

1
00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:00,880

2
00:00:00,880 --> 00:00:04,660
This is part three of the
United States Holocaust Memorial

3
00:00:04,660 --> 00:00:08,230
Museum oral history
interview with Dr. Alfred I.

4
00:00:08,230 --> 00:00:12,160
Fiks on November 3, 2016.

5
00:00:12,160 --> 00:00:14,950
At the end of part
two, we got cut off.

6
00:00:14,950 --> 00:00:16,810
The phone shut down.

7
00:00:16,810 --> 00:00:19,060
But we left off with
your arrival in Brooklyn

8
00:00:19,060 --> 00:00:22,150
and staying with
your father's cousin.

9
00:00:22,150 --> 00:00:24,940
So Dr. Fiks, could you please
tell me a little bit more

10
00:00:24,940 --> 00:00:26,170
about Brooklyn?

11
00:00:26,170 --> 00:00:29,250
What was it like?

12
00:00:29,250 --> 00:00:30,000
Well, OK.

13
00:00:30,000 --> 00:00:33,740

14
00:00:33,740 --> 00:00:36,710
I was quite happy
in Brooklyn trying

15
00:00:36,710 --> 00:00:41,270
to adapt to a new life, a
new language, new foods,

16
00:00:41,270 --> 00:00:44,430
new customs.

17
00:00:44,430 --> 00:00:52,480
But even though I had
taken some language lessons

18
00:00:52,480 --> 00:00:57,510
in Cuba, some English
lessons in Cuba,

19
00:00:57,510 --> 00:00:59,662
I was having a rough
time with the language.

20
00:00:59,662 --> 00:01:00,745
I'll give you one example.

21
00:01:00,745 --> 00:01:03,260

22
00:01:03,260 --> 00:01:05,730
Now at this point,
I am 12 years old.

23
00:01:05,730 --> 00:01:08,690
It's 1943.

24
00:01:08,690 --> 00:01:16,040
So they sent me to

the candy store.

25

00:01:16,040 --> 00:01:20,990

They give me a quarter and told
me to go to the candy store

26

00:01:20,990 --> 00:01:22,220

to buy some candy.

27

00:01:22,220 --> 00:01:24,830

28

00:01:24,830 --> 00:01:27,800

So I went.

29

00:01:27,800 --> 00:01:31,510

I did not understand
the instructions,

30

00:01:31,510 --> 00:01:34,040

but I was going to
repeat them monkey wise.

31

00:01:34,040 --> 00:01:38,920

32

00:01:38,920 --> 00:01:42,590

But when I came
back, everybody had

33

00:01:42,590 --> 00:01:46,130

a great time laughing
at me because I

34

00:01:46,130 --> 00:01:47,505

brought back two candles.

35

00:01:47,505 --> 00:01:50,390

36

00:01:50,390 --> 00:01:51,320

Instead of the candy?

37
00:01:51,320 --> 00:01:55,280

38
00:01:55,280 --> 00:01:57,350
So I still had a
lot of work to do

39
00:01:57,350 --> 00:02:02,750
with my language and
my comprehension.

40
00:02:02,750 --> 00:02:03,590
But that came.

41
00:02:03,590 --> 00:02:07,660

42
00:02:07,660 --> 00:02:14,200
I believe I went into sixth
or seventh grade in school.

43
00:02:14,200 --> 00:02:19,240
I started that as soon
as we got to Brooklyn.

44
00:02:19,240 --> 00:02:20,280
And that helped.

45
00:02:20,280 --> 00:02:24,500
And a lot of kids were
friendly and helped me.

46
00:02:24,500 --> 00:02:27,010

47
00:02:27,010 --> 00:02:30,850
Without knowing anything about
baseball, I was told to--

48
00:02:30,850 --> 00:02:35,620
when people asked me what

kind of baseball fan I am,

49

00:02:35,620 --> 00:02:39,370

I was told to reply, Yankee.

50

00:02:39,370 --> 00:02:42,415

I had no idea what that meant,
but that's what I replied.

51

00:02:42,415 --> 00:02:46,990

52

00:02:46,990 --> 00:02:50,320

So when you started school,
you were learning English

53

00:02:50,320 --> 00:02:52,150

as you went along.

54

00:02:52,150 --> 00:02:53,530

I'm sorry?

55

00:02:53,530 --> 00:02:56,500

So when you started school,
you were learning English

56

00:02:56,500 --> 00:02:59,340

just as you went along?

57

00:02:59,340 --> 00:03:00,810

It was an English school.

58

00:03:00,810 --> 00:03:03,610

It was in Brooklyn
public school.

59

00:03:03,610 --> 00:03:06,150

Yes.

60

00:03:06,150 --> 00:03:06,650

Yes.

61
00:03:06,650 --> 00:03:07,150
OK.

62
00:03:07,150 --> 00:03:11,850

63
00:03:11,850 --> 00:03:17,820
The apartment where we were
living with my father's cousin

64
00:03:17,820 --> 00:03:23,310
was very close to Ebbets
Field, where at that time,

65
00:03:23,310 --> 00:03:26,890
the Brooklyn Dodgers were
playing all the time.

66
00:03:26,890 --> 00:03:30,450
That was their home court.

67
00:03:30,450 --> 00:03:37,140
And so all the cheering and
the yelling and the applause

68
00:03:37,140 --> 00:03:40,410
could be heard clearly
from the apartment

69
00:03:40,410 --> 00:03:43,670
because it was only
two blocks away,

70
00:03:43,670 --> 00:03:49,290
this stadium, Ebbets Field.

71
00:03:49,290 --> 00:03:58,540
And I think it was a few years
later, a few years after that,

72
00:03:58,540 --> 00:04:06,970
it was about '49 that the

yelling even became louder

73

00:04:06,970 --> 00:04:13,070

because Jackie Robinson, who was
the star player of the Brooklyn

74

00:04:13,070 --> 00:04:16,940

Dodgers and the
first Black American

75

00:04:16,940 --> 00:04:24,120

to play in the big
leagues, was playing.

76

00:04:24,120 --> 00:04:27,890

And it was part of
the Brooklyn Dodgers.

77

00:04:27,890 --> 00:04:32,040

And so we were quite
aware of what was going on

78

00:04:32,040 --> 00:04:33,170

in the baseball world.

79

00:04:33,170 --> 00:04:40,300

80

00:04:40,300 --> 00:04:43,130

Let's see.

81

00:04:43,130 --> 00:04:44,410

So how-- I'm sorry.

82

00:04:44,410 --> 00:04:44,910

Go ahead.

83

00:04:44,910 --> 00:04:48,590

84

00:04:48,590 --> 00:04:50,660

We didn't stay too

long with the cousin.

85

00:04:50,660 --> 00:04:56,930

We soon took our own apartment
because my father obtained

86

00:04:56,930 --> 00:05:00,800

employment, landed
a job in Manhattan

87

00:05:00,800 --> 00:05:05,680

working in a fur factory.

88

00:05:05,680 --> 00:05:09,170

And so we had an
income now, which

89

00:05:09,170 --> 00:05:13,550

we didn't have for a few years.

90

00:05:13,550 --> 00:05:21,290

And we got our own apartment,
also in Brooklyn, maybe

91

00:05:21,290 --> 00:05:23,855

about a mile away from
my cousin's house.

92

00:05:23,855 --> 00:05:28,620

93

00:05:28,620 --> 00:05:33,330

And then I went to a
different public school.

94

00:05:33,330 --> 00:05:36,135

And that worked out OK.

95

00:05:36,135 --> 00:05:42,410

96

00:05:42,410 --> 00:05:46,430

Public school, I don't have any particular memories about it.

97
00:05:46,430 --> 00:05:50,600

98
00:05:50,600 --> 00:05:57,300
I guess you graduate from eighth grade, if I remember correctly

99
00:05:57,300 --> 00:06:01,950
and go to high school after that.

100
00:06:01,950 --> 00:06:04,870
And that's what I did.

101
00:06:04,870 --> 00:06:06,930
When I graduated public school, I

102
00:06:06,930 --> 00:06:12,130
went to Erasmus Hall High School in Brooklyn.

103
00:06:12,130 --> 00:06:23,120
And I felt quite grown up there because well, first of all,

104
00:06:23,120 --> 00:06:28,070
in June of '48, I wrote an essay describing our escape

105
00:06:28,070 --> 00:06:30,440
from Hitler.

106
00:06:30,440 --> 00:06:34,610
It was called We Sought Freedom.

