

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:04,790

2

00:00:04,790 --> 00:00:08,210

This is tape 4,  
side A. And you had

3

00:00:08,210 --> 00:00:12,190

said that you had come to  
Washington in June of 1947

4

00:00:12,190 --> 00:00:13,640

on a temporary  
assignment to work

5

00:00:13,640 --> 00:00:16,850

for the Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the United

6

00:00:16,850 --> 00:00:18,445

Nations.

7

00:00:18,445 --> 00:00:19,820

And for how long  
did you do that?

8

00:00:19,820 --> 00:00:22,190

I had a six-month  
appointment which

9

00:00:22,190 --> 00:00:24,580

was extended to  
another three months,

10

00:00:24,580 --> 00:00:27,320

so I was there for nine months.

11

00:00:27,320 --> 00:00:30,170

And my principal  
accomplishment there

12

00:00:30,170 --> 00:00:33,020  
was that I developed  
a production index

13  
00:00:33,020 --> 00:00:37,960  
numbers which are still being  
used by FAO to this day.

14  
00:00:37,960 --> 00:00:40,760  
And a minor thing.

15  
00:00:40,760 --> 00:00:44,750  
If I may be a little bit vain,  
is that ordinarily, everything

16  
00:00:44,750 --> 00:00:48,710  
that goes on professionally  
at FAO is anonymous,

17  
00:00:48,710 --> 00:00:56,540  
but when many years later, the  
bulletin was written explaining

18  
00:00:56,540 --> 00:01:00,830  
the FAO production  
index number system,

19  
00:01:00,830 --> 00:01:03,770  
I was given credit for having  
developed them by name.

20  
00:01:03,770 --> 00:01:06,980

21  
00:01:06,980 --> 00:01:12,280  
So in March 1948, I  
entered the services

22  
00:01:12,280 --> 00:01:14,380  
of the Agriculture Department.

23  
00:01:14,380 --> 00:01:18,430  
My first job there was what was

called the Cooperative Research

24

00:01:18,430 --> 00:01:22,210  
and Service Division, which  
later became the Farmer

25

00:01:22,210 --> 00:01:24,070  
Cooperative Service.

26

00:01:24,070 --> 00:01:30,580  
I was in the dairy division,  
and over a two and a half year

27

00:01:30,580 --> 00:01:38,500  
period, I first worked on  
problems of seasonal variation

28

00:01:38,500 --> 00:01:41,160  
in milk production.

29

00:01:41,160 --> 00:01:44,590  
Milk production  
varies a great deal

30

00:01:44,590 --> 00:01:49,090  
with a flush season in  
late spring, early summer.

31

00:01:49,090 --> 00:01:52,600  
Then beginning in  
July, production

32

00:01:52,600 --> 00:01:54,310  
tapers off and diminishes.

33

00:01:54,310 --> 00:01:59,170  
And for milk drinkers  
who tend to drink milk

34

00:01:59,170 --> 00:02:02,210  
evenly around a year  
or almost evenly,

35

00:02:02,210 --> 00:02:06,130

this creates a marketing  
and a pricing problem.

36

00:02:06,130 --> 00:02:08,740

All kinds of plants  
have been developed

37

00:02:08,740 --> 00:02:12,420

to relatively even  
out production,

38

00:02:12,420 --> 00:02:15,760

and I worked on that  
problem for a while.

39

00:02:15,760 --> 00:02:19,090

And then I was given  
the opportunity

40

00:02:19,090 --> 00:02:22,110

to work on a project  
which I could

41

00:02:22,110 --> 00:02:24,670

use for my doctor's thesis.

42

00:02:24,670 --> 00:02:28,050

And the title of  
my doctor's thesis

43

00:02:28,050 --> 00:02:32,050

is the "Role of  
Farmer's Cooperatives,

44

00:02:32,050 --> 00:02:35,980

of Agricultural Cooperatives and  
of the Agricultural Marketing

45

00:02:35,980 --> 00:02:37,930

Agreement Act."

