justify your dropping your assignments." So I went to see Lawson, and Lawson was, was very tough, really tough and hardnosed.

And Jack said, "Well, Budd, I think the only way we can handle this is that you make an outline of the book, show me the outline, and then if I think the book will be useful to the party, then I'll sort of supervise the writing of the book." And I said, "Jesus, Jack, I can't do that." And Jack started to give me things about the responsibility to the party. And that went on for many, many weeks, and I refused to do it. And they said, "No, you have to do it, or if you…."

Finally, one day I went home with my young wife, Jigee, and I said, "Jigee, I can't take the argument any more. It's just eating me up, and so what I want to do is get in the car and drive away and just leave. And even that was, even that – people don't realize how tightly disciplined the party was. You couldn't just get in a car and drive away. If you were going to New York you had to tell them where you were going. And then if you were staying more than two or three weeks, you were reassigned to a unit in New York. It was very tightly controlled. So I just – the very act of getting in a car and driving away was a very serious defiance of the party discipline.

And when I got back to, I went back to Dartmouth, where I'd gone to college, and found a little house, very cheap, for about 50 or 60 bucks a month, it was. And for the next year I worked on this book, Sammy. Meanwhile, while I was there, the Soviet-Nazi pact came down, and that drove me even further from the party, because I felt that we all had to stand up to Hitler, and suddenly, suddenly the party people were saying that it's just an imperialist war between the Germans and the English. And we should be neutral and stuff, which I thought was a grave mistake, also.

Also, and so I was even further alienated from the party. And I got the book done and, and went back and, uh, the top people like Lawson were mad, were very mad at me for going and doing this on my own. But when the book was published, the book reviewer for the *People's World*, which was the western edition of the Daily Worker, Charles Glenn was his name – he wrote a rave review of the book. He thought the book was <u>the</u> Hollywood book, if not maybe the great American novel that everyone was talking about – raved about it.

That caused a firestorm apparently. They called him in and they gave him hell – Lawson and company. Two weeks later he re-reviewed the book and he said, "On further consideration" – and he even said, "It's been pointed out to me the shortcomings," and he absolutely trashed the book. Apparently they had threatened him that if he didn't, if he didn't do that he would be fired from the paper and maybe even kicked out of the party. He had to do it, and so he just trashed

the book. It was a terrible book. It didn't do that and it didn't do that. It was really disgraceful, just disgraceful.

Q: (Was there a direct connection between that experience and your later decision when faced with testifying?)

Yeah. The funny thing is, while the, while the communists were denouncing me, Sam Goldwyn fired me. He was just in a rage. When I came in, he screamed at me. It was almost like that Judge Freisler. And he screamed at me. "You're a traitor! You're a traitor!" Like that, he got purple, he was so mad. "How could you write that terrible book?!" he screamed at me.

And then, at the Motion Picture Producers Association meeting, that – my father of course was a member and attended, and Louis B Mayer, his old partner, was now an enemy of my father. He took off the same way, and he said, "B.P. I blame you for this. You should have stopped him. It's your fault." He was yelling, too. You have no idea how outraged they were about this thing.

My father said, "Louis, I did try to stop him. I wrote him a letter begging him not to publish the book." I still have that letter, by the way, that my father wrote me. "If you publish this book, it will ruin you. You'll never be able to live. You'll never get a job here again. And not only that, it will hurt me, it will hurt your mother – who was just entering the agency – it will hurt the whole family. You've got to put – don't publish the book." My father wrote that.

Anyway, Louis Mayer said – he said, "You know what I think we should do with him?" He said, "I think we should deport him." And he really meant it. It was really sort of fascinating, because I always said that Hollywood in those days was like its own country. They thought of it as their own country. It was like Luxembourg or something. They ran that country. And they could do anything they wanted. The, the district attorney, Huron Fitz was his name. He was on a weekly salary. They paid him every week. And they could do anything. They could cover up any crime. It never got in the paper. Clark Gable drunkenly killed somebody. He did. And no one every heard about it. Nothing. Because they ran everything, including the press. It was really their country. So when Mayer said that – it really, it sounds ridiculous, but in his mind, I should be deported. And my father – I always said my father was much more intelligent than Louis, he knew so much more, but he wasn't as smart in a practical way as Louis was. And my father said, "Louis," he said, "maybe you're right, but," he said, "where do you think his St. Helena should be?" He said, "Maybe we should deport him to Catalina Island."

And according to my father, some of the producers laughed, but Louis didn't think that was a bit funny. So it was really an odd thing, I was being deported, really, and, and uh, blacklisted, by both the Hollywood moguls and the communist moguls, both. It was from both extremes. So I went back to New York, and – of course, by that time, I felt the die was cast. And then, from then on, which pretty much I've done, I would stay east and be a fiction writer and so forth, which I've tried to do.

Q: (Remind us how old you were at that time – you were very young.)

I was about 25.

(Drinks)

Q: (So wait till you're finished with the water… Tell us again that you were twenty five years old. I mean, that's a vulnerable time to be so berated by everyone around you.)

Yeah. That book changed my life completely. It even cost me harmony with my first love of my life, my wife, Jigee, Virginia. It even cost me the marriage in a way, because Jigee wanted to stay west. She didn't like the east. And she thought the climate was bad for our little daughter Vicky, and we sort of argued about that, back and forth. And the, she insisted, almost, on, on, that we live out there. And I was saying, "I can't live out there. It's over for me there. And in the east, I'm really accepted now. And I have a new contract for a book, and I'm – my new life has begun."

It really planted the seeds of our breaking up eventually. That book changed me in every possible way. It was really funny.

Q: (Give us a sense of the chronology when it was published, and then, if you could move forward to the war, which obviously changed things for everybody, right?)

I started the book in the spring of '39. I finished it in the, about fall of, of 1940. It was published, uh, on my birthday, uh, in 1941. And uh, and then, then I was working on my, I was back in Vermont. I was starting my second book. And then came Pearl Harbor, and we were in the war. And then I, I was anxious to get in the war, and I, uh, I applied to the Marine Corps. Uh, and then I, I went back to Hollywood to see my daughter and Jigee, and at that time, I spoke to the, John Ford, the famous movie director. Ford was forming this outfit, the – called the Navy OSS Photographic Unit that would work with the, in the OSS with, with photographic in-intelligence. And because of my book's success, uh, Ford asked, Ford asked me, he said he would like me to be in that unit. So that's what happened. I then applied, with his recommendation. And that took about six months before I was approved.

And in the meantime, I went down to Mexico and waited in Mexico and wrote screenplays to support myself, wrote screenplays down there, for Mexican producers.

And then finally I was, I got my Navy commission and went to Washington to report to John Ford. And that was the beginning of my war experience. I was in, in for about four years, because after the war, I was with the Nuremberg Trial. It seems to me, I think it was from spring of '42 to spring of '46 before I got, before I got out, because the last six or seven months was spent preparing a film for the Nuremberg, the photographic evidence for the trial.

Q: (Tell us a bit more about John Ford's role. So you went into the Navy, because he was in the Navy, and he already was forming this unit.)

Yes. Exactly.

Q: (But was it solely Navy personnel?)

No. It was not. It could have been anywhere. It could have been Marine, or Army. I think that Jack just had contacts with the Navy. He was a friend of Bill Donovan, the OSS head, of the newly formed OSS. And, so it was a Navy outfit that really was, didn't really have very much to do with the Navy.

At the same time, there were some really ridiculously funny things like at our headquarters in Washington, at the Agricultural Building, if you wanted to go out for lunch, you would go to the Marine Sergeant and say, "Permission to go ashore, Sir." We had all this naval talk, even though we never saw a ship. But, Ford did send me for naval training anyway, to Fort Schuyler. I went to Fort Schuyler and got Navy indoctrination, where I had some trouble with navigation and all these things, I wasn't very good at that.

Q: (Tell us about John Ford and your story about his erratic responses to you in terms of requiring Navy behavior.)

John Ford, of course he was a genius, but he had a, I think he had a kind of sadistic trait. Because when I came in to report – I'd known him in Hollywood, and I was still thinking of him as a movie director and me as a young writer. So I walked in and said, "Hi Jack, I'm here, like, what do you want me to do?" It was sort of like that. And Ford was now a Navy Commander, and he said, "Ensign Schulberg, that's no way to report to your commander. Come to attention and salute and make an official report." And so on. I thought the guy was crazy, but I said, "Ensign Schulberg reporting for duty, Sir." And he's said, "That's more like it." So he's like a standard stiff-necked Navy commander. It was so typical Ford, so I say, OK, if that's what he wants, I'll do it. I don't care.

So the next time I come into his office I give him a sal…and say, "Ensign Schulberg reporting for duty, Sir." John Ford says to me, "Oh, for Christ's sake, Budd, you don't have to go through all that. Sit down. Let's talk." Like now he's just a movie director again. That's the way he was. He loved to keep people off balance. That was a big thing with Ford, to keep them off balance. Whatever you thought he was going to say, he'd say something different.