107
00:06:34,610 --> 00:06:42,470
And lo and behold, I entered it in an essay competition,

108

00:06:42,470 --> 00:06:47,240
and behold, I won first
place with my little essay.

109

00:06:47,240 --> 00:06:48,290
Oh, wow.

110

00:06:48,290 --> 00:06:56,360
And I still carry the prize
around with me until this day

111

00:06:56,360 --> 00:07:02,090
because it was a very
useful tool for a wordsmith.

112

00:07:02,090 --> 00:07:08,790
It was a thesaurus,
Roget's Thesaurus.

113

00:07:08,790 --> 00:07:13,650
And it's inscribed, First Place
Winner Richard Young Essay

114

00:07:13,650 --> 00:07:19,870
Contest, Alfred Fiks,
da da da da, 1948.

115

00:07:19,870 --> 00:07:23,820
So it's one of my
prized possessions,

116

00:07:23,820 --> 00:07:25,430
as you can imagine.

117

00:07:25,430 --> 00:07:25,930
Yes, sir.

118

00:07:25,930 --> 00:07:32,340

119

00:07:32,340 --> 00:07:39,750
About this time, our

family grew by one member.

120
00:07:39,750 --> 00:07:44,670
Not that my mother had a baby.

121
00:07:44,670 --> 00:07:51,800
But what happened
was that when we

122
00:07:51,800 --> 00:08:03,050
were living in France, in Niort,
and my mother's sister was

123
00:08:03,050 --> 00:08:07,300
living nearby,
about a block away,

124
00:08:07,300 --> 00:08:18,530
she had living with her
one boy and one girl.

125
00:08:18,530 --> 00:08:21,740
And the girl, of course,
would be my cousin.

126
00:08:21,740 --> 00:08:25,710
And they would
both be my cousins.

127
00:08:25,710 --> 00:08:31,470
But we're now after
the war, you see.

128
00:08:31,470 --> 00:08:40,260
And Faye, my mother
pleaded with her sister

129
00:08:40,260 --> 00:08:47,670
to come with us when we left
Niort to walk over the frontier

130
00:08:47,670 --> 00:08:51,930
and make our way to Marseilles

to escape to North Africa

131
00:08:51,930 --> 00:08:53,970
and Cuba.

132
00:08:53,970 --> 00:08:58,270
But she thought she was safe.

133
00:08:58,270 --> 00:09:03,040
She was safe because
she was a French citizen

134
00:09:03,040 --> 00:09:05,230
and she didn't believe
that the Germans would

135
00:09:05,230 --> 00:09:06,700
touch French citizens.

136
00:09:06,700 --> 00:09:12,810

137
00:09:12,810 --> 00:09:24,630
About a year after we left,
the Nazi doctrine of Jews

138
00:09:24,630 --> 00:09:30,060
had to wear a yellow star
to identify themselves,

139
00:09:30,060 --> 00:09:37,900
that came into existence in
France the year after we left.

140
00:09:37,900 --> 00:09:50,520
And soon after, one day short
of walking on the street,

141
00:09:50,520 --> 00:09:57,510
and the police came and arrested
her and put her on a truck, she

142

00:09:57,510 --> 00:10:00,405
and my cousin, my girl cousin.

143
00:10:00,405 --> 00:10:03,920

144
00:10:03,920 --> 00:10:14,940
And it seems that there were
two kinds of French citizens.

145
00:10:14,940 --> 00:10:20,160
One would be citizenship
through being born in France,

146
00:10:20,160 --> 00:10:25,950
and the other was
citizenship that

147
00:10:25,950 --> 00:10:29,930
is granted to you because
you stayed in the country

148
00:10:29,930 --> 00:10:35,400
a certain number of years
and applied for citizenship.

149
00:10:35,400 --> 00:10:38,020
And she was the latter
kind of citizen.

150
00:10:38,020 --> 00:10:39,480
She was not born in France.

151
00:10:39,480 --> 00:10:40,800
She was born in Poland.

152
00:10:40,800 --> 00:10:47,100

153
00:10:47,100 --> 00:10:53,100
And so they picked her
up, and she ultimately--

154

00:10:53,100 --> 00:10:57,190

well, I'm getting
ahead of the story.

155

00:10:57,190 --> 00:11:01,350

And she had her
daughter with her.

156

00:11:01,350 --> 00:11:04,260

157

00:11:04,260 --> 00:11:06,920

And her daughter
would be my age,

158

00:11:06,920 --> 00:11:14,900

so that would be about nine
years old, around nine.

159

00:11:14,900 --> 00:11:21,880

And she told her
daughter she was

160

00:11:21,880 --> 00:11:29,500

going to hand the daughter of
to a stranger in the street

161

00:11:29,500 --> 00:11:33,420

to show that the daughter
would not be arrested.

162

00:11:33,420 --> 00:11:37,080

And the guards did
not insist on it

163

00:11:37,080 --> 00:11:43,090

because her daughter was
actually born in France,

164

00:11:43,090 --> 00:11:44,855

so she was a native
born citizen.

165

00:11:44,855 --> 00:11:47,530

166

00:11:47,530 --> 00:11:56,770

And it saved her life
because her mother, my aunt,

167

00:11:56,770 --> 00:11:59,620

wound up in Auschwitz.

168

00:11:59,620 --> 00:12:03,670

And she was murdered
in Auschwitz

169

00:12:03,670 --> 00:12:05,860

along with several
other relatives.

170

00:12:05,860 --> 00:12:09,730

171

00:12:09,730 --> 00:12:16,650

But the point is
that after the war,

172

00:12:16,650 --> 00:12:19,335

she had two brothers,
also my cousins.

173

00:12:19,335 --> 00:12:22,860

174

00:12:22,860 --> 00:12:24,860

My cousin had two brothers.

175

00:12:24,860 --> 00:12:29,930

And so they were trying to
organize their life again

176

00:12:29,930 --> 00:12:34,060

after the end of the war.

177

00:12:34,060 --> 00:12:35,860

And they decided
that it would be

178

00:12:35,860 --> 00:12:43,300

best if their little sister went
to live with her aunt, namely

179

00:12:43,300 --> 00:12:47,500

my mother, in Brooklyn.

180

00:12:47,500 --> 00:12:50,680

And that's what happened.

181

00:12:50,680 --> 00:12:55,840

So my cousin Faye
came to live with us,

182

00:12:55,840 --> 00:12:59,500

and I suddenly had a sister.

183

00:12:59,500 --> 00:13:01,940

So that was a memorable thing.

184

00:13:01,940 --> 00:13:09,710

And it always made us feel
bad that they did not come

185

00:13:09,710 --> 00:13:12,770

with us when we left Niort.

186

00:13:12,770 --> 00:13:17,570

And instead, my aunt was killed.

187

00:13:17,570 --> 00:13:22,360

188

00:13:22,360 --> 00:13:29,230

So now, by the time
that my cousin arrived,

189

00:13:29,230 --> 00:13:35,300
I was an established
American, quote unquote.

190
00:13:35,300 --> 00:13:37,470
So I could take
her under my wing

191
00:13:37,470 --> 00:13:43,420
and help her with her
assimilation process.

192
00:13:43,420 --> 00:13:51,970

193
00:13:51,970 --> 00:13:57,370
So meanwhile, at this time, I
was in high school, as I said.

194
00:13:57,370 --> 00:14:03,480
And after the essay
experience, there

195
00:14:03,480 --> 00:14:10,420
was one other
memorable event when

196
00:14:10,420 --> 00:14:14,950
I was in a group of
high school students,

197
00:14:14,950 --> 00:14:18,570
and we were working
on a project, which

198
00:14:18,570 --> 00:14:19,650
was the following.

199
00:14:19,650 --> 00:14:23,430

200
00:14:23,430 --> 00:14:26,670
Modern day Israel

was established,

201
00:14:26,670 --> 00:14:34,950
was voted on by the
United Nations in 1947.

202
00:14:34,950 --> 00:14:42,230
And Israel was
re-established in 1948.

203
00:14:42,230 --> 00:14:49,080
And among the
Jewish group, there

204
00:14:49,080 --> 00:14:57,030
was a lot of pro-Zionist
feeling of helping

205
00:14:57,030 --> 00:15:02,330
this new Jewish state,
which would be natural.

206
00:15:02,330 --> 00:15:08,090
And if Israel had
existed in 1939,

207
00:15:08,090 --> 00:15:10,790
we would have had
it much easier,

208
00:15:10,790 --> 00:15:15,800
and many, many people
who are dead, who died,

209
00:15:15,800 --> 00:15:18,800
who were killed during
the war would be alive

210
00:15:18,800 --> 00:15:24,500
because they would have
had a place to run to.

