

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

Interview with Henry Gallant
May 11, 2009
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PREFACE

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HENRY GALLANT

May 11, 2009

Beginning Tape One

Question: Good morning, Henry. It's nice to see you.

Answer: Good morning.

Q: What -- what was your name at birth?

A: Well, actually my name at birth was -- my first name was Heinz and my last name was Goldstein or Goldstein --

Q: Right.

A: -- depending on where you are or where you want to be.

Q: And you s --

A: Heinz Goldstein.

Q: Heinz -- Heinz Goldstein.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Did you have a middle name?

A: No.

Q: No. And you changed your name much later, to Henry?

A: That's a long story. That -- that'll take us from one point to another point. I changed my name -- at first I used the name of Henry Gallant, I did not change the name officially until past certain events in the U.S., and --

Q: So we can come to that later.

A: -- we'll come to that -- we can come to that later, right, yes.

Q: So I'm going to call you Henry now, is that okay, instead of Heinz?

A: That's perfectly all right, yeah.

Q: Is that okay?

A: Perfectly all right.

Q: Tell me about your mother and father. Tell me about your father. What -- what did he -- what was his profession?

A: My father -- my father's family was a typical German Jewish family, with the emphasis on German. They were a very good family, very loving family, but they -- as was the case in Germany with the -- with Jewry, the -- they were German first, Jewish second, perhaps. As opposed to Jew first and -- and German second. They were very patriotic. My father was in the military at -- during World War I, and his picture tells a whole story. I mean, his composure, the way he sits. That picture is in the -- in the Jewish heritage and Holocaust museum in Atlanta. He sits on a -- on a horse in a -- in a very Prussian way, very erect. And he was very proud of his origin, in that sense.

Q: And he's wearing a uniform in that picture?

A: Correct.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. And --

Q: You know, Henry, I forgot to ask you, when were you born?

A: 1928.

Q: What was the -- the month and the day?

A: October 30th, 1928.

Q: And you were born where?

A: In Berlin.

Q: In Berlin.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Did your father come from Berlin?

A: No, my father's family came from Westfalia and they lived in a small town in -- called Iserlohn and my grandfather was a veterinarian.

Q: Oh.

A: And not in the sense that he was treating cats and poodles, but mainly he served the community. They were farmers, so he was more into treating horses and cows and so fa --

Q: So he did the big animals.

A: Yeah, he -- they were integrated into -- into a small town community in Westfalia.

Q: And that was your father's father?

A: That was my father's family.

Q: Right.

A: And he had four brothers, one of whom died in World War I, for his then country and he had another brother who saw things coming in 1933, befo -- when Hitler came to power and he emigrated to Palestine. And another brother who lived in Dortmund. So anyway, he had four -- four brothers.

Q: Was he close with them?

A: It was a -- yeah, yeah, it was a close-knit family.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: Although my -- my grandfather married twice, really. His first wife died and as is -- it's really a Jewish custom, you marry a sister of -- of your -- of your wife. I don't know if that was the reason, because on the one hand they were not that -- they were not really Orthodox, so it might

just be a coincidence, I don't know. But he did have two wives, and my father and his -- and two brothers came from one wife, and the other from second wife.

Q: And your father came from which wife, the first or the second?

A: From his -- from the first wife.

Q: From the first wife.

A: Right.

Q: Right.

A: So he was one of the -- the older ones.

Q: Right. And --

A: And he worked for a bank, initially, as a -- I don't know really in what capacity, but he worked for a bank. Later on he -- later on he worked for my mother's brother, who comes from a well-to-do family and they -- th-they were more -- they were more Jewish oriented. They -- they were -- in fact, my grandfather on my mother's side was Orthodox and they orig -- originally came from the east, meaning Poland. And -- and so my grandfather wasn't born in Germany. My mother already was born in Germany, but that was the other branch of the family, and he had a couple of factories and my father worked for my mother's brother and he introduced my mother to -- to my father. And that's how it all came about, that's -- so there are two branches to the family.

Q: Really. And what was your father doing in that business?

A: And my father then later on became a chemist. He manufactured perfume -- perfume.

Q: Was he trained to do that?

A: Yes, he was. He -- he studied chemistry and he tied up with a professor who -- and they be -- they made their own perfume, which was quite successful, really. And my mother was also very enterprising, she had -- she dealt in -- in silver, on a wholesale basis --

Q: Really?

A: -- silverware.

Q: Was that unusual for women to be doing that at that time?

A: I wouldn't really know, because I was --

Q: Because you were a kid.

A: -- I was rather young then, so I g -- I don't know the background of it all. But that was life until -- until I was born, and you know.

Q: Right.

A: And by the time wer --

Q: And your father's name?

A: Was Herman.

Q: And your mother?

A: First name.

Q: Right.

A: And my mother's name was Recha, R-e-c-h-a, Recha.

Q: Right.

A: Rachel, per se. And -- and -- but she called herself, or they called her Rita, she was known as Rita, Rita Goldstein.

Q: Right. So when -- when --

A: And his name was Herman.

Q: Right. Do you remember wi -- in your childhood, was it a very religious family, in spite of the fact that your father wasn't raised that way, but because of [indecipherable]

A: My father adjusted to -- I would -- I would have to put it that way, my father did a good job adjusting to -- to my mother's orientation, religious orientation. And she did keep a kosher household. And that would take me to -- to the comment that kosher, I -- later in my career I became very much -- I became very knowledgeable along that line and th -- kosher can be -- can be many things. Some people keep kosher inside their home, while not paying very much attention to the law of kashrut, if you will, on the -- on the outside.

Q: Right.

A: So -- and -- and -- and that's where I would -- that's how I would characterize my mother's orientation. My father --

Q: Didn't care.

A: -- didn't care, no. He really -- he really didn't. That whole part of the family really did not care about the dietary laws.

Q: So w-would you say that your mother's -- your mother wasn't really that religious, she kept a kosher home but she was --

A: Well, she considered herself quite religious because she came from a r-rather -- rather religious home, and -- but i-i-if for example she were to take a cruise, she would not miss out on -- on taking part in the buffet, and so she could -- she had the capability to bend the rules of -- on occasion.

Q: Right.

A: And the reason I emphasize that is because I -- la-later on in my career I became a caterer and I took over a catering business, which had been known as a kosher caterer. I changed that

somewhat in branching out to a more secular orientation, I did -- but when doing something in the -- in the -- in the synagogue where lifestyle or lifetime events took place, I had to work with a mashgiach under -- under religious supervision, per se.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: So I know all about -- about that -- I know a lot about that -- that particular aspect.

Q: So, when you were born and growing up, do y -- do you remember your very early years?

Was it -- how far --

A: Yes, I do --

Q: -- how far -- yeah?

A: I do -- I do have a pretty good recollection of a very good home life and a very normal life, up to the time that -- that Hitler came to --

Q: Right.

A: -- take over the government.

Q: So, did

A: That's when things changed --

Q: Changed.

A: -- drastically --

Q: And they [indecipherable]

A: -- and they changed very rapidly.

Q: So you do remember your years before five -- cause you were five years old when he took over.

A: Yes. Ye -- when he took over, yes, but things -- i-in my life, things th -- were fairly normal until -- until the -- until past the Olympics, which were in the -- which took place in Berlin in 1936.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And that is where you began to see the signs of -- in front of restaurants, Jews and dogs not permitted. And Juden [indecipherable] per se. And -- and that became quite obvious to me. Also the place where -- parks where I was accustomed to playing had yellow and green benches, park benches, the -- the ones who were -- where Jews were permitted to sit were painted in yellow, and they were also inscribed with the sentence of Nur für Juden, only for Jews. And the Gentiles had green benches. So these -- these little things that started around that time were very obvious.

Q: Tell me a little bit beforehand, w-were you -- were you close with your mother and your father, do you think?

A: Y-Yes --

Q: Do you -- or did you feel closer to one more than the other?

A: Well, due to circumstances I became very close to my mother as -- as history marched on and as things developed in Germany, as we will find out a little later in this conversation, I -- I became much closer to my mother because I was separated from my father.

Q: Yeah. But in -- when you were a kid and you were together at home until '39 --

A: I made no -- I -- there was no distinction --

Q: There's no distinct --

A: -- between my mother and my father, no.

Q: Did you have --

A: I was close to my father.

Q: You were?

A: Yes.

Q: Did you have brothers or sisters, you were a ch -- only child?

A: No, the only child.

Q: The only child.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: So did you eat lunches and dinner with your par -- I mean, how -- how did meals go with your parents?

A: It was a very -- it was a very normal home life. We did -- we -- yes, we did eat meals together. Lunch during the week, from Monday to -- to Friday, lunch was at school.

Q: Oh.

A: You would take your lunch to school in a -- there was the German custom, in a little leather pouch, you had your sandwich or what -- or whatever. And w-with beverages dispensed by the school. But lunch was at school.

Q: And so you ate dinner at home --

A: Yes.

Q: -- with your parents.

A: Yes, correct.

Q: Did your mother cook?

A: Yes, she did.

Q: She did?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Was she a good cook?

A: Excellent.

Q: Yeah?

A: Mm-hm.

Q: Did you like school?

A: Yes, I liked --

Q: When did you start go -- when -- how old were you when you started going?

A: Probably I would say six or seven.

Q: Really?

A: That was first grade, right. I in fact remember my first day in school, and I don't know if I have it here or not, but they just did a project in -- in Berlin of the fate of -- under the heading -- it-it was re -- you would call it a magazine or you could call it a pamphlet, or a little booklet that they put out, that the Berlin senate really put out, with the caption, the fate of Jewish schoolchildren in Berlin. And there's a picture of me on the -- on the title page. And it was a German custom on your first day of school to get a cone b -- about three feet bi -- long, a cone filled with sweets.

Q: Right.

A: That was a German cus-custom. We --

Q: Right, and you bring that to school, right?

A: And you brought that to school and you were photographed with that, every -- every child. And the first picture on page one -- first of all I am on the cover with an unidentified young fellow, but the second page had a picture of the sister of Ann Frank. And her name was Margaret Frank, and she held onto one of those -- they -- th-they were called -- they were called su -- zuckertuete sugar -- sugar cone, in translation. And next to her stood a boy -- mind you that that

was already past 1933, so Hitler had already been in -- firmly entrenched in -- in the leadership of the government. And that boy that stood next to her had that sugar cone also, and it distinguished that -- it distinguished itself by the fact that it had the swastika on the cone.

Q: Oh my.

A: So it's a quite interesting picture. The one was like with flowers, flowers and gold painted and the other cone was a plain white cone with a black swastika.

Q: Interesting.

A: So -- and that was about the time the Jewish teachers were kicked out of the schools and one law followed another. The Nuremberg laws came about and a-all professionals were -- were not allowed to practice. Jewish lawyers were disbarred, judges were kicked out of the court system and dentists and doctors were only allowed to treat Jews.

Q: Henry, what do you rem -- what do you yourself remember as a kid during that time? Do -- do you remember the first time you realized that these Nazis were [indecipherable]

A: Yes. It -- it all -- events were developed very, very rapidly in the -- in the -- the segregation of the Jewish community, not only in Berlin, but all over Germany. But Berlin -- I emphasize Berlin first of all because I lived there. I was born there and I lived there, so I was closest to my hometown. But the events of discrimination happened so fast that a great many tried to escape, to get away, to get out of Germany. Some couldn't, and then there were those who were optimists by -- by their very nature in -- and hoped that things would eventually change for the better, which of course, it didn't. And there, at that very time, you had -- first of all you had Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass, which I remember at that time I was ig -- in a -- in a Landschuleheim which means a country school, outside of Berlin. And we were a bunch of kids

playing soccer then the Hitler youth came in on that fateful day and besides screaming the terrible ep-epitat, or -- or wa --

Q: Epithets?

A: Yeah, yes --

Q: Yeah.

A: -- that -- cursing us Jews and wi-with such things as did you -- I don't want to use any four letter words, but did you -- did you not think we would come to you and they chased the kids away, walked into the dormitories, threw the furniture out of the window, and created massive disruption, which resulted in those kids running away, and so did I. What struck -- what -- what I recall vividly, when -- struck me as noteworthy is the fact that I -- when I made my way back to my home, my parents' apartment, but I would be unable to tell you how I did it. I-I do not recall it -- having taken a public means of transportation, I could not tell you in which way I actually -- the -- the -- that country place, that country home that si -- vry -- that was in Potsdam --

Q: Yeah, that's [indecipherable]

A: -- which is 20 miles from Berlin.

Q: Right.

A: And how I made it back --

Q: You don't know.

A: -- I don't know. And I can only say that today I have an idea that it must have been traumatic event, a -- a very serious disruption in -- in -- in my -- in my way of life, or in my li-lifestyle. And it -- it must have touched me in a way that I forgot everyth -- it just didn't da -- the -- the details did not exist.