46

00:02:37,930 --> 00:02:41,960

And it was not published  
because in the meantime,

47

00:02:41,960 --> 00:02:46,150

the Korean War started and  
other things became important.

48

00:02:46,150 --> 00:02:49,810

But I did write my thesis and  
did earn my doctor's degree,

49

00:02:49,810 --> 00:02:53,560

went back to Minnesota for  
my final oral examination

50

00:02:53,560 --> 00:03:06,460

in July 1950.

51

00:03:06,460 --> 00:03:11,050

In the fall of  
1950, I changed jobs

52

00:03:11,050 --> 00:03:13,150

within the  
Agriculture Department

53

00:03:13,150 --> 00:03:16,150

and went into the  
sugar division.

54

00:03:16,150 --> 00:03:23,320

And there was an interruption  
which I shall come back later.

55

00:03:23,320 --> 00:03:28,510

I worked in the sugar  
division for almost 10 years.

56

00:03:28,510 --> 00:03:34,030

This was an interesting  
program which

57

00:03:34,030 --> 00:03:40,840  
some economic purists rejected  
because it was a quota scheme.

58  
00:03:40,840 --> 00:03:43,000  
Actually, however,  
from the standpoint

59  
00:03:43,000 --> 00:03:50,620  
of relatively liberalized trade,  
after the Congress saw fit

60  
00:03:50,620 --> 00:03:54,630  
not to renew this  
legislation in 1974,

61  
00:03:54,630 --> 00:03:58,750  
the United States became  
much more self-sufficient,

62  
00:03:58,750 --> 00:04:04,850  
and we imported much less sugar  
than we did under this Sugar

63  
00:04:04,850 --> 00:04:08,740  
Act, which was the law of  
the land with an interruption

64  
00:04:08,740 --> 00:04:12,340  
from 1934 to 1974.

65  
00:04:12,340 --> 00:04:20,110  
Well, during the Korean War,  
I temporarily left agriculture

66  
00:04:20,110 --> 00:04:23,470  
and worked in the Office  
of price stabilization

67  
00:04:23,470 --> 00:04:28,240  
from December '51  
until April '53.

68

00:04:28,240 --> 00:04:30,950

69

00:04:30,950 --> 00:04:35,110

And when the Eisenhower  
administration closed down

70

00:04:35,110 --> 00:04:40,330

this program, I had an extremely  
painful period of unemployment

71

00:04:40,330 --> 00:04:43,150

in the spring of 1953.

72

00:04:43,150 --> 00:04:48,160

I returned to agriculture,  
to the Bureau of Agricultural

73

00:04:48,160 --> 00:04:51,520

Economics, in a  
job for which I had

74

00:04:51,520 --> 00:04:57,030

to take a very painful  
cut in grade and salary.

75

00:04:57,030 --> 00:05:03,590

But after three  
or four months, I

76

00:05:03,590 --> 00:05:10,630

could return to the sugar  
division, and from January 1954

77

00:05:10,630 --> 00:05:17,290

until June 1963, I  
continued my work

78

00:05:17,290 --> 00:05:20,770

on the administration  
of the Sugar Act.

79

00:05:20,770 --> 00:05:28,330

In mid-1964, I transferred to  
the Economic Research Service

80  
00:05:28,330 --> 00:05:34,720  
and started working on  
problems of agricultural trade

81  
00:05:34,720 --> 00:05:37,420  
and agricultural development.

82  
00:05:37,420 --> 00:05:41,890  
And I also did some price  
index number work again.

83  
00:05:41,890 --> 00:05:45,250

84  
00:05:45,250 --> 00:05:50,230  
From that job, I transferred  
to the Foreign Agricultural

85  
00:05:50,230 --> 00:05:56,710  
Service at the end of 1973  
in order to be appointed

86  
00:05:56,710 --> 00:06:00,760  
agricultural attachÃ© on  
the United States mission

87  
00:06:00,760 --> 00:06:04,240  
to the Organization for Economic  
Co-operation and Development

88  
00:06:04,240 --> 00:06:05,980  
in Paris.