211
00:15:24,500 --> 00:15:32,460

Well, anyway, this
student committee

212
00:15:32,460 --> 00:15:45,020
wrote the story of an American
Jewish military officer

213
00:15:45,020 --> 00:15:50,280
by the name of David
Marcus, rank of Colonel,

214
00:15:50,280 --> 00:15:59,300
US Army, trained in West
Point, because he volunteered

215
00:15:59,300 --> 00:16:04,170
to help the Israelis
organize their army,

216
00:16:04,170 --> 00:16:07,340
train them to get
them in better shape

217
00:16:07,340 --> 00:16:16,800
to withstand the attack
by their Arab neighbors

218
00:16:16,800 --> 00:16:19,470
when independence was declared.

219
00:16:19,470 --> 00:16:25,200

220
00:16:25,200 --> 00:16:26,310
And that's what happened.

221
00:16:26,310 --> 00:16:31,560
He was quite well-known there.

222
00:16:31,560 --> 00:16:34,320
And as a matter of fact,
they made a movie out of it

223

00:16:34,320 --> 00:16:42,120
called Cast A Giant
Shadow with Kirk Douglas.

224

00:16:42,120 --> 00:16:43,780
Probably before your time.

225

00:16:43,780 --> 00:16:50,340
But that was about
the same person

226

00:16:50,340 --> 00:16:54,390
that we wrote the children's
book about with illustrations

227

00:16:54,390 --> 00:16:55,830
and all.

228

00:16:55,830 --> 00:17:04,020
And it got published
by the Brandt--

229

00:17:04,020 --> 00:17:07,910
I think it was the Brandt
Publishing Company.

230

00:17:07,910 --> 00:17:17,359
So that was a high point of
my high school education.

231

00:17:17,359 --> 00:17:23,720
And then after that,
I got a BBA degree,

232

00:17:23,720 --> 00:17:26,660
a Bachelor of Business
Administration,

233

00:17:26,660 --> 00:17:31,180
from the City
University of New York.

234

00:17:31,180 --> 00:17:35,750
We're up to 1953 now.

235
00:17:35,750 --> 00:17:39,620
And before we go
any further, let's

236
00:17:39,620 --> 00:17:42,410
jump back to when you
arrived in Brooklyn.

237
00:17:42,410 --> 00:17:46,850
And so your family is there.

238
00:17:46,850 --> 00:17:50,520
What was Max doing
during this time?

239
00:17:50,520 --> 00:17:53,790
I know he was in the army,
and y'all visited him in South

240
00:17:53,790 --> 00:17:54,480
Carolina.

241
00:17:54,480 --> 00:17:59,130
But where did he go from there?

242
00:17:59,130 --> 00:18:04,030
Max is not with us
because he's in the army.

243
00:18:04,030 --> 00:18:06,960
I think I mentioned
that we visited him

244
00:18:06,960 --> 00:18:11,930
in Spartanburg, South
Carolina, where he

245
00:18:11,930 --> 00:18:15,050
was stationed in the military.

246

00:18:15,050 --> 00:18:16,280

Yes, sir.

247

00:18:16,280 --> 00:18:18,230

Camp Croft.

248

00:18:18,230 --> 00:18:21,950

And so he was in the army.

249

00:18:21,950 --> 00:18:30,180

And he spoke perfect
French and German.

250

00:18:30,180 --> 00:18:35,810

251

00:18:35,810 --> 00:18:41,600

And so the army, in
all their wisdom,

252

00:18:41,600 --> 00:18:44,240

they sent him to the
Aleutian Islands,

253

00:18:44,240 --> 00:18:50,250

which were off the
coast of Alaska, where

254

00:18:50,250 --> 00:18:55,980

there would be no use for his
German and French ability.

255

00:18:55,980 --> 00:19:00,270

Maybe they had him classified
as an enemy alien, too.

256

00:19:00,270 --> 00:19:00,930

I don't know.

257

00:19:00,930 --> 00:19:06,480

258

00:19:06,480 --> 00:19:09,330

Let's see.

259

00:19:09,330 --> 00:19:14,250

So he was still in the army
when we arrived in Brooklyn.

260

00:19:14,250 --> 00:19:17,570

That's the answer
to your question.

261

00:19:17,570 --> 00:19:22,750

And once he went to
the Aleutian Islands,

262

00:19:22,750 --> 00:19:26,270

were y'all still able to
keep in touch with him?

263

00:19:26,270 --> 00:19:31,400

Was he able to tell you
about what he was doing?

264

00:19:31,400 --> 00:19:34,760

Well, he wrote to
us, and he told us

265

00:19:34,760 --> 00:19:39,740

what life was like in
the Aleutian Islands,

266

00:19:39,740 --> 00:19:42,620

that there was a girl
behind every tree,

267

00:19:42,620 --> 00:19:43,625

but there were no trees.

268

00:19:43,625 --> 00:19:49,930

269

00:19:49,930 --> 00:19:53,500

My brother was not a
very physical person.

270
00:19:53,500 --> 00:20:02,770
He was more
intellectual and chubby.

271
00:20:02,770 --> 00:20:08,770
So the army correctly,
probably, made him

272
00:20:08,770 --> 00:20:16,680
a personnel clerk in the army
company where he was assigned.

273
00:20:16,680 --> 00:20:19,870
So that's where he was.

274
00:20:19,870 --> 00:20:24,570
Happily, the Japanese had
left the Aleutian Islands

275
00:20:24,570 --> 00:20:28,320
before the US Army
arrived there.

276
00:20:28,320 --> 00:20:34,504
Otherwise, the ending
might have been different.

277
00:20:34,504 --> 00:20:40,320

278
00:20:40,320 --> 00:20:42,580
Any other questions?

279
00:20:42,580 --> 00:20:43,320
Yeah.

280
00:20:43,320 --> 00:20:50,040
So I know you went to school.

281

00:20:50,040 --> 00:20:53,150
You started learning English.

282
00:20:53,150 --> 00:20:56,640
And your father started
working at the factory.

283
00:20:56,640 --> 00:21:01,080
How did your parents
adjust to life in America?

284
00:21:01,080 --> 00:21:02,550
How did--?

285
00:21:02,550 --> 00:21:06,450
How did your parents
adjust to life in America?

286
00:21:06,450 --> 00:21:09,300
Well, they were
very busy working

287
00:21:09,300 --> 00:21:12,760
trying to make a living.

288
00:21:12,760 --> 00:21:15,390
My father did not
stay long in his job

289
00:21:15,390 --> 00:21:20,320
because he liked to
be self-employed.

290
00:21:20,320 --> 00:21:24,280
He didn't like to
work for others.

291
00:21:24,280 --> 00:21:29,410
So he opened a little store,
first store right in Brooklyn,

292
00:21:29,410 --> 00:21:37,120
as a matter of fact, in the

same building as we were living,

293

00:21:37,120 --> 00:21:41,080

which follows a
pattern that they

294

00:21:41,080 --> 00:21:44,860

had been used to in Berlin,
where the store also

295

00:21:44,860 --> 00:21:48,580

was in the same building
as where we lived.

296

00:21:48,580 --> 00:21:52,395

So there was no
commuting problems.

297

00:21:52,395 --> 00:22:03,590

298

00:22:03,590 --> 00:22:09,470

I think I mentioned also that
my brother had volunteered

299

00:22:09,470 --> 00:22:17,000

to join the army because he
thought it might help our US

300

00:22:17,000 --> 00:22:19,640

visa application.

301

00:22:19,640 --> 00:22:24,200

But I doubt that it did.

302

00:22:24,200 --> 00:22:27,860

But in any case,
he was trying all

303

00:22:27,860 --> 00:22:32,270

he could to get us to the
states, and he succeeded.

304

00:22:32,270 --> 00:22:38,270

305

00:22:38,270 --> 00:22:39,790

OK?

306

00:22:39,790 --> 00:22:41,890

Yes, sir.

307

00:22:41,890 --> 00:22:45,310

And did your mother work
in your father's store?

308

00:22:45,310 --> 00:22:45,970

Oh, yes.

309

00:22:45,970 --> 00:22:46,630

Yes, indeed.

310

00:22:46,630 --> 00:22:51,870

Just like in Berlin, they
really set up the Berlin model

311

00:22:51,870 --> 00:22:56,710

and replicated it, I guess,
which would be normal.

312

00:22:56,710 --> 00:22:59,080

Rather than start
from zero, they

313

00:22:59,080 --> 00:23:03,270

would repeat what had
worked for them before.