But he took glee in, and he said, "We're going to send you to Fort Schuyler, and they'll really knock some Navy discipline into you." He said, "You're going to find it very tough." He couldn't wait for me to suffer there, at Fort Schuyler. And so I went to Schuyler – I didn't mind it really, I found it rather interesting. Tough, but – and we'd run around the Fort at 6 o'clock in the morning and go all through this stuff, and so it was sort of interesting.

And one really funny thing happened there.

There were two little ensigns from the South. One was named Watts and the other was named Furr. One came from Mississippi and the other from Georgia. And they would always stare at me. I'd be doing something and they'd look up and they were staring at me.

And one night after mess, I came back to my bunk, and they came over, and they said, "Excuse me, Schulberg, would you mind if we talk to you?" And I said, "Well, no." So they sat down

opposite me in this little bunk. And I said, "OK, what do you want to talk about?" And they said, in that thick southern accent, I can't do it, they said: "Someone told us that you were a Jew." And they said, "You know, we've never seen one before." It was like looking at a koala bear from Australia or something, and they'd never seen one before.

And then they, and then we got to chatting a bit. And then they – they were very polite. He said, "Well, Sir, if you don't mind our asking," Furr said, "What do you do in civilian life?" And I said, "Well, I'm a writer." And Furr said, "A writer. That's interesting." He said, "We've got a couple" – he came from Oxford, Mississippi – he said, "We've got a couple of writers in our town." And I said, and I said, "You mean Faulkner?" And he said, "Yeah, the Faulkner brothers, the brothers."

He said, "You know, those two guys" – he said, "I'm a druggist." He worked in a drug store, and his whole view of Faulkner – he said, "These two Faulkner brothers," he said, "almost every morning, they come in and buy aspirin, because they've got such bad headaches, because they drink so damn much at night." That was his –

And I said, "Well" – and I said, "William Faulkner? You know William Faulkner?" And he said, "Well sure, I see him every morning." He said, "How do you know him?" He had no idea that he was famous. He just thought he was a crazy guy in town. They had no idea he was a famous writer. They were so funny. They used to…

After that, they would, whenever they saw me – I should write about them some time – they would –(Drinks)

Umm, whenever they saw me, they would say, "Hi, Schulberg," and then they'd look at each other, be sort of pleased. It was like that, I mean, it was just a, I was just a bizarre thing to them. I didn't feel really anti-Semitism, it was just, simply, they had never seen one, that's all. ----------(?) or something. It was so…

And the final exam - it was just murder. You, you had to chart the, chart the passage of a ship, and you get all these instructions, thirty knots at this and then left to here and right to there, trying to take it from this one place all the way through the canal, to docking. And I didn't know what the hell I was doing. I was sweating. I said, "I'm going to flunk this thing, Ford is going to kill me." I couldn't do it.

I swear to God, as I'm sweating this out, Furr and Watts are sitting right across the aisle from me, and I see a hand coming in surreptitiously, and he shows me his paper so I could copy it and pass. They saved me. They saved me – Furr and Watts. God, they were sort of lovable, really. I'm sure when they went home, big stories about how they met this Jew. Now we know one, like, we really saw one.

Q: (How are we doing on tape time? Time? OK)

So, then I came back from Fort Schuyler, and Ford called me in and said – well, by this time I'm really snapping, I'm really Navy. I've been there for three months or something. And I'm very snapped up.

And Ford the sadist said, "Well, how'd you like that?" And I said, "Gee, I really loved it, Commander, it was great." It was sort of laying into him, and he wanted me to say, God, I suffered there or something. He was not happy – he thought I was suffering there at Fort Schuyler.

But after that, after that, the first nine or ten months or almost a year, we worked just in, in Washington. And Ford had made a film about, a film for public consumption about, about Pearl Harbor, and he asked me to write the, sort of the commentary, the narration, I mean, titles and stuff, and so on. I worked on films like that, which was more or less like working in Hollywood. And, then he sent me overseas to London. I was there in the blitz, and we did some, some undercover work in, in London, and then Paris.

And then we had some really interesting assignments. One was not really involved in photography. We were part of a little group that, as soon as a German town fell, we would rush in and try to grab as much information – we would go to the SS headquarters and things like that and grab papers and orders and things like that. It was interesting. It was interesting.

Q: (Was this in 1943? '44?)

Yes, I'd say this was '43, '44, yes, as we moved through Belgium and into Germany.

And then they used writers in a very creative way. They had writers like me work with, on the team that would drop, drop agents behind the line. And each agent had about, a team of about eight that took care of them. They all had different assignments. One would just – took care of his general welfare. And, and one was involved in the aviation problems, when he could be dropped, the weather, and where, and stuff like that. And I as a writer would work on their cover story, which was very much like writing a story. It was exactly like writing a character in fiction, because you would find out what they really did, and then just adjust it to what they would say when they got, if they were interrogated. And so that was really interesting.

Right before the end of the war, we had one, one guy who was a Danish agent. I was just amazed at the, at the crazy courage of these people. And he'd become quite famous. He had been actually dropped in Berlin or something, or got to Berlin. He went to the Adlon Hotel, and became a big pal of some big SS general. He was posing as a, as a neutral salesman of some kind – I forget what the hell they thought he was selling – but he became a pal and drinking buddy, and so –.

Now it was quite near the end of the war, and his main worry was that the war might end before he could do 50 drops. He really was worried that the war would be over. He couldn't wait to get his fiftieth in. And, but three days before, three or four days before the end of the war, back he went again. I asked him, it's against regulations really, because everything is so secret. But if he ever survived, if he ever came to the States, I'd love to know what happened to him. Because it

was frustrating. When we did this work, when they made contact inside, they made someone, not us, but just someone, in London I think it was, so we would never know what happened, we didn't know whether they got killed or were doing great. We never could sort of complete the experience. So I asked him, if he ever got out, if he survived this last one, and got to the States, I wish he would look me up and tell me what the hell happened to him. But I never heard from him. I don't know what happened to him.

Q: (So you had intelligence training, also – not just naval training, but intelligence training?)

That's right, so they sent me to that school; it's the same place where the CIA is now. Yeah, that was interesting. They sent me to a school. There were a hundred or so agents, at agent school. We were there about a couple of months, and each one had to make up a false identity, as to who they were and what they did. And they just went, funny things –

I said I was a sports writer. You had to of course choose something that you could talk about, or be questioned about, that they didn't know enough about, to pass. So I said I was a sports writer. I didn't say Los Angeles, but close to Los Angeles, like Alta , that I knew enough about.

Sometimes at three o'clock in the morning, they would wake you up and shake you and say, "What's your name? What do you do?" – kind of like that, to try and catch you. And fascinating, too, every Saturday night there was a long drinking session. They would all be at a long table, and they had every kind of booze on the table, and they would encourage people to drink. And they would see who fell apart in drinking, and who didn't. And they would weed them out like that.

Q: (Were you good at that?)

Yeah, I was. Yeah, I had had quite a bit of training in it by then. Yes, I was.

Yes, I passed the whole thing.

Q: (Better at drinking than navigation. They have to change tapes, so we can take a little break. Did I hear you right?)

So I came back from that….

END of Tape 1

Tape 2 of 3:

Q: (Why don't you tell me how Stuart was brought into the unit and when that was?)

Well, Stuart joined the Marine Corps. And after his Marine training – the same tough stuff – even tougher maybe that he went through – he was assigned to a film unit, a film unit in the Marine Corps. Meantime, I heard that we'd a slot open in our outfit. Someone had dropped out. I forget what happened to him. Anyway, I then recommended to Ray Kellogg that we get Stuart, I said he was really very, very able. And so they did suggest to Stuart that he apply, and Ford approved it, and so forth. And so Stuart came over, and from that time worked with us. And that's how we both happened to be, at the end of the war, involved in the Nuremberg Trial preparation.

Q: (Just a little background: Did you work at all with the Signal Corps? Did you have any connection or cooperation with the Signal Corps units, and with George Stevens' unit?)

No, we had no connection whatsoever with the Signal Corps. It drives me a little crazy, because it will never get straightened out, I don't think. Somehow on the Internet it says that George Stevens worked on the Nuremberg film. And I get questions many times: How was it to work with George Stevens? And he seems inextricably bound up in our project. I didn't even know, know George Stevens. I know his son quite well, but I don't think I even ever met George Stevens. And he had nothing whatsoever to do with our project. Nothing.

What he did, and where it got mixed up is that, apparently Stevens, at the end of the war got a film unit and went around photographing the concentration camps, and made several films that were, I think, quite effective. But of course that was not involved at all in the Nuremberg Trial.

For one thing, as I mentioned last night, we could only use film that the Germans themselves had shot and prepared, so anything that George Stevens did with our army people would not be admissible evidence. But we never saw George Stevens. And I don't think I'll ever be able to disconnect it. It comes up constantly. It's right there, if you find it – George Stevens worked on this.

It's one of the many, many troubles with the Internet, that's really a big negative for me. I get asked questions about Hollywood, about, did I get back to Hollywood work because I testified to the committee after the war, and I didn't go anywhere near Hollywood. I still felt outlawed, understand. And I lived in, in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, and just wrote books.

But all that misinformation is set in there, and it will be there forever.

Q: (I agree.)

And I'm sure there'll be biographies written full of misinformation.