Q: So you were --

A: And my father spent that night on the subway because that very same day they had painted all the stores with a huge J, meaning Jew. And it also became apparent that along the Kurfurstendamm, the main boulevard running through Berlin, that every second store really was Jewish owned. Every second retail store was Jewish owned, which in -- which again -- I mean, which points to the fact that there must have been among the population, a fertile ground for hatred, jealousy, or whatever you want to call it. And the massive amount of glass on the streets, as evidenced by the name for that particular night, called Kristallnacht, the night of broken glass, if there hadn't been so many stores that were affected, the department stores, you -- you could surmise that yes, they were the Jews, German Jews were in Berlin were among the middle class or upper middle class. They were -- they were doing well. They were thriving. And following that event of the attack on the Jewish community, that particular which fol -- which is known as Kristallnacht, the -- they arrested 20,000 men, deported them to Buchenwald, Dachau, Sachsenhausen, the surrounding camps. And my father, to avoid arrest, spent the night on the subway, the entire night. And the Gestapo came to every home and they had -- they knew where the Jews lived and arrested many. And we were among those who desperately tried to get out of Germany, and realizing that -- that it was a matter of life and death, that you -- that what would follow would be just terribly unbelievable. And so we managed to get a landing permit, they were sold by -- by the Cuban government at the time and we -- our destination had -- had been projected to be Cuba -- Havana, to be precise. And that occurred, and that -- that began the well-known, documented voyage of the damned.

Q: Right.

A: Damned because we were not allowed to disembark, we were turned back. And --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: And from that point --

Q: Right, you -- your life changes, clearly.

A: Clearly.

Q: Let -- let -- let's go back a little bit. When -- when you left that school, however you got home --

A: Yes.

Q: -- I-I understand, you not -- did you knock at the door, did you have a key to get in, was your mother home, do you remember that?

A: I remember absolutely -- I really could not tell you any other details. All I know is that I was reunited with my --

Q: With your family.

A: -- parents, yes.

Q: With your parents

A: With my mother and father.

Q: Right. Now that -- that was the turning point for your family.

A: Oh absolutely.

Q: It wasn't ni -- it wasn't 1933, it wasn't 1935 --

A: No, it was ni --

Q: -- it was 1938.

A: Correct.

Q: Right.

A: Exactly.

Q: Is there -- I-I -- I've been told that there was an incident with an SS who painted a J on your forehead, is that true?

A: It was not an SS, it w -- it -- I had had my birthday around that time, in -- in 1938, and prior to -- to that date, on or around that date, I -- my playmates were -- were Gentile vo -- largely Gentile boys in my neighborhood, which was a street running off the Kurfurstendamm, it was a good middle class neighborhood and we were a group of kids who played. And one of the kids -- I -- I had gotten a ball point pen, which I'm not sure if it was a Montblanc, or what type of pen, but it was a ball point pen, which at the time had the -- and was called in Germany an Tintenkuli. And that's the wa -- the name they had for this new innovation, a b -- a ball point pen. Prior to that time ball point pens were relatively unknown. It was something that just oc -- developed at -- at -- around -- on or around that time. And he took -- one of the boys took that pen and wrote on my forehead not only a J, but the entire word, Jude, J-u-d-e. So --

Q: And this was one of your friends?

A: One of my playmates.

Q: One of your playmates.

A: Correct.

Q: Was this shocking to you?

A: I -- my sentiment or my precise emotions or my feelings, if you will, I -- I -- I do not recollect. I -- I have no recollection. But I could assume that it was very shocking.

Q: I would imagine.

A: I mean my -- my guess would be that -- that it was extremely shocking, yes.

Q: Did the -- did the Gentile friends that -- you had mainly Gentile friends, wa -- playmates --

A: I had ca -- I had Jewish friend and I had Gentile friends.

Q: Okay.

A: In my immediate neighborhood I also had -- we were quite -- th-the -- there was no great separation between the racial background of the -- the kids. It -- it wa -- wasn't very obvious. As a matter of fact there was a -- there was a fine rapport between Gentile and Jew up to the propaganda that was ril -- that poisoned the minds of the people.

Q: And when --

A: And there was a propaganda that was directed by the government.

Q: Right.

A: In a -- in a way that the youth in particular, that the school system used propaganda to poison the minds of the people in the [indecipherable]

Q: Do you remember when it seemed to change, when the kids seemed -- when the Gentile kids seemed to not want to play with you? Was that very late? Was that 1938, or do you think it happened earlier?

A: That was rather -- I would say it was around that time, 1938.

Q: It was around that time.

A: But shortly thereafter we were -- it wasn't very long before we actually embarked on the SS Saint Louis, the -- the well known ship --

Q: Right.

A: -- that carried 937 German Jews to the intended destination --

Q: Right.

A: -- which was Cuba and -- and resulted in a -- in a dramatic voyage, really [indecipherable]

Q: Do -- do you remember it -- wi -- did your parents talk to you about they were getting these landing visas, the visas for Cuba or did they just say pack your little bag and we're going? Was it -- do you remember?

A: Well, I think that it was a -- a policy by most parents to avoid involving children in -- in the pressure or in the tension that -- that existed at the time. And so the details of the -- of what went on is -- is not foremost in my memory.

Q: Okay. We're going to change the tape.

End of Tape One

Beginning Tape Two

Q: Tell me about your schooling.

A: Well, as I was saying, upon returning from that country school where -- where I had been while my parents were -- went through the very serious emotion of liquidating our household --

Q: Right.

A: -- to the point where -- to the point they were permitted to -- to take some things along with them -- and the businesses were confiscated anyway before that, they were -- your personal wealth already by that time had been confiscated by the -- by the Nazi government. And the school I went to was also in the same neighborhood, so to speak. It was a Jewish public school adjacent to a synagogue. And -- so you could say that the school and the synagogue were one and the same. It was a parochial school, if you will. And on that very same day of Kristallnacht that -- they burned that synagogue to the ground. And so was the school. So we actually were without a synagogue, we were without a school, and the -- the holy -- like the Torahs were piled up on -- and the prayer books were piled up on the street and set on fire, burned. And -- and that happened all over Germany. On that particular day 600 synagogues were burned to the ground. And I might add for accuracy and historical detail that it was in response -- it was a fake response, a fabricated response, because they probably would have done it anyway, that -- that those terrible, anti-Semitic acts were government orient -- were instigated, but it happened that a young Jewish man assassinated a German councilor official. And by the end -- by the end -- his name was bi -- his name was Greenspan. And -- and so the German government to -- in retaliation, quote unquote, in retaliation set these events in motion. And -- and that's so much for that.

Q: Did you hear about that?

A: Did I hear about that?

Q: Then, then. Or did you only hear about that later on?

A: I -- it is hard to differentiate between what I heard and what I read. That's an evid -- that's self evident.

Q: Right.

A: It is an inevitable truth that some details were perhaps too heavy and too -- too farfetched for a 10 year old to fully comprehend. So my guess would be that -- that I read it.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It's a historical fact.

Q: Right, right.

A: But the information, per se came to me through the media.

Q: So your parents did not say to you you were going to Cuba, as far as you remember, in terms of the preparations.

A: Don't remember.

Q: You don't remember.

A: No, I -- I don't --

Q: Do you remember anxiety in the house? Do you remember people doing all sorts of --

A: Oh yes, absolutely. Oh yeah, absolutely. Everything was being packed, the overseas, the cert -
- certain thing we were allowed to take some things with us and -- and th-that we were about to leave became apparent. And --

Q: Were you able to pack a little bag for yourself?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: Do you remember what you packed?

A: No, I don't exactly remember, but I probably -- I could only guess that I packed the things that were, at that time, at that point in time, important to me.

Q: But you don't remember what they were?

A: No.

Q: No. So did you have a little bag, a satchel, what did you have? Do you remember? It was a little --

A: Could have been a rucksack --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- a backpack --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- most likely.

Q: Were your parents fairly wealthy at this time, so they could afford this?

A: I would not characterize them as wealthy, but compared to the general population, they were certainly middle class, or upper middle class. In those days everything was a little bit -- I would -- I wouldn't hesitate to say low key.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And in no way comparable to -- to what is commonplace today. And that pertains to -- to sports, to just about everything, I mean --

Q: Right, right.

A: -- we have the means of communication, it -- i -- those were two, not only -- we're not only talking about 50 or 60 years, we're talking about two different worlds.

Q: Mm. Did you take a taxi to the boats? Do you -- do you remember how you got there?

A: I remember that we went to the station by train and traveled to Hamburg on a train.

Q: Really?

A: Yeah.

Q: And so all this stuff that was being taken was -- was shipped separately --

A: Exactly --

Q: -- so you just [indecipherable]

A: -- it was taken -- it was taken -- it was moved by -- transported to -- to the ship.

Q: Right.

A: How -- how exactly the -- the details of how there were suitcases -- it wasn't really a whole lot --

Q: Okay.

A: -- that you were permitted to -- to take along.

Q: Did you have to say goodbye to anybody, or did -- was this all in secret?

A: No, no, you could say -- you could say goodbye to just whomever you -- you pleased, you know.

Q: And did you? Do you remember?

A: No, no, no specific recollection, really. The -- the only thing that I, from that period that stands out is the fact that we arrived in Hamburg and -- and went into a big hall where tables were set up with custom officers who would stamp your passport as -- as surrendering your citizenship and so forth and so on, and boarding the ship, which was a former cruise -- cruise liner.

Q: Cruise liner. Your -- did you live in an apartment or a house?

A: In an apartment.

Q: Was that rented, or you just -- your family just left it? Did they own it? Do you -- do you have any recollection?

A: No, I do not know if they owned it, but most apartments I believe were rented.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: I think.

Q: So you think they just left and then whoever was the landlord just took over again. You didn't - but you're not sure.

A: Yeah -- no. I went back there some -- many, many years later. I was invited by the city government as a guest. I was invited in Berlin and -- and of course I took a stroll to -- it was within walking distance. We stayed in the -- they put us up in the Hotel Kempinski, which was one of the better hotels, to say the very least, and gave us the royal treatment. They kicked us out in 1939 and invited us with -- with every kind of amenity to visit and showed us the city and the approach to Judaism, which had sa -- changed 360 degrees, so to speak.

Q: So you went -- you went back to your old neighborhood --

A: And I went back to my old neighborhood and -- and I went to the old apartment, which had a balcony and -- and I knocked on the door, rang the house bell. And of course the response of the owners was quite -- was quite interesting, they demonstrated a kind of -- I would a -- I would say a kind of fear -- unfounded, totally unfounded fear that I came back to reclaim my former home.

Q: Right.

A: Because all of the homes that were -- that were vacated by Jews who either left Germany in -- in the nick of time -- war broke out and after that there was n -- emigration was totally impossible. Anybody who was still caught in the trap was ultimately deported to -- to the a -- to the east.

Q: Right.

A: To -- to Theresienstadt, which was in Czechoslovakia, a camp where a lot of German Jews were housed, and -- or -- or sent to Poland to -- to -- to the death camps. And so these hi -- these apartments and all of the property that Jews once owned was stolen, if you will. And so were the what -- who -- who -- and the apartments were -- and the houses and the villas and the homes were auctioned off to anyone who was permitted to take part in the auction. Books were written on the subject.

Q: So these people, when you went to visit, were afraid. Did they let you in?

A: Exactly, they were afraid. Yeah, they let me into the foyer and -- and I pointed out that they had this -- through this hallway you come to the kitchen, and off the hallway is the living room, to your left. And they were quite stunned by my memory as to their own home, the layout of their own home.

Q: Right.

A: And it was -- to me it was a slightly -- it wasn't so very dramatic, it was more a -- more amusing in -- in a -- in a -- in a certain sense. Although I was touched emotionally la -- in seeing my old home.

Q: Yes, I can imagine.

A: Naturally, but --

Q: Did they let you get beyond the foyer, or did they -- did they not want you --

A: I made no effort and they did really not invite me to --

Q: Okay. I see.

A: -- on the -- on the grand tour because their house or their apartment, their residence was not on the market for -- for --

Q: Right.

A: They had no intention of selling it --

Q: Right.

A: -- and I had no intention of buying it.

Q: Henry, what was your first impression when you saw the luxury liner, the Saint Louis?

A: Oh, that was amazing. I was 10 and a half years old and I'd never seen a huge ship like that, and it was a very big ship. And, in fact it was owned by the Hamburg-America line and it -- it -- it had been used for pleasure cruises up to that time. And the captain, Gustav Schroeder was his name, turned out to be a very civil and -- and ya -- a wonderful human being, to say the least. He demonstrated a -- a feeling of humane -- he did not return a -- a -- upon our -- our attempt to find a place to -- to -- where we could la -- where -- disembark, and when that didn't come to be, he delayed the departure for Europe as long as he could. And finally, ultimately, at the end of it all, he -- he -- they pronounced him as one of the Righteous Gentiles and that's history, and planted a tree for him in -- in Israel. So he was quite a man.

Q: What was your room like? You -- did you st -- you stayed with your parents?

A: Yeah, in a cabin. In a very, very --

Q: Was it nice -- it was nice? You remember?

A: Yes, it -- it -- it was as nice as tourist class was, economy class was during that period. We did not --

Q: Did you have a good time on the ship, or was the sh --

A: Excellent. No, I -- w-we played. We played games.

Q: A lot of kids.

A: Yeah. Th-There were quite a few children on board.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And we played games. It was a -- it was a -- a joyful occasion. For the adults I would say it w -- they -- they tried to make the adults as comfortable as the -- as the -- th -- as -- as they could. The-There were movies on board and there were -- there was a gala dinner, festivities of ca -- some kind. Th-That was on the way over, on the way back it was traumatic. But the first half of the voyage was one of pleasant anticipation. Although I must say the adults were -- had mixed feelings. The -- as an adult, to leave your home behind, your culture and all that you were accustomed to beside your possessions, it was a -- th-they -- they were touched in a totally different way than the children.

Q: This affected you, I gather. You could feel it.