314

00:23:03,270 --> 00:23:07,880

And so my mother was in the
front receiving customers

315

00:23:07,880 --> 00:23:09,980

and talking to them.

316

00:23:09,980 --> 00:23:13,370

She was more sociable
than my father,

317

00:23:13,370 --> 00:23:16,040

so that worked out fine
because my father was

318

00:23:16,040 --> 00:23:21,130

in the back in the workshop
where the work was done,

319

00:23:21,130 --> 00:23:26,440

and my mother was in the front
receiving customers, talking

320

00:23:26,440 --> 00:23:30,340

to them, and making
them feel important.

321

00:23:30,340 --> 00:23:33,170

322

00:23:33,170 --> 00:23:39,430

And so she always
worked, although--

323

00:23:39,430 --> 00:23:45,400

now one difference with
Berlin is that in Berlin, we

324

00:23:45,400 --> 00:23:56,110

had Marie, who was the
housekeeper, baby sitter, baby

325

00:23:56,110 --> 00:24:00,300

nanny, et cetera.

326

00:24:00,300 --> 00:24:03,090

But in Brooklyn, we did
not have such a person.

327

00:24:03,090 --> 00:24:05,295

So my mother was
doing double duty.

328

00:24:05,295 --> 00:24:13,670

329

00:24:13,670 --> 00:24:15,420

How much news did you receive?

330

00:24:15,420 --> 00:24:17,120

Sorry?

331

00:24:17,120 --> 00:24:19,940

How much news did you
receive about what

332

00:24:19,940 --> 00:24:22,800

was going on in Europe?

333

00:24:22,800 --> 00:24:30,890

Well, both my mother
and I, we were always

334

00:24:30,890 --> 00:24:36,380

tuned into a radio
and news station.

335

00:24:36,380 --> 00:24:39,465

So we were quite
aware of the news.

336

00:24:39,465 --> 00:24:44,190

337

00:24:44,190 --> 00:24:50,760

When we got to Brooklyn in
1943, the war was still going on

338

00:24:50,760 --> 00:24:56,130

and would not be
finished until 1945.

339

00:24:56,130 --> 00:25:01,160

So we were quite interested.

340

00:25:01,160 --> 00:25:08,810

And they would read the New York newspaper that came out.

341

00:25:08,810 --> 00:25:14,030

One came out in German and one came out in Yiddish.

342

00:25:14,030 --> 00:25:17,290

343

00:25:17,290 --> 00:25:22,567

They would read the newspapers and I

344

00:25:22,567 --> 00:25:23,650

would listen to the radio.

345

00:25:23,650 --> 00:25:26,350

346

00:25:26,350 --> 00:25:29,230

So you were able to follow the events of the war

347

00:25:29,230 --> 00:25:30,610

as it was going on.

348

00:25:30,610 --> 00:25:32,230

Well, yes.

349

00:25:32,230 --> 00:25:39,040

Yes, because we had great interest in the subject.

350

00:25:39,040 --> 00:25:46,090

I remember to this day, in 1947, the United Nations General

351

00:25:46,090 --> 00:26:00,270

Assembly was voting on the resolution that would split.

352

00:26:00,270 --> 00:26:04,550

The resolution was on the partition

353

00:26:04,550 --> 00:26:11,930

of the land that was a British mandate, the land that

354

00:26:11,930 --> 00:26:18,230

now occupies Israel in Jordan, Transjordan.

355

00:26:18,230 --> 00:26:21,340

At that time it was Transjordan because it

356

00:26:21,340 --> 00:26:25,660

was on the other side of the Jordan River.

357

00:26:25,660 --> 00:26:33,200

And I remember my father and I listening to the vote

358

00:26:33,200 --> 00:26:37,100

as they called out the names of each country

359

00:26:37,100 --> 00:26:40,700

to receive their votes, yay or nay,

360

00:26:40,700 --> 00:26:45,860

on whether they were in favor of partitioning that territory

361

00:26:45,860 --> 00:26:49,940

between Jews and Arabs.

362

00:26:49,940 --> 00:26:57,180

And that resolution
passed, to our delight.

363

00:26:57,180 --> 00:27:00,120

364

00:27:00,120 --> 00:27:00,825

It passed.

365

00:27:00,825 --> 00:27:04,040

366

00:27:04,040 --> 00:27:08,930

I'm very happy that it was
supported by the US and all

367

00:27:08,930 --> 00:27:12,710

the European countries.

368

00:27:12,710 --> 00:27:16,970

The cynics in the world
said that, well, that

369

00:27:16,970 --> 00:27:21,930

was just a squashing of
their own guilt feelings.

370

00:27:21,930 --> 00:27:25,370

That's why they voted for the
partitioning of that territory.

371

00:27:25,370 --> 00:27:30,310

372

00:27:30,310 --> 00:27:35,390

But I think that was
a great occurrence.

373

00:27:35,390 --> 00:27:47,990

And modern Zionism was set up
to construct a Jewish homeland

374
00:27:47,990 --> 00:27:54,300
in the historical homeland,
in historical Israel.

375
00:27:54,300 --> 00:28:08,780
And to a large extent, they
did what the Zionist leaders

376
00:28:08,780 --> 00:28:13,310
of a century ago were planning.

377
00:28:13,310 --> 00:28:20,540
Of course, they hadn't counted
on Hitler or the United

378
00:28:20,540 --> 00:28:22,730
Nations.

379
00:28:22,730 --> 00:28:24,560
But I think there
is a point to be

380
00:28:24,560 --> 00:28:30,750
made that if there
had been no Holocaust,

381
00:28:30,750 --> 00:28:34,840
there might be no Israel today.

382
00:28:34,840 --> 00:28:42,650
So in a way, we can say that
maybe the innocent victims

383
00:28:42,650 --> 00:28:48,170
of the Holocaust who were
slaughtered like animals,

384
00:28:48,170 --> 00:28:52,750
worse than animals, maybe
they didn't die in vain.

385

00:28:52,750 --> 00:28:59,790

386

00:28:59,790 --> 00:29:08,850

There are those
fanatic Jews, whom

387

00:29:08,850 --> 00:29:16,430

I disagree with 1000%,
a group of orthodox Jews

388

00:29:16,430 --> 00:29:25,570

who say that the reason
for the Holocaust

389

00:29:25,570 --> 00:29:31,860

was that the Jews had stopped
following the laws of Moses,

390

00:29:31,860 --> 00:29:34,340

the laws of God.

391

00:29:34,340 --> 00:29:41,400

That was the reason for God
sending Hitler to punish them.

392

00:29:41,400 --> 00:29:54,675

And I think those people are
either psychotic, idiotic,

393

00:29:54,675 --> 00:29:55,175

or worse.

394

00:29:55,175 --> 00:29:57,710

395

00:29:57,710 --> 00:30:01,970

Anyway, I don't have any use
for that kind of attitude.

396

00:30:01,970 --> 00:30:11,330

397
00:30:11,330 --> 00:30:12,190
Let's see.

398
00:30:12,190 --> 00:30:13,180
Where was I?

399
00:30:13,180 --> 00:30:17,470
So you were asking
about the news.

400
00:30:17,470 --> 00:30:20,860
And yeah, we were
very much interested

401
00:30:20,860 --> 00:30:31,130
in news and the books
that came out in that era,

402
00:30:31,130 --> 00:30:36,770
a book called Exodus after
the name of a ship which

403
00:30:36,770 --> 00:30:47,770
was bringing refugees to
what was then Palestine,

404
00:30:47,770 --> 00:30:49,810
and the British
would turn them back.

405
00:30:49,810 --> 00:30:54,110

406
00:30:54,110 --> 00:31:02,260
There was a lot of drama
and a lot of passion

407
00:31:02,260 --> 00:31:09,500
that was used by both
sides of the issue there.

408
00:31:09,500 --> 00:31:12,560

But I'm very happy.

409
00:31:12,560 --> 00:31:18,820
I'm a big friend of Israel's,
not of the illegal settlements

410
00:31:18,820 --> 00:31:21,440
on the West Bank.

411
00:31:21,440 --> 00:31:36,480
But I'm supporting Israel that
adapts to the 21st century

412
00:31:36,480 --> 00:31:43,580
as they are doing in
the technological field.

413
00:31:43,580 --> 00:31:49,190
But that is not a half
theocracy because I

414
00:31:49,190 --> 00:31:54,620
think the orthodox
religious people have

415
00:31:54,620 --> 00:31:57,080
too much power there
for the well-or

416
00:31:57,080 --> 00:31:58,580
the well-being of the country.