Q: (OK, So George Stevens had nothing to do with *The Nazi Plan*.)

Nothing.

Q: (And did George Stevens and his group have anything to do with John Ford and his unit?)

Nothing. Zero. Nothing. They were two completely separate – I think that Stevens apparently did some very good work, but it had nothing to do with John Ford's OSS unit. Nothing.

Q: (OK. Why don't you tell us, give us some detail about how it came about, your suggestion about photographic evidence, and when you first came to Nuremberg, too, if you can go on to that.)

At the end of the war, after the war was, was over, General Bill Donovan was very interested in, was one of the first, I think, to be strongly in favor of an international tribunal to try the major war criminals. And he, he called a meeting –

I need some water, too, cause my mouth gets dry from talking so much. (Drinks)

He called a meeting of, of all the various OSS departments to discuss how the OSS could contribute to the building of an international trial. And again, Ray Kellogg, maybe Ford, but I worked much more closely with Kellogg than I did with Ford – Ford was over Kellogg, and Ford might make suggestions to Ray, Ray Kellogg, but Kellogg was my immediate superior. So I guess Ray just chose me to go to the meeting, and so I did, and there was Bill Donovan talking about the importance of the impending trial. And he felt that the OSS was logically set up to make a major contribution to their intelligence work and all the rest of it. I got the feeling at the meeting that, that I think Donovan saw himself as the main, would be the main U.S. prosecutor. I think he really hoped to have the job that eventually went to Justice Robert Jackson.

Anyway, each one spoke up about what they could do, and naturally, coming from the Film OSS Photographic – it was only logical to say that maybe there was photographic evidence that we could use at, at a trial.

As a result of that meeting, Kellogg then put me in, in charge of a photographic team that would look, search for and gather and edit and present the photographic evidence at the trial. And so, so I … Then I went back to Berlin, and, where, where the OSS was headquartered, and, and – with my brother Stuart, to be in charge of the still photographic evidence. So, he set up in, I think in Wiesbaden. And Stuart got the, the cooperation of Hans Hoffmann, who was Hitler's official photographer. And Hoffmann, who – oddly enough, his son in law was Baldur, Baldur von Schirach, the, who was on trial, the head of the *Hitlerjugend*. It was really ironic because in a sense the father in law was helping to hang his son in law.

But as I point out – with all the Germans that we worked with they, once we won, they would do anything we wanted, that they were completely submissive, really, and cooperative, almost to a slavish point. I mean, I was sort of disgusted with it, in a way. We would say that the – feeling anti-German at that time, because we did feel that the country really overwhelmingly had supported Hitler. You see those crowds of millions and millions of people would turn out for

those rallies. And we said that we thought of the Germans as being either, either at your throat or, or at your feet. That's what we said.

And at that point, we found them willing – that even formerly Nazi people would do anything that you, anything that you wanted, because they were scared of us also. But by then we were the conquerors and they were scared about what we might do to them.

Q: (Was Hoffmann that cooperative too?)

Hoffmann was totally cooperative with Stuart and turned over his entire treasure trove of photographs to Stuart. Went over with his staff, he had his staff down there, the way I had up in Berlin. (Coughing) (Drinks water)

Q: (So, Budd, when did you first go to Nuremberg, to the city? And what did you find when you were there?)

What did I find there, did you say?

Q: (When did you first get to Nuremberg?)

Very soon after we, after we set up headquarters in Berlin, in the Wannsee, very fancy, plush – it was like the Beverly Hills of Berlin, I guess, in a way, or even Bellaire. And at that time, I, I uh, after we set up shop there, then because, I went down to Nuremberg to talk with the Jackson legal staff to get the particulars of the indictments and find out, find out specifically what, what photographic, how the photographic evidence would, would dovetail with their actual indictments. And uh from the point on we worked very closely.

There was a lieutenant Jim Donovan who served as a liaison between the Jackson staff – he was on Jackson's staff, well we all were really, we were officially on Jackson's staff too – would work out the, the working arrangement between the indictments and what we could do to back up those indictments photographically.

And we worked with Ben Kaplan, whom I still see from time to time on the Vineyard – a very distinguished lawyer and I think a judge later, but we would work closely with them, and sometimes I was down there frequently. I might fly down for a few hours and fly back, and so I was in Nuremberg a lot, every, maybe a couple of times a week even, during that period when we were preparing the film.

Q: (What was the city like? What was the atmosphere like?)

Well, the city was a ruin. It was really a wreck. And the uh, and the Germans seemed very beaten down and sort of depressed, and uh, and eager to please, really, eager to please you, and sort of scared of you, too. It was very much a sense of the conquered and the conquerors. But it was shocking to see those cities. I saw Cologne, Berlin itself was, Jesus – I flew over Berlin in a small plane, and it looked like a honeycomb. There was hardly a roof left in all of this enormous

city. There was hardly any roofs on the buildings. You could just see right into them. It was totally destroyed.

Q: (Did you have any reflections on the impact of Allied bombing and whether it was justified?)

Well, that's a tough question, because really you might say on both sides, it really doesn't seemed justified to uh bomb civilians, you know, on one side or the other, just as the Nazis were doing in London, and we were doing in Dresden and everywhere else. We did destroy those cities. At the time, I felt that, at that time I felt that we had to do it, because we, apparently that was, they thought, the only way to win the war. And God knows we had to win the war if we wanted to survive. At the time, at the same time, it was really horrendous to see what we had done, I mean to people, and oh God, the wreckage of it.

Q: (I'm sorry, go ahead.)

When I saw Berlin, I, my feeling was that it would take fifty years or more to ever get it back together. I was amazed at how quickly they restored those cities. I was amazed at the resilience of people to rebuild them. I thought it would take all through the 20th century.

Q: (When did you first have real knowledge about what had been going on in the concentration camps?)

Um, trying to remember – there – Even before the war, there had been word, word had gotten out that there were concentration camps, uh, in, in 19… let's see, what's it in, yeah, in 1938. Joe, Joe Louis's uh, when— it was a, famous story that, there was, you know, that was – Braddock's manager was Jewish, and, and Goebbels was working very hard to set up a championship fight between Braddock the champion and Max Schmeling in Germany. And Joe Gould, the manager – I went to see him in the hospital shortly before he died. And whether he made it up or not, Joe Gould told me that, that he got a phone call from Schmeling in Germany, and Max was dying to set up this rematch with Louis. And, so he called. Joe Gould was actually at, at Stillman's Gym when he got the call. And Schmeling said, "Joe, I'm here with, with, I'm here with Mr. Goebbels in his office, and he would like to talk to you." And so there was Goebbels in Berlin talking to this little Jewish guy in Stillman's Gym. And of course now, it sounds made up, but what, what Joe Gould told me that day in the hospital was that, he said, Goebbels said, "We're very anxious to arrange a championship match between your fighter and our fighter, in Berlin, and we, and we want to know what your conditions are." And Gould said, "Well first, I want 500,000 dollars in a New York bank before we leave." And he said that Goebbels said, "Well, that's no problem."

And he said, "And also, we want, one judge must be American, and we want an English referee." And he said, "Well, just a minute, I'll have to ask Mr. Schmeling." Then he came back he said, "Mr Schmeling says that's OK, too." And then he said, "And we want ten first class passages, and, and first class accommodation for ten people in your best hotel," and so on. And he said, "Alright that'll be alright. Is there any other condition?"

Gould said that he said, "Well, there's just one more. We'd like you to release all, all the Jews from your concentration camps."

So that was '38. So by that time we were hearing rumors about the concentration camps. It was beginning to get out. They were just starting. I'm not sure exactly when they set them up. But there were only a few in the beginning. I think Dachau was one of the early ones.

Incidentally I, getting ready for the Nuremberg trial, I went to the Dachau trial as an observer. I didn't work on the trial, in fact, I was an observer at the trial.

Q: (And that was for the OSS?)

Pardon me?

Q: (For the OSS?)

For the OSS, yes, everything I did was on behalf of our OSS unit, yes, yeah.

Q: (OK, so let's jump in. The war ends, they undertake this incredibly ambitious –)

Very. It had never been done before, never

Q: (-- and so fast, so fast. So talk to me about what they wanted from you, how you could do it in the time there was. Tell us about that.)

They were building a case that the Nazis and Hitler had conspired almost from the beginning, almost from 1933 on, to breach the Treaty of Versailles and to find ways to get around it. And so they had these, many different steps of the indictment – of crimes against humanity, and, and crimes against the existing peace of the world, and so forth. There was a whole series of them. And for each one I would sit down with Donovan, sometimes with Ray Kellogg in attendance also – Ray served as sort of an intermediary between Donovan and me – and Donovan would spell out, out for us what the indictments were, show us, in fact I would read them, and then ask us, "How do you think that you see film building or buttressing the case that we're making?" So, so I would go away with that information and then, then look for film that would answer his, his, what he was looking for. So...

Q: (Where did you look first?)

