

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:04,680

2

00:00:04,680 --> 00:00:08,340

The following is an
interview of Hans Hirsch.

3

00:00:08,340 --> 00:00:13,560

It is taking place on June
11, 1996 in Bethesda, Maryland

4

00:00:13,560 --> 00:00:17,520

and is being conducted
by Gail Schwartz.

5

00:00:17,520 --> 00:00:19,720

Please give us your full name.

6

00:00:19,720 --> 00:00:22,560

My name is Hans George Hirsch.

7

00:00:22,560 --> 00:00:27,930

I was born in Stuttgart, Germany
on the 8th of August, 1916

8

00:00:27,930 --> 00:00:32,689

in the midst of World War I.

9

00:00:32,689 --> 00:00:36,690

Who were the members of
your immediate family?

10

00:00:36,690 --> 00:00:42,020

My father Otto Hirsch,
at the time of my birth,

11

00:00:42,020 --> 00:00:47,510

was a city council of
the city of Stuttgart.

12

00:00:47,510 --> 00:00:53,780

And my mother-- also a native of
Stuttgart, just like my father.

13
00:00:53,780 --> 00:00:56,660
Her maiden name was,
in German, Loeb.

14
00:00:56,660 --> 00:01:00,830
In English, it's
pronounced Loeb, L-O-E-B.

15
00:01:00,830 --> 00:01:05,600
Her father was a
textile manufacturer,

16
00:01:05,600 --> 00:01:14,000
a very successful
businessman in Stuttgart.

17
00:01:14,000 --> 00:01:16,000
What was her first name?

18
00:01:16,000 --> 00:01:17,250
Here mother's name was Martha.

19
00:01:17,250 --> 00:01:19,350
Martha.

20
00:01:19,350 --> 00:01:23,210
My paternal grandfather,
Louis Hirsch,

21
00:01:23,210 --> 00:01:29,960
was a third-generation
wine merchant.

22
00:01:29,960 --> 00:01:35,630
And he had been very active
in the Jewish community

23
00:01:35,630 --> 00:01:37,550
all life long.

24

00:01:37,550 --> 00:01:43,910

And at the time of my birth,
he had the imposing title

25

00:01:43,910 --> 00:01:46,640

in German of
"Oberkirchenvorsteher."

26

00:01:46,640 --> 00:01:50,660

literally translated "high
church chairman," which

27

00:01:50,660 --> 00:01:58,670

was the title of the members
of the royal Jewish church

28

00:01:58,670 --> 00:01:59,730

authority.

29

00:01:59,730 --> 00:02:02,270

This is a very, very
strange phenomenon

30

00:02:02,270 --> 00:02:07,610

in my native state of
Gutenberg from the organization

31

00:02:07,610 --> 00:02:10,100

of the Jewish
community by the state.

32

00:02:10,100 --> 00:02:19,220

In 1871, until the separation
of church and state in 1924,

33

00:02:19,220 --> 00:02:23,270

the Jewish community was
referred to as a church.

34

00:02:23,270 --> 00:02:28,340

And the rabbi at
the time of my birth

35

00:02:28,340 --> 00:02:32,990
had the imposing title
of high church counselor.

36

00:02:32,990 --> 00:02:39,260
So grandfather, later after the
separation of church and state,

37

00:02:39,260 --> 00:02:43,700
became the vice president of
the state Jewish community.

38

00:02:43,700 --> 00:02:49,760
And he served in that capacity
until he was in his 70s.

39

00:02:49,760 --> 00:02:55,280
In 1930, he declined
reelection when my father

40

00:02:55,280 --> 00:02:58,670
was elected president.

41

00:02:58,670 --> 00:03:00,470
Did you have any
brothers or sisters?

42

00:03:00,470 --> 00:03:02,720
At the time of my
birth, I was not only

43

00:03:02,720 --> 00:03:05,090
my parents' first
and only child,

44

00:03:05,090 --> 00:03:08,000
but I was also the
only grandchild

45

00:03:08,000 --> 00:03:09,720
of both grandparents.

46

00:03:09,720 --> 00:03:13,700
And you can imagine how
unbelievably spoiled I

47
00:03:13,700 --> 00:03:15,770
was during my first few years.

48
00:03:15,770 --> 00:03:17,840
Both grandparents, as
I mentioned before,

49
00:03:17,840 --> 00:03:19,280
lived in town.

50
00:03:19,280 --> 00:03:24,290
And then of course,
at the age of three,

51
00:03:24,290 --> 00:03:28,610
I had cousins on each side.

52
00:03:28,610 --> 00:03:32,120
And I was well
over five years old

53
00:03:32,120 --> 00:03:34,790
until my first sister arrived.

54
00:03:34,790 --> 00:03:37,430
Ultimately, we were
three children.

55
00:03:37,430 --> 00:03:42,230
And ultimately, the
maternal grandparents

56
00:03:42,230 --> 00:03:43,850
had five grandchildren.

57
00:03:43,850 --> 00:03:47,910
And the paternal grandparents
had six grandchildren.

58

00:03:47,910 --> 00:03:49,730

And what were your
siblings' names?

59

00:03:49,730 --> 00:03:51,110

And when were they born?

60

00:03:51,110 --> 00:03:54,290

My sister Greta, who
now lives in New York,

61

00:03:54,290 --> 00:03:58,940

was born on December 24, 1921.

62

00:03:58,940 --> 00:04:02,330

She became a music teacher.

63

00:04:02,330 --> 00:04:07,640

And my sister Ursula,
born on March 5, 1925,

64

00:04:07,640 --> 00:04:09,320

became a horticulturist.

65

00:04:09,320 --> 00:04:13,880

She is now employed by the
New York Botanical Garden.

66

00:04:13,880 --> 00:04:17,480

So you were saying that you
had a large, extended family--

67

00:04:17,480 --> 00:04:18,170

Oh, yes.

68

00:04:18,170 --> 00:04:19,490

--in the area.

69

00:04:19,490 --> 00:04:22,940

Oh, yes, too many to count.

70

00:04:22,940 --> 00:04:27,470

And my parents and
my grandparents

71

00:04:27,470 --> 00:04:33,050

were very, very family-minded
and cultivated the relationship

72

00:04:33,050 --> 00:04:36,840

and the friendship
with everybody,

73

00:04:36,840 --> 00:04:39,920

including the grandparents'
numerous cousins.

74

00:04:39,920 --> 00:04:43,940

75

00:04:43,940 --> 00:04:47,580

How religious was your
family, considering the titles

76

00:04:47,580 --> 00:04:49,070

that they had?

77

00:04:49,070 --> 00:04:56,660

They were extremely liberal
and, by our standards, much less

78

00:04:56,660 --> 00:04:57,950

observant than we.

79

00:04:57,950 --> 00:05:03,480

80

00:05:03,480 --> 00:05:06,900

In terms of what
we are observing

81

00:05:06,900 --> 00:05:12,670

and what we are doing,
the liberalism--

82
00:05:12,670 --> 00:05:16,260
and, I might say,
non-observance,

83
00:05:16,260 --> 00:05:22,110
lacking observance, minimal
observance-- of Jewish customs

84
00:05:22,110 --> 00:05:27,420
is astonishing to me and
sounds almost unbelievable when

85
00:05:27,420 --> 00:05:31,260
I talk to my children and
grandchildren about it.

86
00:05:31,260 --> 00:05:36,330
We did observe
the high holidays.

87
00:05:36,330 --> 00:05:41,410
And at the time I was a very
young child, that was no Seder.

88
00:05:41,410 --> 00:05:46,920
But very typically for my
father, who was very Jewish

89
00:05:46,920 --> 00:05:51,060
minded in his own
liberal way and sought

90
00:05:51,060 --> 00:05:53,670
to reconnect with
Jewish traditions--

91
00:05:53,670 --> 00:05:58,170
when I was five years
old, he prevailed

92
00:05:58,170 --> 00:06:00,900
upon his circle

of friends to have

93

00:06:00,900 --> 00:06:05,230

a formal Seder in our home.

94

00:06:05,230 --> 00:06:10,950

And since none of the circle of friends felt up to giving it,

95

00:06:10,950 --> 00:06:16,830

a man with cantorial training--

96

00:06:16,830 --> 00:06:19,860

he later became a very distinguished leader

97

00:06:19,860 --> 00:06:24,730

of German Jewery, and ultimately a music professor in New York.

98

00:06:24,730 --> 00:06:26,640

His name was Karl Adler.

99

00:06:26,640 --> 00:06:29,970

And he, at that time a young bachelor,

100

00:06:29,970 --> 00:06:32,400

was prevailed upon to give that Seder.

101

00:06:32,400 --> 00:06:34,740

And I remember it very vividly.

102

00:06:34,740 --> 00:06:37,750

It made a very, very deep impression on me.

103

00:06:37,750 --> 00:06:42,390

And I insisted from then on that we either have our own Seder,

104

00:06:42,390 --> 00:06:45,570
or have a Seder with those
friends of my parents.

105
00:06:45,570 --> 00:06:53,130
And this was the case from that
time until I lost my parents.

106
00:06:53,130 --> 00:06:57,780
Did your family observe
Shabbat or kashrut?

107
00:06:57,780 --> 00:07:00,330
Absolutely no kashrut.

108
00:07:00,330 --> 00:07:03,780
And Shabbat-- this is a
very interesting story.

109
00:07:03,780 --> 00:07:10,440
My paternal grandparents had
their Shabbat Friday evening

110
00:07:10,440 --> 00:07:11,400
with their children.

111
00:07:11,400 --> 00:07:15,120
That's my father, my mother,
and my uncle, and my aunt,

112
00:07:15,120 --> 00:07:17,590
and we children until
I was a teenager,

113
00:07:17,590 --> 00:07:20,230
or considered too
young to attend,

114
00:07:20,230 --> 00:07:23,940
which meant that my generation--

115
00:07:23,940 --> 00:07:27,300
my sisters, my cousins, and

I-- had absolutely nothing

116
00:07:27,300 --> 00:07:30,390
on Friday evening.

117
00:07:30,390 --> 00:07:34,320
My mother-- I remember
very distinctly how,

118
00:07:34,320 --> 00:07:36,360
once in a while--

119
00:07:36,360 --> 00:07:38,970
this sort of thing happened
perhaps once every year,

120
00:07:38,970 --> 00:07:40,350
or every two years.

121
00:07:40,350 --> 00:07:42,780
She would call my grandmother
and say, Mother, I

122
00:07:42,780 --> 00:07:44,520
want to go to a
concert Friday night.

123
00:07:44,520 --> 00:07:46,530
Can't we meet some
other evening?

124
00:07:46,530 --> 00:07:49,470
And grandmother would
say, no, absolutely not.

125
00:07:49,470 --> 00:07:52,890
Friday evening, you
come to your parents.

126
00:07:52,890 --> 00:07:55,860
And she, Mother, had a hard
time understanding that.

127

00:07:55,860 --> 00:07:57,330

But she obeyed.

128

00:07:57,330 --> 00:08:00,060

On the other hand,

when I was a teenager,

129

00:08:00,060 --> 00:08:02,280

I asked my grandmother

for permission

130

00:08:02,280 --> 00:08:04,170

to chant the Kaddish.

131

00:08:04,170 --> 00:08:08,430

And she said, all

right, you may do that.

132

00:08:08,430 --> 00:08:11,460

But it felt so

strange and so out

133

00:08:11,460 --> 00:08:14,310

of place that, after I

had done it a few times,

134

00:08:14,310 --> 00:08:17,430

I said, I guess I have to wait

until I have my own house.

135

00:08:17,430 --> 00:08:18,810

It just doesn't fit in here.