417
00:31:58,580 --> 00:32:01,100

418
00:32:01,100 --> 00:32:04,760
But that's just my opinion.

419
00:32:04,760 --> 00:32:08,850
Well, OK.

420
00:32:08,850 --> 00:32:10,980

I graduated from high school.

421

00:32:10,980 --> 00:32:19,930
And then I went on to the City
University of New York, which

422

00:32:19,930 --> 00:32:25,520
was a very convenient
circumstance

423

00:32:25,520 --> 00:32:29,420
because New York
and San Francisco

424

00:32:29,420 --> 00:32:35,930
were the only two cities
that had free universities.

425

00:32:35,930 --> 00:32:42,560
And so I was able to attend
City University of New York

426

00:32:42,560 --> 00:32:45,620
without having to
worry about where do I

427

00:32:45,620 --> 00:32:49,020
get the money to pay for it.

428

00:32:49,020 --> 00:32:55,790
And I would go to
my classes every day

429

00:32:55,790 --> 00:33:00,430
by subway from
Brooklyn to Manhattan.

430

00:33:00,430 --> 00:33:04,270

431

00:33:04,270 --> 00:33:08,620
And after my classes,
usually in the morning,

432
00:33:08,620 --> 00:33:11,290
I would come in the afternoon.

433
00:33:11,290 --> 00:33:16,195
And in the afternoon I would
have various part time jobs.

434
00:33:16,195 --> 00:33:18,890

435
00:33:18,890 --> 00:33:23,600
I was a delivery
boy for a drugstore.

436
00:33:23,600 --> 00:33:27,020
And then I worked for
my father as well,

437
00:33:27,020 --> 00:33:32,230
helping him in the workshop.

438
00:33:32,230 --> 00:33:36,750

439
00:33:36,750 --> 00:33:39,810
I was a delivery
boy for fur coats

440
00:33:39,810 --> 00:33:42,300
when people wanted
them brought to them.

441
00:33:42,300 --> 00:33:46,500

442
00:33:46,500 --> 00:33:51,410
I would be earning
\$0.25 an hour,

443
00:33:51,410 --> 00:33:58,180
which enabled me

to even save some,

444

00:33:58,180 --> 00:34:02,440

even though I spent a lot
on going to the movies

445

00:34:02,440 --> 00:34:04,045

once a week with my friends.

446

00:34:04,045 --> 00:34:08,639

447

00:34:08,639 --> 00:34:11,760

And what made you study?

448

00:34:11,760 --> 00:34:14,489

Hold on, please.

449

00:34:14,489 --> 00:34:17,159

OK, I changed ears again.

450

00:34:17,159 --> 00:34:19,230

I see.

451

00:34:19,230 --> 00:34:25,400

What made you decide to study
business administration?

452

00:34:25,400 --> 00:34:29,639

Well, I was kind
of forced into it

453

00:34:29,639 --> 00:34:35,370

because I had no other
outstanding interests.

454

00:34:35,370 --> 00:34:39,659

And my parents were pushing
me to study something

455

00:34:39,659 --> 00:34:43,350

that would enable me

to take over the store

456
00:34:43,350 --> 00:34:44,190
when they retired.

457
00:34:44,190 --> 00:34:47,219

458
00:34:47,219 --> 00:34:53,620
But you see, the best laid
plans of mice and men,

459
00:34:53,620 --> 00:34:56,870
we know what happens to them.

460
00:34:56,870 --> 00:34:59,780
Even though they thought
I was studying business

461
00:34:59,780 --> 00:35:04,730
administration, my
major was in a new field

462
00:35:04,730 --> 00:35:06,980
called industrial psychology.

463
00:35:06,980 --> 00:35:09,540

464
00:35:09,540 --> 00:35:13,200
So you told them that
you were studying

465
00:35:13,200 --> 00:35:16,170
business administration
while you were studying--

466
00:35:16,170 --> 00:35:20,250
And the degree I
got is a BBA degree.

467
00:35:20,250 --> 00:35:21,540

Oh, I see.

468
00:35:21,540 --> 00:35:24,690
And I was attending
classes at the business

469
00:35:24,690 --> 00:35:27,660
school of City University.

470
00:35:27,660 --> 00:35:30,240

471
00:35:30,240 --> 00:35:33,910
But my major was
industrial psychology,

472
00:35:33,910 --> 00:35:44,730
which was not exactly how
to administer a store or set

473
00:35:44,730 --> 00:35:49,580
prices or customer relations
or stuff like that.

474
00:35:49,580 --> 00:35:53,880

475
00:35:53,880 --> 00:35:56,580
Industrial psychology
dealt largely

476
00:35:56,580 --> 00:36:08,070
with learning and
training of your workers,

477
00:36:08,070 --> 00:36:10,710
how to train them.

478
00:36:10,710 --> 00:36:16,980
And it dealt largely
with psychometrics,

479

00:36:16,980 --> 00:36:18,480
mental measurements.

480
00:36:18,480 --> 00:36:21,710

481
00:36:21,710 --> 00:36:24,280
I was in a part of
psychology, which

482
00:36:24,280 --> 00:36:29,140
tries to be more scientific
than the clinicians

483
00:36:29,140 --> 00:36:32,350
with the couches.

484
00:36:32,350 --> 00:36:44,980
And so based on the axiom in
science that everything that

485
00:36:44,980 --> 00:36:51,605
exists in some
quantity, so if you

486
00:36:51,605 --> 00:37:00,090
were looking for a person that
had good aptitude in assembling

487
00:37:00,090 --> 00:37:11,640
small units of
objects, then you might

488
00:37:11,640 --> 00:37:17,310
want to measure how
good each applicant is

489
00:37:17,310 --> 00:37:22,110
in their psychomotor ability
that they demonstrate

490
00:37:22,110 --> 00:37:30,510
on a test in their job

interviewing situation.

491
00:37:30,510 --> 00:37:35,940
Or if your job requires
high intelligence,

492
00:37:35,940 --> 00:37:39,480
you might want to
measure the intelligence

493
00:37:39,480 --> 00:37:44,250
to see who were
the smartest ones.

494
00:37:44,250 --> 00:37:46,260
That is psychometrics.

495
00:37:46,260 --> 00:37:51,960
It is the scientific
method of constructing

496
00:37:51,960 --> 00:37:59,350
tests that would measure some
aspect of human behavior.

497
00:37:59,350 --> 00:38:15,210
So this major, incidentally,
set me up for a problem later

498
00:38:15,210 --> 00:38:19,470
on which I'll come
to in a minute.

499
00:38:19,470 --> 00:38:27,240
But after I graduated
from City, at that time

500
00:38:27,240 --> 00:38:30,390
it was called City
College of New York.

501
00:38:30,390 --> 00:38:34,080
It was 1953.

502
00:38:34,080 --> 00:38:39,790
And I had to get a
master's degree in order

503
00:38:39,790 --> 00:38:45,100
to be able to do anything
in industrial psychology

504
00:38:45,100 --> 00:38:48,350
or to get a job.

505
00:38:48,350 --> 00:38:55,600
And so I applied to
Penn State University.

506
00:38:55,600 --> 00:39:04,300
And in 1954, I received an
MS degree, Master of Science

507
00:39:04,300 --> 00:39:06,370
in research psychology.

508
00:39:06,370 --> 00:39:09,960

509
00:39:09,960 --> 00:39:18,460
And that was my first experience
going to a US university

510
00:39:18,460 --> 00:39:20,590
with a campus.

511
00:39:20,590 --> 00:39:24,760
It was quite eye-opening.

512
00:39:24,760 --> 00:39:27,390
And this was at Penn State?

513
00:39:27,390 --> 00:39:28,590
Yes, at Penn State.

514
00:39:28,590 --> 00:39:35,430

515
00:39:35,430 --> 00:39:39,590
And it was my first time
of moving out of the house,

516
00:39:39,590 --> 00:39:45,750
out of my parents'
house, or apartment.

517
00:39:45,750 --> 00:39:52,770
So I was becoming independent.

518
00:39:52,770 --> 00:40:00,200
And I had a normal interest
in girls and women.

519
00:40:00,200 --> 00:40:04,460
So things were developing
according to plan.

520
00:40:04,460 --> 00:40:08,300

521
00:40:08,300 --> 00:40:13,250
I got my master's
degree in 1954.