89  
00:06:05,980 --> 00:06:11,320  
And I went to Paris  
the Sunday evening

90  
00:06:11,320 --> 00:06:14,770  
after Thanksgiving 1973.



91

00:06:14,770 --> 00:06:19,420

And my family came two months  
later, that is, my wife

92

00:06:19,420 --> 00:06:21,710

and our youngest daughter Naomi.

93

00:06:21,710 --> 00:06:25,840

The older three children by  
that time were out of the nest.

94

00:06:25,840 --> 00:06:30,430

And I had three years  
and eight months

95

00:06:30,430 --> 00:06:36,310

of an extremely interesting  
assignment in Paris.

96

00:06:36,310 --> 00:06:39,700

We returned in August 1977.

97

00:06:39,700 --> 00:06:43,270

I continued to work in the  
Foreign Agricultural Service,

98

00:06:43,270 --> 00:06:46,515

mostly in problems of  
liaison with the OECD,

99

00:06:46,515 --> 00:06:49,270

the abbreviated name for the  
Organization for Economic

100

00:06:49,270 --> 00:06:52,120

Co-operation and Development.

101

00:06:52,120 --> 00:07:02,110

And I retired in February 1982.

102

00:07:02,110 --> 00:07:06,280

And what are your children's

names, and when were they born?

103

00:07:06,280 --> 00:07:08,800

Our oldest daughter

[PERSONAL NAME]

104

00:07:08,800 --> 00:07:17,020

born in February of 1947, is  
our only Minnesota-born child.

105

00:07:17,020 --> 00:07:23,230

She was five months old when  
her mother brought her here

106

00:07:23,230 --> 00:07:27,130

to Washington as a little baby.

107

00:07:27,130 --> 00:07:30,790

And we had some problems  
having a second child,

108

00:07:30,790 --> 00:07:37,570

but finally, after  
almost 5 and 1/2 years,

109

00:07:37,570 --> 00:07:42,430

Deborah was born in August 1950.

110

00:07:42,430 --> 00:07:47,380

And then there was a  
very short interval.

111

00:07:47,380 --> 00:07:50,260

20 months later,  
Daniel was born,

112

00:07:50,260 --> 00:07:54,310

our only son, in March 1954.

113

00:07:54,310 --> 00:07:57,040

And then developed  
a 7 and 1/2 year

114

00:07:57,040 --> 00:08:02,170

gap, a period during which  
my wife had two miscarriages,

115

00:08:02,170 --> 00:08:08,260

until Naomi was born  
in September, 1961.

116

00:08:08,260 --> 00:08:10,960

Did you ever serve in the  
United States military?

117

00:08:10,960 --> 00:08:11,560

Oh, yes.

118

00:08:11,560 --> 00:08:20,150

I was in the Army from  
September 1943 until March 1946.

119

00:08:20,150 --> 00:08:27,940

I was naturalized while on  
post-induction furlough.

120

00:08:27,940 --> 00:08:33,159

and I was sent to the  
Corps Military Police

121

00:08:33,159 --> 00:08:35,559

and had to work  
as an interpreter

122

00:08:35,559 --> 00:08:41,159

with prisoners of war who  
had been captured in Africa.

123

00:08:41,159 --> 00:08:44,430

That was Rommel's Africa Korps.

124

00:08:44,430 --> 00:08:47,230

They were used for  
agricultural labor

125

00:08:47,230 --> 00:08:52,810  
in the Civil Service Command,  
which was the area going as far

126  
00:08:52,810 --> 00:08:53,980  
west as Colorado.

127  
00:08:53,980 --> 00:08:59,130  
I spent most of my time  
in military service

128  
00:08:59,130 --> 00:09:02,365  
there at prisoner of war  
camps in Colorado and Wyoming.

129  
00:09:02,365 --> 00:09:05,210

130  
00:09:05,210 --> 00:09:07,660  
They needed  
interpreters so badly

131  
00:09:07,660 --> 00:09:11,590  
at the time in the fall  
of 1943 that I was not

132  
00:09:11,590 --> 00:09:14,680  
given any basic  
training, and in order

133  
00:09:14,680 --> 00:09:18,220  
to do something for  
my military education,

134  
00:09:18,220 --> 00:09:22,840  
I applied for training  
in military government.