136

00:08:18,810 --> 00:08:21,400

137

00:08:21,400 --> 00:08:24,630

So did you go to Hebrew school,

have any kind of instruction?

138

00:08:24,630 --> 00:08:33,480

Oh, well, the relatively minimal

instruction in Jewish religion

139

00:08:33,480 --> 00:08:38,220
was taken very, very seriously
under the state charter

140

00:08:38,220 --> 00:08:39,480
of the Jewish community.

141

00:08:39,480 --> 00:08:44,380

142

00:08:44,380 --> 00:08:48,870
If the number of Jewish
students warranted,

143

00:08:48,870 --> 00:08:51,650
Jewish teachers came
to public schools.

144

00:08:51,650 --> 00:08:54,660
This is completely different
from how it is in America.

145

00:08:54,660 --> 00:08:58,170
In Germany, and as far
as I know to this day,

146

00:08:58,170 --> 00:09:02,010
religion is a subject
of public school.

147

00:09:02,010 --> 00:09:06,150
And the children divide into
their respective religions,

148

00:09:06,150 --> 00:09:09,540
which of course are
not innumerably many

149

00:09:09,540 --> 00:09:14,100
sects like in America, but
typically Protestant, Catholic,

150
00:09:14,100 --> 00:09:18,000
and in our days, very
few Jews-- and now

151
00:09:18,000 --> 00:09:22,800
of course, in post-Holocaust
Germany, almost no Jews.

152
00:09:22,800 --> 00:09:29,610
But during part of my
schooling, the teacher

153
00:09:29,610 --> 00:09:33,780
of religion-- first, a
man trained as a cantor,

154
00:09:33,780 --> 00:09:38,070
and as a teacher, and later
as a rabbi-- came to school.

155
00:09:38,070 --> 00:09:42,720
There was a combination
of the two nearby schools.

156
00:09:42,720 --> 00:09:46,560
It was practical for the Jewish
children to come together.

157
00:09:46,560 --> 00:09:48,900
And we had small classes.

158
00:09:48,900 --> 00:09:51,780
And when this was
not feasible then,

159
00:09:51,780 --> 00:09:56,040
Wednesday afternoon, we went
to the Jewish community center

160
00:09:56,040 --> 00:09:58,360
for two hours of
religious instruction.

161
00:09:58,360 --> 00:10:01,410
That was, I remember,
part of my schooling.

162
00:10:01,410 --> 00:10:04,380
I went there
Wednesday afternoon.

163
00:10:04,380 --> 00:10:09,410
And this was taken
extremely seriously

164
00:10:09,410 --> 00:10:14,810
by the high council of
the Jewish community.

165
00:10:14,810 --> 00:10:17,750
I remember, at one
time, my grandfather

166
00:10:17,750 --> 00:10:23,240
made a public speech
in which he swore

167
00:10:23,240 --> 00:10:25,250
that no Jewish
child in the state

168
00:10:25,250 --> 00:10:28,040
should be without
a Jewish education.

169
00:10:28,040 --> 00:10:30,410
And I found in--

170
00:10:30,410 --> 00:10:34,640
and I have in my collection
now, in my records,

171
00:10:34,640 --> 00:10:42,860
photocopies of reports how the
rabbi of Stuttgart who served

172
00:10:42,860 --> 00:10:45,830
as the theological member
of the high council

173
00:10:45,830 --> 00:10:48,650
of the Jewish
community went around,

174
00:10:48,650 --> 00:10:53,960
not only in our century, but
also the 19th century examining

175
00:10:53,960 --> 00:10:56,120
teachers and students
and reporting

176
00:10:56,120 --> 00:10:58,880
on the status of
Jewish education.

177
00:10:58,880 --> 00:11:03,005
And also, no matter how
isolated a Jewish child who

178
00:11:03,005 --> 00:11:06,600
lived in the state, the
teacher, if necessary

179
00:11:06,600 --> 00:11:09,890
would, by motorcycle,
or bicycle, or train

180
00:11:09,890 --> 00:11:14,000
reach that child to teach her.

181
00:11:14,000 --> 00:11:20,810
In Baltimore, there is a Jewish
butcher, Lemberger & Wasserman.

182
00:11:20,810 --> 00:11:23,630
He comes from a small
Jewish community

183
00:11:23,630 --> 00:11:24,830
in the state of Gutenberg.

184
00:11:24,830 --> 00:11:27,410
And his wife grew
up in a village,

185
00:11:27,410 --> 00:11:29,570
in a town where
there were no Jews.

186
00:11:29,570 --> 00:11:31,880
And she told me, as I
expected to be told--

187
00:11:31,880 --> 00:11:34,130
but I sort of tried her out--

188
00:11:34,130 --> 00:11:36,140
what kind of Jewish instruction.

189
00:11:36,140 --> 00:11:39,470
Oh, she said, the teacher
came every week by train

190
00:11:39,470 --> 00:11:43,580
to teach me and my
siblings in our town.

191
00:11:43,580 --> 00:11:44,930
Did you have a bar mitzvah?

192
00:11:44,930 --> 00:11:45,650
Oh, yes.

193
00:11:45,650 --> 00:11:46,530
Tell us about that.

194
00:11:46,530 --> 00:11:46,850
That--

195

00:11:46,850 --> 00:11:47,558

Tell me about it.

196

00:11:47,558 --> 00:11:50,150

--was something which
was taken very seriously.

197

00:11:50,150 --> 00:11:54,770

Now the Torah, of course,
was read by the cantor.

198

00:11:54,770 --> 00:11:57,470

And in Stuttgart,
the Torah was always

199

00:11:57,470 --> 00:11:59,430

read in German translation.

200

00:11:59,430 --> 00:12:04,040

So my training existed
of general training

201

00:12:04,040 --> 00:12:07,550

in Jewish principles, and
ethics, and Jewish religion.

202

00:12:07,550 --> 00:12:12,140

And I had to memorize the
grace, the birkat hamazon.

203

00:12:12,140 --> 00:12:15,620

I mean, the accomplishment
was much less

204

00:12:15,620 --> 00:12:17,810

than what we are
accustomed to now.

205

00:12:17,810 --> 00:12:21,290

But that was the standard.

206

00:12:21,290 --> 00:12:26,000

And there was the synagogue
service, of course,

207
00:12:26,000 --> 00:12:27,900
very similar to a bar mitzvah.

208
00:12:27,900 --> 00:12:31,470
So it is now accepted as
no chanting of Yael Heffer,

209
00:12:31,470 --> 00:12:33,470
no speech by the bar mitzvah.

210
00:12:33,470 --> 00:12:38,210
And Saturday night, there
was a big family celebration

211
00:12:38,210 --> 00:12:41,600
in our garden with many
out-of-town people,

212
00:12:41,600 --> 00:12:45,270
and even American
family present.

213
00:12:45,270 --> 00:12:49,180
Let's talk first a little
bit about where you grew up.

214
00:12:49,180 --> 00:12:54,200
Can you describe
the city itself?

215
00:12:54,200 --> 00:12:58,490
Well, I--

216
00:12:58,490 --> 00:13:00,590
How would you describe it?

217
00:13:00,590 --> 00:13:05,810
I grew up, of course,
very sheltered.

218

00:13:05,810 --> 00:13:08,600

Until I was 12 years
old, my parents

219

00:13:08,600 --> 00:13:12,200

lived in a beautiful
rented apartment.

220

00:13:12,200 --> 00:13:15,770

But we had garden privileges.

221

00:13:15,770 --> 00:13:17,360

It was a rented home.

222

00:13:17,360 --> 00:13:20,210

But it was really very suburban.

223

00:13:20,210 --> 00:13:22,970

The owner of the
house lived upstairs.

224

00:13:22,970 --> 00:13:24,980

And we lived
downstairs in, really,

225

00:13:24,980 --> 00:13:27,440

two floors with
garden privileges.

226

00:13:27,440 --> 00:13:35,900

And my parents had no
desire to become home owners

227

00:13:35,900 --> 00:13:40,730

until after the death of
the widowed home owner.

228

00:13:40,730 --> 00:13:44,900

The young son didn't like
any children and gave notice.

229

00:13:44,900 --> 00:13:47,690

And that forced my
parents, together

230
00:13:47,690 --> 00:13:50,630
with my father's
brother and his family,

231
00:13:50,630 --> 00:13:53,330
to build a beautiful duplex.

232
00:13:53,330 --> 00:13:57,710
And that's how my parents
became home owners in 1928.

233
00:13:57,710 --> 00:14:01,040
And as long as we
are on this subject,

234
00:14:01,040 --> 00:14:09,440
I must tell you a story,
which is worth being told.

235
00:14:09,440 --> 00:14:13,310
My maternal grandmother
had a much older sister

236
00:14:13,310 --> 00:14:16,880
who had had an
extremely hard life

237
00:14:16,880 --> 00:14:21,170
and was a very bitter person.

238
00:14:21,170 --> 00:14:26,180
And she also had a
very, very long history

239
00:14:26,180 --> 00:14:29,750
of being quite tactless.

240
00:14:29,750 --> 00:14:35,150
She came to our new
home to visit us

241
00:14:35,150 --> 00:14:38,570
and, in theory, to wish us well.

242
00:14:38,570 --> 00:14:44,300
And she said, Martha, she
said, addressing my mother,

243
00:14:44,300 --> 00:14:48,350
our tradition is that one
should not acquire homes.

244
00:14:48,350 --> 00:14:51,560
One should not own real
estate, because one never knows

245
00:14:51,560 --> 00:14:54,170
when one will be driven out.

246
00:14:54,170 --> 00:14:56,630
And that was in 1928.

247
00:14:56,630 --> 00:15:01,470
And my mother was absolutely
aghast and said, Aunt Sally,

248
00:15:01,470 --> 00:15:05,380
these times have passed
never to come again.

249
00:15:05,380 --> 00:15:07,610
You must not talk this way.

250
00:15:07,610 --> 00:15:09,069
And she said,
well, I just wanted

251
00:15:09,069 --> 00:15:10,819
to share an old Jewish
tradition with you.

252
00:15:10,819 --> 00:15:15,710

253
00:15:15,710 --> 00:15:18,560
In your first house,
you stayed there

254
00:15:18,560 --> 00:15:21,140
until you were 12
years old, you said.

255
00:15:21,140 --> 00:15:24,200
Was it a mixed neighborhood
of Jews and non-Jews,

256
00:15:24,200 --> 00:15:26,294
or primarily a
Jewish neighborhood?

257
00:15:26,294 --> 00:15:28,960

258
00:15:28,960 --> 00:15:33,370
I have to think very hard to
think of Jewish neighbors that

259
00:15:33,370 --> 00:15:35,740
have ever--

260
00:15:35,740 --> 00:15:38,770
well, and after the
Nazis had come to power,

261
00:15:38,770 --> 00:15:41,050
and long after we
had moved away,

262
00:15:41,050 --> 00:15:44,050
I discovered that some people
who lived in the neighborhood

263
00:15:44,050 --> 00:15:45,040
were Jewish.

264

00:15:45,040 --> 00:15:46,420

I hadn't known it.

265

00:15:46,420 --> 00:15:51,460

And in the wider neighborhood,
there were some Jews.

266

00:15:51,460 --> 00:15:54,657

But I would say it was a--

267

00:15:54,657 --> 00:15:55,240

Predominantly.

268

00:15:55,240 --> 00:15:56,870

--very mixed neighborhood.

269

00:15:56,870 --> 00:15:58,360

And so, when you
were a young child

270

00:15:58,360 --> 00:16:01,000

and you played on
the street, did

271

00:16:01,000 --> 00:16:03,280

you have friends
who were non-Jewish?