A: You could feel the tension that --

Q: Among the adults.

A: -- that prevailed, yes. Those were not normal times, by any means.

Q: Did you a -- you as a child, with the other kids that you were playing with, did you ever talk about it, or -- or this was not part of the discussion? Do you remember ha --

A: Among us children?

Q: Yeah.

A: No, but from what I -- I was told that there wa -- there were games which related to the times that we were living in. One particular game was one where they separated th-the kids into two groups. One was a Gentile group, the other one wa -- all the -- all of them were Jewish. They separated them and they created a scenario by way of which they -- they -- the -- they reflected what was going on in -- in -- in Germany.

Q: Really?

A: In the -- in the way of drastic separation of the -- of the races.

Q: So that must have been difficult. I mean, even the game wasn't funny.

A: No, it was not really -- it was not really funny. There were --

Q: Which -- which --

A: -- I didn't [indecipherable]

Q: -- do you remember which side you were at?

A: No.

Q: You know -- you know -- you --

A: No, no, I -- well, not really. And we -- we did other things. There was a swimming pool, we -- we swam it. There were lots of games for kids and the -- the -- the first half of the voyage went -- until we arrived in Havana, it was quite interesting.

Q: And where did you eat? Did you eat with kids, or did you eat with the adults? Did you eat with your parents? Do you remember?

A: I sat at a table with my parents --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- and we ate in groups of families, just as a -- just as a cruise ship would be operated, yeah.

Q: There was no school -- there was schooling for kids on the ship --

A: No, absolutely not.

Q: -- that was just fun.

A: Yeah, yeah, absolutely. And the trip over lasted, I believe, 10 days --

Q: And when you -- and did you --

A: -- from Hamburg to Atlanta.

Q: -- did you understand that you were supposed to get off at Havana?

A: Oh yes.

Q: You did understand that?

A: Yes.

Q: Cause you were old enough by then, you were 10 and a half, so you had something --

A: Yeah, well, it wasn't so much the age as -- as the fact that suitcases were being packed and they were put out in front of the cabins for removal. There was no doubt in anyone's mind that this was a point of debarkation and --

Q: Right.

A: -- and the entire events that took place supported that idea that we were at our dest -- point of destination.

Q: Right.

A: The people stood on the deck, on top deck, looked down at the -- at the ocean, at the water and from the shore of -- of Havana, little boats with family members who had preceded the Saint Louis, they came to greet their relatives on -- on board. And ma -- I had an uncle and an aunt and my cousin, who left Germany two weeks prior to the Saint Louis on a ship called the Iberia. And that ship carried 250 passengers. And their life and their future turned out to be completely different than -- than ours, which was named the voyage of the damned. They were far from damned because they --

Q: They disembarked?

A: -- lived -- they lived -- they disembarked, they lived a year in Havana and waited for their -- their quota. America had a quota system for new immigrants and when their number came up, they immigrated to the United States in a perfectly legal manner. And so they stayed just shortly

here in Havana, and then -- then moved the -- the 90 miles to the shores of the United States.

And their life then turned -- my cousin joined the army, and he became an American soldier.

Q: Right.

A: And my uncle, who had been in the jewelry business in Germany, he became a representative for a watch company. They lived in a small town in Beaumont, Texas -- Beaumont, Texas, and -- and later on they moved to New York. And my cousin, who had been under the G.I. Bill of Rights became a watchmaker. And so they had a very normal -- normal future ahead of them, until we ourselves were reunited with them in 1947, at the end of World War II.

Q: So what was that like, that sort of suspension in Havana on the Saint Louis --

A: Yeah.

Q: -- where -- where you couldn't get off, although there's -- there's one suicide, right?

A: Well, that was -- that was a dramatic turning point. To begin with there was the hope, the persistent hope that if we don't get off the ship today, due to some administrative technicality, we would be -- we would be allowed to get off tomorrow. It -- it should be -- I should not fail to mention that the Hapag-America line, the Hamburg-America line, the shipping company did compel the passengers to pay for a return ticket, because we did not have authentic visas, as the -- the entry permit is known -- is -- is known today. We did not have a -- a resident visa, we had a landing permit. And -- which was sold by a Minister of Immigration. And that, in the political arena, resulted in a jealous confrontation between various segments in the Cuban government, and the ultimate rejection of -- of the -- of the passengers to disembark. And so when then went past another day, and the American Jewish organizations used their -- tried to use their influence to somehow have Franklin Delano Roosevelt, F.D.R. as he was known, to -- to admit the passengers, which he failed to do, had he known that two-thirds of the passengers would end up

in gas an-and g -- be gassed in -- in the death camps of Poland and Auschwitz and Majdanek and Treblinka and so on, he may have -- in my view, he may have had -- taken a different sort of action. As it was, he -- he refused. In fact he marked a note with the comment, no action. He turned back every effort to allow these people to disembark. He and his administration sent the 937 victims to -- for most of them, to their death.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And the ship ultimately appealed to Canada, to -- to every country in the world for asylum and the response throughout the world was the same, in th -- terms of not allowing these people into their respective countries. And this is precisely the reason that the Saint Louis became a -- a world event. Not in the same way as the Titanic, because the Titanic was sunk by an iceberg and the Saint Louis was sent back to Europe for an uncertain fate of their passengers by reason of politics and racial -- racial confrontation and discrimination.

Q: There's a -- a report that the children wrote a letter to Eleanor Roosevelt from the ship. Were -
- were you part of that, or you didn't know --

A: Not that at -- not that I, in all honesty, not that I remember --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- but it was quite possible, but I do not remember that.

Q: You don't remember. And she also didn't answer, as far as --

A: I met Mrs. Roosevelt [indecipherable]

Q: You did?

A: Yes, I met her personally, which was -- since you mentioned that, and had you interviewed me at that time, or had you pushed the clock -- were we able to push the clock back --

Q: Right.

A: -- a number of years, I probably -- I may have just asked her that question. But I did not speak to her about the Saint Louis, but I met her. And I met her and she had an apartment in the Park Sheraton Hotel in New York City.

Q: Right.

A: And she stayed in the towers, and during my stay in -- which is probably going to come here and we're going to probably going to touch on that, in switzer -- we ended up in Switzerland ultimately. Not being able to do -- to disembark in Cuba, the ship going back to Europe, we ended up ultimately by -- by way off other events, we ended up in Switzerland and I attended -- somewhere in time I attended hotel school. And having had this hotel experience, I went to the Park Sheraton Hotel in search of a position. And the general manager told me that it is the policy of the hotel to promote people from within the hotel, from within ranks of the hotel, and then -- then he asked his assistant, the assistant manager, he asked him, he says, how did you start here, to refresh his memory. So he said well, I started as an elevator operator. And this resulted in my working at the Park Sheraton Hotel as an elevator operator, and my passenger in that -- in -- in my --

Q: Was Eleanor --

A: -- was Eleanor Roosevelt, because she lived on top of the 25th floor and I had a job to take the elevator from the 25th to the 30th floor, consequently I saw her every day.

Q: So did -- you never told her you had been on the Saint Louis?

A: No.

Q: Interesting.

A: No, I did not --

Q: So she never knew your history?

A: No, I did not do that because I felt that as an employee of the hotel, you just did not -- you did not create a personal relationship of that kind with your -- with your passengers. I -- I met many famous people and -- throughout my career, and -- and I met the Duke and Duchess of Windsor at the Greenbrier Hotel in White Soda Springs, where I had worked as a -- as a sous chef, as a cook, if you will, and I did not ask the Duke of Windsor if he really was a friend of Adolf Hitler, which later on reading books it became --

Q: Right.

A: -- apparent that he was a great sympathizer of the Nazi regime, prior to Britain entering the war, of course. But he was, and the House of Windsor, the -- and -- and -- and the -- and the [indecipherable] that was a relationship between the German aristocracy of the -- of the time and so on. But I did not discuss any of that.

Q: Right. What was it like on the trip back?

A: Well, in Havana one man jumped overboard.

Q: Right.

A: He lost his head, he lo -- he despaired, and in desperation he jumped overboard, cut his wrists. So you can imagine that panic ensued. When -- when it became apparent that we could not disembark, that the ship may ha -- may have to go back to Europe, back to Germany. Some people already had been in concentration camps and the feeling was one of utter panic. And the return voyage was very -- even -- even I as a young child realized the tension that existed. They wanted to capture the bridge -- and when I say bridge, I'm not talking about a card game, I'm talking about th-the -- the place where th-the command of the ship took place, where the captain and -- and his first and second officers and the instruments were located, that guided the ship to its destination. And the ship was a -- was on course for Europe. And organizations were still --

on a daily basis there were announcements that came over the ship radio that this and this occurred, this and this happened, and hope was given to -- to the passengers that they would find a country that would ultimately admit them. And so it was that just shortly be -- they had even planned to scuttle, if that's the right word, to run the ship aground in the English channel, and thus set the ship on fire to -- to save -- to prevent people from having to return to Germany, and perhaps find -- find England receptive to -- to take these people in. And it wasn't necessary to do that because shortly before entering the North Sea, German territorial waters, four countries -- four countries accepted the -- gave asylum to 200 and some of the passengers. And those four countries were, Belgium, Holland, France and England.

Q: We -- I'm afraid we have to stop, and we'll continue it from there.

A: Good.

End of Tape Two

Beginning Tape Three

Q: Do you know who -- who negotiated with these four countries to allow --

A: Yes, there was one fellow, as a matter of fact the Holocaust Museum has a picture of it, his name was Troper, T-r-o-p-e-r. He was one of the negotiators. And then the various organizations like the Joint, J-o-i-n-t, Joint. Th-The -- we've got HIAS, ORT and [indecipherable] ORT, O-R-T.

Q: Right.

A: Various Jewish organizations that operated in New York and -- and so on. They -- they all tried to motivate countries and governments to -- to accept. And then we were given asylum and -- and then of course the times, everything turned into a disaster, into a pathetic set of circumstances that resulted in the gassing of two-thirds of the passengers and a total disruption for the remaining people. It -- it was just simply too -- too much to even reflect upon. It -- we -- the French history throughout World War II was a sorry state of affairs. France was partitioned in the va -- France granted asylum, and the -- the French government quickly changed with the -- war started shortly after our de-debarkation. And --

Q: What -- let me ask you something, i-if I can interrupt. Why did you decide -- did you decide to go to France, or were -- was that a decision made for you?

A: You could -- you could give a preference.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Which in some cases was adhered to, or was met, and in other cases they just -- you were just assigned to a country. If I'm not mistaken, my mother spoke some French, and my father, having been a chemist and created a perfume, and France being a le -- a -- a leader in the world of perfume, in -- in that particular [indecipherable] of -- that it could be possible that -- I do not

know for sure whether we requested, or whether we got there by chance. All I know is that we finally th -- that people -- the boat went to -- to -- to Holland, Belgium, and we debarked in Bologne, which was Bologne, well, which was -- which was France. And my father never saw freedom again, he was interned as an -- as an alien, and he was interned in one or two different camps.

Q: You mean he was interned by the French?

A: By the French. France was split into two parts, into -- one part was under German occupation and consequently a very early and fast policy of seclusion, der -- of anti-Semitic decrees, one after the other [indecipherable] th-the telephone booth is -- you were not allowed to make long distance telephone calls, and you had to wear the jew -- by that time you had to wear the Jewish star and so forth and so on. And -- and the other half was the non-occupied zone, run by the Vichy government, under the leadership of Marshal Pétain, who was a hero in World War I. He - - he distinguished himself at the Battle of Verdun. He -- in -- in world -- '14 - '18, the world -- first World War. He was a hero during that period.

Q: You mean 19 -- 1918.

A: Well, I mean, a --

Q: You said 1418.

A: Yeah, 14 --

Q: 19 --

A: -- to 19. 1914 to 1918.

Q: Ah, really, okay.

A: And -- and he -- he was anti-Semitic, that -- that regime, with Laval, L-a-v-a-l Laval, they were fascist. They were without any question of a doubt of the same sentiment as Mussolini, they

were definitely allied -- allied with the axis with -- with Germany, and enforced decrees that completely isolated and separated Jew -- the Jews. And -- and what followed was just a total disaster. They arrested the Jews in 1942 in conjunction with the s -- with the solving, quote unquote of the Jewish question, the -- the -- the big problem as to what to do with the Jews, the Final Solution. And anyone who ever has the opportunity to -- to hear that phrase, the Final Solution, need only put it into the internet browser and th -- you get 20 pages detailing the conference on Wannsee, which is outside of Berlin, a villa where the SS big shots, Eichmann, Himmler, Heydrich and Rosenberg and all these people, 15 in total, met, who were in charge of ultimately transporting and killing those Jews who were still alive, and eliminating Jews from the face of Europe, which -- which -- which indeed happened.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And -- and my father was sent to Gurs, a hellhole. If there ever was a hellhole, that was one, on the --

Q: Now he's in southern France, southern --

A: In si -- in -- near the Spanish border.

Q: Right. And you and your mother go --

A: And we and my mother were free. My mother was completely free by French or by fren -- by the -- by the French rules of the time, she was free. And I was sent, with all of the kids from the Saint Louis to a children home run by the ORT and [indecipherable]. And that children home was outside of Paris, about 25 kilometers from Paris, and they had a big banner, welcome to the children of the Saint Louis. And to me, it was one of the worst times in my life, because --

Q: Why now?