Stupidly, we, as a shortcut, because we were very, very worried about time – at that time it was like August, and the trial was supposed to open on the 15th of September. We had no time. So we got, so as a shortcut, we thought we'd look at all the Fox Movietone footage, because actually that was produced, had come from Germany, and so we got all of that, and it, I thought it didn't answer all, all the things he was asking for, but some of them. And so I, I went down with a list. And at that point Donovan, Jim Donovan said, "Well, Budd, that's film that was released in the United States. Even though the source was German, we can't use anything that was at the influence, say, of Fox Movietonews, because the defense attorneys would jump in and say 'That,

that's not admissible evidence, it might have been doctored,' if they can't tell what happened to it, and so forth. It has to be only German film, made in Germany, photographed by the Germans, official Germans, too – the army or the Waffen SS people and so on." It made our job so much more difficult. I wasn't sure we could really do it at all.

And then we heard that that film was, the German film was all in the Russian sector, which made it even more difficult for us.

It's sort of a long story, Raye, but I went to the head of the Russian archives, this unusual man, uh, Major Avenerius he was, and I told him what we were looking for, and as I said last night, he, he asked me, well, he said, "Did you come up from the John Ford unit?" And I said, "Yes," and he said, "Well, that's very interesting." And it turned out that he was a John Ford scholar. He knew every, he really knew every Ford movie. He named them, he must have named twenty of them or more, every single one, all the way back to the early 20s. He knew the obscure silent films. He knew every damned shot. It turned out he was a… He was like really basically a civilian, and he'd been a professor at the film institute in Moscow, and John Ford was his favorite of all world directors. John Ford was his favorite director. He knew <u>everything</u> about Ford.

And he found it very interesting that Ford was the commander of the outfit. And he asked me if Ford would be coming, and I said "Well, yes he might come, just to inspect what we're doing." And he said, "Would you introduce me to him?" All his life he'd wanted to meet John Ford. I said, "Well, sure, if he comes. I think he may come." And with that, that opened the door. He told me to come back in the morning. And he opened up to us only, German, not all but a lot of the German newsreel film that they had shot themselves, and that we, a great deal of that record, the whole record of the growth of the Nazis and their coming to power officially through that strange uh, actually through an election, and all the rest of it.

So much of that film that we got from him the next day [coughs] we got because of the John Ford connection. We actually got a truck and loaded the truck with film. We had, we only showed four hours at the trial but we had maybe forty or fifty hours. We had hundreds and hundreds, hundreds of thousands of feet – it may have been as much as a million feet, I swear to God.

Q: (Do you want to clear your throat? And then I'd like to have you go back and tell us – This was at the Babelsberg studio, right? Mention where Avenerius was taking you. And also, talk about, you were presumably working on 35mm film, which is very unwieldy. Let's go back into that, so you can tell us where, and some of those things about the film conditions, and how you could handle film, both viewing it, copying it, all of that. So, go ahead.)

Well, we got so much of this film from him, as I mentioned last night, and after a few days of this, he suddenly stopped and suddenly became a little more stiff. Apparently his colonel had objected to his giving us so much film, even though the Soviet Union was one of the four parties represented in the prosecution. But the colonel stopped it. And then, I won't go into so much detail, but then we had to win over the colonel, which we did with this lavish party that we threw for him, an all night into the dawn party. When the colonel got drunk enough and softened up,

and we showed them the July 20th trial, which they were very interested in, and they wanted a – we had that and they didn't – and they wanted a copy of that, which we would make for them. And so, softened up, the colonel then gave us permission to drive way into the Soviet sector. And it was on that trip that – which the Russians said it was the furthest any Americans had been allowed in to penetrate the Soviet sector – they knew of this tunnel where film had … I should backtrack.

My two, my two SS film editors – we had recruited them from a POW camp – Walter Rothe and Curt von Molo were their names - and they told us that there were films made of, actually showing the Jews being shoved into cattle cars and ripped of their rings and jewelry and, and various atrocious things that the SS were doing to these poor Jewish victims. And, they had both worked on those, edited those films, and had shown them to Goebbels and Himmler, and obscenely, they called them 'desserts,' because they would be shown after dinner like a dessert in a – I guess as an amusement, partly an amusement but partly it was supposed to be reporting. These were like SS reports on what they were accomplishing. And they told us that there were a great many of these films. And the Russians said that they might be in this place, where they'd been sort of sealed up in a tunnel. And they did take us there, and it was on fire. It was burning. It was almost, it, it was, God, it looked like acres of film were burning. We did pick up little pieces.

And then they told us about two, two places in the sector, one called Rossleben and, and Rudersdorf – two small towns where the same thing. They would apparently make a tunnel into a mountainside or a hillside, and then seal up this film. And they were hiding it. And, and so we drove to both places. And in both places, of course, Rossleben and Rudersdorf, we found the same thing that we had found in the Russian sector. The film was burning, or had been burned – acres of it. It was huge. And once again, we were cheated out of getting what would have been just invaluable stuff. And again, we picked up here and there – it would be like a foot of, of film that was – you could see what it was if you held it to the light. And we did find some of that and made copies of it and, and brought that, and brought that down to Nuremberg. But I was convinced by this having happened three times that someone must be informing them that, that we were coming to get it.

Q: (So what you're saying really suggests that even though there was officially a prohibition on filming any of these kinds of activities, these guys were telling you that it <u>was</u> filmed.)

Oh yes.

Q: (Presumably this was film that was kept highly secret, right?)

Yes, Yes

Q: (And not something that went through the Propaganda Ministry.)

No.

Q: (Well that's one question. And the other part is – these acres of films, was it your feeling that some of that was official German film, like the Goebbels empire, or that these were all SS film locations?)

I don't know if they all were, because we really couldn't, we were not able to examine them the way that we would have wished to, but I got the feeling that these were more SS films that they were hiding, rather than the Goebbels propaganda films. But there might have been some of both. I really don't know. I really don't know the answer.

Q: (But tell us again where the German newsreel material was that you found.)

Well, that we found mostly in the Babelsberg, where, that Avenerius was in charge of. Most of that film came from there that they had – all of the newsreel film that had been shot all, all through the war, from the early days.

Q: (Do you remember where you found the film of the trial of the bomb plotters?)

Yes, I do. It, it was, I really, practically found that myself, with a couple of people with me. We – It was a film lab, and in the basement we found about twenty, twenty reels of film, and so I just took it with us and went back and started to run it. We didn't know what was in it, and there was the whole God damned trial of the plotters.

I was rather surprised, seeing the film did, *The Nazi Plan*, which had only a snippet of the trial, that I can't remember why that was chosen, because there were far more shocking scenes than that one that we showed, that was not as abusive as some. I don't know why that one…

For some reason, Donovan, at first he didn't want to use any of the film. He thought that crimes against their own people would not be as germane. I didn't really understand it, because after all we were using film of the anti-Jewish riots and so forth, which was against their own people. I never really agreed with him. I don't know what his reticence was about that.

Q: (Well, I wonder if it had anything to do with the fact that the people on trial for trying to kill Hitler were not the defendants in the dock at Nuremberg. This was a really opposite polarity.)

Well, that's true. And Judge Freisler was not – God he was a horrible, but it's true he was not on trial.

Q: (I think he was killed in an Allied bombing raid, actually, while he was in a courtroom.)

Freisler, I think he was. I think he was killed. Thank God, he was a, God what a horrible….

Q: (I share your, your passionate horror for that trial footage. I know it very well.)

That trial was something. Then also… I don't think, I don't think I spoke about it last night, but the, our, our SS editors told us that the, uh, the uh, July 20th people, in being convicted, they

were actually hung alive on meat hooks, big meat hooks, and just put like that and left to die. And that was photographed. That was photographed.

Q: (Filmed?)

Filmed, I mean, yes, filmed. And the idea was that they would show that to every, in every diplomatic center, show it to all the diplomats, Nazi diplomats and High Command people, as a way of frightening them against doing something like that again. What we heard was that it, it sort of backfired. It was so horrifying that they were afraid it would turn more people against the regime and they stopped circulating it.

And of course we were dying to get hold of that film. We were told that someone had actually sold it to someone in, in Switzerland, and so I went to Switzerland, went to Bern and to Basel, trying to find out if I could get the film. And a guy, a guy came to my hotel and said that he had the film, and, and he asked me how much I would pay for it. And I forget what I said – I had been told, I think, that we could go up to 5000. I think I started at 2500. And he said, he wouldn't even think of it for 2500, and then we got up to 5000. And he came back and said, "I've got other people interested also, in it and I think they might be willing to pay more than 5000." And then I only had permission for five, so I had to call Ray Kellogg and find out how much more we could pay than 5000. And it took time and red tape, and meanwhile this little guy came back. I waited there in the hotel, and he came back and looked at me, and I think he asked some exorbitant amount like 10,000. I said, well, I don't have that yet. And he said, "Well, I have someone who's willing to pay and I've decided not to come back any more, and I'm going to sell it to him." And apparently they did.

Apparently it was Nazi people in Spain, where a great many had been able to reach and survive, and they bought it. And I went back empty-handed. I was very disappointed I didn't get the film. If they'd given me enough money, if they had said 20,000… It was almost, it was like buying a Hollywood story, but – going back to my boss to ask how much money can I give him.

Q: (Was he a German? Was this little man a German?)

No, I thought he was Swiss. I thought he was Swiss and not German.

Q: (You know, everyone's still looking for that film – still looking for it.)