135  
00:09:22,840 --> 00:09:27,000  
And I was sent to Fort  
Custer in southern Michigan

136  
00:09:27,000 --> 00:09:32,000

where I had a short course  
in military government.

137  
00:09:32,000 --> 00:09:35,230  
It was quite an  
interesting course

138  
00:09:35,230 --> 00:09:39,310  
which I enjoyed taking,  
and among my teachers

139  
00:09:39,310 --> 00:09:42,850  
was a man who later  
for many years

140  
00:09:42,850 --> 00:09:46,360  
served as United States  
Senator from Kentucky, Senator

141  
00:09:46,360 --> 00:09:50,460  
Cooper, who later at  
the end of his long life

142  
00:09:50,460 --> 00:09:54,820  
served as United States  
ambassador to East Germany.

143  
00:09:54,820 --> 00:10:00,070  
And I met him in Paris one  
time when he was on his way

144  
00:10:00,070 --> 00:10:03,160  
back from Berlin to  
the United States.

145  
00:10:03,160 --> 00:10:06,910  
It was a very sentimental  
and emotional meeting

146  
00:10:06,910 --> 00:10:12,750  
between teacher and  
student many years earlier.

147

00:10:12,750 --> 00:10:15,910  
After I had finished the  
military government course,

148  
00:10:15,910 --> 00:10:22,090  
I went back to prisoner-of-war  
camp interpreter work,

149  
00:10:22,090 --> 00:10:32,290  
and in 1944, the  
army was looking

150  
00:10:32,290 --> 00:10:39,520  
for instructors in convalescent  
work in the medical department.

151  
00:10:39,520 --> 00:10:42,160

152  
00:10:42,160 --> 00:10:47,230  
I applied and was  
appointed instructor

153  
00:10:47,230 --> 00:10:50,980  
to teach farm management  
and agricultural economics

154  
00:10:50,980 --> 00:10:54,600  
to convalescing  
soldiers at Camp Carson,

155  
00:10:54,600 --> 00:10:57,370  
Colorado in Colorado  
Springs, which

156  
00:10:57,370 --> 00:11:01,780  
was my last, very pleasant  
assignment in the army.

157  
00:11:01,780 --> 00:11:04,450  
And I do want to say here,  
it was made still more

158

00:11:04,450 --> 00:11:10,080  
pleasant by the proximity of  
one of my parents' best friends,

159  
00:11:10,080 --> 00:11:14,050  
the pediatrician, our childhood  
pediatrician, Dr. Otto

160  
00:11:14,050 --> 00:11:21,910  
Einstein, and his wife Jenny,  
who lived in a sanatorium

161  
00:11:21,910 --> 00:11:25,810  
outside of Colorado Springs.

162  
00:11:25,810 --> 00:11:29,710  
I want to divert here  
from my own life story

163  
00:11:29,710 --> 00:11:31,990  
just to save one  
or two sentences

164  
00:11:31,990 --> 00:11:33,845  
about this remarkable man.

165  
00:11:33,845 --> 00:11:38,200  
After having spent a lifetime  
as a very popular pediatrician

166  
00:11:38,200 --> 00:11:45,410  
in Stuttgart, he got out of  
Germany by going to Nicaragua,

167  
00:11:45,410 --> 00:11:49,150  
into the interior of  
Nicaragua for one year,

168  
00:11:49,150 --> 00:11:51,940  
substituting for a  
missionary physician

169  
00:11:51,940 --> 00:11:54,440

who went on home leave.

170  
00:11:54,440 --> 00:11:57,760  
And then he came to  
the United States

171  
00:11:57,760 --> 00:12:03,870  
on the affidavit of his  
stepson and his wife's son,

172  
00:12:03,870 --> 00:12:05,860  
Hans [? Lehman. ?]

173  
00:12:05,860 --> 00:12:10,210  
And he settled in  
Colorado, became

174  
00:12:10,210 --> 00:12:12,490  
an institutional physician.