272

00:16:03,280 --> 00:16:07,240

I had both Jewish and
non-Jewish playmates.

273

00:16:07,240 --> 00:16:09,280

And so up to the time
that you were 12,

274

00:16:09,280 --> 00:16:11,720

were there any difficult
moments being Jewish?

275

00:16:11,720 --> 00:16:12,563

Oh, yes.

276
00:16:12,563 --> 00:16:13,063
Oh.

277
00:16:13,063 --> 00:16:15,130
Being Jewish.

278
00:16:15,130 --> 00:16:18,683
My grade-school
experiences were terrible.

279
00:16:18,683 --> 00:16:19,600
But out on the street.

280
00:16:19,600 --> 00:16:20,830
But I'm not talking
about in school.

281
00:16:20,830 --> 00:16:22,622
But out on the street,
in the neighborhood,

282
00:16:22,622 --> 00:16:25,110
did you experience anything
up to the age of 12?

283
00:16:25,110 --> 00:16:26,110
Not in the neighborhood.

284
00:16:26,110 --> 00:16:26,610
No.

285
00:16:26,610 --> 00:16:28,300
No, the experiences
were in school.

286
00:16:28,300 --> 00:16:28,955
OK.

287
00:16:28,955 --> 00:16:30,580
Well, now let's talk
about your school.

288
00:16:30,580 --> 00:16:32,260
When did you start
going to school?

289
00:16:32,260 --> 00:16:33,070
How old were you?

290
00:16:33,070 --> 00:16:37,210

291
00:16:37,210 --> 00:16:40,630
School year in Germany
starts in April.

292
00:16:40,630 --> 00:16:45,430
And in April 1922, I was
not six years old yet

293
00:16:45,430 --> 00:16:48,790
and was not admissible
to school, although I

294
00:16:48,790 --> 00:16:50,630
was really ready for it.

295
00:16:50,630 --> 00:16:55,630
Well, luckily, I became
sick with whooping cough.

296
00:16:55,630 --> 00:16:58,070
So for that reason, I
couldn't go to school.

297
00:16:58,070 --> 00:17:00,070
And by the time the
whooping cough was over,

298
00:17:00,070 --> 00:17:01,750
I was six years old.

299
00:17:01,750 --> 00:17:08,300

And I had gone to kindergarten.

300

00:17:08,300 --> 00:17:13,000

So my parents felt I was
ready to go to school.

301

00:17:13,000 --> 00:17:18,130

And in November, which
seasonally means more or less

302

00:17:18,130 --> 00:17:21,130

at the midpoint of the school
year, from April to March,

303

00:17:21,130 --> 00:17:24,910

I was enrolled in first
grade in public school.

304

00:17:24,910 --> 00:17:30,730

And with two or three or four
makeup lessons, I caught up.

305

00:17:30,730 --> 00:17:32,800

There was no difficulty.

306

00:17:32,800 --> 00:17:34,300

I was one of the youngest.

307

00:17:34,300 --> 00:17:38,200

308

00:17:38,200 --> 00:17:40,670

Well, that was late 1922.

309

00:17:40,670 --> 00:17:43,190

A year later, in
the fall of 1923,

310

00:17:43,190 --> 00:17:46,600

is when the Hitler Putsch
occurred, when Hitler first

311

00:17:46,600 --> 00:17:49,710
tried to seize the government
the first time in Munich.

312
00:17:49,710 --> 00:17:55,750
And at that time was the
first rise of Nazism.

313
00:17:55,750 --> 00:18:03,820
And the anti-Semitism in
grade school was terrible.

314
00:18:03,820 --> 00:18:08,250

315
00:18:08,250 --> 00:18:13,480
We had a benevolent,
very kind, old teacher

316
00:18:13,480 --> 00:18:20,380
who tried in vain by education
to do something about it.

317
00:18:20,380 --> 00:18:27,160
I remember in dictation how,
in connection with teaching,

318
00:18:27,160 --> 00:18:28,420
the letter J--

319
00:18:28,420 --> 00:18:35,330
he gave a dictation, Jesus
was a Jew, but to no avail.

320
00:18:35,330 --> 00:18:39,790
So it was unbelievable rowdyism.

321
00:18:39,790 --> 00:18:46,870
And on the way home,
I was molested.

322
00:18:46,870 --> 00:18:47,820
These boys were--

323
00:18:47,820 --> 00:18:49,330
In what way?

324
00:18:49,330 --> 00:18:50,350
They didn't attack me.

325
00:18:50,350 --> 00:18:54,820
But they would follow
me, and call me Jew,

326
00:18:54,820 --> 00:18:57,880
and make life miserable for me.

327
00:18:57,880 --> 00:19:01,900
And I was a difficult child.

328
00:19:01,900 --> 00:19:07,540
My grandson Oren, whom you know,
reminds me very much of myself,

329
00:19:07,540 --> 00:19:10,030
and not only in my own memory.

330
00:19:10,030 --> 00:19:15,580
But I have my mother's write
up, which I recently re-read.

331
00:19:15,580 --> 00:19:19,750
And reading about myself, I
think I'm reading Oren's story.

332
00:19:19,750 --> 00:19:22,990

333
00:19:22,990 --> 00:19:27,950
But my social problems--
and I mean anti-Semitism--

334
00:19:27,950 --> 00:19:30,190
was just one aspect of it.

335

00:19:30,190 --> 00:19:34,960

It got so bad that, after
two years in the public grade

336

00:19:34,960 --> 00:19:39,010

school, my parents took me out.

337

00:19:39,010 --> 00:19:43,150

And for a very short time--

338

00:19:43,150 --> 00:19:45,730

a few days, or
two weeks, or so--

339

00:19:45,730 --> 00:19:48,280

I was not going to school.

340

00:19:48,280 --> 00:19:50,970

There was some kind of
a doctor's certificate.

341

00:19:50,970 --> 00:19:53,290

Then, however--

342

00:19:53,290 --> 00:19:55,510

When these incidents
would happen to you--

343

00:19:55,510 --> 00:19:57,340

and you were very young--

344

00:19:57,340 --> 00:20:00,160

was it something you could
talk over with your parents?

345

00:20:00,160 --> 00:20:00,760

Oh, yes.

346

00:20:00,760 --> 00:20:02,680

I did, of course.

347

00:20:02,680 --> 00:20:09,250

And my parents then,
through friends,

348

00:20:09,250 --> 00:20:16,510

discovered that there was
a young public teacher who

349

00:20:16,510 --> 00:20:20,980

was in the process of
setting up his own school.

350

00:20:20,980 --> 00:20:25,900

This was a very interesting
pedagogical experiment

351

00:20:25,900 --> 00:20:28,720

within the framework of
the public school system

352

00:20:28,720 --> 00:20:31,000

of the city of Stuttgart.

353

00:20:31,000 --> 00:20:36,040

He was permitted to have parents
financing for his own school

354

00:20:36,040 --> 00:20:39,340

building at the
edge of the city,

355

00:20:39,340 --> 00:20:41,770

in a suburban
setting, if you wish.

356

00:20:41,770 --> 00:20:46,360

And the school was a public
school, although in many ways,

357

00:20:46,360 --> 00:20:49,570

because of the financing
of the facility,

358

00:20:49,570 --> 00:20:51,840
had the private aspect.

359
00:20:51,840 --> 00:20:53,830
It was also a school
where one stayed over

360
00:20:53,830 --> 00:20:57,340
for lunch, which was
most unusual in Germany

361
00:20:57,340 --> 00:20:59,620
in those days for
public schools.

362
00:20:59,620 --> 00:21:03,910
And that was all in the making.

363
00:21:03,910 --> 00:21:05,260
It didn't exist yet.

364
00:21:05,260 --> 00:21:07,330
But the plans were being made.

365
00:21:07,330 --> 00:21:15,850
And I was permitted to join the
downtown class of this teacher

366
00:21:15,850 --> 00:21:19,360
just about two or three weeks
after I had been taken out

367
00:21:19,360 --> 00:21:20,860
of the other school.

368
00:21:20,860 --> 00:21:26,050
And I really went for it and was
eagerly looking forward to it

369
00:21:26,050 --> 00:21:27,700
day after day.

370

00:21:27,700 --> 00:21:31,900

And to this day, I feel
that I owe this teacher

371

00:21:31,900 --> 00:21:33,580

a very great deal.

372

00:21:33,580 --> 00:21:34,720

And--

373

00:21:34,720 --> 00:21:35,650

What was his name?

374

00:21:35,650 --> 00:21:42,050

Shiecker,
S-H-I-E-C-K-E-R. And we--

375

00:21:42,050 --> 00:21:44,560

with the interruption
of the war, of course--

376

00:21:44,560 --> 00:21:47,350

remained in contact with him.

377

00:21:47,350 --> 00:21:50,530

I last visited him just a
few weeks before his death

378

00:21:50,530 --> 00:21:53,380

at age 83 in 1977.

379

00:21:53,380 --> 00:21:58,120

And believe it or not,
just a month ago, we

380

00:21:58,120 --> 00:22:02,896

had a small mini reunion of--

381

00:22:02,896 --> 00:22:04,270

Alumni.

382

00:22:04,270 --> 00:22:07,600

--alumni in New York.

383

00:22:07,600 --> 00:22:10,690

You said that you were able
to talk to your parents

384

00:22:10,690 --> 00:22:12,180

about these difficult--

385

00:22:12,180 --> 00:22:12,940

Oh, yes.

386

00:22:12,940 --> 00:22:13,520

--happenings.

387

00:22:13,520 --> 00:22:16,210

How did they explain to--
you were a young child.

388

00:22:16,210 --> 00:22:18,250

Do you remember how
they explained to you

389

00:22:18,250 --> 00:22:21,220

why this was happening?

390

00:22:21,220 --> 00:22:23,303

Oh.

391

00:22:23,303 --> 00:22:23,970

I remember how--

392

00:22:23,970 --> 00:22:25,030

Because it must have
been very frightening.

393

00:22:25,030 --> 00:22:26,800

You were so young
to have this happen.

394

00:22:26,800 --> 00:22:31,930

No, I was always very

defiant about my Judaism.

395

00:22:31,930 --> 00:22:35,200

I remember how my father
explained the swastika symbol

396

00:22:35,200 --> 00:22:40,750

to me, which was very commonly
seen in Germany as of 1923.

397

00:22:40,750 --> 00:22:44,500

He said, this is a symbol,
which means I hate the Jews.

398

00:22:44,500 --> 00:22:49,450

And he said, this
is a terrible thing,

399

00:22:49,450 --> 00:22:52,180

which we have to fight against.

400

00:22:52,180 --> 00:22:56,660

And we have survived
for thousands of years.

401

00:22:56,660 --> 00:23:01,390

It's painful, but
it can't affect us.

402

00:23:01,390 --> 00:23:04,240

And you said you were defiant,
even as a young child.

403

00:23:04,240 --> 00:23:05,507

Oh, yes.

404

00:23:05,507 --> 00:23:06,840

With a sense of pride, you mean?

405

00:23:06,840 --> 00:23:09,720

Oh, yes.

406

00:23:09,720 --> 00:23:17,470
I was brought up to be very
sad, if not contemptuous,

407
00:23:17,470 --> 00:23:23,070
of anybody who left
the Jewish community.

408
00:23:23,070 --> 00:23:30,120
And I have, here in town
now, a close friend,

409
00:23:30,120 --> 00:23:32,730
a native of Stuttgart,
eight years younger

410
00:23:32,730 --> 00:23:36,510
than I. It turned out that
his father and my mother

411
00:23:36,510 --> 00:23:38,520
played tennis before
they were married.

412
00:23:38,520 --> 00:23:40,290
And then they lost each other.