These two people, they had seen it. And they described that film to me, said it was the most horrifying thing because the people lived for some time. And it was really gruesome. But it's never been seen, huh?

Q: (So who were the people who described –)

It's way down in Argentina, maybe, or somewhere, that film.

Q: (But not in Russia, huh? You see a lot of speculation is that it got to Russia.)

Yeah, but they never found it there.

Q: (No, and I think the Russians would have exposed it if they had it.)

Q: (So who told you about actually seeing the film?)

I'm trying to think – I'm trying to remember. Curt von Molo told me that he had not seen the film, but that someone had, that he knew had seen the film and told him about it. But he himself had not actually worked on that film. In fact, that there wasn't anything to edit. Apparently they just photographed it.

Q: (So when you had to choose material for the *Nazi Plan*, I assume you were trying to show the defendants, in action, among other things. How did you decide what to keep and what to throw out?)

Well, it was awfully tough, because we had such an embarrassment of riches. We had so God damn much material. What I would do is more or less make a list of what we had and then go down check it out with Jim Donovan. And he would say 'Yes' to that – specifically, things like the self-incriminating statements, like, like Goering, Goering reading the racist laws. So he said – In fact, watching the film yesterday, for the ordinary public, it's a shame we can't subtitle it, because Goering was saying something about the Jews, like that we need to sweep Germany clean with a steel broom, things like that, that were incriminating, so many things they were saying that were definitely in breach of international law.

So it was just a question really of, of very difficult selection and, and elimination. I had told Jim Donovan that we could run, I thought we could, at one point I could see running all day from 9 to 5, and we could run all day.

And he said, well obviously, we can't do that. And we finally worked it down. Jim Donovan suggested four hours. And so we went back and reviewed and tried to pick the high spots of the indictment that our film would relate to, but it, the... We had four film editors and they literally worked, I would say, twenty hours a day, I mean, they worked until two and three in the morning, and started again at 7, they just worked around the clock. And that film unit had so damn much film –

Q: (Tell us more about the editors and particularly I'm interested in Joe Zigman since he also worked on the other film.)

We had three very good Hollywood film editors: Robert Parrish [Drinks] and Joe Zigman, and Bob Webb. And then we had one Russian girl – I swear to God, I don't remember how she got assigned to us. She was very helpful. She was a very small Russian newsreel editor. I think her name was (Shostopol) or something.

And so the four of them would work around the clock, looking at this film and then trying to follow a sort of a rough outline that I would make. Let's see now, we start in 1930 and we show highlights before Hitler comes in, and then, we sort of outlined it step by step, and then

somebody tried to select the most effective visually and verbally. And thank God, of course we had interpreters with us to translate for us, as my, my three years of German at Dartmouth College was being strained to the breaking point.

Q: (And were they handling original films, or did you make work copies? How did they do that?)

Let's see, at first we just looked at the original film, and then as we started making our selections, we would, then we would make copies of the footage that they were selecting.

Q: (And the bosses in Nuremberg – describe again how, how they wanted to review the film work.)

Well, for one thing, they would say something, that they needed a photograph or something. The next day, they'd be calling and saying, "Well, where is it? Bring it down." We would try to explain, that first we have to select, we have to edit it, we have to – they never understood it. They never understood. And General Donovan was very impatient. He had no patience with us at all, none at all. Because he would promise things on a high level that couldn't be fulfilled down where we were, and that was the trouble. And he would be embarrassed, "Well, where is it?" So that, uh….

Donovan finally pulled, he himself pulled out of the trial, as you know. His, his nose was out of joint because he was jealous of Justice Jackson, and he didn't want to play second fiddle to Jackson, really and so, eventually he withdrew completely, but that didn't stop us, but we were left in place without Donovan, to finish the work that we'd been asked to do.

Q: (So when you were working that quickly, and you got a little more time because the trial was postponed –)

Thank God. When they said September 15th – we, we debated whether to go down and admit, I don't think that there couldn't be any photographic evidence. You'll have to – Even though Jackson in his opening day remarks mentioned that, I think, it was historic, it was the first time ever that there would be – it was not only the first international trial, but the first trial I believe that ever used photographic, film photographic evidence that way. And we were almost ready to say we can't do it. And then word came, it's been postponed until October 15th. And then we had a month's leave. But as we got toward October 15th we weren't ready either. We still had like a month's work, even killing ourselves with the work.

And then thank God came this second postponement to November. And that really saved us, because without that, there wouldn't have been any *Nazi Plan* film in the courtroom.

Q: (And when it was shown, I'm imagining – was it a film with tape joins, or had you made a print from, from the assembled material?)

Yes, we 'd made a print of the condensed four hour version, yeah, yes, but as noted Ray Kellogg had to – he testified as to the authenticity of the film, that it was all German film and so forth,

and so forth, and that all we'd done is brought four hours in place of four hundred hours, that we could have done.

Q: (Did you ever consider whether you had too many Nazi Party rallies?)

I was worried about that. I was worried about the party rallies, but at the same time, the party rallies included two valuable things. One was what they actually said at those rallies, which as it moved on, became more and more inflammatory as they got more and more powerful, and as the western democracies surrendered to them, and so on. They became more and more aggressive. So there was that sense of, of growing confidence in their aggression that you can't trace.

And also, there were people whose very presence indicted them. People would say that we, like Speer was one, and Schacht was another – and a number of people – and Keitel and Jodl – but people who said they were just German officials but not necessarily Nazi Party related. And showing them with their Nazi badges and things was, was very helpful in indicting them. And, and Riefenstahl was helpful in identifying various people.

Q: (Let's talk about Leni Riefenstahl. Were going to change tape again, …so we won't talk about Leni yet.)

Q: (When you showed the *Nazi Plan* in the courtroom, you were there. Were the defendants glad to see themselves up on the screen?)

No, I really wouldn't describe it that way. No, I don't think they were overjoyed. I think they were worried. They looked worried really. They looked very, they were very concerned. Goering is, is interesting. Goering was by far the smartest of all the people on trial.

I remember the day at our hotel, when the captain psychiatrist came rushing in, all excited. He'd been testing the IQs of the various defendants. And he said, "My God, that Goering he acts like a clown. He's a genius." He said, "His IQ went through the roof, he's so smart." That guy's name was Murphy, Captain Murphy, who strangely enough years later committed suicide also. I don't remember why.

But Goering tended to take the whole trial very seriously, as I mentioned last night. He acted like, as a defendant was who feels that he has a chance of being found not guilty. I don't know if he really thought so, but that's the way he acted, and that was his demeanor most of the time in the courtroom. He would take notes, and he would consult with his attorney, and so forth, and he took it very seriously.

Some just sat like, as if they were staring. Streicher had a funny look on his face. And the two military people, Keitel of the Army and Adm. Jodl [sic] very clearly, very clearly were saying, were disassociating, their attitude was, we shouldn't be here, and we have nothing to do with this. And they would sort of turn away, and act rather haughty, like that. They were all kind of different.

But it is true that the day of the *Nazi Plan* screening I was very, it was like three months of work, it was like your movie is about to open, and I was very keen to get there. I purposely got there as early, so early I think I was the first one to walk in, and so I was able to get a seat. I sat at the end of the Russian table, and that table – as I noticed again last night – was like maybe ten feet from the dock, and from that vantage point, I was able to watch them. They were almost as near as you are, as you are to me, just a little further, but I could watch them absolutely, all their faces, I just going down the line, back and forth.

Q: (In the dark?)

Well, it was dark except for the light of the screen. I could see them though.

Q: (Did you feel proud of your work?)

I guess so.

Q: (Interruption)

I was feeling awfully relieved that we had it in time, I think that was my main emotion. It was really touch and go, too. I mean I would get calls twice a day, "How is it? Is it ready?"

It was also, I just couldn't take it down and show it. I had to take it down and screen it for Jackson's staff to make sure it was all germane, and, and I was very worried about that too – that they might say "No you can't" – and they were very haughty, I mean they, their attitude toward us was sort of, "Who needs them?" I mean, "They're just a pain in the ass, sort of a nuisance," I felt, and we don't really, they were such – not Donovan, but Ben Kaplan and the others.

Q: (OK, I think we're out of here, right?)

END Tape 2

Tape 3 of 3:

Leni Riefenstahl.

Well, it seemed a fairly obvious search for us.

[Sound problem – Boom mike was missing.]

Well, the – of all the Nazi propaganda films that, many were made, by far the most, by far the most illustrious, or you might say notorious, of the Germans was Leni Riefenstahl's master film of the Nazi party day – I think it was the seventh – called the *Triumph of the Will*. It was shot in a way that you could see obviously idolized and made heroes of the people, by shooting at a low angle up on Hitler and the other Nazi leaders, a sense of really ex-, ex-, exalting them. The film, which was about a three-hour, very long documentary film, was a powerful, powerful piece of work. It was overwhelming. The, the idea that Goebbels had, and Hitler, was to have a film that could be shown, it was not only for German consumption. It was shown all over Europe.

And I think that it definitely made a contribution to the capitulation of the western democracies, capitulating to Hitler, letting him make one act of aggression after another, in the Rhineland, and the Sudetenland, and on and on they went, one little step at a time.
And the feeling was that, looking at that film, that it would make the non-German countries and their leaders say, "How can we possibly defeat that power?" It was overwhelming, just overwhelming.