175  
00:12:12,490 --> 00:12:18,130  
And around the age of 70, he  
studied for his Colorado State

176  
00:12:18,130 --> 00:12:23,410  
Board exams and open  
a part-time office

177  
00:12:23,410 --> 00:12:27,550  
as a pediatrician  
in Colorado Springs.

178  
00:12:27,550 --> 00:12:33,430  
He was a very, very  
remarkable person,

179  
00:12:33,430 --> 00:12:36,040  
a distant cousin  
of Albert Einstein

180  
00:12:36,040 --> 00:12:41,500  
with whom he maintained  
a very close friendship.



181  
00:12:41,500 --> 00:12:43,330  
So you stayed within  
the United States

182  
00:12:43,330 --> 00:12:46,000  
the entire time you  
were in the military.

183  
00:12:46,000 --> 00:12:51,430  
How did it feel to you being  
a translator, an interpreter

184  
00:12:51,430 --> 00:12:55,350  
for prisoners of war?

185  
00:12:55,350 --> 00:12:57,880  
Was this uncomfortable  
for you, comfortable?

186  
00:12:57,880 --> 00:12:58,390  
No.

187  
00:12:58,390 --> 00:13:02,480  
I mean, the worst  
problem was that we

188  
00:13:02,480 --> 00:13:06,460  
had a camp commander  
who of course, somewhat

189  
00:13:06,460 --> 00:13:11,830  
understandably, was mostly  
interested in keeping things

190  
00:13:11,830 --> 00:13:14,680  
quiet and not to  
have any incidents.

191  
00:13:14,680 --> 00:13:19,420  
And when the majority  
of these prisoners

192

00:13:19,420 --> 00:13:24,140

sang anti-Semitic songs, he  
didn't want to hear about it.

193

00:13:24,140 --> 00:13:28,210

And the worst, problem  
which I and a number

194

00:13:28,210 --> 00:13:33,430

of fellow interpreters was  
the camp commander, who

195

00:13:33,430 --> 00:13:36,690

refused to clamp down on us.

196

00:13:36,690 --> 00:13:44,020

And another problem was  
that we had segregated

197

00:13:44,020 --> 00:13:50,950

amongst these prisoners a  
small group of anti-Nazis

198

00:13:50,950 --> 00:13:54,730

who had been sent into  
battle as cannon fodder

199

00:13:54,730 --> 00:14:00,250

and had surrendered,  
and were very

200

00:14:00,250 --> 00:14:05,230

strong anti-Nazis, typically  
socialists, not communists.

201

00:14:05,230 --> 00:14:09,920

And to explain to  
the camp commander

202

00:14:09,920 --> 00:14:11,500

that in his own  
interest, he ought

203

00:14:11,500 --> 00:14:13,900

to keep these people  
segregated lest they be

204

00:14:13,900 --> 00:14:18,100

murdered by the Nazi majority--

205

00:14:18,100 --> 00:14:19,660

those were some of  
the difficulties

206

00:14:19,660 --> 00:14:21,430

which we had in those days.

207

00:14:21,430 --> 00:14:30,890

208

00:14:30,890 --> 00:14:35,480

The strangest experience I  
had was a very pleasant one.

209

00:14:35,480 --> 00:14:41,960

Once late during that  
period, we took a trainload

210

00:14:41,960 --> 00:14:44,120

of some several hundred  
of these prisoners

211

00:14:44,120 --> 00:14:50,000

from Colorado to a  
camp in Nebraska,

212

00:14:50,000 --> 00:14:57,830

and the delivery of these  
people for the receiving camp

213

00:14:57,830 --> 00:15:00,890

to take charge of them  
was a very formal thing

214

00:15:00,890 --> 00:15:03,230

with roll call and so on.

215

00:15:03,230 --> 00:15:12,140

And there was an American  
Sergeant taking the roll call,

216

00:15:12,140 --> 00:15:15,470

and we were present because  
they were our responsibility

217

00:15:15,470 --> 00:15:18,350

until they had answered  
that roll call.