413
00:23:40,290 --> 00:23:44,550
And we found each other in
the 1980s here in Washington

414
00:23:44,550 --> 00:23:47,220
and became fast friends.

415
00:23:47,220 --> 00:23:53,140
Well, the parents of this man
had left the Jewish community.

416
00:23:53,140 --> 00:23:56,400
And this is something I--

417
00:23:56,400 --> 00:23:58,710
each time I think of him,

each time I am with him,

418

00:23:58,710 --> 00:23:59,640

I think of it.

419

00:23:59,640 --> 00:24:01,470

Of course, it's not

his fault. But I

420

00:24:01,470 --> 00:24:05,460

make remarks and say how sad
it was what his parents did.

421

00:24:05,460 --> 00:24:14,010

And this is something which
has characterized us very, very

422

00:24:14,010 --> 00:24:14,850

much.

423

00:24:14,850 --> 00:24:22,980

We considered it as extremely
dishonorable for anybody

424

00:24:22,980 --> 00:24:25,360

to leave the Jewish community.

425

00:24:25,360 --> 00:24:27,600

So now you're in this second
school, this new school.

426

00:24:27,600 --> 00:24:27,760

Yes.

427

00:24:27,760 --> 00:24:29,885

Your parents had taken you
out of the first school.

428

00:24:29,885 --> 00:24:30,775

And you said--

429

00:24:30,775 --> 00:24:31,650

There, I absolutely--

430
00:24:31,650 --> 00:24:33,000
--it was a very positive place.

431
00:24:33,000 --> 00:24:34,650
--flourished.

432
00:24:34,650 --> 00:24:37,350
And--

433
00:24:37,350 --> 00:24:39,300
This was a coed school?

434
00:24:39,300 --> 00:24:39,900
Yes.

435
00:24:39,900 --> 00:24:40,470
Yes.

436
00:24:40,470 --> 00:24:43,350
I'm glad you asked, because
this was also unusual.

437
00:24:43,350 --> 00:24:48,210
Typically, schools in Germany
were not coeducational.

438
00:24:48,210 --> 00:24:49,260
But this one was.

439
00:24:49,260 --> 00:24:50,470
Was your first school coed?

440
00:24:50,470 --> 00:24:50,970
No.

441
00:24:50,970 --> 00:24:51,230
No.

442
00:24:51,230 --> 00:24:51,440

No.

443

00:24:51,440 --> 00:24:51,500

No.

444

00:24:51,500 --> 00:24:52,208

It was boys only.

445

00:24:52,208 --> 00:24:54,690

And later on, high school
was not coeducational.

446

00:24:54,690 --> 00:24:58,410

But this particular
school was coeducational.

447

00:24:58,410 --> 00:25:01,100

448

00:25:01,100 --> 00:25:03,830

And I just flourished.

449

00:25:03,830 --> 00:25:05,690

I had, during the--

450

00:25:05,690 --> 00:25:09,530

well, I formerly attended
two school years.

451

00:25:09,530 --> 00:25:14,900

But for a four month
period, from December 1924

452

00:25:14,900 --> 00:25:17,600

until I formally
entered in April, '25,

453

00:25:17,600 --> 00:25:23,120

I was really there for
almost 2 and 1/2 years.

454

00:25:23,120 --> 00:25:28,340

And beginning in 1925,
not quite nine years old,

455
00:25:28,340 --> 00:25:35,480
together with a dozen
other students--

456
00:25:35,480 --> 00:25:37,430
again, by our
parental arrangements,

457
00:25:37,430 --> 00:25:39,320
and with parental financing--

458
00:25:39,320 --> 00:25:45,660
we were taught Latin so that,
after the end of the school,

459
00:25:45,660 --> 00:25:52,700
which was a six or
seven-year school,

460
00:25:52,700 --> 00:25:55,940
formally a six-year
school at that time,

461
00:25:55,940 --> 00:25:59,960
we could enter the particular
kind of high school

462
00:25:59,960 --> 00:26:03,230
where Latin was an
absolute prerequisite.

463
00:26:03,230 --> 00:26:07,640
And indeed, I even
had to take an exam

464
00:26:07,640 --> 00:26:12,320
to be admitted to what,
by American account,

465
00:26:12,320 --> 00:26:13,940

would be seventh grade.

466

00:26:13,940 --> 00:26:18,260

And since the German
calendar starts

467

00:26:18,260 --> 00:26:20,850

after the fourth year of
grade school with one again,

468

00:26:20,850 --> 00:26:22,520

so it was third grade.

469

00:26:22,520 --> 00:26:25,550

And I made and passed
this examination

470

00:26:25,550 --> 00:26:28,730

to enter the
gymnasium, gymnasium

471

00:26:28,730 --> 00:26:30,205

in American pronunciation.

472

00:26:30,205 --> 00:26:31,580

It has nothing to
do with sports,

473

00:26:31,580 --> 00:26:34,040

but with humanistic
education centered

474

00:26:34,040 --> 00:26:36,050

around Latin and Greek.

475

00:26:36,050 --> 00:26:45,020

And I entered there in April,
1927, not quite 11 years old

476

00:26:45,020 --> 00:26:47,270

and went through the nine year--

477

00:26:47,270 --> 00:26:50,870
well, through seven years
of the nine-year curriculum

478
00:26:50,870 --> 00:26:56,760
until I graduated already during
the Nazi period in March, 1934.

479
00:26:56,760 --> 00:26:57,260
OK.

480
00:26:57,260 --> 00:26:59,390
Before we get to
March, 1934, I'd

481
00:26:59,390 --> 00:27:02,600
like to back up a little bit.

482
00:27:02,600 --> 00:27:04,910
What language did
you speak at home?

483
00:27:04,910 --> 00:27:05,814
German, of course.

484
00:27:05,814 --> 00:27:06,720
German.

485
00:27:06,720 --> 00:27:08,360
My mother was
somewhat bilingual.

486
00:27:08,360 --> 00:27:11,210
She had gone to what she
called college, which

487
00:27:11,210 --> 00:27:13,460
was a prep school in England.

488
00:27:13,460 --> 00:27:17,630
And she was absolutely
fluent in English.

489

00:27:17,630 --> 00:27:20,480

And when the parents
wanted to talk something

490

00:27:20,480 --> 00:27:22,820

not for the children's
ears, they talked English.

491

00:27:22,820 --> 00:27:25,640

My father's English was less
perfect than my mother's.

492

00:27:25,640 --> 00:27:27,950

But he could converse.

493

00:27:27,950 --> 00:27:31,850

And when my mother was
with her younger sister,

494

00:27:31,850 --> 00:27:33,230

they always talked English.

495

00:27:33,230 --> 00:27:37,042

496

00:27:37,042 --> 00:27:38,750

Did your mother come--
it sounds like she

497

00:27:38,750 --> 00:27:41,860

came from a very upper-class
family to have studied abroad.

498

00:27:41,860 --> 00:27:42,360

And so--

499

00:27:42,360 --> 00:27:47,940

Well, my grandfather was
economically very interesting.

500

00:27:47,940 --> 00:27:53,090

He was still born in a village

in the Palatinate, the area

501

00:27:53,090 --> 00:27:57,770
from which the present-day
Chancellor Kohl comes from,

502

00:27:57,770 --> 00:28:00,290
west of the Rhine.

503

00:28:00,290 --> 00:28:06,395
And he had an
older brother who--

504

00:28:06,395 --> 00:28:07,990
he was seven years older.

505

00:28:07,990 --> 00:28:16,160
And in 1868, the two brothers
founded this textile factory.

506

00:28:16,160 --> 00:28:18,710
The older one was 25.

507

00:28:18,710 --> 00:28:20,840
Grandfather was 18.

508

00:28:20,840 --> 00:28:26,510
And I think they started with
one loom and hired somebody.

509

00:28:26,510 --> 00:28:35,330
And in due time, this became a
firm, which was world renowned.

510

00:28:35,330 --> 00:28:39,830
And one of the prized pieces
in my genealogical files

511

00:28:39,830 --> 00:28:43,260
is correspondence
between the firm--

512

00:28:43,260 --> 00:28:45,620
the name was Gebruder
Loeb, Loeb Brothers,

513
00:28:45,620 --> 00:28:49,340
and Woodward & Lothrop, the
Washington, DC department store

514
00:28:49,340 --> 00:28:54,030
which, to my great regret,
recently ceased to exist.

515
00:28:54,030 --> 00:28:59,000
So they exported to parts of
the czarist empire, I know.

516
00:28:59,000 --> 00:29:01,100
And they exported to
the United States.

517
00:29:01,100 --> 00:29:02,750
And I don't know where else.

518
00:29:02,750 --> 00:29:04,880
They were very successful.

519
00:29:04,880 --> 00:29:07,740
How did your parents meet?

520
00:29:07,740 --> 00:29:08,240
I--

521
00:29:08,240 --> 00:29:08,740
Do you know?

522
00:29:08,740 --> 00:29:10,640
--don't know how they met.

523
00:29:10,640 --> 00:29:16,610
I only know my mother was
18, and father was 24.

524

00:29:16,610 --> 00:29:20,090
Now, they didn't get married
until five years later.

525
00:29:20,090 --> 00:29:21,770
There was a Jewish
club in Stuttgart.

526
00:29:21,770 --> 00:29:23,720
My hunch is, without
firm knowledge,

527
00:29:23,720 --> 00:29:27,695
that they must have met at
a bar or at some function

528
00:29:27,695 --> 00:29:30,440
of this union club.

529
00:29:30,440 --> 00:29:31,880
What was the name of it?

530
00:29:31,880 --> 00:29:35,510
The grandfathers would
go there to play cards.

531
00:29:35,510 --> 00:29:40,970
My father always treated the
place with great contempt,

532
00:29:40,970 --> 00:29:44,450
because he felt there
was too much socializing,

533
00:29:44,450 --> 00:29:49,730
and one should spend leisure
time either with his children

534
00:29:49,730 --> 00:29:54,665
or grandchildren, or studying,
or on cultural affairs,

535
00:29:54,665 --> 00:29:57,140

but not playing cards.

536

00:29:57,140 --> 00:29:59,780

Were you interested in sports
as a young child growing up?

537

00:29:59,780 --> 00:30:00,650

No.

538

00:30:00,650 --> 00:30:06,200

I was never
interested in sports.

539

00:30:06,200 --> 00:30:09,230

And to this day, I
enjoy that one part

540

00:30:09,230 --> 00:30:11,500

of the newspaper I
don't have to deal with

541

00:30:11,500 --> 00:30:13,940

is the sports section.

542

00:30:13,940 --> 00:30:19,460

And I, obviously,
did whatever was

543

00:30:19,460 --> 00:30:24,710

required in my school education
in sports, and gymnastics,

544

00:30:24,710 --> 00:30:25,520

and so on.

545

00:30:25,520 --> 00:30:31,550

And I also played the German
version of baseball, and so on.

546

00:30:31,550 --> 00:30:37,370

But I was never good at it, and
never particularly enjoyed it.

547

00:30:37,370 --> 00:30:45,890
Oh, I was quite awkward, again
very similar to grandson Oren.

548

00:30:45,890 --> 00:30:52,940
But one thing I made a
decent record was in running.

549

00:30:52,940 --> 00:30:59,755
I achieved a certain decent
record in 100-meter running.

550

00:30:59,755 --> 00:31:09,960
[AUDIO OUT]

551

00:31:09,960 --> 00:31:11,910
This is tape one,
side B. And you

552

00:31:11,910 --> 00:31:14,700
were talking about your athletic
ability and your running

553

00:31:14,700 --> 00:31:16,920
ability.