A: -- I had never been separated from my parents, not even during the worst times in -- in Berlin prior to immigrating, and I was separated from my parents, which to me was very painful. And I stayed a few months in that home, along with the other children. And then my mother managed to get me to join her. My mother and I lived in a very, very small hotel. I had the occasion as a tourist to see that place a number of years later, and I was appalled because it had not been in my memory, what -- what I -- what I saw. It was like a -- a little dump. A very, very small hotel in the -- not far from the Follies Bergère, in the -- in Bon Nuvella, that's a si-si -- a -- a [indecipherable] in the -- in the opera in -- in -- in Paris. And we lived in Paris for a few months, and my mother managed. I wished I had the opportunity -- well, I lost her, she passed away and why -- I would -- would have loved to ask how she managed to get us the papers to -- to go to the non-occupied zone, which we were able to leave Paris for Nice.

Q: Let me ask you something.

A: So we have done the French Riviera.

Q: Right. Was sh -- was she in Le Man, or was she actually --

A: In Le Man.

Q: Now, that's fairly far from Paris, though.

A: 200 kilometers.

Q: Right.

A: From Paris.

Q: So --

A: We stayed there, in a small house.

Q: You stayed there -- that's where you were staying.

A: That's where we were staying until we -- we --

Q: Left for Nice.

A: And still that's now -- war had already started.

Q: Right.

A: The Germans has already occupied half of France.

Q: Right [indecipherable] 1940.

A: And that happened right around the time -- overnight you had Dunkirk and the English who had been in Le Man disappeared in the middle of the night, abandoned their barracks and headed for Dunkirk, part of World War II and -- and went to -- and then escaped. Hitler was slow in making up his mind, he missed the boat, so to speak, and -- in more ways than one. He missed many boats because the troops, the English troops, by any means, went from Dunkirk back to -- into the mainland, to England, and thus escaped. And there were more than 250,000 of them. And that turned the war into the battle -- and that turned the war into the battle for England. Ultimately what followed was Pearl Harbor and the entry of America into the war. We went to Nice, to the French Riviera and lived there for a little more than a year and a half.

Q: Let me go back. Now wi -- did -- you -- you were only at this school, the Ozay sker -- school for a few months --

A: A few months.

Q: -- before your mother got you.

A: Correct.

Q: Di-Did you have classes there, or you didn't have classes? Do you remember?

A: As I recall, we had classes, yes. We had classes and -- and we lived a fairly -- fairly normal life except it was war and we carried gas masks.

Q: Oh.

A: And there were air raids. The German bombers -- the -- the -- there was a war on and Paris was declared an open city and consequently it was occupied. France surrendered. Belgium, Holland and -- Belgium, Holland capitulated in 24 hours.

Q: Right.

A: And the passengers who had been assigned to those two countries fell into the Nazi hands, which -- which marked them -- which guaranteed -- sealed their -- their fate, marked them for extermination. That was as good as --

Q: But that didn't happen with you and your mother.

A: No, that didn't happen, because we went to the non-occupied zone, and in the aftermath of the so-called Wannsee Conference, the solution of the final question, of the Jewish question, they -- from that point on, the speed with which European Jewry was arrested and sent to the camps, that went so fast, a-as -- as to reflect the -- the industrial talent and the great capacity of Germany to -- to manufacture the best of the best in terms of cars, that's how they managed to deport the -- and with the cooperation of the French. The -- the French co-op -- would -- not only cooperated, but they were instrumental in -- in the shipping of their own native -- 70,000 native Jews were arrested and shipped to Auschwitz, along with all of the many immigrants who had found refuge and so-called asylum. They were all sent to -- and this fellow, just as we -- most of us know of Simon Wiesenthal, there was a counterpart in France, Serge Klarsfeld who documented the fate of -- of the French -- of the Jewish immigrants and the French and so forth. My father would di -- would -- became a -- I have a letter here that states in detail that my father was last -- he'd seen -- deported from Gurs, they liquidated that camp as -- that I had described as a hellhole because it -- you walked in mud. You -- the food was insufficient. If there was any food, it was insufficient. And you slept on straw, th-the hygiene, the circumstances were awful. And the transport -- my

father was deported on the 10th of August 1942, to Auschwitz, and on French trains. And it was later established that the SS paid a certain amount of money for each passenger on those trains, on the French cattle wagons that took their -- their passengers to Auschwitz.

Q: So this --

A: And there was all ste -- a hundred people to one car, without seats, standing room only, resulting in the death of a -- of quite a few people before they even arrived. You know --

Q: Did you ever see your father again --

A: No.

Q: -- after you left the Saint Louis?

A: No.

Q: You never did. Did your mother ever see him?

A: Ah, no. No, we never saw him again.

Q: And do you have any idea why your mother chose Nice? Why go to Nice? There was a large Jewish community there, I gather, but --

A: There was a large Jewish community there.

Q: Do you think that's why?

A: And was that -- there was a large Jewish community there and --

Q: And was it under the Italians at that point, when your mother came?

A: No, it -- it was not. It was under -- under French domin -- dominion. And -- it was under French dominion and Nice was a destination and -- and some of her friends from -- originally from Berlin also were in Nice. And I had a --

Q: [indecipherable]

A: -- I celebrated my Bar Mitzvah in Nice.

Q: Yeah, I understand that.

A: Yeah.

Q: Let me go back just a little bit.

A: Please.

Q: D -- how did you get to Nice, by train?

A: Yes.

Q: That you remember?

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember the train trip? It was a long trip.

A: Yes.

Q: From Paris, yes?

A: Yes. But what I remember even more was the fact that we went into hiding as -- as the -- the great arrests took place in Paris and all over France, in -- in response to the decision taken at -- in Wannsee a-as part of the conference --

Q: So you were in hiding in Paris --

A: -- the Final Solution --

Q: Were you in --

A: -- we were hiding with a Gentile family in an attic.

Q: In Paris?

A: In -- in Nice.

Q: In Nice. But let's go back to the beginning when you were in Nice, cause you were in Nice for a -- two years, do you think?

A: About -- a little more than a year and a half.

Q: Little more than a year, I see. So --

A: Of which part of the time I was in hiding at --

Q: Right, now --

A: -- from that point on.

Q: -- but in the beginning, where -- did you live in an apartment with your mother? I mean, how did you -- how did you get along? Did you go to work?

A: We lived in a very, very small hotel.

Q: Mm.

A: Which you could call a rooming house.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: And you would tell they catered mainly to permanent residents. And we had one room. I sh -- I would characterize it as a large closet. It had a bed, it had a small round table, the size of this table here. It had a small closet, it had two chairs, and that was it.

Q: That was it.

A: And that's where we stayed until we were right -- until we went into hiding.

Q: Did your mother work?

A: No.

Q: So how did she have money to pay for the hotel, do you remember?

A: Y-Yes. We had friends in Switzerland who were associated during peace time with my uncle's factories. They had -- and these friends had two department stores. They were -- they were of means, they were well-to-do.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And they sort of supported us, with limited pocket money or funds. And it -- it was by way of charity that we existed for --

Q: Right.

A: -- a little more than a year, for a year and a half.

Q: Before you went into hiding, was it fairly comfortable in Nice? I mean, did you feel safe in some way, or not?

A: For a period of time, I -- ec -- except for missing my father and living a -- an -- a life of -- getting used to another lifestyle, I would say that -- that it -- it was -- until the -- the big raffles, the big arrests, it was quite comfortable.

Q: And you -- you went to school?

A: Yes. I went to elementary school, yes.

Q: So you --

A: And I went to school not -- at that time knowing very little French, but for a -- an 11 year old boy, it was astonishing how rapidly --

Q: Right.

A: -- I acquired the -- to the point where I speak French fluently today --

Q: Really?

A: -- to this day.

Q: Really?

A: Yes. I speak French as good as English.

Q: Interesting.

A: And I've never forgotten my German, so if anything good happened during that period, I became multilingual.

Q: Yes. And how did your Bar Mitzvah happen [indecipherable]

A: Well, my Bar Mitzvah, as I told you later on in -- much later, I -- I became a caterer, and I can tell you one thing, my Bar Mitzvah, from the Bar Mitzvahs taking place in the year 2000, or in the late 19 -- oh, a -- 19 whatever, th-that -- it was not a theme party.

Q: No, huh?

A: No, it was a -- but, the -- the -- with emphasis on -- on shall we say, the law, Halacha, th-the law, religious law, I -- I did -- I did -- I took lessons and I did -- did -- did quite well in doing my Haftorah, the portion on the Torah.

Q: And was this -- was this at the school?

A: In a s -- very short, very, very small synagogue in Nice.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: A very small congregation, I think there were about 20 people.

Q: And why did you decide to -- did you decide to do that, or your mother wanted you --

A: My mother was very, very -- oh, my mother was very -- she was determined to have me Bar Mitzvahed at the age of 13. And right here I got letters that she wrote to the camp in Gurs to ask that my father be given -- maybe call it naïve or call it whatever, I don't know what you would call it, but she wrote a letter to the camp commander begging him to allow him to attend what she called the Holy Communion, as it is known in Christianity. And -- and she has these letters right here.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And -- and of course they turned it down. So -- and she wrote these letters up to she still -- and then she wrote a letter -- I have that correspondence, part of which I gave to the Holocaust

Museum, where she wrote she will never forgive France for not allowing my father to -- to attend that --

Q: Right.

A: -- most important of events in the life -- in the life cycle of a Jewish boy.

Q: Was there a -- a little party?

A: Yes.

Q: For those 20 [indecipherable]

A: In that little hotel, in that little dump. In that little hotel, in that little room, there was some herring, and I could recite the menu, it was very basic.

Q: Right.

A: But there was a kiddush, the re-reception. And not to be compared with what you have today.

Q: Yes, I understand.

A: But it was a kiddush and my mother did her very best to make it memorable.

Q: Right.

A: And so it was. And --

Q: Did you have friends who came? Kids?

A: Yes, yes. A couple of boys and their parents and so forth.

Q: Uh-huh. So you have good memories of that.

A: Yes. What I remember most of all however, was the fact that it had been my fervent wish to get a bicycle and my father wrote from Gurs to my mother that she should get that bicycle, and he wrote a letter to me that -- that I -- now my wish is fulfilled and I could take those trips, and indeed I did. I took trips from Cannes to Monte Carlo --

Q: On your bicycle?

A: -- on bicycle, yes, yes --

Q: Really?

A: -- yes, long trips on my bicycle. That was -- I lived for that, it's beautiful, wonderful. And --

Q: So your father was allowed to write to you some?

A: My father was allowed to write until his deportation. The correspondence, it was censored --

Q: Right.

A: -- by the French, Vichy government.

Q: Right.

A: Tho -- ther -- those letters were -- the-they had these three lines across in yellow, green and blue, and th-they were cen-censored letters. But they were allowed, and my mother was allowed to send packages, food packages.

Q: To him?

A: Yes. And she did send packages and some of his letters indicated th-the wonderful bliss, the -- the pleasure he had for -- to eat a challah, after not having had a slice of bread in a year and a half.

Q: Wow.

A: So -- so -- and he shared this with his fellow inmates, and --

Q: So she never saw him either?

A: No.

Q: But she was able to --

A: And one day a parcel came back, letters came back, [speaks French here] left without leaving a forward address. And that was when he was sent to Drancy, a -- a -- another hellhole. An unfinished building de -- de -- designed to become a camp. It had no facilities, no hygiene, no

toilets, nothing. And no electricity. It was completely unfinished. And people stayed there two and three days and then were shipped in those famous cattle wagons to Auschwitz. And the story has it that a hundred women who were separated from their children jumped out of the windows and killed themselves. It's all part of the legacy.

Q: Did you -- did you understand, did your mother understand what might happen, or that was -- that came much later? To your father.

A: We understood the separation, we understood the deportation, and the hope, however, never left us until much, much later, that awful things were going on, but the details of the massive -- massive killings, leaked through much, much later, through some sources. The Germans were very, very good in keeping their activities, their murderous activities a secret.

Q: Right.

A: And -- but however, even A-American embassy officials and -- and -- with -- in conjunction with Raoul Wallenberg and other people of that kind, ga -- became knowledgeable that horrible things were occurring. And whereas American planes bombed the rail lines to I.G. Farben, which had slave labor, they used the camp inmates to operate their factories, it -- it -- it is said and it is remembered and it is a part of history that they did not bomb the rail lines leading to Auschwitz, because it would delay the war effort. Can I use a handkerchief [indecipherable]

Q: Yes, absolutely use a handkerchief.

A: Thanks.

Q: Course.

A: It -- it -- followed that -- that -- that the -- the death machine roared day and night, and the crematoriums that --

Q: But that's not something that you knew at the time --

A: No.

Q: -- so that you -- you hoped that he would be okay

A: No, we did not know it. There was hope that he would be seen again or returned, almost up to the end of the war.

Q: Right.

A: It only became known at the very end that he did not survive, that he was the victim of the persecution. And that is why I make it a point, the words to me have always had and always will have a significant meaning. Words stand for something, they stand for events. They describe events and words are very pertinent to -- to -- they go far beyond just the spelling of a word. The work Holocaust apparently did -- did -- did not come to be un-until the -- the -- the mid -- mid-70's, because this letter that I have from the Red Cross ends with, it must be assumed that your father was a -- became a victim of the persecution. The word holocaust did not -- was not mentioned in that letter. They called it the persecution. So --

Q: So a-after your father is sent -- oh, I guess maybe we should stop, since we don't have too much time. So I won't ask another question, we'll stop the tape at this point.