218

00:15:18,350 --> 00:15:25,100

And suddenly, one of  
these prisoners breaks

219

00:15:25,100 --> 00:15:28,610

ranks, walks into the middle of  
the huge ring they had formed,

220

00:15:28,610 --> 00:15:31,740

walks up to the  
American interpreter,

221

00:15:31,740 --> 00:15:35,290

and says in broad,  
Swabian dialect,

222

00:15:35,290 --> 00:15:38,450

you are Thomas Naegeli  
from [PLACE NAME]..

223

00:15:38,450 --> 00:15:44,090

And they, violating all  
orders, embraced, and said,

224

00:15:44,090 --> 00:15:48,560

we all knew that  
this was the son

225

00:15:48,560 --> 00:15:51,990

of my parents' very  
close friend Tom Naegeli,

226  
00:15:51,990 --> 00:15:54,710  
eight years younger than  
I. I knew him as a child

227  
00:15:54,710 --> 00:15:56,180  
but not very well.

228  
00:15:56,180 --> 00:15:59,990  
So that evening, when  
both of us were off duty,

229  
00:15:59,990 --> 00:16:01,730  
we spent the evening together.

230  
00:16:01,730 --> 00:16:07,310  
And to this day, I have hanging  
at the entrance of my house

231  
00:16:07,310 --> 00:16:11,860  
the silk point which he painted  
of the Nebraska landscape

232  
00:16:11,860 --> 00:16:13,910  
where he served at the time.

233  
00:16:13,910 --> 00:16:18,050  
And we have become  
very close friends,

234  
00:16:18,050 --> 00:16:22,800  
and fortunately, once in a  
while, can see each other.

235  
00:16:22,800 --> 00:16:27,170  
Did you harbor any feelings and  
anger towards these German POWs

236  
00:16:27,170 --> 00:16:29,150  
while you were talking to them?

237

00:16:29,150 --> 00:16:33,050  
Was it an emotional experience  
for you to be with them?

238

00:16:33,050 --> 00:16:33,560  
No.

239

00:16:33,560 --> 00:16:42,500  
I mean, the problem to which  
we gave thought was how

240

00:16:42,500 --> 00:16:44,150  
to re-educate these people now.

241

00:16:44,150 --> 00:16:49,250  
There was precious little  
done in prisoner-of-war camps,

242

00:16:49,250 --> 00:16:50,780  
really nothing.

243

00:16:50,780 --> 00:16:56,780  
And in those days, I had to  
spend my time censoring mail.

244

00:16:56,780 --> 00:17:00,620  
I mean, I gave a very  
great deal of thought

245

00:17:00,620 --> 00:17:07,010  
to the question of re-educating  
these young people who

246

00:17:07,010 --> 00:17:13,640  
have been fed so much hatred  
and so many lies, lies

247

00:17:13,640 --> 00:17:15,109  
and so much falseness.

248

00:17:15,109 --> 00:17:22,670

249  
00:17:22,670 --> 00:17:25,609  
You had said earlier  
that in the beginning,

250  
00:17:25,609 --> 00:17:29,510  
you were able to communicate  
by mail with your parents,

251  
00:17:29,510 --> 00:17:32,150  
In the beginning  
when you first came.

252  
00:17:32,150 --> 00:17:34,220  
How long did that continue?

253  
00:17:34,220 --> 00:17:36,935  
For how long was that possible?

254  
00:17:36,935 --> 00:17:40,430  
I mean, I arrived in July 1938.

255  
00:17:40,430 --> 00:17:42,470  
There was nominal  
peace and there

256  
00:17:42,470 --> 00:17:43,920  
was no air mail in those days.

257  
00:17:43,920 --> 00:17:46,820  
The first air mail, I  
think, started in '39 or so.

258  
00:17:46,820 --> 00:17:51,470  
But typically, boat mail was  
much faster than it is now.

259  
00:17:51,470 --> 00:17:55,008  
When you mail it by boat now, I  
have the feeling they throw it

260  
00:17:55,008 --> 00:17:56,540

in a corner to season it.