554

00:31:16,920 --> 00:31:19,110
Were you want any teams at all?

555

00:31:19,110 --> 00:31:23,860
Well, as part of school,
we had school teams.

556

00:31:23,860 --> 00:31:24,360
Yes.

557

00:31:24,360 --> 00:31:27,600
And I was on those teams.

558

00:31:27,600 --> 00:31:31,800
But this was part of
the regular curriculum.

559
00:31:31,800 --> 00:31:32,700
What about music?

560
00:31:32,700 --> 00:31:34,580
Were you interested in
music as a young boy?

561
00:31:34,580 --> 00:31:38,130
Well, my mother was a pianist.

562
00:31:38,130 --> 00:31:43,560
And she wanted me to learn
how to play the piano.

563
00:31:43,560 --> 00:31:46,470
And she thought of
herself as a good teacher.

564
00:31:46,470 --> 00:31:54,000
And this was really one of the
few things where my parents--

565
00:31:54,000 --> 00:31:56,562
in this case, my mother--
and I did not see eye to eye

566
00:31:56,562 --> 00:31:57,645
and had a lot of friction.

567
00:31:57,645 --> 00:32:01,620

568
00:32:01,620 --> 00:32:07,470
The problem was that, in her
own enthusiasm for music,

569
00:32:07,470 --> 00:32:10,620
she would give
unlimited lessons.

570
00:32:10,620 --> 00:32:15,720

And she did not know
that after be it

571
00:32:15,720 --> 00:32:20,860
30 minutes, or 45 minutes, or
60 minutes there will be an end.

572
00:32:20,860 --> 00:32:25,410
And I discovered after a
while that, if I pleaded

573
00:32:25,410 --> 00:32:29,650
that I had homework to do, then
there was simply no lesson,

574
00:32:29,650 --> 00:32:31,210
and I could avoid it.

575
00:32:31,210 --> 00:32:34,510
But if I would go in for it,
and after an hour I would say,

576
00:32:34,510 --> 00:32:37,130
Mother, we have played
now for an hour,

577
00:32:37,130 --> 00:32:40,290
don't you think that's enough
for the day, she would tell me,

578
00:32:40,290 --> 00:32:43,800
no, I've made myself free for
you to be with this afternoon,

579
00:32:43,800 --> 00:32:46,740
and you ungrateful
boy want to get away.

580
00:32:46,740 --> 00:32:51,580
And this way, the thing
petered out three times.

581
00:32:51,580 --> 00:32:53,370

And finally, when I was--

582

00:32:53,370 --> 00:32:56,340

I think I was 12 years
old, she realized

583

00:32:56,340 --> 00:33:00,460

that it would be better to
give me to another teacher.

584

00:33:00,460 --> 00:33:04,080

And I had a very patient,
encouraging teacher

585

00:33:04,080 --> 00:33:07,800

and took piano
lessons for something

586

00:33:07,800 --> 00:33:09,720

like three or four years.

587

00:33:09,720 --> 00:33:13,170

And this man was
very encouraging.

588

00:33:13,170 --> 00:33:17,950

And also, this Karl Adler,
of whom I talked earlier--

589

00:33:17,950 --> 00:33:21,210

the man who, as a young man,
gave us a Seder and who was

590

00:33:21,210 --> 00:33:23,820

a friend and an
influence in the family,

591

00:33:23,820 --> 00:33:26,280

really until his
death in New York,

592

00:33:26,280 --> 00:33:31,570

and he died in his

80s in the 1970s--

593

00:33:31,570 --> 00:33:36,870

he was the founder and director
of the music conservatory

594

00:33:36,870 --> 00:33:37,950

in Stuttgart.

595

00:33:37,950 --> 00:33:40,500

And he was quite encouraging.

596

00:33:40,500 --> 00:33:45,900

And so I went along.

597

00:33:45,900 --> 00:33:52,890

No comparison with my younger
sister who already composed

598

00:33:52,890 --> 00:33:58,770

cantatas at age 10, and was
obviously a gifted musician,

599

00:33:58,770 --> 00:34:01,860

and the younger sister
who enthusiastically

600

00:34:01,860 --> 00:34:03,780

learned how to play the cello.

601

00:34:03,780 --> 00:34:07,440

But when I reached--

602

00:34:07,440 --> 00:34:11,227

it must have been the next to
the last grade in high school,

603

00:34:11,227 --> 00:34:12,810

or maybe the last
grade, I said, look,

604

00:34:12,810 --> 00:34:15,719

I really have to prepare now
for my final examinations,

605
00:34:15,719 --> 00:34:20,520
and I have to quit
taking piano lessons.

606
00:34:20,520 --> 00:34:22,800
And my mother understood.

607
00:34:22,800 --> 00:34:24,900
And I was always
somewhat worried

608
00:34:24,900 --> 00:34:28,199
that I would have
regrets later and that I

609
00:34:28,199 --> 00:34:30,150
would long to play the piano.

610
00:34:30,150 --> 00:34:32,565
But I really didn't.

611
00:34:32,565 --> 00:34:33,690
Did you have any favorite--

612
00:34:33,690 --> 00:34:36,840
And I like to listen to music.

613
00:34:36,840 --> 00:34:39,750
Did you have any favorite
pieces that you liked to play?

614
00:34:39,750 --> 00:34:41,340
Was there any
particular one that--

615
00:34:41,340 --> 00:34:43,320
No, it was all
very simple stuff.

616

00:34:43,320 --> 00:34:46,230

Now, I did sing in
the school choir.

617

00:34:46,230 --> 00:34:51,270

And to this day,
I enjoy singing.

618

00:34:51,270 --> 00:34:54,449

Well, also, I am not
a member of any choir

619

00:34:54,449 --> 00:34:57,630

and don't do any formal singing.

620

00:34:57,630 --> 00:34:59,880

But it was funny
the last month, when

621

00:34:59,880 --> 00:35:03,120

we had this grade school
reunion, how we suddenly

622

00:35:03,120 --> 00:35:05,880

started singing songs again.

623

00:35:05,880 --> 00:35:06,840

What about reading?

624

00:35:06,840 --> 00:35:08,310

Did you read on your own?

625

00:35:08,310 --> 00:35:09,060

Oh, yes.

626

00:35:09,060 --> 00:35:10,440

And my great regret now is--

627

00:35:10,440 --> 00:35:11,482

Was that a love of yours?

628

00:35:11,482 --> 00:35:14,160

--that, to my very
deep regret, I simply

629
00:35:14,160 --> 00:35:15,320
don't find time to read.

630
00:35:15,320 --> 00:35:15,820
But--

631
00:35:15,820 --> 00:35:17,730
But as a young student you did?

632
00:35:17,730 --> 00:35:22,020
--I remember that,
for my bar mitzvah,

633
00:35:22,020 --> 00:35:24,570
I received as a gift 66 books.

634
00:35:24,570 --> 00:35:25,980
I remember that number.

635
00:35:25,980 --> 00:35:30,780
And in those years, following
my bar mitzvah and also before,

636
00:35:30,780 --> 00:35:32,940
I was an avid reader.

637
00:35:32,940 --> 00:35:35,730
Who were some of your
favorite authors?

638
00:35:35,730 --> 00:35:39,195
Well, I was--

639
00:35:39,195 --> 00:35:42,300
Or you just read everything
you got your hands on.

640
00:35:42,300 --> 00:35:45,915
I read German classics.

641

00:35:45,915 --> 00:35:48,900

And among the German
classics, my favorite

642

00:35:48,900 --> 00:35:53,760

was Schiller, with whom I
identified as a fellow Swabian,

643

00:35:53,760 --> 00:35:57,390

because he was born not
far from where I was born.

644

00:35:57,390 --> 00:36:00,460

And I read Jewish history.

645

00:36:00,460 --> 00:36:01,830

And--

646

00:36:01,830 --> 00:36:04,403

What language did you-- you
said you took the classics.

647

00:36:04,403 --> 00:36:05,070

Well, the base--

648

00:36:05,070 --> 00:36:06,430

Did you take English in--

649

00:36:06,430 --> 00:36:06,930

Oh, yes.

650

00:36:06,930 --> 00:36:07,597

--the gymnasium?

651

00:36:07,597 --> 00:36:12,210

The base around which everything
else was anchored was Latin--

652

00:36:12,210 --> 00:36:15,540

nine years of Latin
every day, and then

653
00:36:15,540 --> 00:36:17,760
six years of Greek every day.

654
00:36:17,760 --> 00:36:19,260
And I enjoyed it.

655
00:36:19,260 --> 00:36:20,520
And--

656
00:36:20,520 --> 00:36:21,840
But you also took English?

657
00:36:21,840 --> 00:36:23,730
Four years of English.

658
00:36:23,730 --> 00:36:26,830
And we had an excellent
English teacher.

659
00:36:26,830 --> 00:36:30,260
The interesting
thing is this man--

660
00:36:30,260 --> 00:36:31,010
he was a Catholic.

661
00:36:31,010 --> 00:36:34,050
And he was an
outstanding teacher.

662
00:36:34,050 --> 00:36:35,970
And he had a Jewish wife.

663
00:36:35,970 --> 00:36:38,400
So the Nazis forced
him out of office.

664
00:36:38,400 --> 00:36:40,830
And fortunately, he
could come to America.

665

00:36:40,830 --> 00:36:42,030

I lost track of him.

666

00:36:42,030 --> 00:36:43,890

I know that he was
in this country

667

00:36:43,890 --> 00:36:46,740

and ultimately
died as an old man.

668

00:36:46,740 --> 00:36:51,780

But he was replaced with
an absolute incompetent.

669

00:36:51,780 --> 00:36:57,000

And the interesting thing is
that I developed a friendship

670

00:36:57,000 --> 00:37:01,982

with a man now in his early 70s
who was eight grades below me.

671

00:37:01,982 --> 00:37:03,690

I didn't know him when
we went to school.

672

00:37:03,690 --> 00:37:07,980

We found that out in the 1980s
when we met and became friends.

673

00:37:07,980 --> 00:37:13,600

And although he had
in terms of curriculum

674

00:37:13,600 --> 00:37:16,920

the same training
as I in English,

675

00:37:16,920 --> 00:37:20,700

he's totally incapable of
handling anything in English,

676

00:37:20,700 --> 00:37:22,560

reading or listening.

677

00:37:22,560 --> 00:37:28,680

He was here, visited here
honoring my late wife and me

678

00:37:28,680 --> 00:37:31,320

with his and his wife's
presence at our golden wedding

679

00:37:31,320 --> 00:37:32,380

anniversary.

680

00:37:32,380 --> 00:37:35,460

And in terms of language,
he was totally helpless

681

00:37:35,460 --> 00:37:39,540

because of a total
incompetent teacher,

682

00:37:39,540 --> 00:37:42,990

who had replaced this gifted
teacher whom I enjoyed.

683

00:37:42,990 --> 00:37:45,780

684

00:37:45,780 --> 00:37:47,130

You were in gymnasium now.

685

00:37:47,130 --> 00:37:51,420

Did you have any unpleasant
experiences, either in school,

686

00:37:51,420 --> 00:37:56,040

or on the street at that time
during your gymnasium years?

687

00:37:56,040 --> 00:38:03,060

Essentially, no, except

in the last year.

688
00:38:03,060 --> 00:38:05,802
Once the Nazis had come to
power, of course, things got--

689
00:38:05,802 --> 00:38:07,010
Right, and we'll get to that.

690
00:38:07,010 --> 00:38:08,310
--quite bad.