522
00:40:13,250 --> 00:40:24,010
But after that, I knocked around
in a few different jobs, all

523
00:40:24,010 --> 00:40:29,840
with psychology, but
in research psychology,

524
00:40:29,840 --> 00:40:36,820
not in the clinical
counseling end of it.

525
00:40:36,820 --> 00:40:47,470

And in 1962, I have a PhD
degree from Purdue University

526
00:40:47,470 --> 00:40:49,210
in Indiana.

527
00:40:49,210 --> 00:41:01,690
Now by that time, I am married
and have one daughter, I guess.

528
00:41:01,690 --> 00:41:02,190
Yes.

529
00:41:02,190 --> 00:41:05,010

530
00:41:05,010 --> 00:41:06,880
So life goes on.

531
00:41:06,880 --> 00:41:13,480
But I don't want to go into too
much detail on my resume here.

532
00:41:13,480 --> 00:41:19,650
But after the doctorate, I
worked for an outfit called

533
00:41:19,650 --> 00:41:30,210
Humro, H-U-M-R-R-O, which is a
Human Resources Research Office

534
00:41:30,210 --> 00:41:36,480
of George Washington University,
who had a contract with the US

535
00:41:36,480 --> 00:41:41,700
Department of the Army to
do research on psychological

536
00:41:41,700 --> 00:41:49,710
applications to their needs,
whether it's marksmanship

537

00:41:49,710 --> 00:41:55,020
or interviewing prisoners or
training their own people,

538

00:41:55,020 --> 00:41:57,370
or what have you.

539

00:41:57,370 --> 00:42:04,970
And I worked with
HUMRRO for several years

540

00:42:04,970 --> 00:42:11,450
in problems of selection and
training and language learning.

541

00:42:11,450 --> 00:42:19,430
We developed a course
totally on tape

542

00:42:19,430 --> 00:42:25,850
in Vietnamese for
American advisors

543

00:42:25,850 --> 00:42:30,830
who were heading over to
Vietnam, which you may remember

544

00:42:30,830 --> 00:42:33,795
from your historical readings.

545

00:42:33,795 --> 00:42:42,850

546

00:42:42,850 --> 00:42:49,650
And what interested
you in psychology?

547

00:42:49,650 --> 00:42:53,190
How did you become involved with
that back with your bachelor's?

548

00:42:53,190 --> 00:42:55,590

Well, I got interested
in psychology

549
00:42:55,590 --> 00:42:58,200
because it was the only
course I got an A in.

550
00:42:58,200 --> 00:43:01,150

551
00:43:01,150 --> 00:43:10,990
And looking back,
I don't know if it

552
00:43:10,990 --> 00:43:13,600
was the best choice for me.

553
00:43:13,600 --> 00:43:15,520
One never knows.

554
00:43:15,520 --> 00:43:20,050
You know, you can't do
experiments with your own life

555
00:43:20,050 --> 00:43:23,290
because you never have
a control condition.

556
00:43:23,290 --> 00:43:28,630
You never know what might
have happened if A,B, C, D.

557
00:43:28,630 --> 00:43:38,740
So I could have used some
psychological vocational

558
00:43:38,740 --> 00:43:42,310
counseling of my own, maybe.

559
00:43:42,310 --> 00:43:49,510
But I think that psychology
fit me pretty well--

560

00:43:49,510 --> 00:43:53,200
not perfectly, but it
fit me pretty well.

561

00:43:53,200 --> 00:43:57,720
And then the application
of it to languages

562

00:43:57,720 --> 00:44:06,420
fit into my background because
I was able to speak almost four

563

00:44:06,420 --> 00:44:07,010
of them.

564

00:44:07,010 --> 00:44:09,750
So that worked out OK.

565

00:44:09,750 --> 00:44:15,760

566

00:44:15,760 --> 00:44:24,530
And after HUMRRO,
I had some friends

567

00:44:24,530 --> 00:44:28,550
who worked with Peace
Corps, the US Peace Corps.

568

00:44:28,550 --> 00:44:32,270
This was a program set
up by President John F.

569

00:44:32,270 --> 00:44:42,150
Kennedy, which caught the
imagination of many people

570

00:44:42,150 --> 00:44:47,550
for its idealism and
its practical aspects.

571

00:44:47,550 --> 00:44:56,140

But I worked with them on
foreign language training

572
00:44:56,140 --> 00:45:03,350
and on doing evaluation of
their foreign language training.

573
00:45:03,350 --> 00:45:12,520

574
00:45:12,520 --> 00:45:13,520
Let's see.

575
00:45:13,520 --> 00:45:20,880
From Peace Corps,
the next project

576
00:45:20,880 --> 00:45:27,480
was with USAID, which is the
US Agency for International

577
00:45:27,480 --> 00:45:34,020
Development, our so-called
giveaway program.

578
00:45:34,020 --> 00:45:53,330
And AID would come to Congress
every year asking for money.

579
00:45:53,330 --> 00:45:56,090
And Congress would
say, well, how

580
00:45:56,090 --> 00:45:59,740
do we know that your projects
are achieving anything or doing

581
00:45:59,740 --> 00:46:06,920
any good, whether the
project is road building

582
00:46:06,920 --> 00:46:15,785
or setting up a clinic or

setting up a health project.

583
00:46:15,785 --> 00:46:21,080

584
00:46:21,080 --> 00:46:30,110
And so USAID put in a big effort
to evaluate their own projects.

585
00:46:30,110 --> 00:46:34,200
And they evaluated them
not using their own people,

586
00:46:34,200 --> 00:46:40,740
but using people like me who
were hired on a contract basis

587
00:46:40,740 --> 00:46:42,350
to do the evaluations.

588
00:46:42,350 --> 00:46:45,370

589
00:46:45,370 --> 00:46:51,090
And so I did evaluations
in about a dozen

590
00:46:51,090 --> 00:46:55,350
different countries for USAID.

591
00:46:55,350 --> 00:47:06,380
And it was challenging work
because on the one side,

592
00:47:06,380 --> 00:47:10,640
you got to see a lot
of places and travel.

593
00:47:10,640 --> 00:47:14,870
But on the other side,
the project people

594

00:47:14,870 --> 00:47:18,740
on whom you were dependent
as the evaluator,

595
00:47:18,740 --> 00:47:22,730
they were not too
happy to see you.

596
00:47:22,730 --> 00:47:28,830
And so there was a question
of local resistance

597
00:47:28,830 --> 00:47:34,765
to giving you any information
that you might find negative,

598
00:47:34,765 --> 00:47:35,265
for example.

599
00:47:35,265 --> 00:47:39,920

600
00:47:39,920 --> 00:47:46,230
But everybody did
their best pointing out

601
00:47:46,230 --> 00:47:50,990
strengths and weaknesses
of projects, shortcomings,

602
00:47:50,990 --> 00:47:52,400
how can they be corrected.

603
00:47:52,400 --> 00:47:55,010

604
00:47:55,010 --> 00:47:59,840
And then you had
to have the people.

605
00:47:59,840 --> 00:48:04,580
But you couldn't force the
people to read your report,

606
00:48:04,580 --> 00:48:05,915
your evaluation report.

607
00:48:05,915 --> 00:48:10,240

608
00:48:10,240 --> 00:48:17,990
So my evaluation reports did
not have too many readers,

609
00:48:17,990 --> 00:48:20,970
and that was a source
of frustration to me.

610
00:48:20,970 --> 00:48:23,660
But it's one I had to live with.

611
00:48:23,660 --> 00:48:28,220
The money was pretty
good, not wildly big,

612
00:48:28,220 --> 00:48:32,210
but it was adequate to live on.

613
00:48:32,210 --> 00:48:35,330

614
00:48:35,330 --> 00:48:40,505
I was now a married
man with two children.

615
00:48:40,505 --> 00:48:43,980

616
00:48:43,980 --> 00:48:59,120
So this work with USAID
led me to a job offer

617
00:48:59,120 --> 00:49:04,220
in West Africa as
technical advisor

618
00:49:04,220 --> 00:49:07,520
to the West Africans
Examinations Council.

619
00:49:07,520 --> 00:49:10,470

620
00:49:10,470 --> 00:49:22,550
Now this would be 1970, '72.

621
00:49:22,550 --> 00:49:24,095
West Africa was largely--

622
00:49:24,095 --> 00:49:27,660

623
00:49:27,660 --> 00:49:30,900
at that time, many
were still colonies

624
00:49:30,900 --> 00:49:34,820
of various European countries.

625
00:49:34,820 --> 00:49:37,740

626
00:49:37,740 --> 00:49:42,680
For example, Nigeria,
where I was stationed,

627
00:49:42,680 --> 00:49:48,650
was a British colony until 1960.