A: Okay.

Q: And go to the next tape.

End of Tape Three

Beginning Tape Four

Q: Henry, what -- when did you have to go into hiding in Nice? This is wa --

A: As they -- as they were picking up -- arresting the people on the boardwalk and searching for us, and [indecipherable]

Q: This is aft -- after the Bar Mitzvah?

A: Yes.

Q: So does your mother find a place, is that what happened?

A: Evidently these were Gentile acquaintance -- acquaintances who -- yes.

Q: And what was that like for you? The two of you went into hiding, you didn't have -- y-you didn't have much stuff anyway.

A: Oh, it's a little primitive, but they were very -- they were good people, you know.

Q: And where did you hide, in their attic?

A: In the attic.

Q: And were you able to come down at any point, did you just have to stay there?

A: Stayed mostly in there. I -- I once ventured outside by myself, and in -- in an attempt to retrieve some of our more valuable possessions in that hotel where we stayed, but I was only partially successful. And we got then a -- we managed to get a guide who drove us to the foot of a mountain, from whence we were ultimately able to walk over farmland in the middle of the night, into Switzerland.

Q: So how long did you stay in hiding in -- in Nice, you think?

A: It seemed like -- it seemed like a very long time, but I don't know exactly how long it was.

Q: Were you alone or were there other families there?

A: There was one more family which then left, came and left. It was like a -- a hiding place that was organized by some knowledgeable people.

Q: Were there children there as well --

A: In the -- knowledgeable in the resistance movement or something like that.

Q: Were there other children in the attic with you, or not?

A: Much older than I. Children, I wouldn't call -- call them children.

Q: Children. And you were 13 at this point, or over 13?

A: Yeah, I was over 13.

Q: So you understand --

A: I was 14 when I came into Switzerland --

Q: Into Switzerland.

A: -- so now I must have been there for several months.

Q: So you understand much more of what's going on by this time?

A: Yes, yes, I came to understand what was going on.

Q: Does your mother talk to you more about it, or if -- or is -- are you still sort of left in the dark?

A: Well, my mother passed away in 1970 --

Q: No, no, I mean then, in Nice.

A: We were preoccupied with how to make our way into Switzerland, how to save ourselves.

And we crossed the border on a rainy night, the -- as expected the border guards had retreated into their huts.

Q: Because it was raining?

A: Yes.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: That was a bad night. And we managed to get literally to walk into Geneva.

Q: Without being stopped?

A: Well, where we were stopped, taken to a soccer field, to a dugout, that's where, and met other refugees there. And a couple of days later we were taken to a -- a refugee camp. A very primitive camp that was our first point of -- of sanctuary in -- in Switzerland. What followed was a period of time that I spent with the various families.

Q: So you separated from your mother again?

A: Yes.

Q: Cause she stays in the refugee camp?

A: She was sent to a more permanent camp, and that camp consisted of a -- a resort hotel, which was transformed into a refugee camp because there was no tourism in Switzerland during that period.

Q: [indecipherable]

A: So what the Swiss government did, they requisitioned all of those resort hotels and turned them into reception camps for their many refugees, of varied background.

Q: Was there a problem with your getting in, or not? They didn't have -- they didn't have any issue with the fact that you were Jewish?

A: No.

Q: None.

A: I did not encounter any anti-Semitism --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- in --

Q: In Switzerland.

A: -- in Switzerland.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Here is a -- an item in this book.

Q: And that book is?

A: Yeah, this -- it -- it has here, it -- page --

Q: What's the name of the book?

A: "Swiss Wartime Work Camps." And here is has Henry Gallant, Atlanta, Georgia, U.S.A..

And it gives you a short synopsis of my relationship with Switzerland. It said, "My mother and father and I left Germany May 13, 1939, bound for Havana, Cuba on the S.S. Saint Louis. That episode became known as the voyage of the damned. My family and I disembarked in France, the other passengers were admitted in Belgium, Holland and England. My father was interned in Gurs and in late '42 transported from Drancy to Auschwitz. He was never heard from again. My mother and I lived in Nice until September of 1942. French collaborators arrested thousands of Jews and we found a hiding place in an attic and stayed there a few months until my mother arranged for false identification papers and a guide to take us to the Swiss border. We walked over pastures at night and entered at Switzerland illegally. We were not sent back. We were taken to a football field near Geneva, having crossed the border at Annemasse. And after several days were sent to a Aufangslager reception camp at Ayresfield, Berner Oberland. The camp was primitive, or rustic, as you would expect in basic training. The food adequate and the Swiss soldiers friendly and sympathetic with our plight." And then it goes on to tell the rest of the story.

Q: Mm-hm, mm-hm. So you tell me the story, instead of reading it.

A: Oh.

Q: So -- whoops. I thought I threw out something --

A: Well, I lived in several families. I lived first --

Q: Let me ask you something.

A: Hm?

Q: Why did your mother dec-decide that she was going to go to Switzerland? Had she been talking to people in the resistance? Do you have any idea why?

A: Why --

Q: Because o-obviously a lot of people didn't --

A: -- well when you -- when you see people disappear overnight --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And when you see the French gendarmes arresting people, then you know you better get --

Q: You better get out of there.

A: -- do something. And Switzerland borders -- borders France. And the only other place would have been Spain, and that would have been a very long --

Q: That would have been a much longer journey.

A: And more difficult to cross the Pyrenees, the mountains. The Alps. Switzerland was the logical place and besides, we had that family that had supported us partially.

Q: They lived in Switzerland.

A: The -- the -- these friends by the name of Benedict, the f-family that I mentioned supported us --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- throughout our stay there for, you know, several months.

Q: Was the guide somebody who was from the resistance? Is that what -- do you remember who this person --

A: No, had no contact with him. He didn't speak, kept quiet.

Q: And he just took you to the place.

A: He just went through his -- his job in a very myth -- mechanical way.

Q: And you were in a -- in a car, up to a certain point?

A: Up to the -- where we got out. And he just said, walk over this field and you will come -- go straight and you will see ahead of you a mountain. Try to make yourself -- try to make it possible to cross that -- that mountain. And --

Q: That must have been very nerve-wracking.

A: Yeah, to say the least.

Q: So what was the ca --

A: And very dangerous.

Q: Cause you could have been caught at any time or shot or whatever.

A: Correct. And you would not know what would happen to you if you were caught. You would not know the response. It was an act of desperation.

Q: And you felt it and your mother felt it.

A: Yes.

Q: And you were alone when you walked across there, you weren't with anybody else. So you didn't --

A: No.

Q: -- you -- so that all of this was unfamiliar territory to you.

A: Yeah, totally unfamiliar, exactly, totally unfamiliar. I had no idea what the out --

Q: So you just followed his finger?

A: Yes.

Q: He said go in that direction and that's where you went to.

A: Pretty much. I couldn't -- I wouldn't put it any other way.

Q: But Geneva's pretty far. You walked to Geneva?

A: No, Geneva from Annemasse is not all that terribly far.

Q: No? Uh-huh.

A: It -- it -- it's maybe -- I -- I would say probably a two hour walk into the outskirts of Geneva.

Q: And what -- what was the -- the weather at this time? It was raining that night.

A: When we first began that -- that long, long excursion, if you will call it that, it was raining cats and dogs. It was raining severely. How the weather turned later on is not in my memory.

Q: Were you wet? You must have been -- you must have been soaking wet.

A: I would assume -- I was assume -- I would assume that I was wet.

Q: And do you remember the kind of shoes you were wearing?

A: No.

Q: No.

A: No.

Q: Did you have a rucksack with you? Did you have --

A: Yes, I had a backpack.

Q: You had a backpack.

A: Mm-hm.

Q: And your mother the same, do you think? Or do you think --

A: Don't really remember what she had, I think she had some kind of a bag that she held, you know.

Q: But you couldn't have carried very much --

A: No.

Q: -- because you knew you had to go --

A: Practically nothing.

Q: Right.

A: Practically absolutely, I would say less than nothing but the very bare essentials, maybe some toilet articles like --

Q: So did you lead your mother, did your mother lead you? Do you have any recollection, or did you just hold onto each other -- did you hold hands?

A: No, just -- just walk.

Q: Just walked.

A: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Just walked.

Q: And when the Swiss police got you in Geneva and took you someplace, were you f -- was that a frightening situation, or they were not mean to you?

A: No, because there were other people there in that dugout at the --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- that soccer field. And it was a relief, actually, to be what we -- it became apparent that we were on -- on solid ground and we were safe, and we were not threatened by what we had witnessed in the south of France.

Q: But you had false papers, is that correct?

A: For -- yeah, yeah, identif -- identification papers.

Q: And is that when you became Henry Gallant?

A: Oh no. No, no, no, no.

Q: No? No, that beca --

A: No, that is a totally different --

Q: So who were you? So who were you then?

A: -- they -- you have to -- you had -- for that you have to buy my second book.

Q: I see. But you haven't finished the first one yet, Henry, so --

A: That -- no, that's correct, that's correct.

Q: So, who --

A: You've got a good memory.

Q: So who -- yeah right -- so who was -- who was on your passport, if it was a fake paper? What was the name? It was still Heinz Goldstein?

A: I would imagine. Or it was a totally different name.

Q: It would have to be a different name --

A: I -- I had --

Q: -- you couldn't be Jewish.

A: -- no, I have -- I have -- no, no, absolutely not. I have that in memory that it was a totally different name. I don't remember the name.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: But it -- it was definitely in -- in no way related to my real name or my -- my future adopted name, no, no.

Q: Right.

A: No, no, no, these were papers that were suggesting a --

Q: A different identity.

A: As a matter of fact, we were stopped by a gendarme, that's just a side incident. We were, the -
- the car was stopped by a gendarme who looked at those papers. My mother spoke some French,
in fact, she spoke good French. And -- and the gendarme, this I remember distinctly, the
gendarme saying in a certain voice, Sa sont vous papier? These are your papers, and my mother
said, oh, oui, bien sur. And o -- and -- and he -- and he said, [speaks French here] he said -- and
he made no -- he -- he -- in my view, in my recollection, he left no doubt at all that -- that he was
aware these papers were -- were faked. And -- but he also seemed to indicate that he knew the
times we were living in, and he -- we were just fortunate in running in -- ther -- there were
people like that throughout the history of World War II. People who --

Q: Who just turned and looked away.

A: -- yes, there were people like that. There were people like that in Germany as well, who to --
who risked their lives. And there were people like that in Poland, who risked their lives for the --
to -- who hid children and did all sorts of things that could have cost them dearly had -- had --
you know, had it become known.

Q: So what does this -- what does this gendarme say to your mother? This -- these are your
papers?

A: [speaks French] -- if you believe these to be your papers --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- then you may proceed.

Q: I see, so it was clear that he was [indecipherable]

A: Clear, absolutely. Left no doubt in my mind whatsoever.

Q: Right, right. And that happened before you came --

A: And I hear that as if it -- as if you were talking to me now.

Q: Mm. And that was before Geneva?

A: Yes, of course.

Q: This is way before.

A: Absolutely.

Q: Yes.

A: That was midway. We were just stopped.

Q: Right.

A: There were roadblocks at th -- that was one of those roadblocks. As it was leading to the border.

Q: The border of Switzerland?

A: Correct.

Q: I see. So this is a French gendarme --

A: An -- absolutely, and --

Q: -- or border --

A: -- certainly a French gendarme.

Q: Right.

A: La gaul si ville --

Q: Right.

A: -- who was known to be -- th-they were known to be like the SS, they were horrible people, by and large.

Q: So that must have been awful as you -- as you start to go because you have no idea what's going to happen.

A: I wa -- yes, I -- that is what I would -- would -- would call it.

Q: So when you were -- when you were --

A: That was one of those moments, one of those terrible moments of -- of stress and anxiety and so forth.

Q: Right. And then you got over it, and then you just kept going.

A: Yes.

Q: Do you remember that the weather changed? That the -- that it didn't stay [indecipherable]

A: The last thing on -- on my mind during that period was the weather. I ma -- I don't know what transpired exactly in my thoughts, but the weather was not part of it.

Q: Did you hate this?

A: Did I hate?

Q: Were you angry that you had to go through this, or was this just a normal time somehow?

A: I think my entire life I just take things as they come.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: There are always moments that you -- that one dislikes and that one does not find terribly amusing or exciting or enjoyable.

Q: Mm.

A: But I guess that's part of being here.

Q: Right.

A: Better being here than not being here.

Q: Than not being here. Did you complain to your mother as your -- as this -- because your change starts when you're seven, eight years old. I mean, your -- you're not a grown person. So do you complain to your mother, or do you fee -- do you feel as a kid that things are so bad,

they're happening for everybody, they're so bad that I shouldn't complain? Do you have any recollection of what that was like for you as a kid?

Q: That's a very good question. I -- I don't think that -- that -- complaining really was not part of my -- my psychological make-up. I -- I do not complain.

Q: Did you ever cry, when you were alone?

A: I cried -- I cried terribly when I was separated from my mother in -- upon disembarking in -- in France --

Q: In France, when you went to the [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, that was -- that was a horrible -- that was one of the most horrible time, cause I had never been previously separated, so --

Q: Right, right, so that's when you cried.

A: That separation was, you know, in the -- not knowing which and what was going to happen and so forth. That went on --

Q: Did anyone talk to you?