691
00:38:08,310 --> 00:38:10,620
Now, in the period--

692
00:38:10,620 --> 00:38:16,260
in 1932, when there was this
political turmoil in Germany

693
00:38:16,260 --> 00:38:21,150
when, for one reason or another,
the parliament was dissolved,

694
00:38:21,150 --> 00:38:23,130
and there were elections
every few weeks--

695
00:38:23,130 --> 00:38:24,960
And you're 16 years old now.

696
00:38:24,960 --> 00:38:26,790
And I was 16 years old.

697
00:38:26,790 --> 00:38:28,510
And the whole nation was--

698
00:38:28,510 --> 00:38:31,020
there was, of course,
economic depression

699
00:38:31,020 --> 00:38:33,000
and political upheaval.

700
00:38:33,000 --> 00:38:39,060
And there were some
classmates who were

701
00:38:39,060 --> 00:38:40,680
members of the Hitler Youth.

702
00:38:40,680 --> 00:38:44,790

703
00:38:44,790 --> 00:38:48,870
The people are, of
course, extremely hostile

704
00:38:48,870 --> 00:38:50,280
to these people.

705
00:38:50,280 --> 00:38:54,030
And there were some incidents.

706
00:38:54,030 --> 00:39:01,290
But we did not
anticipate that it

707
00:39:01,290 --> 00:39:04,770
would lead to what happened
after Hitler had come to power.

708
00:39:04,770 --> 00:39:07,258
Now, one of the--

709
00:39:07,258 --> 00:39:09,300
Did you yourself have any
particular experiences?

710
00:39:09,300 --> 00:39:09,900
Well, let me--

711
00:39:09,900 --> 00:39:10,050
Yeah.

712

00:39:10,050 --> 00:39:10,930
--tell you now.

713

00:39:10,930 --> 00:39:15,270
For instance, one of
these Hitler Youth members

714

00:39:15,270 --> 00:39:17,400
trained to be a theologian.

715

00:39:17,400 --> 00:39:24,360
And in my native
state, in Gutenberg,

716

00:39:24,360 --> 00:39:29,010
all Protestant theologians
must pass a Hebrew exam.

717

00:39:29,010 --> 00:39:34,110
And if they don't take Hebrew
in high school for four years,

718

00:39:34,110 --> 00:39:36,450
then they have to
take it in college.

719

00:39:36,450 --> 00:39:39,730
And the requirement--
it's really a semester.

720

00:39:39,730 --> 00:39:43,500
So all people who know
they want to study

721

00:39:43,500 --> 00:39:45,630
for the Protestant
theology, if they were

722

00:39:45,630 --> 00:39:48,030
responsible children
of their parents,

723

00:39:48,030 --> 00:39:51,390
tried to relieve their parents
of the financial burden

724
00:39:51,390 --> 00:39:57,390
of another semester and took
elective Hebrew in high school.

725
00:39:57,390 --> 00:40:01,180
So we had a high
school class there,

726
00:40:01,180 --> 00:40:03,240
where I was the only Jew.

727
00:40:03,240 --> 00:40:06,300
And otherwise, there
were mostly Protestants.

728
00:40:06,300 --> 00:40:09,330
There were also a few
Catholics in class.

729
00:40:09,330 --> 00:40:12,870
But it was mostly Protestants,
people who wanted later

730
00:40:12,870 --> 00:40:14,970
to become theologians.

731
00:40:14,970 --> 00:40:19,600
And I remember how
this Hitler Youth

732
00:40:19,600 --> 00:40:23,460
was member one day
put on the blackboard

733
00:40:23,460 --> 00:40:25,470
as we entered the class--

734
00:40:25,470 --> 00:40:28,620
we had class early

in the morning

735

00:40:28,620 --> 00:40:32,520
before the other classes,
from 6:45 or 7:00 or whatnot,

736

00:40:32,520 --> 00:40:35,490
or after regular hours, 12:30.

737

00:40:35,490 --> 00:40:41,340
And he had put on the
blackboard [HEBREW],,

738

00:40:41,340 --> 00:40:47,580
which was the Hebrew translation
of the Nazi [GERMAN],,

739

00:40:47,580 --> 00:40:49,650
Judah perish.

740

00:40:49,650 --> 00:40:53,710
And the Hebrew
teacher, [? Endrut, ?]

741

00:40:53,710 --> 00:40:57,630
he himself, was a very
distinguished theologian.

742

00:40:57,630 --> 00:41:03,190
And he said, that doesn't go
with what we are doing here.

743

00:41:03,190 --> 00:41:03,800
Wipe it out.

744

00:41:03,800 --> 00:41:05,100
I don't want to see that.

745

00:41:05,100 --> 00:41:08,760

746

00:41:08,760 --> 00:41:11,510

So there were
incidents like this.

747
00:41:11,510 --> 00:41:18,260
But we consider
this deep below us.

748
00:41:18,260 --> 00:41:24,080
And while we were sad about it
and of course avoided contact

749
00:41:24,080 --> 00:41:29,820
with these people, until
the Nazis came to power,

750
00:41:29,820 --> 00:41:32,240
this was just something
we had learned

751
00:41:32,240 --> 00:41:36,740
how to live with without taking
it quite as seriously as maybe

752
00:41:36,740 --> 00:41:38,800
we should have taken it.

753
00:41:38,800 --> 00:41:41,210
Were there any experiences
up to this point

754
00:41:41,210 --> 00:41:45,050
where you were
fearful of your life?

755
00:41:45,050 --> 00:41:45,550
No.

756
00:41:45,550 --> 00:41:47,690
No threatening, no
really physically

757
00:41:47,690 --> 00:41:49,900
threatening incidents?

758
00:41:49,900 --> 00:41:50,400
No.

759
00:41:50,400 --> 00:41:51,200
It was more verbal.

760
00:41:51,200 --> 00:41:54,380
That was a more verbal assault.

761
00:41:54,380 --> 00:41:57,020
We grew up with the--

762
00:41:57,020 --> 00:42:02,570
one of my childhood events,
which remained with me all

763
00:42:02,570 --> 00:42:06,950
my life long was the murder
of the German foreign minister

764
00:42:06,950 --> 00:42:09,680
about a half an
hour in June 1922,

765
00:42:09,680 --> 00:42:13,940
when I was not
quite six years old.

766
00:42:13,940 --> 00:42:17,030
This was really a catastrophe.

767
00:42:17,030 --> 00:42:24,740
And while it shocked and
saddened us unbelievably,

768
00:42:24,740 --> 00:42:29,030
we did not anticipate
that this was just

769
00:42:29,030 --> 00:42:30,650
a forerunner of the Holocaust.

770
00:42:30,650 --> 00:42:34,850

771
00:42:34,850 --> 00:42:38,570
Could you just, before we
go on historically, explain

772
00:42:38,570 --> 00:42:41,390
to us what you
mean when you say,

773
00:42:41,390 --> 00:42:44,840
the Jewish community of
the city of Stuttgart--

774
00:42:44,840 --> 00:42:46,760
Yeah, that is something--

775
00:42:46,760 --> 00:42:48,380
well, what that--

776
00:42:48,380 --> 00:42:49,370
--what that meant.

777
00:42:49,370 --> 00:42:51,620
You keep referring to
the Jewish community.

778
00:42:51,620 --> 00:42:55,910
In Germany, unlike
the United States,

779
00:42:55,910 --> 00:43:00,170
even though in
Germany one thinks now

780
00:43:00,170 --> 00:43:03,030
that there's a separation
of church and state,

781
00:43:03,030 --> 00:43:07,540

the churches are
state chartered.

782
00:43:07,540 --> 00:43:14,960
That means the state grants
the religious communities

783
00:43:14,960 --> 00:43:16,940
the right to tax their members.

784
00:43:16,940 --> 00:43:20,270
Now, if they don't like it, then
they can leave the community.

785
00:43:20,270 --> 00:43:24,230
But unless they
actively take the step

786
00:43:24,230 --> 00:43:27,320
of leaving the community,
they are considered

787
00:43:27,320 --> 00:43:29,570
members of the
Protestant Church,

788
00:43:29,570 --> 00:43:32,570
or the Catholic Church,
or the Jewish community

789
00:43:32,570 --> 00:43:36,560
and have to pay church taxes.

790
00:43:36,560 --> 00:43:46,260
And these state
chartered communities one

791
00:43:46,260 --> 00:43:51,500
could perhaps, in terms
of American legal systems,

792
00:43:51,500 --> 00:43:54,365
compare it with a

conservation district.

793

00:43:54,365 --> 00:43:58,680

794

00:43:58,680 --> 00:44:02,120

A soil conservation district
gets chartered by the state

795

00:44:02,120 --> 00:44:05,060

and has the right to
impose taxes on its members

796

00:44:05,060 --> 00:44:07,130

for the purpose of conservation.

797

00:44:07,130 --> 00:44:14,990

And similarly, the state
charters the religious bodies.

798

00:44:14,990 --> 00:44:19,100

Now, the interesting thing in
my native state of Gutenberg

799

00:44:19,100 --> 00:44:23,390

was that, whereas all other
German states after the Nazis

800

00:44:23,390 --> 00:44:27,050

had destroyed the
Jewish communities,

801

00:44:27,050 --> 00:44:29,840

both the people and
also their institutions

802

00:44:29,840 --> 00:44:33,230

and the legal framework,
what happened in Stuttgart

803

00:44:33,230 --> 00:44:36,185

was that there was a--

804

00:44:36,185 --> 00:44:39,230

the man who was
the last executive

805

00:44:39,230 --> 00:44:42,110

secretary of the
Jewish community

806

00:44:42,110 --> 00:44:45,920

was deported to the
concentration camp

807

00:44:45,920 --> 00:44:48,620

in Theresienstadt, in Terezin.

808

00:44:48,620 --> 00:44:50,820

But he survived.

809

00:44:50,820 --> 00:44:53,240

He came back.

810

00:44:53,240 --> 00:44:56,330

And he had been a
judge as a young man.

811

00:44:56,330 --> 00:45:01,220

And of course, he was dismissed
as a judge already in 1933.

812

00:45:01,220 --> 00:45:04,970

But when he returned from
the concentration camp,

813

00:45:04,970 --> 00:45:07,880

on the next day, he made
a public declaration

814

00:45:07,880 --> 00:45:10,950

and said, the Jewish
community of the state--

815

00:45:10,950 --> 00:45:13,250

this was a state-wide affair--

816
00:45:13,250 --> 00:45:15,650
has been illegal.

817
00:45:15,650 --> 00:45:20,240
The Jewish community is a--

818
00:45:20,240 --> 00:45:23,960
literally translated word is,
as a corporation of public law,

819
00:45:23,960 --> 00:45:26,180
has the right to levy taxes.

820
00:45:26,180 --> 00:45:29,990
And I hereby declare
that it exists.

821
00:45:29,990 --> 00:45:33,120
And this was the only
such community in Germany.

822
00:45:33,120 --> 00:45:35,450
Elsewhere, the
Jewish communities

823
00:45:35,450 --> 00:45:38,480
were reestablished with
American and British aid.

824
00:45:38,480 --> 00:45:41,990
And in Gutenberg alone,
it was done by self-help.

825
00:45:41,990 --> 00:45:45,620

826
00:45:45,620 --> 00:45:47,400
All right, let's
now move on to--

827

00:45:47,400 --> 00:45:47,900
And--

828
00:45:47,900 --> 00:45:48,980
Yeah.

829
00:45:48,980 --> 00:45:52,460
And now, I must explain
that these state-chartered

830
00:45:52,460 --> 00:45:57,800
communities had,
strangely enough,

831
00:45:57,800 --> 00:46:03,950
no nationwide
federation prior to 1933

832
00:46:03,950 --> 00:46:07,874
for a number of reasons.