I think it was General Donovan who said that the *Triumph of the Will* was worth two *Wehrmacht* divisions. It was a powerful piece of propaganda.

And so, it was, it didn't take any genius to think that we ought to talk to Leni Riefenstahl. She not only made that one masterwork, but she made a number of small *Parteitag* films or reports. She was very closely tied in with the whole Nazi propaganda machine. And so it was obvious that we would want to, to speak with her and, and examine her, and bring her to Nuremberg.

And so I went on a search one by one and first spoke to counter intelligence in Berlin, and they directed to me to some place in Strasbourg. And I went there, and then I went to Kitzbühl. And one by one, I got closer and closer to finding out where she actually was living – sort of hiding in the open, in a way. It wasn't exactly hiding but she wasn't advertising either, what her address was.

And so I was able to actually, with a weapons carrier and an army driver, I was able to go to her house and literally just knock on the door. She was living in a very nice place – it was a big, big, rustic – it looked like three stories – a very, quite large – on a, overlooking a Bavarian lake. It was a very nice place. So that's what I did. I just knocked on the door and somebody came to the door.

And I was in my Navy uniform, of course. And I said, "I would like to speak to Miss Riefenstahl." And they let me in. It was a little man, said he would call her. So I sat down, and

I waited. It took a very long time for her to come. I think it was almost half an hour, maybe. She took a very long time coming. I think she was making up. After all, she was a movie star as well as a filmmaker – big star in Germany –all these famous ice movies that she made, and mountain movies.

And she finally came, and I sat with her on a couch. And she started right away working on me. She said, of course, "I'm a film artist, and internationally respected." And she gave a very positive rundown on herself. And she said, "I'm respected everywhere in London, in Hollywood, and so forth, and I'm not a Nazi, I'm a pure film artist." That was her own party line and, boy, she stuck to it pretty well, too. And, and when she told me how well received she was in Hollywood, of course that was my hometown. She didn't know that I came from Hollywood. She just saw a young, an American officer who was trying to do her in. And she told me that, after all, even in 1938 everyone in Hollywood received her as a pure filmmaker and fellow artist. And I didn't tell her that I was in Hollywood when she came. Hal Roach was an extremely rightwing – the old comedy producer/director Hal Roach gave a party for her, a big reception party, and asked all the main people in Hollywood to come. And all of the liberal people like Melvyn Douglas and Helen Gahagan and Dorothy Parker and so many, Freddy March – a whole bunch, there must have been twenty – they were each given a list of ten people to phone and say, "Don't go." I had a list myself. And the party was a fiasco. Only about eight or ten people – just the extreme right wing people like Victor McLaglen, people like that – only the fascist minded people, of which there were unpleasantly some in Hollywood. It was a total fiasco. Basically, the party was a disaster for her. But I didn't tell her that. I just listened and listened.

But as I said last night, I had this warrant for her in my pocket. It was like burning a hole in my pocket. I thought, I would just let her talk a little longer, so I relaxed her. I didn't argue with her at all about what she thought she was.

Finally I took the thing out and said, "Miss Riefenstahl, I'm sorry, but I have to take you to Nuremberg." And that's when she screamed "Puppi, Puppi, they're, he's arresting me," she screamed. "He's arresting me." And he ran in. I didn't know at the time, he was a major in the *Wehrmacht*. And I told her, I tried to reassure her, I said, "Look, you're not being put on trial with Goering and von Ribbentrop, but we do need you as a material witness, and you'll be held, you'll be put up in one of the hotels, and held until the court releases you."

And so out we went. We went in – I wish I had a photo of that – because sitting outside was a weapons carrier, like an open truck almost. It was just the three of us, and we drove from there, from Kitzbühl, all the way to Nuremberg. She didn't say anything on the way. She was just silent. She didn't say anything. She was very ticked off – very. And I guess scared.

Q: (Did she speak English?)

Yes, she could speak English, I guess quite well. She spoke fairly well – accented, but fairly well. I didn't need an interpreter with her, no.

Q: (How did you use her?)

They would run film, we ran the *Triumph of the Will* and the other film that she made, and we would ask her to, we would stop it and ask her who was that, and who was that, and identifying people. Where and when and who it was, really.

Q: (Did she work with you both in Berlin and in Nuremberg?)

Only in Nuremberg.

Q: (Only in Nuremberg?)

I took her only to Nuremberg.

Q: (So she wasn't in Wannsee…)

No, she was never in Wannsee with us, no, no, no.

Q: (Do you remember what month it was, when in the course of the project?)

When I took her there? I think it was quite soon before the trial actually started. I think it was like a week before, in, in early November.

Q: (Who wrote the intertitles for *The Nazi Plan*?)

Well, I think I did, with the people that we had. We had this German prosecutor who had – I never quite understood how – he had defected in '41 and got to the States, I think probably through the efforts of the OSS he somehow got to Switzerland on German business or something, and then defected. And he was a very helpful of course in defining for us what we were looking at.

Q: (So he was anti-Hitler, and he lived in the States and spoke English too?)

Yes, yes he did.

Q: (Intertitles grew out of your list, your script you were taking back and forth for approval?)

Yes, I think it was, yeah. We didn't take the actual film. We would make a note describing what it was and, and summing up what was being said, or being written.

Q: (Tell us more about your brother's role in *The Nazi Plan*.)

Stuart, Stuart got, he located Hans Hoffmann, and Hoffmann was the key still photographic - both cameraman and archivist in, in Germany. He was really Hitler's photographer. And as I mentioned, he was the father in law of one of the major war criminals. Baldur von Schirach was the head of the youth movement. And so Stuart with Hoffmann got access to, I guess, as much still photographs as I had film up in Berlin. He and the separate staff that he had went through

thousands and thousands and thousands of photographs, doing much the same thing that I did, showing them to Donovan as to their value as evidence at the trial.
[Footnote: This refers to Heinrich Hoffmann.]

Q: (And they were entered into evidence separately…)

Yeah, that's right. They were entered separately

Q: (Were you and Stuart together when you went through OSS training?)

No, no we weren't at all, because my training preceded Stuart's, as I'd been in for almost a year, I think, before Stuart was transferred to the Marine Corps. And I'm not sure that…see, I'm not sure that Stuart went through that, what you might call spy school. I don't remember that he did.

Q: (Were you in Washington together?)

Oh yes, it was at the south Agriculture Building. That's where I mentioned before. It was treated like a ship. It was referred to as a ship. And we would "go ashore" and all this nonsense.

Q: (You know it's right across the street from the Holocaust Museum?)

I'll be damned. No, I didn't know that. That's where we were every day. That's really ironic.

Q: (Could you tell us a little more about the SS editors? Von Molo & Rothe – what were their sympathies? What were their attitudes to what the Nazis had done?)

Well, Walter Rothe was, had been a Fox Movietone film editor, he was a newsreel editor. Curt von Molo had been a feature film, film editor. He told me that he had worked with Fritz Lang and with some of the top German directors, and he seemed very, he seemed quite intelligent. And the two of them, instead of being two Nazi POWs that might have managed sympathy for each other, the two of them couldn't stand each other. They didn't like each other. And each, both of them told me – "I was recruited into the SS film unit but I was, I didn't want to do it, but I had to or else." Each one said the same thing, "I was really anti Nazi." Each one said about the other guy: "Walter Rothe really was a Nazi. He was very sympathetic." And Rothe said the same thing about von Molo. He was anti Nazi but von Molo was pro-SS and wanted to get in that SS film unit. They both said that. They had no use for each other at all. I really didn't know which of them was right.

Also, Curt von Molo told me that all through the war, while he was working for the SS, that a Jewish film editor had been hiding in his attic, like in his house. And I took that with a grain of salt, because it was a joke to us. But from the first crossing over into Germany, we didn't meet a German who didn't have a Jew in the attic. How could there be six million Jews in the concentration camps, because they must have all been up in the attics. Everybody we met, almost without fail, would say, "I was against Hitler and I saved a Jew in my attic." It got to be a joke with us. And von Molo said the same thing. He had this Jewish editor, and he said it was very precarious because he did work on these horrible SS films, at the same time.

I guess I didn't tell that last night. One Sunday, we – we would tend to try to rest on Sunday. We were, everybody was really wiped out by this work. One Sunday, I said to von Molo, "Look, Curt, I'm really sick of hearing about these Jews in the attic, I've had it up to here with it, and I've got to tell you I don't believe it, and he said, "Well, honestly, I'm telling you the truth. It was that fellow, a friend of mine, that I worked with in the studio, you know, UFA."

And I said, "Look, it's Sunday morning. Let's take the day off. We'll take a jeep, and you and I and a driver, we'll just drive around the whole day in Berlin." Because, that's right, he said, "Someone told me that he survived and that he's back. Someone said they saw him in Berlin, just a few days ago, and thank God, apparently he's alive." So I said, "Curt, let's take the day off. And we're going to look for this Jew in the attic." And we did. So we start out, and he noticed some girl in Nuremberg, and we go there and we find her – it was incredible we could find anybody, with how they were living – the place was a total disaster – people were living in holes and doorways and Christ knows, anyway this first girl says, "I heard that too."