A: N-No, because I did my crying in the solitude of my own person.

Q: Right.

A: I -- to be -- to be precise, I would not -- it -- it wasn't in my nature to cry in public. I did not -- I had enough sense of awareness that I went to the bathroom and cried. But I was very unhappy.

Q: Yeah, I imagine.

A: Yeah, I was very unhappy. I was very unhappy, it was the epitome of loneliness at that very moment in time and place.

Q: And do you think your parents knew that about you?

A: Well, my father wasn't -- was not bothered.

Q: He's not there, right, but your mother --

A: He was already --

Q: -- he had been arrested.

A: Yeah, yeah. No, I don't think so. I don't --

Q: Except she very quickly tried to get you out of that school.

A: Yeah, a few -- it -- I think -- not a -- weeks, or a couple of months transpired, more than that.

Q: Oh, so maybe she knew, but you didn't know that she knew.

A: I think the French, if I'm not mistaken, if I remember correctly, the French instit -- set into motion a law that women with children could -- could have their children with them.

Q: Oh, I see.

A: And I think it was in context with that ordinance, or with that new law that -- that we were reunited. That's --

Q: Uh-huh.

A: -- pretty much as I remember it.

Q: Okay, right. So how long were you in the soccer field in Switzerland, do you remember?

Days, weeks, hours?

A: Three, four days.

Q: And they gave you sufficient food?

A: Yes. Th -- it was like camp style --

Q: So you were okay.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: It wasn't na -- it wasn't --

A: No, no, no, do not remember having been hungry or anything like that, no, they took care --

Q: You never remember being hungry?

A: N-No, no, they took care of us. And --

Q: And that was -- that's been true throughout this whole circumstance, that you were not hungry.

A: And I was not very demanding either, you know -- you know, I think continental breakfast was invented in Europe, you know. That consists of a slice of bread, marmalade and a piece of margarine or butter and a glass of milk. This is breakfast, you know?

Q: And that was enough.

A: Or in -- in Switzerland it was also commonplace, I spent a -- a certain amount of time on a farm because the Swiss men were -- they had to serve in the army, so they took -- by that time I was already -- I was no more a child in that sense and I worked on a farm. And breakfast consisted of the typical Swiss Rösti, you know, like potatoes that -- not potato pancakes, but like hash brown potatoes. They would grind them and then fry them and this -- this, and bread --

Q: Were they good?

A: Oh yeah, excellent. This and bread and milk and so forth, o -- coffee au lait, you know, touch of coffee with a lot of milk was breakfast.

Q: So, you -- are you -- you're very adaptable as a kid. You -- you keep [indecipherable]

A: Yeah, I was -- I found myself to be adaptable to a -- to a lot of different circumstances. And my -- the time I spent in Switzerland, these families, I think I mentioned it, they were of a different background. I spent a year with a secular Jewish family, one that was not religious. I mean, it was nothing extraordinary to have a pork roast for dinner. And -- and then I spent a little over a year with a secondary Gentile family, secondary teacher. And lo and behold, I ended up with an Orthodox family, a very religious Jewish family.

Q: That was the last one.

A: That was the last family, right, that's when I attended the --

Q: So what are the circumstances of your staying with a family? Are you sort of like a foster kid, they get money from someplace?

A: Exactly, exactly, exactly.

Q: Uh-huh.

A: We -- the Swiss -- the Swiss organiza -- they were organized and -- and th-they -- they had a -
- a branch of c-call it the Red Cross or something, administer the -- th-the -- the -- the -- the -- the
so-called youngsters, teenagers and so forth, they were kind of separated from the adults.

Q: Were there other children in the family, I mean, in these families?

A: In one family there were two boys wi -- they were a little older than I, and in the Gentile
family there were two -- two girls. One is -- I think is 20 or 21.

Q: Sounds nice.

A: Very interesting, yes.

Q: Why was it interesting? Why do you say that?

A: Well, it was -- it was interesting that we -- difficult to go into -- in -- into details, but it -- it
was a novelty of sorts.

Q: For you to be around girls?

A: The environment for me, yeah.

Q: Right.

A: Mm-hm. I mean, I was in, call it puberty, or whatever, you know. And they were also very
curious, these -- th-th -- that family was very curi -- there were questions.

Q: So they wanted to know about your experiences?

A: They knew about the Jewish lifestyle. Probably their knowledge -- their Biblical orientation.

And whatever it follows the -- the -- the varied traditions of -- I'm trying to be as diplomatic as I possibly can. But they were --

Q: Do you want to be less diplomatic?

A: I beg your pardon?

Q: I said, do you want to be less diplomatic?

A: I-If your curiosity compels you to -- to do -- do --

Q: I'll ask, yes, what was it like?

A: Yeah, well, they had never seen a circumcised boy.

Q: Right.

A: And it was quite a new experiment, you know, a new experience, rather, you know.

Q: Right.

A: And th-they -- they -- they wanted to -- to see what this thing looks like you know? And of course I wasn't -- I wasn't about to disrobe, if you will --

Q: Right.

A: -- under these -- in -- in this particular circumstance. But, I said, if you accidentally -- I said, I'm going to take a bath or a shower and if you happen to walk in, that won't bother me one bit.

Something along that line.

Q: Right, right.

A: And --

Q: Was that uncomf --

A: -- a -- but there was nothing new, really, they -- they -- that was nothing -- nothing new. I remember seeing a -- a film where -- with -- where Jews were in jeopardy and the only way that

these guards could ascertain the -- the religious, you know, that they had caught up the Jews or not would be exactly through this ritual which -- which by the -- in -- in -- in -- among Jews is commonplace.

Q: Right.

A: So.

Q: Were you seeing your mother at this --

A: Yes, they had a -- they had a rule that the Swiss government -- I call it the government but it was a branch of the government in charge of imi -- affairs of immigration. And they had a rule that children, or teenagers or whatever, family members may be reunited for a period of three days every six weeks. So while I was with this family, I actually saw my mother every six weeks for three days.

Q: And that -- that was true for each of the three families that you were with, you said?

A: Correct. And they even paid the expense of the guesthouse where you were staying and the -- and the meals and so forth. That -- that they did, and --

Q: Was this difficult for you to see your mother and then have to go away for awhile?

A: Well, it wasn't exactly easy, but you know, th -- I can remember it. It was wonderful. We were close.

Q: Right.

A: You know, and due to the conditions that existed at that time. And -- and then la -- three days go by, and you know --

Q: And then she's gone.

A: Yeah, but you look forward to the next six weeks, I mean --

Q: Right.

A: I mean to --

Q: Right.

A: She --

Q: And she was in a refugee camp. And what did that mean?

A: Well, they called it a camp. They can't call it a resort hotel, you know? So a camp can mean -
- can mean two things. A camp need not be -- need not be a concentration camp.

Q: Right.

A: After all. But a camp is not a home either, you know.

Q: Right.

A: So the word camp could -- could imply anything, you know? Children in the summer go to
camp.

Q: Right.

A: And --

Q: Was she living in bad conditions, or not?

A: No.

Q: No, she wasn't.

A: No, no, not at all. Not at all.

Q: So do you correspond with her?

A: Yes.

Q: So in between the visits --

A: Yes, yes, yes, absolutely. Absolutely.

Q: So it must have been important.

A: Quite frequently as a matter of fact, yeah. Both ways.

Q: Did you end up saving those letters?

A: There are some of those letters, a couple of letters are floating around among ma -- among hi -
- literally hundreds of pictures, which I have never bothered, throughout the years to -- to catalog
in a picture album.

Q: Right.

A: They are in boxes [indecipherable] and they really come from every -- from every stage, I
always -- I would say every era. I have pictures from our life in Berlin before the war. I have
pictures of our time spent in Nice, on the French Riviera. I have pictures that were taken in
Switzerland. And beside having stayed with these families, I spent the little -- a little more than
one year in a boarding school, which was known by the name of Ecole d'Humanité. Ecole means
school and Humanité means humanity.

Q: Right.

A: The school of humanity. And the professor and his wife, who ran that school were two
German Gentiles who left Germany at the onset of Hitler taking the government.

Q: I think we have to stop there. So why don't we start there, when you talk about the --

A: That's a good point.

Q: -- boarding school.

A: Excellent point to start.

Q: Okay, okay.

End of Tape Four

Beginning Tape Five

Q: Okay. We ended and you started talking about the boarding school, Ecole d-Humanité.

A: Yeah, Ecole d'Humanité.

Q: Tell me about that. This was in Switzerland, right?

A: Yeah, yeah. In Switzerland, not far from Zurich. And it was operated by a fellow whose name was Paul -- Paolos -- Paolo -- Paul Geheeb. He had a very famous school in -- in Germany, which was, I would say, 50 years ahead of its time. He -- it was very classic. He -- he was a friend of Mahatma Gandhi. He knew intimately Rabbi Don Attagori, the famous author. And if you went up to the dormitories along the stair what -- what do you call it, the stairs, you had pictures from Tolstoy, Dostoyevsky, Maxim Gorky. And it was all about the classics. And on Saturday they -- they would have what they called andoch, a certain evening of spiritual -- spiritual -- spirituality or something. And they would play Beethoven's Fifth, or Eine kleine Nachtmusik, Mozart, Beethoven, Hayden, Bach, Brahms and Handel and so forth and so on. And my entire th -- wa -- culture was written with a capital C. And I went to this school along with a lot of other children who were refugees in Switzerland during that time, and among the student body were two brothers and that's a very interesting item. There were two brothers, the nephews of the chief of staff of the German -- German army, whose name was Walter von Brauchitsch. And their name was Hans and Matteas von Brauchitsch. And we were very close, we were friends. And in the issue of "Life" magazine of May 1946 there's a caption where German general's nephews went to school with Jewish -- the Jewish immigrants. And there's one picture of me and -- and the Brauchitsch brothers. And we have kept in touch all throughout my stay here in the United States. And I went to that school for about a little more than a year. And in 1947 I came to America. Immigrated legally.

Q: So was that school -- was it -- it good for you to be in that school?

A: Well, I think it was very good, it -- in retrospect it was very good because the emphasis on culture is basically where even today I -- I developed the -- the taste or a liking for classic music, for example. And had I not gone to that school, well I'm not saying that -- that the Stones or the Beatles or whatever are not wonderful to listen to, or that it's not part of -- e-each age has its sed -- has its own music, so to speak, but classic music is forever and I came to appreciate it and then even today have an appreciation for classic music.

Q: Did you --

A: And it was developed in that --

Q: In that school.

A: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

Q: Did you work at that school also?

A: Well, I -- my skill that I acquired in hotel school, I did pretty much run the kitchen there, yes.

Q: When did you go to hotel school? I don't think we spoke about that.

A: To hotel school, when I stayed with my last family, that Orthodox -- I think I mentioned the Orthodox Jewish family.

Q: Yes.

A: Well, I spent the -- I went to school in the daytime, to hotel school and in the evening I would come home, to what was then home, a foster home, if you will, to -- to those people that I stayed with. But that was the period that I went to hotel school.

Q: And is --

A: And that was in Lucerne.

Q: And is that before the end of the war?

A: That was before the end of the war.

Q: So what was it like to have the war end?

A: Excuse me, I have to change that.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: It was at the end of the war, because the school occupied one half of the building and the other half was a hotel. And our guests at the time -- it was just at the end of the war, our guests at the time were G.I.s who were on a seven day rest trip to Switzerland, what they called, R and R, rest and relaxation. They came there to spend seven days in Lucerne and that was my first experience with real Americans and th-their lifestyle. And when I say lifestyle I'm referring to the meals that they ate. And they ate the apple pie and left the crust.

Q: They left the crust?

A: For the most part, yeah. At the end of the meal there were -- you could see -- that was, to us was completely strange because it is a European custom to finish what you have on your plate, unlike the way we live. If we're not crazy about something we certainly don't eat it, we just leave it.

Q: So what did you think of these guys leaving the crust?

A: Oh, they were terrific -- oh, the gu -- they were terrific. The -- in -- in those days, I -- they will never come again, 1945, everything that was American was --

Q: Was good.

A: -- was great. From a Parker 51, which were the fountain pens, to -- to Chesterfield or Camel --

Q: Really?

A: -- cigarettes. The -- the very plain, G.I. issued raincoats -- anything that was American was

fabulous. And the guys, the soldiers were -- really, they were kids. They were in their -- 20 - 21 -
22. And --

Q: But your se -- you're about 17 when the war ends, right?

A: Right. And they were about 21.

Q: Right.

A: And -- and they were -- I met them in night clubs, they -- doing the jitterbug and all that was
American, you know. It was very exciting.

Q: And is it because you met them that you wanted to come to the United States, or did you want
to come anyway?

A: Oh no, no, no, no. We had -- we had wanted to come to America in the -- in the late 30's. Our
trip to -- that -- the voyage, the so-called voyage of the damned was a prelude to entering the
United States. Our trip to Cuba was -- was part of waiting out the -- the quota number to come
up. So that was -- we had intended to go to America all along. Cuba was not our -- was not to be
our final destination. Our quest was to enter the United States, come to America.

Q: So what was the end of the war like in Switzerland? Was it very happy, or -- I mean it -- was
it -- did you mark it, or did it just sort of pass you by?

A: No, it was a transition, it was a transition. It was also the time that we were to find out that
our father would never return, you know? And it was the beginning of -- of a new -- of kind of a
new life. You --

Q: How did you find out about your father? Do you remember?