833
00:46:07,874 --> 00:46:11,640
This had been resisted
attempts, and it had failed.

834
00:46:11,640 --> 00:46:16,880
There was a loose confederation
of the four south German states

835
00:46:16,880 --> 00:46:19,820
in which my father, as president
of Gutenberg community,

836
00:46:19,820 --> 00:46:22,520
very actively participated.

837
00:46:22,520 --> 00:46:26,390
And through this, I
got to know the leaders

838
00:46:26,390 --> 00:46:29,480
of the Jewish communities
in the neighboring states.

839
00:46:29,480 --> 00:46:34,280
But it was only 1933 after
the Nazis had come to power

840
00:46:34,280 --> 00:46:37,760
that, nationwide,
the representatives

841
00:46:37,760 --> 00:46:41,510
of the state-chartered
Jewish communities

842
00:46:41,510 --> 00:46:45,830
recognized the need to form
a national organization

843
00:46:45,830 --> 00:46:49,520
for the purpose of
representation and guidance.

844
00:46:49,520 --> 00:46:53,150
And this was-- and
then, of course,

845
00:46:53,150 --> 00:46:59,000
wisely informing this national
union of Confederation

846
00:46:59,000 --> 00:47:03,140
or representative body, whatever
English word you want to use,

847
00:47:03,140 --> 00:47:07,250
the large nationwide Jewish
organizations of the Zionist

848
00:47:07,250 --> 00:47:12,710
organization of Germany and the
Essential Association of German

849
00:47:12,710 --> 00:47:15,590
Citizens of the Jewish

Faith, which was the largest

850

00:47:15,590 --> 00:47:18,230

voluntary Jewish
organization in Germany,

851

00:47:18,230 --> 00:47:23,360

and the veterans
organization were also

852

00:47:23,360 --> 00:47:27,620

invited to be formative
members of this nationwide

853

00:47:27,620 --> 00:47:31,850

representative organization,
which was founded in 1933,

854

00:47:31,850 --> 00:47:36,720

and of which my father became
the executive director.

855

00:47:36,720 --> 00:47:39,830

The president was the
distinguished Berlin Rabbi Leo

856

00:47:39,830 --> 00:47:40,670

Baeck.

857

00:47:40,670 --> 00:47:44,750

And my father was elected
the executive director.

858

00:47:44,750 --> 00:47:46,350

Was your family a Zionist--

859

00:47:46,350 --> 00:47:46,850

No.

860

00:47:46,850 --> 00:47:47,350

--family?

861

00:47:47,350 --> 00:47:52,220

Now, that's an interesting
question to answer.

862

00:47:52,220 --> 00:47:59,180

I don't know how much Zionist
or how much pre-state Israel

863

00:47:59,180 --> 00:48:01,496

history you know.

864

00:48:01,496 --> 00:48:06,970

Under the British mandate
established after World War I,

865

00:48:06,970 --> 00:48:10,790

there was to be a Jewish
agency for Palestine, which

866

00:48:10,790 --> 00:48:13,490

would advise the
mandatory government,

867

00:48:13,490 --> 00:48:16,790

the British government
about the Jewish community

868

00:48:16,790 --> 00:48:18,590

and about Jewish affairs.

869

00:48:18,590 --> 00:48:23,780

And until the 1929, this was
entirely a Zionist affair.

870

00:48:23,780 --> 00:48:29,450

In 1929, under the leadership
of the great American Jewish

871

00:48:29,450 --> 00:48:34,730

liberal leader Louis
Marshall, the Jewish agency

872

00:48:34,730 --> 00:48:38,780

was enlarged to
include non-Zionists.

873
00:48:38,780 --> 00:48:42,650
And the various bodies
of the Jewish agency

874
00:48:42,650 --> 00:48:46,760
became 50% Zionist
and 50% non-Zionist.

875
00:48:46,760 --> 00:48:51,050
And then, again, it was
broken down by countries.

876
00:48:51,050 --> 00:48:53,210
Of course, the large
American community

877
00:48:53,210 --> 00:48:55,400
had the largest representation.

878
00:48:55,400 --> 00:49:01,670
And other communities had
numbered representatives.

879
00:49:01,670 --> 00:49:07,850
And my father became one of
the non-Zionist delegates

880
00:49:07,850 --> 00:49:14,900
to the Jewish agency,
effective in August 20, 1929.

881
00:49:14,900 --> 00:49:16,400
He came back from there.

882
00:49:16,400 --> 00:49:19,970
There was a simultaneous
world Zionist congress

883
00:49:19,970 --> 00:49:23,350
at which Jewish Louis

Marshall engineered

884

00:49:23,350 --> 00:49:28,010
this enlargement of the
Jewish agency in August 1929.

885

00:49:28,010 --> 00:49:31,460
And my father came back
from Jewish Switzerland

886

00:49:31,460 --> 00:49:34,595
for my bar mitzvah.

887

00:49:34,595 --> 00:49:37,700
This happened all just a few
days before my bar mitzvah.

888

00:49:37,700 --> 00:49:40,340

889

00:49:40,340 --> 00:49:43,850
Is there anything else you
wanted to add about your years

890

00:49:43,850 --> 00:49:47,930
up to 1933, up to '33.

891

00:49:47,930 --> 00:49:52,440
Very important was, of course,
the German Jewish youth

892

00:49:52,440 --> 00:49:52,940
movement.

893

00:49:52,940 --> 00:49:57,710

894

00:49:57,710 --> 00:50:03,470
The German youth
movement was brewing,

895

00:50:03,470 --> 00:50:07,070

was established
before World War I.

896
00:50:07,070 --> 00:50:12,890
And the charter even,
so to say, happened

897
00:50:12,890 --> 00:50:20,370
before World War I on a mountain
called the Hoher Meissner where

898
00:50:20,370 --> 00:50:22,670
the representatives
of the German Jews

899
00:50:22,670 --> 00:50:30,800
vowed that they would shape
their lives independently

900
00:50:30,800 --> 00:50:33,470
and that, at their
joint meetings,

901
00:50:33,470 --> 00:50:36,290
there would be no
alcohol and tobacco.

902
00:50:36,290 --> 00:50:46,450
And during and right
after World War I,

903
00:50:46,450 --> 00:50:53,410
some Jewish leaders established
a German Jewish organization.

904
00:50:53,410 --> 00:50:58,750
It was felt both for
reasons of Jewish study

905
00:50:58,750 --> 00:51:03,730
and Jewish observance, and
to some extent also because

906

00:51:03,730 --> 00:51:09,100
of anti-Semitic exclusiveness
of certain youth organizations,

907
00:51:09,100 --> 00:51:12,070
that there should be
a German Jewish youth

908
00:51:12,070 --> 00:51:17,680
organization, which would
definitely be German oriented.

909
00:51:17,680 --> 00:51:22,660
And when I was young, this was
an existence that was not--

910
00:51:22,660 --> 00:51:25,630
One of the early members,
whom you may know

911
00:51:25,630 --> 00:51:28,360
and whom certainly my children
and grandchildren know,

912
00:51:28,360 --> 00:51:30,920
is Franz Wolf, our
good friend who

913
00:51:30,920 --> 00:51:33,310
this week will be 96 years old.

914
00:51:33,310 --> 00:51:36,100
He was one of the early
members of this organization.

915
00:51:36,100 --> 00:51:38,380
And I still like to
listen to his stories

916
00:51:38,380 --> 00:51:43,210
about what things were like
around the time I was born.

917

00:51:43,210 --> 00:51:44,560
Did you eventually join it?

918
00:51:44,560 --> 00:51:45,220
Oh, yes.

919
00:51:45,220 --> 00:51:51,220
I joined at the time
of my bar mitzvah.

920
00:51:51,220 --> 00:51:56,500
And typically, on Sundays,
we would go hiking.

921
00:51:56,500 --> 00:51:59,590
And we would meet
one evening a week,

922
00:51:59,590 --> 00:52:03,130
and read and discuss things.

923
00:52:03,130 --> 00:52:03,946
Coed, or--

924
00:52:03,946 --> 00:52:04,446
No.

925
00:52:04,446 --> 00:52:05,340
No.

926
00:52:05,340 --> 00:52:10,570
The groups, as the
smallest unit was called,

927
00:52:10,570 --> 00:52:12,670
was not coeducation.

928
00:52:12,670 --> 00:52:17,770
Now, we would have meetings,
group to group, with girls.

929
00:52:17,770 --> 00:52:20,770

And one of the funniest
things we ever did

930
00:52:20,770 --> 00:52:24,460
was, a few years later
when our group of boys

931
00:52:24,460 --> 00:52:27,490
met with a group of
girls from Nuremberg.

932
00:52:27,490 --> 00:52:32,080
And these were, of
course, people our age.

933
00:52:32,080 --> 00:52:36,880
But many years later,
when I first met my wife,

934
00:52:36,880 --> 00:52:39,220
it was interesting
to find out how

935
00:52:39,220 --> 00:52:43,150
she knew all the girls with
whom I had met at that time.

936
00:52:43,150 --> 00:52:46,960
What about your social
life before 1933?

937
00:52:46,960 --> 00:52:49,780
Did you socialize a lot
with these young girls

938
00:52:49,780 --> 00:52:50,640
that you mentioned?

939
00:52:50,640 --> 00:52:52,060
Oh, well, sure.

940
00:52:52,060 --> 00:52:58,930
I mean, I had quite a

number of girlfriends.

941
00:52:58,930 --> 00:53:00,400
Well, one interesting--

942
00:53:00,400 --> 00:53:01,720
Was it always in big groups?

943
00:53:01,720 --> 00:53:03,460
Or did you have
to be chaperoned?

944
00:53:03,460 --> 00:53:04,175
Or could you be--

945
00:53:04,175 --> 00:53:04,800
No, no, no, no.

946
00:53:04,800 --> 00:53:04,940
We--

947
00:53:04,940 --> 00:53:06,860
You could have the
freedom to be together?

948
00:53:06,860 --> 00:53:07,360
Oh, yes.

949
00:53:07,360 --> 00:53:07,930
Oh, yes.

950
00:53:07,930 --> 00:53:11,140

951
00:53:11,140 --> 00:53:14,380
And when you were with
them, where would you go?

952
00:53:14,380 --> 00:53:19,135
Well, we would go on walks.

953

00:53:19,135 --> 00:53:27,496

Or we would talk together,
or play something together.

954

00:53:27,496 --> 00:53:30,180

Or we would meet in groups.

955

00:53:30,180 --> 00:53:32,430

So you were an active member
of this youth in Germany.

956

00:53:32,430 --> 00:53:33,130

Oh, yes.

957

00:53:33,130 --> 00:53:34,870

Oh, yes.

958

00:53:34,870 --> 00:53:37,450

Now, as far as social
life is concerned,

959

00:53:37,450 --> 00:53:43,300

one interesting
thing was, in 1932,

960

00:53:43,300 --> 00:53:48,040

in the next to the last grade
of high school, that was really

961

00:53:48,040 --> 00:53:53,530

the year when you were expected
to have dancing lessons.

962

00:53:53,530 --> 00:53:59,830

And that was organized
and chaperoned by parents.

963

00:53:59,830 --> 00:54:05,080

And when my mother
received the phone call

964

00:54:05,080 --> 00:54:11,140

inviting me to join that group,

my parents and grandparents

965

00:54:11,140 --> 00:54:16,240
were absolutely exuberant,
because a generation earlier,

966

00:54:16,240 --> 00:54:20,980
my father-- despite his
distinguished record in school

967

00:54:20,980 --> 00:54:23,860
and all his friendships,
he was excluded

968

00:54:23,860 --> 00:54:25,390
from the dancing lessons.