And I (referenced?) this person, we went to see him, it was amazing we'd find anybody but there was still, even with everything down, there was a kind of amazing word of mouth. People seemed to know where other people were. And to cut this short – after a few hours of going from one (street?) to another, and finally to his actual, we found his own girlfriend, who had survived the war. She lived all the way through the war in Berlin. And she said, "Yes, he is, he's definitely here." And she told us where she thought he was. And we went there. And here comes this little Jewish guy, he was still in his concentration camp stripes and still – he out, and he sees Curt, he hugs Curt, and he says to me, "This man saved my life. I actually lived in his attic."

And we finally found a real Jew in the attic. And apparently Curt was telling the truth the whole time. And from that time on, I became very, now I believed, now I knew that Curt was for real and that he really, he told me that Fritz Lang left, and he tried to leave, and got stopped, or something. He wasn't able to leave. He was hoping to leave, too. Now I believed him. Now I thought that Walter Rothe was a Nazi rat. But it really was an unbelievable story.

Q: (Did Von Molo & Rothe ever ask you about being Jewish? Did they ever bring the subject up?)

No, not that I remember – no, I don't remember them ever, no, I don't, I don't think they did.

Q: (Were there family members from your mother's side who were affected by the Holocaust?)

Well, not really directly, no. My mother was born in Latvia, and she came to the States with her parents when she was very, very young, like a year old – a baby being held in her mother's arms, and she had no memory at all of Latvia, but that's where she was born. And my father, my father was born in Bridgeport, Connecticut, and his parents had come from Lithuania. But neither family was German-Jewish or, or involved in the Holocaust.

Q: (But you must have still felt a personal commitment to this history)

Oh gosh, yes, oh God, yes. Oh absolutely, we thought, after all, if we'd been here, Warsaw or anywhere – We'd be one of these poor wretches in the ovens, oh yes.

One funny thing happened in Wannsee. We were in this big mansion, really, in Wannsee. And we just went in one day and said, "We're staying here." And they, the woman was very well-to-do and she still had her servants and everybody living in the big house in Wannsee. Out in the back of the little garden where there was a freshly dug grave that we could see, and apparently that was her husband. We never really got clear on what the circumstances were, but they were obviously very well connected; they had done very nicely, until one day I got a bad cold, and I stayed in bed, I was in this big bedroom with my sniffles. And she and the staff were very concerned about me. They were taking care of me, the poor thing. And they were bringing me tea and chicken soup and all kinds of things. And I thought to myself, "If this had been last year, they would have been killing me, and now they're taking care of my cold." I never told them about the Jewishness or anything. But it struck me funny, the concern they showed for me.

(Did you or your brother experience any hostility from Germans in the initial encounters when you started looking for materials?)

Not really. The reaction I got was more, asking people, there'd be kind of a sullen – some, they were worried. My impression was, Raye, that they were more defensive in being worried they might be involved. They were like Just like the Jew in the attic – the reverse of that was no one to have heard of a concentration camp.

I went to Dachau. It must have been two miles outside of Dachau, and I got lost, and I asked the way to the Dachau concentration camp. And this was two miles away. They had never heard of it. They didn't know what I was talking about. That was the attitude – more than hostility, was, I would say, their most concern was saving their own skin.

Q: (Tell us more about attending the Dachau Trial – how long were you there)?

I was only there about a week or so. In fact, it was so typical there. The, the, the pattern of denial was amazing. The commander's name was Wolf, and I swear to God, he looked kind of Jewish and had the Jewish name of Wolf. And his defense was sort of like, it really was, his defense was sort of like – "Well, I tried to save as many as I could. Like I could have killed 35 or 40 thousand a week but I only killed 17 thousand." It was like he saved the lives of all these people. That was, that attitude went all the way down the line.

There was one big stupid looking guard, and he was accused of maltreating the Jewish prisoners, and he actually said, he said, "Well, this woman, you see," he said, "I was under orders, I had to kick her," he said, "but I didn't kick her nearly as hard as, I was trying to kick her as little as".. It was, all the way down the line that was the attitude – that they did it as little as possible to survive. I loved that thing about the kicking. They only kicked her a little bit.

And, and Wolf was, Wolf was hung. I think he was the only one there, I think, that was hung. The others there got sentences, different, but depending on their importance, on their involvement.
[Footnote: The Dachau Commander on trial was named Weiss – Martin Gottfried. A prosecution witness named Wolf demonstrated punishment on the whipping block at Dachau. See USHMM photo #61085]

[Footnote: 42 were charged; 40 stood trial. All 40 were found guilty; 36 were sentenced to death by hanging. Official name of the trial was U.S. vs. Martin Gottfried Weiss, et al. It began Nov. 15, 1945 and ran to December 13, 1945.]

I was only there to see how the trial was run, sort of getting ready for Nuremberg, which was of course on a much, much higher scale.

Q: (Was Stuart with you at all in Nuremberg, or in Berlin? Did I ask you that already?)

It was just a short time. It seems to me – I wonder if Sandra could confirm this – as far as I can remember, Stuart, I don't think he was there on the, when we showed the film. I think by that time Stuart – I'm quite sure had gone home. I think he had finished his work. I just remember him at the beginning. But I don't remember working with Stuart all the way through.

Q: (Take us a little farther along into the Pare Lorentz documentary, and that project as it emerged.)

I was living out on my farm. And I got back from the war in, I think it was February of '46 was when I finally got released from the Navy. And I got, I bought that farm out in Bucks County. And Pare Lorentz came out to see me. Oddly enough, he was married to the girl, Elizabeth Graham, that I had worked with as a co-writer for Selznick. And I knew her very, very well, liked her. And so he came out to see me to describe the film he was planning to make on Nuremberg, and he thought that after my Nuremberg experience, I would be the logical one to write and work with him on the film.

And I told him that I had been in the war for four years. I had just gotten out and now I had a contract for a novel with Random House, and they were actually paying me so much a month as an advance, and I was living on that, and so I had to go back and get started on my other career.

He then tried again, sometime afterwards. I saw him in New York, and he again urged me to write this, he was very set on doing it. And at that point, we talked about Stuart. Stuart actually had done an excellent job in Nuremberg. I mean on his he was very able and very smart with it, and so it just seemed a logical, logical job for Stuart, which Pare then proceeded to work with Stu.

Q: (Did you follow very closely the making of the project? Were you in touch with Stuart much?)

Yeah. I would not say very closely, no. I, of course I was in touch with Stuart and would see Stuart from time to time in New York, and I think once or twice I went out and saw Pare with Stuart and just heard what they were doing. I forget if they asked me anything, but they might have. But it was more like that, but it, I was not in constant touch, but I was very aware of Stuart's work and aware of the troubles he was having, that Sandra explained last night in much more detail, but I was aware of all the back and forth troubles with the, uh, with the group in, in Germany that were trying to stop the film and so forth.

Q: (Do you remember at all hearing about this remarkable film footage that Stuart uncovered of this killing?

Well, I just remember hearing about it once – that they actually had finally found something that we had hoped to find. We never really found anything that was related to the gas chambers. We had hoped to. And we'd been told there was such film, but we had never uncovered it, so I was fascinated by what Stuart did, yeah. I wish we could have shown that at the trial.

Q: (I'm sure you do. Who told you that there was footage of the gas chambers? Was this more from your SS editors?)

Yes, yes, they said that it, it also had been photographed, yeah.

(Did you ever come across Walter Frentz, who had worked with Leni Riefenstahl as a cameraman on the Olympics film?)

I remember his name but I don't recall talking to him. I remember his name, I guess.

Q: (Because he filmed some of those things you put in *The Nazi Plan*, you know.)

No, I don't remember talking to him directly, only hearing about him.

Q: (Is there anything you could tell us about the link between the fact that Stuart and Joe Zigman worked on both *The Nazi Plan* and the Nuremberg documentary? Do you have any thoughts about that continuity between them?)

Well, only that, I think that Stuart, in getting ready to make that film with Pare, that a very logical, the most logical film editor would have been someone who worked on *The Nazi Plan*. And he was very friendly with Joe Zigman. And, I think Bob Parrish had gone back to Hollywood and was building his own career right after he got out. And so I think that Joe was the logical choice for, and an ideal choice for Stuart. I remember him very well too, Zigman. He was an awfully good person. Yeah.

Q: (Pare Lorentz seems to remember him very fondly, too.)

Yes, he was awfully appealing. When did Joe die? Do you know when? Cause I lost touch with him.

Q: (I haven't found out exactly.)

Q: (SS editors – How did the main film editors use them? Were they used as assistant editors? Cutting?)

No, I don't recall them, I don't recall them.… They were much more just advising as to what film was available. I don't think that they, I don't remember them ever actually working on a Moviola, editing the film.

Q: (And Movieolas are what you used, right?)

That's what they used then, oh yes, God, yes. Hours and hours and hours at the Moviola

Q: (Separate tracks for sound?)

Yes, I think there were separate tracks, yeah.

Q: (For your material for *The Nazi Plan*, if I understand correctly, you only used original tracks that were found with the films?)