A: I got that -- that letter from the Red Cross, that who -- they researched this and their findings
indicated that he was deported to Auschwitz.

Q: And did you and your mother ask for that information? Was that how --

A: Yes.

Q: You did.

A: Yes, yes. Mm-hm. And that was the response.

Q: So, there's a great sadness at the same time that you're happy the war is over, it's --

A: Yeah, the -- absolutely. Surprisingly, the way I s -- remember it today, tha -- when you have a loved one whom you haven't seen for six or so years, the -- the shock is somewhat diminished.

As they say, the time heals all wounds.

Q: The what? The --

A: Time heals --

Q: Heals all wounds?

A: -- all wounds.

Q: Did it?

A: That's what they say.

Q: I know, but I'm asking you whether --

A: You -- it -- I -- I'd -- I would a -- I would say that that is ma -- very much so, yes.

Q: Okay.

A: I would [indecipherable] to that. Maybe not all wounds, you never forget. But of course you don't forget. But the intensity of losing a loved one is stronger in the early stage of absence than after a number of years.

Q: And you think that was true for your mother, or you think it was different?

A: It's hard to say. I don't know how my mother felt. I wouldn't know how, but you don't know what -- in -- in -- intimately you don't know what another person is really feeling.

Q: Right, right.

A: So I can't say.

Q: Right.

A: You miss a person that is close to you, perhaps forever. I'm merely referring to the intensity.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The shock, the drama.

Q: Right, right, it's different.

A: You know? You know.

Q: So, when the -- the war is over, do you go -- you -- you leave the foster home and you go to your mother?

A: When the war was over I had -- I lived with my mother for a period of time until we actually came over on the S.S. America, one of the ships.

Q: Was it difficult to get -- to get a visa to come to the United States or not?

A: Well, it took a number of years. As you know, we were refused admission in 1939, and at the end of the war it was very easy, the sympathy for -- for the victims of the -- now known as Holocaust was -- was very much -- was very acute.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: So it was not difficult to enter the United States at the end of the war for victims of the -- of the period.

Q: But you then had to make another change. Did you know English?

A: Yes, I had learned English and I was rather good at it, too.

Q: Oh, you were?

A: Oh yeah.

Q: You -- and your mother spoke English fluently?

A: She did also, mm-hm --

Q: Really?

A: -- mm-hm.

Q: But -- all right, so the-there's not a linguistics problem --

A: So I came to America, and --

Q: And what happened?

A: -- and I had relatives who had preceded -- I had more than one relative who had preceded us in -- in their quest to live in America.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And they -- I -- we spent a couple of days in New York, then I went to Philadelphia, where I had an uncle, an aunt and two cousins. And I worked in a Swiss pastry shop as a --

Q: In Philadelphia?

A: -- in Philadelphia for a few days and then they also had a pastry shop in Atlantic City, so they transferred me to Atlantic City, and that was my first experience, so to speak, after arriving in New York and in New York I spent a few days. My aunt took me to see a musical, my first musical, which I still remember distinctly was Oklahoma with Gordon MacRae. And -- and then I went to Atlantic City, and Atlantic City wasn't a very exciting place in -- at that time. It went through several transitions. At the time I got to Atlantic City was in 1940 -- in 1947, and you had the boardwalk --

Q: Mm-hm.

A: -- and the old part of the -- of Atlantic City. It was a highlight, it was the time when Saratoga, the horses, they -- the Greenbrier Hotel in White Sulphur Springs. I mean, America was something different, totally different and much different than it is today. Atlantic City in

particular went through different stages. You know, from that era -- from that time it -- it got completely run down until gambling came to Atlantic City.

Q: Mm.

A: And then you had a different -- you had a different place again, you know, the old people got chased out of their homes and they built fabulous hotels like in Las Vegas. So after Atlantic City I visited my cousin in Beaumont, Texas and I stayed there for a couple of months. And then returned to New York and worked in -- as a cook in a couple of hotels.

Q: And did you come back to New York because you didn't want to stay in these other places? I mean, why did you do that?

A: Well, Beaumont, Texas was not really my -- my first choice. It was a wonderful place, it has m -- great -- at that time a great little town, today it's a great big town. But it wasn't where I wanted to be and also in my -- in -- in my -- in the pursuit of my career, I -- I was a chef at the time and worked at the old Astor Hotel, which meanwhile has been torn down. I worked in the Hotel New Yorker and at a later stage I worked at the Waldorf Astoria for about 10 years.

Q: Mm. As a chef?

A: No. I didn't know wa -- there's a chef. I worked in the -- in the nightclub, in the Empire room.

Q: Hm. What did you do?

A: And that was the -- it was the showroom -- I beg your pardon?

Q: What did you do?

A: I was a captain. That is the closest to the maitre'd. I had a section of the -- of the room that was under my direction, the service, per se. And I enjoyed that very much. The showroom -- we had one act following another. We had Tony Bennett, Peggy Lee, Dinah Shore, the Pointer Sisters, Diana Ross and the Supremes. Maurice Chevalier and Gilbert Bécaud, a French singer.

And Charles Aznavour, another French singer. And we had -- and the guests that attended these performances, we had Liza Minelli and so forth. And I enjoyed that very much, it was very entertaining.

Q: Did you mind not being a chef, or you were [indecipherable]

A: No, when I went to hotel school I took two courses, actually. I became a -- a -- I -- I took a -- in -- in -- I took a course in the culinary art, but I also took a course in a -- a service course.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And in -- in my career, I -- I was a maitre'd for a number of years and not just in the Empire room, but I also worked -- the Empire room closed -- actually the Empire room was a seasonal affair. It closed in July and reopened in late September, which to me was -- was very beneficial. It was not only benef -- it was very convenient, because I used those two or three summer months to -- to work in the Catskill mountains. And I got a great deal of experience in the Catskill mountains. I worked in some of the great hotels, of which most of them are closed. It's all part of an era that is history long forgotten, but at that time the epitome of elegant living. A -- I would say a culture that just simply, like so many other things, a culture that disappeared. Of the approximate two million Jews living in New York, you could safely say that 99 percent of them spent their summers in -- in the Catskill mountains, if not for the whole summer, then for a weekend, or -- or for a week or two.

Q: So what hotel did you work at?

A: I worked at Grossingers.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Which is an -- an icon.

Q: Right.

A: I worked at The Concord, another icon.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: I was the maitre'd in The Pines in South Fallsburg. I was the maitre'd in a place called Gibbers, and The Evans in Loch Sheldrake. And I also was the maitre'd for two seasons -- you must remember that this was seasonal, so when you say, well, you've worked in so many different places, the answer to that is simple, it -- these were seasonal hotels that opened up for Passover in -- generally in April, around April, closed again after Passover and reopened in June, around Memorial day and stayed open until the high holidays, the Jewish holidays, like Sukkahs and Simchas Torah and so forth and so on. And I worked there on th -- for the entire summer, until the Empire room opened up in late September and that's when I went back to the Empire room. So I spent 10 years in the Empire room, with the exception of the summers, which I spent in the Catskills. And these hotels in the Catskills had -- each had their own -- its own identity. The Grossinger and the Concords were family hotels. A place I worked at was called Shavunge Lodge. That was a place for singles. The Waldameer was a place for singles, but older singles. So each of these hotels had their own clientele.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And it was a pleasant -- pleasant time. And -- but all in the past, because 90 percent of all these hotels do no longer exist.

Q: So how long were you in this business?

A: In this business I was until the major change occurred in 1975 when we moved to Atlanta, Georgia. And th -- what happened is that the acts that I had mentioned in the Empire room, Tony Bennett, Johnny Mathis, Dinah Shore and the Pointer Sisters, they all -- and Liza Minelli and all of these people had a salary of approximately six to 7,000 dollars. Steve Lawrence and Eydie

Gormé was another, and Ed Sullivan. These were the days th-that -- Jack Benny and George Burns -- not only is that time gone, like -- like gone with the wind, but it has disappeared and so - - and -- an-and it ex -- it precisely happened at a time when the salaries of these e-entertainers went sky high. And the Empire -- and then it became a matter of -- strictly of economics. The Empire room had 500 seats and the cover charge, meaning the -- meaning the cost of simply getting a table to sit down, it did not even cover a drink or anything to eat, that way the cover charge was a so-called entry ticket, if you will. And the cover charge went from five dollars to 15 dollars per person. And then it went to 25 dollars. At the same time the salaries from 7,000 dollars went to 35,000 dollars. So high that at one point it got to -- it became a reality that Barbra Streisand got one million dollars to appear in the room for one week. And it was logical that the hotel could not sustain, even though the -- the nightclub was not designed to make money, it was mainly designed to attract conventions and people to fill the rooms. That was the idea, to fill the rooms. But those salaries were unsupportable, so the only place that you could have that kind of entertainment would end up to be Las Vegas, where the profit and the money came from the gambling tables. And in 1975, the Empire room closed. It -- it -- and it became just a banquet facility, and the nightclub as such, as it was known, no longer existed. And -- and the only place that you could have the kind of entertainment would be in a facility where three or four thousand people would cor -- would congregate, would sit. And that was Las Vegas and a place in New Jersey and vary -- some venues.

Q: So what -- what did you do in Atlanta?

A: In Atlanta I worked through my connections at that time in the hotel industry. I came close to the management of the Fairmont Hotel company, which was based at the time in San Francisco, in Denver and in New Orleans. And they had a t -- a hotel in -- in Atlanta. But that was in 1975,

and Atlanta had not as yet become what you would like to call an international city. And they were not used to -- and the -- they were not used to those prices. And so when I said that I -- first hand experience, I -- I came to manage the Venetian Room, which was the nightclub in the Fairmont Hotel. And Tony Bennett appeared there and -- and well, and a number of other entertainers. And when the phone rang for someone to make reservations, they would say, well how much does it cost to get in? So I would say, well the cover charge is 15 dollars. And the response on the other end would be, and what do you get for that? And without trying to -- without -- trying to avoid to sound sarcastic, I would say well, you get a table, and you get to sit down. But how else -- what else would you say? Th-That was the logical answer. And consequently the entertainment of that -- that caliber of entertainment again went the way they did it in New York. And so Richard Swig, who was owner of the hotel decided that Atlanta -- the only thing that would work in Atlanta would be western entertainment. And so they brought in Loretta Lynn and a couple of other -- and Alison Krauss, some people with a [indecipherable] with a reputation in the area of western music. And so you had a lot of -- I don't want to use the term -- I -- I think that to say rednecks, you know, would probably not take -- take too well, so let's say country folk, or whatever you will. But they -- the western music in -- in that -- that kind of caliber of western music didn't do it either. And del -- later on, a number of years later, Atlanta got very fine restaurants and it built tremendous hotels and what was expensive at tha -- at that time turned out to be cheap because prices went up and -- and Atlanta grew to be an international city, and they built a new airport and it is what it is today, you know, a big city.

Q: When -- when did you get married?

A: In 1961.

Q: And how did you meet Ilsa?

A: Well, I had worked in -- in upstate New York, in a place -- in a -- I was still in the Empire room and I connected with the owners of the Marcie Hotel which was located in Lake Placid, which is close to Canada. And at the end of the season -- it was a seasonal operation al-also, the Marcie Hotel. It closed around September when the Empire room opened. But I had a few days off and I went to Montreal because having lived in France and speaking French, Montreal was the ideal place to spend a couple of days, and I went to Montreal for a three day weekend and I met Ilsa, my wife for -- who would become ultimately my wife, met her in -- in Montreal. And -- and the rest is more or less history, we -- she came to visit me in New York and we became very good friends and ultimately --

Q: But how long did it take you to get married?

A: Well, I -- that's a very fine question -- that's a very good question. I must have un -- unconscio -- unconsciously had -- I ha -- I had without knowing it, I -- by that time I was in my very, very early 30's and I had become accustomed to -- to -- I was -- probably I -- I was a bachelor of sort, and I used to spend the summer in Europe and the -- the wer -- and th -- on one of those -- and in -- Ilsa and I, we were -- she was in Miami, and I was in Miami, but we were not married at the time. And then one nice summer, she went to Las Vegas and returning from Europe, I called her up. But I noticed that her voice was slightly distant, there was a kind of change of sorts had taken place. And naturally after we had been -- we were friends for four years, you know. So she must have said to herself, enough is enough, this guy's got to make up his mind. And she had met other friends. And I decided right then and there on the spur of the moment that this is it, my time has come, I'm getting married. And we spent a few days in San Francisco and returned to Las Vegas. So we got married in Vegas. In Vegas. Was a gamble, but it turned out -- turned out to be a winner.

Q: It [indecipherable] a gamble.

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: We're going to have to change the tapes.

A: Yeah.

End of Tape Five

Beginning Tape Six

Q: What did you do in Atlanta after 1975?

A: Yeah, I had connections in the Waldorf, in the -- in the Empire room and at -- wh -- in which I had been a assistant maitre'd. I had connections of people who -- who were connected to the Fairmont Hotel chain.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: And wa -- one became food and begeda -- food and beverage director at the San Francisco Fairmont and from there moved to -- to Denver, to the -- and opened up the Denver Fairmont and ultimately ended up in Atlanta in -- and entertained the position of resident manager. And he called me in New York a-at which time the Empire room was on very thin ice because of the rising -- the ra -- the scale of the entertainment compensation, which the room could not sustain, with its limited amount of seating. And so we di -- he asked me if I work -- if I would be considering taking over the Venetian room as a manager. And I went to -- to Atlanta and stayed in the hotel for about two weeks and looked the situation over. It appealed to me and I kind of took the bait and not shortly after that -- that period, we -- my wife and our son -- meanwhile, we had Mark, our son, and we moved to Atlanta. Got a wonderful apartment at a significantly lower expense than the prevailing rent in New York.