969

00:54:25,390 --> 00:54:27,850
That was in 1901.

970

00:54:27,850 --> 00:54:28,888
But in 1900--

971

00:54:28,888 --> 00:54:30,180
Excluded because he was Jewish?

972

00:54:30,180 --> 00:54:32,980
Yes, definitely.

973

00:54:32,980 --> 00:54:41,060
As of 1901, the class that
organized dancing lessons

974

00:54:41,060 --> 00:54:45,070
in the [PLACE NAME]
gymnasium, Jews were excluded.

975

00:54:45,070 --> 00:54:48,530
But in 1932, this
was not the case.

976

00:54:48,530 --> 00:54:50,740

And I remember how--

977

00:54:50,740 --> 00:54:55,000
now, this was already at a time
when the Nazism was rampant.

978

00:54:55,000 --> 00:55:00,160
But the parents said, now
we are moving forward.

979

00:55:00,160 --> 00:55:03,100
A generation ago,
this was not possible.

980

00:55:03,100 --> 00:55:08,260
Now you are part of this
mixed dancing group.

981

00:55:08,260 --> 00:55:15,400

982

00:55:15,400 --> 00:55:20,690
Well, we were still dancing
when Hitler came to power.

983

00:55:20,690 --> 00:55:22,630
But that was the end then.

984

00:55:22,630 --> 00:55:26,140
Did you feel very German?

985

00:55:26,140 --> 00:55:27,490
Oh, yes.

986

00:55:27,490 --> 00:55:30,370
You felt very Jewish and
very German at the same time.

987

00:55:30,370 --> 00:55:31,240
Very much so.

988

00:55:31,240 --> 00:55:39,930

989

00:55:39,930 --> 00:55:45,120

All right, now it is 1932, '33.

990

00:55:45,120 --> 00:55:51,675

And what was the first
change that you remember,

991

00:55:51,675 --> 00:55:56,670

that developed in
regard to Nazism?

992

00:55:56,670 --> 00:56:09,690

Well, when Hitler was appointed
chancellor, my father I think

993

00:56:09,690 --> 00:56:11,460

was still--

994

00:56:11,460 --> 00:56:16,500

my father suffered acute
appendicitis early January,

995

00:56:16,500 --> 00:56:21,750

1933, and had to be
emergency operated

996

00:56:21,750 --> 00:56:26,070

in a resort town in the
Alps, and was hospitalized.

997

00:56:26,070 --> 00:56:27,750

There were some complications.

998

00:56:27,750 --> 00:56:32,160

He was hospitalized for
an unusually long period.

999

00:56:32,160 --> 00:56:35,890

As I recall, as of
January 30, 1933,

1000

00:56:35,890 --> 00:56:38,940

he was still in that
alpine hospital.

1001

00:56:38,940 --> 00:56:45,870

And we were, of course,
absolutely shocked about what

1002

00:56:45,870 --> 00:56:47,820

was happening.

1003

00:56:47,820 --> 00:56:56,580

But we did not expect
the way things were

1004

00:56:56,580 --> 00:56:58,860

developing almost immediately.

1005

00:56:58,860 --> 00:57:01,620

1006

00:57:01,620 --> 00:57:04,470

There were the elections then,
of course, which will probably

1007

00:57:04,470 --> 00:57:08,460

rigged, giving the Nazis,
together with their partners,

1008

00:57:08,460 --> 00:57:10,950

a 51% majority.

1009

00:57:10,950 --> 00:57:12,718

But interestingly
enough, at that time,

1010

00:57:12,718 --> 00:57:14,010

there was still enough freedom.

1011

00:57:14,010 --> 00:57:18,300

There was a committee
group in Stuttgart

1012
00:57:18,300 --> 00:57:22,170
which had showed a play, which
mocked the election results.

1013
00:57:22,170 --> 00:57:24,800
And they got away with
it-- not much longer.

1014
00:57:24,800 --> 00:57:29,640
But as of March 1933,
this was still the case.

1015
00:57:29,640 --> 00:57:34,110
At the end of March 1933,
there was pogrom in one

1016
00:57:34,110 --> 00:57:38,640
of the small Jewish communities
in the northern part

1017
00:57:38,640 --> 00:57:43,380
of the state where we
had distant relatives.

1018
00:57:43,380 --> 00:57:45,720
I think one person was killed.

1019
00:57:45,720 --> 00:57:49,300
And a third cousin of mine,
with whom I'm still in touch--

1020
00:57:49,300 --> 00:57:50,580
she lives in Israel--

1021
00:57:50,580 --> 00:57:53,190
was severely beaten.

1022
00:57:53,190 --> 00:57:54,180
And--

1023
00:57:54,180 --> 00:57:57,090

How did you hear about that?

1024
00:57:57,090 --> 00:57:58,680
Well, I heard from my father.

1025
00:57:58,680 --> 00:58:00,780
Now, how my father--

1026
00:58:00,780 --> 00:58:03,210
my father obviously
knew it ex officio,

1027
00:58:03,210 --> 00:58:05,280
as president of
the high council.

1028
00:58:05,280 --> 00:58:08,010
And whether he you
heard by telephone

1029
00:58:08,010 --> 00:58:09,195
or whether somebody came--

1030
00:58:09,195 --> 00:58:11,820
they had not used the telephone,
and took the train, and came--

1031
00:58:11,820 --> 00:58:13,320
I just don't remember.

1032
00:58:13,320 --> 00:58:19,500
But we were very deeply shocked.

1033
00:58:19,500 --> 00:58:22,170
And then a week later
came the boycott.

1034
00:58:22,170 --> 00:58:26,070
And that, of course,
was a terrible event

1035
00:58:26,070 --> 00:58:31,410

when all Jewish businesses
were marked Juden.

1036
00:58:31,410 --> 00:58:37,180
And stormtroopers stood in front
trying to dissuade clientele

1037
00:58:37,180 --> 00:58:38,700
from entering.

1038
00:58:38,700 --> 00:58:45,660
And also, lawyers' and doctors'
offices were so marked.

1039
00:58:45,660 --> 00:58:47,100
And--

1040
00:58:47,100 --> 00:58:50,550
As a 17-year-old boy, what
were your thoughts then when

1041
00:58:50,550 --> 00:58:53,496
you would see these markings?

1042
00:58:53,496 --> 00:58:57,660
Well, our thoughts were
thoughts of defiance.

1043
00:58:57,660 --> 00:59:03,870
We were very, very
upset about it.

1044
00:59:03,870 --> 00:59:13,470
And we thought we were in for
a very, very difficult period

1045
00:59:13,470 --> 00:59:15,690
of hatred and persecution.

1046
00:59:15,690 --> 00:59:18,960
But we did not
anticipate that there

1047

00:59:18,960 --> 00:59:20,520
would be wholesale murder.

1048

00:59:20,520 --> 00:59:22,890
And we did not
anticipate that it

1049

00:59:22,890 --> 00:59:25,500
would become totally
impossible for any Jew

1050

00:59:25,500 --> 00:59:27,490
to make a living in Germany.

1051

00:59:27,490 --> 00:59:34,860
I remember how, in December 1937
when I was home on a vacation,

1052

00:59:34,860 --> 00:59:38,460
my father said, you
have to get out.

1053

00:59:38,460 --> 00:59:41,580
Even as a farmer, you cannot
expect to make a living

1054

00:59:41,580 --> 00:59:42,540
in Germany.

1055

00:59:42,540 --> 00:59:45,720
If you have a farm
someplace, they

1056

00:59:45,720 --> 00:59:47,995
will come and burn
down your farmstead--

1057

00:59:47,995 --> 00:59:50,610
that there is no
more hope of having

1058

00:59:50,610 --> 00:59:55,470

any kind of economic future
for any young person.

1059
00:59:55,470 --> 01:00:01,140
The only hope is that old
people may be permitted to live

1060
01:00:01,140 --> 01:00:06,210
on their pension, or whatever
they own, their savings,

1061
01:00:06,210 --> 01:00:09,480
because they can't take
them with them, but no ...

1062
01:00:09,480 --> 01:00:13,830
The idea that one can
build up existence here

1063
01:00:13,830 --> 01:00:16,440
in this country for
a young Jewish person

1064
01:00:16,440 --> 01:00:20,890
is no longer realistic.

1065
01:00:20,890 --> 01:00:24,425
Let's go back to 1933 and,
you said, the boycott.

1066
01:00:24,425 --> 01:00:25,425
Now, you were in school.

1067
01:00:25,425 --> 01:00:27,810
You were 17 year old.

1068
01:00:27,810 --> 01:00:32,220
Many of the teachers would
start displaying swastikas

1069
01:00:32,220 --> 01:00:42,543
and start all kinds of Nazi
and anti-Semitic teaching.

1070
01:00:42,543 --> 01:00:43,960
While you're sitting
in the class?

1071
01:00:43,960 --> 01:00:44,480
Oh, yes.

1072
01:00:44,480 --> 01:00:45,850
Oh, yes.

1073
01:00:45,850 --> 01:00:51,290
And at first, once in a
while, we were asked to.

1074
01:00:51,290 --> 01:00:54,190

1075
01:00:54,190 --> 01:00:59,830
But that became more
and more limited.

1076
01:00:59,830 --> 01:01:03,490
And this was a difficult year.

1077
01:01:03,490 --> 01:01:07,090
And it was shocking how
many of the teachers

1078
01:01:07,090 --> 01:01:10,880
keeled over and became Nazis.

1079
01:01:10,880 --> 01:01:13,370
And then, of course,
it was a year later

1080
01:01:13,370 --> 01:01:16,490
that I took the final exams.

1081
01:01:16,490 --> 01:01:19,220
And--

1082

01:01:19,220 --> 01:01:21,250

Were you penalized
academically--

1083

01:01:21,250 --> 01:01:21,750

Yes.

1084

01:01:21,750 --> 01:01:24,236

--for being a Jew in
that year, in '33?

1085

01:01:24,236 --> 01:01:25,400

Very much so.

1086

01:01:25,400 --> 01:01:29,600

Now, the first very
interesting thing

1087

01:01:29,600 --> 01:01:35,420

was that, for the
graduating class,

1088

01:01:35,420 --> 01:01:37,970

there was an award in history.

1089

01:01:37,970 --> 01:01:41,510

And it had been quite clear
that this award would go to me.

1090

01:01:41,510 --> 01:01:44,360

And it was not awarded.

1091

01:01:44,360 --> 01:01:50,720

And the more serious
thing was that the Nazis

1092

01:01:50,720 --> 01:01:53,720

decided that there
were too many people

1093

01:01:53,720 --> 01:01:56,270

wanting to go to universities.

1094
01:01:56,270 --> 01:02:01,235
The idea in this country, we're
going four years of college,

1095
01:02:01,235 --> 01:02:05,870
has gained ever wider
acceptance in this country.

1096
01:02:05,870 --> 01:02:09,050
In Germany, as of 1933--

1097
01:02:09,050 --> 01:02:11,090
or even as of 1932.

1098
01:02:11,090 --> 01:02:12,530
This was not just the Nazis.

1099
01:02:12,530 --> 01:02:15,320
There was the idea
that too many people

1100
01:02:15,320 --> 01:02:17,930
wanted to become academicians.

1101
01:02:17,930 --> 01:02:20,690
Too many people wanted
to go to universities.

1102
01:02:20,690 --> 01:02:23,780
And therefore, the Nazis said
graduation from high school

1103
01:02:23,780 --> 01:02:28,070
is not enough to be
admitted to a university.

1104
01:02:28,070 --> 01:02:35,710
We have to further limit
admission to universities.

1105
01:02:35,710 --> 01:02:37,266

Contact reference@ushmm.org for further information about this collection