628
00:49:48,650 --> 00:49:55,780
And as a British colony, how
did they pick their high school

629
00:49:55,780 --> 00:49:57,490
graduates?

630

00:49:57,490 --> 00:50:03,190
Well, they used a
British system of O level

631
00:50:03,190 --> 00:50:08,230
and A level examinations,
which largely

632
00:50:08,230 --> 00:50:12,320
consisted of essay questions.

633
00:50:12,320 --> 00:50:14,150
And the essay
questions would have

634
00:50:14,150 --> 00:50:18,020
to be sent to
England for grading.

635
00:50:18,020 --> 00:50:22,310

636
00:50:22,310 --> 00:50:25,225
The grades would have to
be sent back to Nigeria.

637
00:50:25,225 --> 00:50:28,010

638
00:50:28,010 --> 00:50:32,960
And the system was wide
open for corruption,

639
00:50:32,960 --> 00:50:42,460
where the students who came
from families who had money

640
00:50:42,460 --> 00:50:54,760
could afford to buy their
child a certificate that they

641
00:50:54,760 --> 00:50:58,390
had graduated,

graduation certificate

642
00:50:58,390 --> 00:51:00,460
from secondary school.

643
00:51:00,460 --> 00:51:03,730
But the poor people couldn't.

644
00:51:03,730 --> 00:51:07,870
So the US came
along, and they were

645
00:51:07,870 --> 00:51:11,380
interested in getting the
English influence out of there,

646
00:51:11,380 --> 00:51:15,660
US government was.

647
00:51:15,660 --> 00:51:20,910
So we were trying to set up
the West African Examinations

648
00:51:20,910 --> 00:51:27,520
Council to do their own testing,
not with essay questions,

649
00:51:27,520 --> 00:51:32,340
but with multiple choice
true false questions

650
00:51:32,340 --> 00:51:41,650
and things that could be
scored mechanically, maybe.

651
00:51:41,650 --> 00:51:46,270
And we were setting up the
multiple choice examination

652
00:51:46,270 --> 00:51:53,080
models for the Nigerian
Education Council, which was

653
00:51:53,080 --> 00:51:55,240
for all of West Africa, really.

654
00:51:55,240 --> 00:52:00,520

655
00:52:00,520 --> 00:52:05,580
So I was working in
Nigeria and Ghana

656
00:52:05,580 --> 00:52:13,100
for two years on that
project with some success.

657
00:52:13,100 --> 00:52:18,690
And then the contract
finished, period.

658
00:52:18,690 --> 00:52:20,350
And I returned to
the United States.

659
00:52:20,350 --> 00:52:24,940

660
00:52:24,940 --> 00:52:31,750
And so over the years, even
going back to high school,

661
00:52:31,750 --> 00:52:36,940
did you ever talk with your
family, or maybe your friends,

662
00:52:36,940 --> 00:52:39,730
about your experiences
during the war?

663
00:52:39,730 --> 00:52:43,650

664
00:52:43,650 --> 00:52:45,450
Very little.

665
00:52:45,450 --> 00:52:47,790
My best friends, they knew.

666
00:52:47,790 --> 00:52:53,350
But it was not a popular
subject of conversation.

667
00:52:53,350 --> 00:52:53,850
No.

668
00:52:53,850 --> 00:53:00,130

669
00:53:00,130 --> 00:53:10,760
And I was not especially
interested in emphasizing that,

670
00:53:10,760 --> 00:53:13,070
either.

671
00:53:13,070 --> 00:53:18,050
I wanted to become
better at my new life

672
00:53:18,050 --> 00:53:20,090
rather than talk
about my old life.

673
00:53:20,090 --> 00:53:23,540

674
00:53:23,540 --> 00:53:26,990
So instead of looking back,
you wanted to focus on--

675
00:53:26,990 --> 00:53:27,720
Move forward.

676
00:53:27,720 --> 00:53:28,220
Yeah.

677

00:53:28,220 --> 00:53:33,740

678

00:53:33,740 --> 00:53:38,430

Do you ever talk about
your experiences today?

679

00:53:38,430 --> 00:53:38,930

Yes.

680

00:53:38,930 --> 00:53:40,510

I'm talking to you.

681

00:53:40,510 --> 00:53:42,290

Yes, sir.

682

00:53:42,290 --> 00:53:49,900

But guess, have you talked
to your family, your wife

683

00:53:49,900 --> 00:53:51,530

or your children?

684

00:53:51,530 --> 00:53:52,460

Yes, yes.

685

00:53:52,460 --> 00:53:55,730

686

00:53:55,730 --> 00:54:05,260

As a matter of fact,
my Costa Rican son,

687

00:54:05,260 --> 00:54:09,920

he works with
sound systems here.

688

00:54:09,920 --> 00:54:14,570

And so he also interviewed
me, doing something

689

00:54:14,570 --> 00:54:20,970
similar to what you're doing
on a less professional scale,

690
00:54:20,970 --> 00:54:21,470
of course.

691
00:54:21,470 --> 00:54:25,190
But he did the same thing
because he had curiosity.

692
00:54:25,190 --> 00:54:28,840

693
00:54:28,840 --> 00:54:30,410
Yes.

694
00:54:30,410 --> 00:54:35,020
And you know, you get
to my point in life,

695
00:54:35,020 --> 00:54:40,450
you begin to look
back and say, well,

696
00:54:40,450 --> 00:54:43,700
if I have any messages
to leave people,

697
00:54:43,700 --> 00:54:47,920
you better get busy
writing the message

698
00:54:47,920 --> 00:54:50,350
because your time is limited.

699
00:54:50,350 --> 00:54:54,270

700
00:54:54,270 --> 00:54:55,553
So that's what we're doing.

701

00:54:55,553 --> 00:54:58,630

702

00:54:58,630 --> 00:55:01,150
And Sigmund Freud was right.

703

00:55:01,150 --> 00:55:06,520
Sigmund Freud said sex is
the most powerful motivation

704

00:55:06,520 --> 00:55:11,590
that there is, for,
especially for men.

705

00:55:11,590 --> 00:55:14,510

706

00:55:14,510 --> 00:55:17,810
And that's true,
except when you get

707

00:55:17,810 --> 00:55:26,720
to be my age, when it becomes
equally important to be

708

00:55:26,720 --> 00:55:35,150
able to point to some
significance in your life,

709

00:55:35,150 --> 00:55:39,410
this question of what
have I done with my life?

710

00:55:39,410 --> 00:55:42,410
Have I done anything
significant?

711

00:55:42,410 --> 00:55:43,950
Well, not really.

712

00:55:43,950 --> 00:55:50,060
I did not get a Nobel
Prize for any specialty.

713
00:55:50,060 --> 00:56:05,240
And the stuff I've written will
never compete with Hemingway.

714
00:56:05,240 --> 00:56:11,840
So it's very difficult
to find things

715
00:56:11,840 --> 00:56:16,220
that matter that you
have done in your life.

716
00:56:16,220 --> 00:56:22,375
And that's why I was attracted
to your program of your museum.

717
00:56:22,375 --> 00:56:28,160

718
00:56:28,160 --> 00:56:34,070
And so you mentioned
wanting to leave a message.

719
00:56:34,070 --> 00:56:35,410
Sorry?

720
00:56:35,410 --> 00:56:40,070
So you mentioned wanting to
leave a message, your reason

721
00:56:40,070 --> 00:56:42,830
for recording the interview.

722
00:56:42,830 --> 00:56:45,080
If there's one thing
about your experiences

723
00:56:45,080 --> 00:56:50,170
that you wish people
knew or you think

724

00:56:50,170 --> 00:56:56,170
it's important to emphasize,
what would that be?

725
00:56:56,170 --> 00:57:05,500
Well, that's the
\$64,000 question.

726
00:57:05,500 --> 00:57:07,060
Well, I don't know.

727
00:57:07,060 --> 00:57:12,170

728
00:57:12,170 --> 00:57:18,410
My experiences have brought
me to a position on God,

729
00:57:18,410 --> 00:57:19,850
for example.

730
00:57:19,850 --> 00:57:29,150
But I'm not so sure that
my opinion about religion

731
00:57:29,150 --> 00:57:35,510
is relevant to other people
because other people are

732
00:57:35,510 --> 00:57:40,610
reacting to the needs that
they have experienced.

733
00:57:40,610 --> 00:57:44,660
They don't care what
conclusions I have come to.