Q: Yeah, right.

A: And so much for that. I retained that job for, I think, something like four years. No, excuse me, two years, at which time the Venetian room closed, just simply closed from one day to the next because of m -- more or less the same problem that had preceded in New York, the high cost of entertainment. The -- we had a real kind of setback in the economy and the room was a

not -- was not profitable. The hotel -- the occupancy in the hotel was less than -- than 50 percent and that's very, very bad for a hotel. Less than 96 percent is scr -- is going down.

Q: Right.

A: So the hotel -- the -- the -- the entire hotel left Atlanta. And I got -- my next job, I got a job at the Atlanta Hilton in the banquet department and I worked there for four years. Four years, until 1975 -- until 19 -- excuse me, until 1980. From '75 to '80 I worked in the -- in the Hilton. And then I followed -- I -- I met a -- someone who had a catering business. And he wanted to join his two daughters in Baltimore and he was ready to sell the business for a very s-small amount of money. He just wanted somebody qualified to carry on and so I took over his employees and bought into a established business that wasn't doing a great volume, but it was established in the sense that it was incorporated, and the name was Prestige Caterers. And it turned out to be the golden goose. It -- it was a very successful operation. I -- and I fit right in, due to my experience in the kitchen and my connections in the dining room. I branched out what had been a strictly kosher catering business, I branched out and advertised in the yellow pages and -- and became known in Atlanta as a -- I made a name for myself there and it wa -- it was very, very good for a number of years. For a good number of years. In fact, it -- it lasted until -- it lasted until I retired.

Q: And when did you retire?

A: I retired in -- I think it was '86, at which time Ilsa, my wife, ran the place for another two years, but -- and then we closed it for good.

Q: When did you --

A: We closed it for good, actually, I'm wrong on my dates. We closed it, we -- we still were in business during the Olympics, which was a major boost. The Olympics are, for us in our catering establishment, was a -- was a kind of revival of -- of the nor -- of numbers. We did -- we did

quite well for the Olympics. I had a customer who took over the -- whatever we had to offer that is wa -- in terms of volume, we did quite well. But it wasn't very long there after that we closed up.

Q: When did you become Henry Gallant?

A: When did I become Henry Gallant? I -- my time in the -- in the hotel school in Switzerland was a -- whe-when you speak of cooking, when you speak of food, it -- it has many different outlet. Just as you have Italian and Chinese and German cuisine, Austrian, Swiss and so forth and so on, ea-each type of -- of cuisine, each type of food has its own -- its own quality and its own reputation and so forth, and -- and the chefs -- that entire industry was -- was led by chefs from Switzerland, from Germany, from France and from Austria. You might safely say that those four countries, th -- Wolfgang Puck, who's very well known, his name is a household word, not only in advertising for food, but also in advertising for the food equipment. You go to - - to a department store and all of a sudden up pops his face. The Georgia Aquarium, he runs the - - the catering department and food department of Georgia Aquarium. So his -- there are few people who don't know Wolfgang Puck. He's Austrian, just like another fellow from Austria, very successful, Arnold Schwarzenegger, he's Austrian. And he wasn't always a movie star, or he wasn't always a governor. He was at one time, a weightlifter and made his name as Mr. Universe, if I'm not mistaken. So anyway, I, with a name like Goldstein, it -- it identified with professions that you would like to, or would not like to associate with, perhaps with law, with -- with furriers, with tailors, with textiles, with medicine, with dentistry and so forth and so on. In the kitchen, Americans in the 19 -- in the late 40's and early 50's, you would have traveled the entire country from one ne -- from Buffalo to -- to San Francisco and you would not find an American -- an American chef. It just simply was not an occupation that Americans, native

Americans would -- would embrace. They just wouldn't. Unlike today, where the situation has turned 180 degrees, where you have this -- the California cuisine and -- and from the -- the TV shows featuring Julia Child and -- an-and Emeril -- E-E-Emile -- what is his name?

Q: Emeril?

A: Emeril, right, correct. They -- they -- they -- you see them everywhere. And tha-that happened probably in that -- began to happen after World War II or something. There was a field that Americans became -- came to like and enjoy and -- and thrive in. But the name Goldstein was a li -- a strong liability and also there was a great deal of anti-Semitism here in America. The -- the -- I worked -- for example, I -- the s -- New York Culinary Federation sent me to the Greenbrier at White Sulphur Springs. And the Greenbrier is a -- an institution. It is a hotel that, like the Homestead in Virginia, it is a hotel that was the home to senators and presidents and -- and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor and what have you. It was the elite, the so-called 500 and chief executive officers of the major American corporations, they all spent their summers in the Greenbrier with Ben Hogan and -- and the top golfers, the golf tournaments. Anybody who was anybody went to the Greenbrier. But the Greenbrier was owned by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway company, by a fellow whose name was Young. His last name was Young, the first name I do not recall, and the hotel was notably restricted. It did not have Jewish employees and it did not have Jewish clientele, simple as that. Clear and simple. And I already had been there and in the office they categorically told me that -- an office girl, a very nice girl told me that the -- if I were smart I would change my name because with a name like Goldstein you wouldn't last in this hotel. And I took her advice and I changed my name at that time. I did not change my name legally until a number of years later. I had replied to an ad in the New York Times which read -- I had always had the desire to travel. Traveling was an -- a -- I would say it was a passion. It --

maybe because I traveled in the early stage of my life, I don't know, but I enjoyed traveling and so when I saw that ad by Pan American Airlines, which meanwhile has -- doesn't fly any more, but -- they joined Eastern Airlines, it doesn't fly either. But Pan American had an ad in the paper, wanted, young man between 31 and 35 as flight attendant, capable of talking two languages. Well, I said to myself, I speak French, I speak German. I'm ideal -- a -- an ideal candidate as flight attendant. I submitted my resumé and at -- was called to a meeting in -- with the executive flight board. And 10 days later I got a letter, dear Mr. Goldstein -- I was so shocked that I still remember the wording of the letter, dear Mr. Goldstein. As we told you upon your interview, your qualifications are not best suited for our specialized requirements and this however is in no way to indicate your scope of ability and wishing you every success for the future, we remain cordially yours, W.J. Parrot, superintendent of flight service. Now, it happened that in nine -- that was in 1956, and it happened that wa -- Israel was at war with the -- with the Arabs, and Lebanon -- and I was supposed to fly Beirut, Rome, Paris, London, Beirut. I was supposed to be stationed -- they -- they asked me, are you ready to stay one year overseas and -- and live in Beirut? I said, that's no problem. But I didn't know that the -- this -- I -- I -- in other words, I was a victim of the political situation at the time. And I was not a candidate to live in Beirut. And so I got this letter, which did no diminish my desire to travel and I worked -- began working on resort -- on cruise ships.

Q: Mm.

A: I worked initially on cruise ships. But that was not the easiest thing to accomplish, because in order to work on cruise ships you had to have a certificate of marine -- you had to have a Coast Guard document. And you could only get a Coast Guard document if you had a job. And you could only get a job if you had a Coast Guard document. And the only way to come to a

document like that was to accept a job for the military sea transport service, which I did and I traveled between New York and Bremerhaven for a few months, and then joined the National Maritime Union and worked for Grace Line. And that took me to -- to New York, Cristóbal, through the Panama Canal, to Guayaquil, Ecuador. From there to Buena Ventura, Columbia, with the destination of Kayahu, Lima, Peru. And I did this until I went to the Empire room, the rest was history.

Q: How do you think the Holocaust affected you? Well, your experiences, I shouldn't say the Holocaust as a whole, cause it's not --

A: Well, the Holocaust -- the Holocaust affected me, the Holocaust wasn't a -- I can only answer that it was a disaster for the Jewish people, and whatever affects the Jewish people affects me. I mean, we lost six million -- five million of our brothers and sisters and so it affected me a lot. It -- it made me think, it made me -- it had a lot of consequences. I speak on matters of the -- of the Holocaust at the Bremen Museum of Jewish Heritage and Holocaust History. I speak to students. I am a speaker at -- under the jo -- jor -- Georgia Commission of the Holocaust. I'm a speaker to educate young people that division and -- and rejecting diversity and for minorities is -- is a very bad thing, and to be a bystander is equally bad, and that we all have an obligation to -- to be active in preventing the onset of the result of discrimination. Pure and simple.

Q: So you feel you have an obligation.

A: I -- absolutely.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: Absolutely. I think I have an obligation, I -- it's a kind of miracle that I'm alive, I -- that I managed to be five minutes ahead of the Nazis. And if not for that good fortune or that luck, or call it whatever you will, if not for that I would have ended up in the crematorium of Auschwitz.

Q: How does that make you feel?

A: Well, it makes me feel -- it makes me feel as -- as a lucky guy, chosen for something, I don't know what. Maybe to speak to these young people.

Q: Do you like speaking to these kids?

A: I do it out of the sense of responsibility, to what extent I am -- I'm not sure that -- that -- I like to do my -- the things that I have to do, that I feel I have to do.

Q: So not necessarily like it.

A: No, not necessarily, it's not my vocation, I -- to be a public speaker. I don't like to see myself necessarily standing on the stage and -- although sometimes it's enviable, depends on -- on what you speak about, to whom you speak, who your audience is, I mean, in some aspect I think it's -- it could be a lot of fun.

Q: Mm-hm.

A: The subject matter is not so very entertaining.

Q: Right.

A: As it is a responsibility and a necessity, but not so very enjoyable. But if the subject changes from evening to evening, as it does for Bill O'Reilly, if you will, it could be fun to -- it could be fun to talk to different people, interview them, speak to them, exchange ideas.

Q: Is there anything you want to say that we haven't been able to talk about today?

A: Not really. I thank you for the opportunity. I enjoyed speaking to you.

Q: Well, I enjoyed speaking with you, too.

A: And I was keenly attentive to your questions and I did my best trying to answer them.

Q: Well, I think you did very well. I thank you very much for talking with me.

A: A pleasure.

Q: Thank you.

A: Thank you. [tape break] -- the result is going to be less than --

[tape break]

Q2: Can you tell us about this picture?

A: Yes. On the extreme right there is a picture of my mother and sitting next to her with the -- smoking a pipe, is my father.

Q: And where was this?

A: On the S.S. Saint Louis, on the way to Havana, Cuba, as evidenced by the fact that this is a happy occasion. I see balloons and decorations, so it was a -- a joyful occasion. We didn't have that kind of thing on the way back.

Q2: And this picture?

A: That evidently is the same occasion, just a different location in that hall and the second young fellow from the right, that's me. Yours truly.

Q: When you were Heinz.

A: When I was Heinz.

Q: Mm-hm.

Q2: And this picture?

A: This is -- the man that you're pointing at is Morris Troper, T-r-o-p-e-r Troper, who is working for an American Jewish organization and he has accomplished finding an asylum for us, because everybody looks so happy. I'm the fellow in the fore -- yes, exactly, that's me. And the woman next to him is his wife, on the --

Q: Here?

A: No, th-the lady next to Troper. No, on the other end.

Q2: In the hat

A: In the -- the hat -- one more.

Q: Here?

A: Yes.

Q: Okay.

A: That's his wife.

Q: Sorry.

Q2: And who is this?

A: This is a -- a German educator who had a very large school, a boarding school in Germany and who fled from the Nazis because as Goebbels put it, no longer a country of poets and of -- something like that. In other words, he was an educator and he then moved to Switzerland and began a school where he -- where a lot of Jewish refugees would find asylum or whatever you want to call it. His name was Paul Geheeb and he was a friend of Mahatma Gandhi. Well, his whole looks, you know, he looked as he -- you just see, he looks like he just came back from Woodstock. He was 50 years ahead of his time.

Q2: And where did this picture appear?

A: In li -- this is "Life" magazine of May -- May 6th, 1946, or May 13, 1946.

Q2: And what's this?

A: Yeah, well that's also "Life" magazine of May 6th, 1946 and in this picture, still under the -- the -- the school that Paul Geheeb, the German educator left, escaping from the Nazis, he -- I am in -- in the dining room, running the kitchen and passing food to the kids who are th -- in -- who are sitting there. And the picture below that is -- on the right is -- on the left -- n-no, where you going to be? Oh -- oh, there? Oh, no that's -- that is the nephew of the German chief of staff of

the entire German military. In other words, his name is Hans von Brauchitsch and the von Brauchitsch name is a -- von Brauchitsch was the chief of staff of the German army. And next to him is -- is me, we were buddies, we were friends. And he was in this school as a student in Switzerland because his -- his father, who is the brother of the German chief of staff, [indecipherable] Nazi, was married to a Jewish woman. And under the German Nuremberg laws, racial intermarriage was forbidden, but the Nazis did not want the embarrassment of having a high up German general in this kind of a relationship, so they allowed the two nephews to emigrate to Switzerland. Which by the way, Switzerland was neutral during World War II. [tape break]

Q: Most of it is --

A: Yeah, yeah.

Q: At a certain point you will --

A: At one time --

End of Tape Six

Conclusion of Interview