Absolutely, that's right. That's the only thing we could do. We couldn't use anything that was not the German original, and nothing else, because they thought the defense attorneys would pounce on it. And by the way, the defense attorneys took their jobs very seriously, because it was not like a routine, cut and dried. They really, they were all excellent German lawyers. And they worked very diligently and would make, I mean their, they argued very hard for their clients; they really did.

Q: (Did you have a sense that there was anxiety on the part of the prosecution, as to whether the film evidence would be accepted and valid in supporting the indictment?)

Well, uh, only at the beginning – at the beginning, much more than later. I would say that gradually, they became impressed with how detailed the dovetailing of the film and the statements were to what they had on paper. And so the, I think the confidence grew as, as we went along, and that when they found that statements and pictures really were incriminating, they felt that it would bolster their case.

I think it was quite surprising and very enterprising of Justice Jackson, coming from the background that he did – after all, he wasn't John Ford from Hollywood – that he was as, as, as open to the use of film, which was so innovative and had never been done, as he was. He was really very sympathetic to its use, as long as, as long as we were diligent. Ben Kaplan who's this very nice guy that I still talk to on the Vineyard. He was very, very tough, and he was rather snooty about it. I mean, he was doing it because they told him, but his heart wasn't really in it, I don't think. But he would put it to very tough legal tests as to whether it was just movies or it really was, really was indictable evidence, which was good, really. That was useful.

Q: (I believe that was the standard. Visual images could be entered as long as they were pertinent, directly pertinent to the charge.)

Exactly, exactly, exactly. And that's what he held us to. Yeah.

Q: (Well, that must have made your job really hard at the beginning, when they hadn't decided yet what the indictments were going to be.)

That's very true. At the beginning, the whole thing was so, so nebulous, that we almost had to try to read their minds as to what they would be looking for. We had to decide – these non-legal minds of ours – what did seem to us indictable evidence. Yeah, that's right. We had pretty good – but I must say, looking back, that we had a pretty good sense of what was really verbal and visual crime. We had some sense of it.

Q: (Do you know what was done with the original film elements when you were finished?)

Well, I was very nervous about that, because, for one thing, on the July 20th, all that film, I had something which, there was some army colonel that was attached to us, and we found out that he had taken some of that film and sold it to some American company. And I just hit the ceiling, because all this stuff was very valuable in a private profit-making way. It was all very hot film, you might say. I had nightmares about how people might try to grab it and steal it and, and, and sell it. And this colonel in the army, I asked that, I talked to Kellogg about him and asked that he be removed from us. I talked to people about – you must not –everybody has to be absolutely, totally honest about this, and, and scrupulous about it. We must send all of it back to the National Archives, and nowhere else. And that's what I did. I sent all of the film to the National Archives.

Q: (So, you must have required security even for the cutting rooms?)

Well, we did. Yes we did. Yes they did. Yes, we were concerned about that, yeah.

Q: (Did you every sleep during this period?)

Sleep? I don't think any of us every slept very much. I really don't. We were very hopped up. We were so excited, and also driven. The phone calls from Nuremberg were a nightmare. When the phone rang from Nuremberg, I would grit my teeth – I knew what was coming. And we were, we lived really in, in fear that any moment, they would say, "Pack it in, we'll do without the film." We were very afraid that might happen, and so we all went on, on very little sleep, very little sleep. But we were all very nerved up, too, and hyper, and really very into how much we were being challenged to do in a short time.

Q: (There must have been a great deal of comradeship.)

There was, it was a very close unit. Bob Parrish who unfortunately passed away a couple of years ago, he became one of my best friends. He was a wonderful man. He was more or less in charge of all the film editors. And he was a lovely man. He was a sort of child star. He was a

great pet of John Ford. Ford really loved Bob, and really helped him after he passed from acting to get in on the ground floor of film editing, he helped him a lot. And Ford – as nasty as I could find him – was always very benign with Bob. He really liked Bob. And Bob was a charming guy, as well as being very, very, very able. I think he won an Oscar later for *Body and Soul*, editing. And then later he became a film director, on his own.

Q: (How do you look back on this fitting into your whole career and life? What does this short period mean to you in terms of what you did?)

Well, I think of myself as being very lucky, really, that I just happened to be in the right place at the right time and that I was very lucky they chose me for that job. They could have picked somebody else, I guess. And I think that just now, looking back that long ago as some, just one chapter in my life. In just a short time I've celebrated the 60th anniversary of the Nuremberg Trial. And quite recently I celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Watts Writers Workshop, that I got started when, on the day the curfew was lifted on the Watts riots, or the Uprising as they always called it down there.

I think I've been lucky that I've been able to be at certain places at the right times.

Q: (We only have a couple more minutes…)

Ok.

Q: (Do you want to describe some more about the Watts Workshop? That seems like a wonderful…)

Well, I . . . . Yeah, I felt awfully good last month, when I went for the 40th, and, and uh saw these men who are now about 60 years old, who were really uh kids some were quite almost wild kids who were running the streets and, uh, it was very, it was very moving for me to, when I, I call on the phone to University of California at Northridge, and, and, the voice I hear is this very deep, profound-sounding voice saying, this is Professor Scott, please leave a message, and I think of this Professor Scott as this w-wild kid of nineteen, he was, uh, he had been in the riots and throwing Molotov cocktails and all this.

When I went down there, I went down on the first day that the, that the curfew was lifted and it was pretty wild still there. Some buildings were still smoking and smoldering, and there were little fires in the different open lots, and it was very, it was very, very tense, and I got this idea, sort of a wild idea, of starting a writer's workshop, and, and I put up a notice in a, it was kind of a settlement house called Westminster. I just put a sign up on the bulletin board saying "Writer's Workshop, anybody interested sign below." And I said I would be back every Wednesday.

It took me a long time, for about 2 ½ months nobody came. Nobody came. I just sat there. I just sat there, and I learned a lot about Watts. I read the local paper, *The Sentinel*, I talked with the social workers. I went down in the, in the pool hall, sat around there, got kind of snubbed and glared at. I learned a lot, and my wife Geraldine was sort of taunting me about this, and she said, I'd come back and she said, "Well, what happened?" I'd say, "Well nobody showed up."

And she'd say, "How long can you really, sort of a Don Quixote act, this is getting ridiculous, how many times can you go to Watts and nobody shows up?" And I said "Well, I think I'll just wait till, I'll give it from August until Thanksgiving." This is now into, maybe early October. And I said, "If nobody shows up by Thanksgiving ok, I'll, uh, I'll pack it in."

Finally, finally, the next time I went down, this one guy came. And it was, it was Charles, uh, Taylor, and he came with a young somewhat, uh, somewhat demented, uh, young man, very disturbed. And, uh, and this Charles sat opposite me and the young man sat right up, right next to me and just staring right at me. It was a, uh, strange, just stared at me. And, uh, anyway, I brought down Claude Brown's book, *Manchild in the Promised Land* and this guy Charles said, "What is all this? What are you up to? What are you trying to do?" He was rather, a little bit belligerent, challenging, and I said, "There's no mystery to it, I'm trying to start a writer's workshop."

And I then read to him some excerpts from *Manchild in a Troubled Land*, and it was a little bit about, about Claude at the age of about 10, and, uh, there's been a riot in, in, uh, in Harlem, and he's too small to go to it but his big brother's saying, "Boy it was great. We got a, we got a television set, and a radio and this and that," and, um, little Claude says, he writes this, "Gee, that sounds like such fun. When can we have another one, when can we have another riot?" And when I read that out loud to him, his reaction was amazing, he said, "I didn't know you were allowed to write that in a book!" He said, "Would they arrest him for that?" And I said, "Not only not arrest him, this book is a major bestseller. He's making a lot of money out of this book."

Well, he was just amazed. And that was, that really opened the door, I think he went back, because next the day, next Wednesday, two or three people showed up with him, I think, including Johnny Scott and a few other young poets. I'll make this short, but what they showed me – I couldn't believe. Their work was so goddamn good. Johnny Scott was a goddamn genius. I read some the other day, it's so good, and some of the others were too. And that was the beginning.

I then went to *Los Angeles* magazine and told them about this, and I showed them the work, and so they ran a piece with a page of their poetry and, uh, *Time* Magazine picked up on it, did a big story – also running a page of Johnny Scott and Jimmy Sherman, Sammy Harris, all these young poets. And for that to be in *Time* Magazine was a huge, huge thing. And they were offered money. Then it got bigger and bigger, and it's still going. We have now, now we have in New York, and when I got to New York I started it there, and we now have the Frederick Douglass Creative Arts Center on, uh, on 96th Street. And there we have a faculty of twenty, and it's, it's much more, much more structured now. Now it's a real writing school, and, uh, it's going very strong.

Q: (So you're back to where you were born.)

Pretty much, that's right. Yes, I am, it's very close to where I was born, I know.

Q: (Budd, this is such a privilege and I thank you so much.)

You're very welcome.

Q: (I wish we could keep going. We'll have to do it the next time).

Oh, alright, Raye, fine. It's been nice to talk to you.

Q: (Thank you so, so much)

You're very welcome. You're very welcome.

END Tape 3