734
00:57:44,660 --> 00:57:48,080

735
00:57:48,080 --> 00:57:56,420
If I come out and give you
some short statement on why

736
00:57:56,420 --> 00:58:02,840
I believe that atheism is
the most defensible position

737
00:58:02,840 --> 00:58:06,440
on the question of
God, I'm not sure it's

738
00:58:06,440 --> 00:58:09,390
going to affect a
single person's views.

739
00:58:09,390 --> 00:58:13,020

740
00:58:13,020 --> 00:58:17,670
But anyway, you've tempted
me, and I'll tell you now.

741
00:58:17,670 --> 00:58:22,840

742
00:58:22,840 --> 00:58:31,320
I will state the
basic reason why

743
00:58:31,320 --> 00:58:43,120
I am an atheist, because
I try to live logically

744
00:58:43,120 --> 00:58:49,720
and scientifically and only
believe things where I can

745
00:58:49,720 --> 00:58:53,330
have evidence of its existence.

746
00:58:53,330 --> 00:59:01,870
And I have had no evidence
of any God or afterlife

747

00:59:01,870 --> 00:59:03,490
for anything like that.

748
00:59:03,490 --> 00:59:07,960

749
00:59:07,960 --> 00:59:11,800
In addition,
Christians and Jews,

750
00:59:11,800 --> 00:59:18,550
too, I suppose,
they believe that--

751
00:59:18,550 --> 00:59:25,270
well, Jews call him Adonai
or Yahweh or Jehovah.

752
00:59:25,270 --> 00:59:30,460
The Christians call him God the
Father because the Christian

753
00:59:30,460 --> 00:59:40,472
God, it's a three-headed God
with the Father, the Son,

754
00:59:40,472 --> 00:59:41,305
and the Holy Spirit.

755
00:59:41,305 --> 00:59:45,720

756
00:59:45,720 --> 00:59:48,550
But talking about
God the Father,

757
00:59:48,550 --> 00:59:55,856
who, incidentally, is the same
God as the Muslims call Allah.

758
00:59:55,856 --> 01:00:02,860
Allah is God the Father to the
Christians and God to the Jews.

759
01:00:02,860 --> 01:00:08,570
And I believe all
three religions

760
01:00:08,570 --> 01:00:18,300
believe that God is one, all
powerful, number two, all

761
01:00:18,300 --> 01:00:19,320
knowing.

762
01:00:19,320 --> 01:00:21,750
He knows everything.

763
01:00:21,750 --> 01:00:23,880
And three, all good.

764
01:00:23,880 --> 01:00:26,790

765
01:00:26,790 --> 01:00:33,450
And my own thought about what
happened to me in my childhood,

766
01:00:33,450 --> 01:00:41,080
and what happens in the world
repeatedly in different places,

767
01:00:41,080 --> 01:00:48,010
is that there is so much
unhappiness and misery

768
01:00:48,010 --> 01:00:54,850
and sickness and death
and cruelty and injustice

769
01:00:54,850 --> 01:01:00,740
that where is this God
who is all knowing,

770
01:01:00,740 --> 01:01:05,130

all powerful, and all good?

771

01:01:05,130 --> 01:01:09,800

He or she must be on strike.

772

01:01:09,800 --> 01:01:14,600

Anyway, that's the funny
answer I come up with.

773

01:01:14,600 --> 01:01:18,540

But I think you get my message.

774

01:01:18,540 --> 01:01:19,040

Yes, sir.

775

01:01:19,040 --> 01:01:25,050

776

01:01:25,050 --> 01:01:31,080

But you see, every person is
working with their own history,

777

01:01:31,080 --> 01:01:33,720

not other people's history.

778

01:01:33,720 --> 01:01:37,990

That's why history
is irrelevant.

779

01:01:37,990 --> 01:01:41,500

And that's why most
people ignore history,

780

01:01:41,500 --> 01:01:44,590

and they commit the same
errors over and over

781

01:01:44,590 --> 01:01:49,090

again because they don't
learn from other people,

782

01:01:49,090 --> 01:01:53,170

because it's not natural to
learn from other people's

783
01:01:53,170 --> 01:01:54,850
histories.

784
01:01:54,850 --> 01:01:58,870
You can only learn
from your own history.

785
01:01:58,870 --> 01:02:00,250
And so here we are.

786
01:02:00,250 --> 01:02:04,540

787
01:02:04,540 --> 01:02:11,590
My delight at being
successful in reaching

788
01:02:11,590 --> 01:02:17,530
US soil, US
territory, my delight

789
01:02:17,530 --> 01:02:26,740
will be shortened and
diminished if it turns out

790
01:02:26,740 --> 01:02:33,030
that next Tuesday,
the citizens of the US

791
01:02:33,030 --> 01:02:37,140
elect Trump president.

792
01:02:37,140 --> 01:02:41,280
If that happens,
I will seriously

793
01:02:41,280 --> 01:02:50,490
re-examine my decision of having
taken out American citizenship.

794

01:02:50,490 --> 01:02:53,530

795

01:02:53,530 --> 01:02:56,530

And well, I don't
live there anyway,

796

01:02:56,530 --> 01:02:58,590

but I'm still a US citizen.

797

01:02:58,590 --> 01:03:01,320

798

01:03:01,320 --> 01:03:08,730

But if that event
happens, I will

799

01:03:08,730 --> 01:03:13,900

be destroyed in my
belief about the US

800

01:03:13,900 --> 01:03:17,240

because if anything else--

801

01:03:17,240 --> 01:03:20,280

I don't know, you
may have read--

802

01:03:20,280 --> 01:03:24,380

do you read The New York Times?

803

01:03:24,380 --> 01:03:25,460

Some.

804

01:03:25,460 --> 01:03:26,030

Yes, sir.

805

01:03:26,030 --> 01:03:31,250

Anyway, Tom Friedman last
week had a good column

806

01:03:31,250 --> 01:03:45,740
on with all the shortcomings
of Hillary Clinton,

807
01:03:45,740 --> 01:03:56,550
the minimum requirement to
become president is decency.

808
01:03:56,550 --> 01:04:00,270
And you know that
Hillary Clinton,

809
01:04:00,270 --> 01:04:05,490
aside from all her
other errors and faults,

810
01:04:05,490 --> 01:04:08,940
she is a very decent person.

811
01:04:08,940 --> 01:04:13,830
And you cannot say that about
Trump because he is most

812
01:04:13,830 --> 01:04:14,330
indecent.

813
01:04:14,330 --> 01:04:17,620

814
01:04:17,620 --> 01:04:23,060
And if that doesn't come
through to the American voters,

815
01:04:23,060 --> 01:04:29,250
then I will be terribly,
terribly disappointed.

816
01:04:29,250 --> 01:04:37,230
Anyway, I don't know.

817
01:04:37,230 --> 01:04:42,150
I think I've given you
sufficient catharsis here.

818
01:04:42,150 --> 01:04:47,770

819
01:04:47,770 --> 01:04:53,000
Is there anything
about your wartime

820
01:04:53,000 --> 01:04:56,420
experiences that we haven't
talked about that you

821
01:04:56,420 --> 01:04:57,170
would like to add?

822
01:04:57,170 --> 01:05:12,518

823
01:05:12,518 --> 01:05:13,060
I don't know.

824
01:05:13,060 --> 01:05:15,980
Maybe I would have been
better off in philosophy

825
01:05:15,980 --> 01:05:17,120
than psychology.

826
01:05:17,120 --> 01:05:23,850
But no.

827
01:05:23,850 --> 01:05:26,250
The short answer to
your question is no.

828
01:05:26,250 --> 01:05:32,460
I thank you very much
for having great patience

829
01:05:32,460 --> 01:05:35,430
and listening to my ramblings.

830

01:05:35,430 --> 01:05:36,990

No, thank you, sir.

831

01:05:36,990 --> 01:05:42,550

832

01:05:42,550 --> 01:05:47,530

Well, if you don't want
to add anything right now,

833

01:05:47,530 --> 01:05:50,620

we can always do
an addition later.

834

01:05:50,620 --> 01:05:55,270

But it sounds like
we will conclude.

835

01:05:55,270 --> 01:05:57,550

So thank you again, Dr. Fiks.

836

01:05:57,550 --> 01:06:01,000

This is very much
appreciated for all three

837

01:06:01,000 --> 01:06:02,890

parts of your interview.

838

01:06:02,890 --> 01:06:08,170

And this concludes the United
States Holocaust Memorial

839

01:06:08,170 --> 01:06:12,590

Museum interview with
Dr. Alfred I. Fiks.