261

00:17:56,540 --> 00:18:00,440

And for letters to go by boat  
to you takes anywhere from two

262

00:18:00,440 --> 00:18:01,610

to four weeks.

263

00:18:01,610 --> 00:18:06,500

In those days, you'd get mail  
service in 10 or 11 or 12 days.

264

00:18:06,500 --> 00:18:12,260

And so you had communication  
with your parents until when?

265

00:18:12,260 --> 00:18:16,850

Well, I mean things  
became, of course,

266

00:18:16,850 --> 00:18:22,033

difficult when the war  
started in the summer of '39.

267

00:18:22,033 --> 00:18:27,290

And the Germans of course  
censored all outgoing mail.

268

00:18:27,290 --> 00:18:29,780

And there was  
always a possibility

269

00:18:29,780 --> 00:18:33,920

of British interception  
and British censorship,

270

00:18:33,920 --> 00:18:37,860

but the difficulty was, of  
course, German censorship.

271

00:18:37,860 --> 00:18:49,540

And when my father was killed in



Mauthausen concentration camp,

272

00:18:49,540 --> 00:18:56,485

we found out about it  
through a coded telegram.

273

00:18:56,485 --> 00:19:00,002

274

00:19:00,002 --> 00:19:07,450

That became known at  
the end of June of 1941,

275

00:19:07,450 --> 00:19:10,690

before the United States  
had entered the war.

276

00:19:10,690 --> 00:19:14,770

277

00:19:14,770 --> 00:19:15,850

How did you hear?

278

00:19:15,850 --> 00:19:19,990

The Jewish community  
in Berlin dared not

279

00:19:19,990 --> 00:19:24,970

telegraph or telephone  
directly, so they

280

00:19:24,970 --> 00:19:29,080

sent a telegram which looked  
as if an affidavit was

281

00:19:29,080 --> 00:19:31,020

needed for my mother.

282

00:19:31,020 --> 00:19:35,775

And the telegram had, Martha  
Hirsch nÃ©e Loeb, widowed.

283

00:19:35,775 --> 00:19:40,070

284

00:19:40,070 --> 00:19:44,910

And then, however,  
some weeks later,

285

00:19:44,910 --> 00:19:47,910

I got a letter from my  
mother, which I still have,

286

00:19:47,910 --> 00:19:51,580

in which she informed  
me of my father's death.

287

00:19:51,580 --> 00:19:52,955

And of course,  
she couldn't write

288

00:19:52,955 --> 00:20:01,220

my sisters who were in England,  
but my sisters were told.

289

00:20:01,220 --> 00:20:08,430

Two or three people, a a  
relative and two close friends,

290

00:20:08,430 --> 00:20:09,950

visited them and told them.

291

00:20:09,950 --> 00:20:13,710

292

00:20:13,710 --> 00:20:18,390

Then, of course,  
after Pearl Harbor,

293

00:20:18,390 --> 00:20:20,910

I received two or  
three more letters

294

00:20:20,910 --> 00:20:23,280

which had been on the

way for some weeks,

295

00:20:23,280 --> 00:20:29,320

and I realized that this would  
be the end for a long time.

296

00:20:29,320 --> 00:20:32,460

I didn't realize that it would  
be the end of correspondence

297

00:20:32,460 --> 00:20:33,450

forever.

298

00:20:33,450 --> 00:20:37,270

From then on, it was just  
25-word International Red Cross

299

00:20:37,270 --> 00:20:38,610

messages.

300

00:20:38,610 --> 00:20:42,300

And the last one written  
by my mother the day

301

00:20:42,300 --> 00:20:45,450

before her deportation, I have.

302

00:20:45,450 --> 00:20:53,390

It's a 25-word message in  
which she expressed the hope,

303

00:20:53,390 --> 00:20:56,540

despite everything,  
to see us again,

304

00:20:56,540 --> 00:21:03,740

and in which she just said,  
keep father's memory holy.

305

00:21:03,740 --> 00:21:06,500

And in a way, recently,  
I have listened

306

00:21:06,500 --> 00:21:11,690

to a very moving lecture  
on Jewish ethical wills.

307

00:21:11,690 --> 00:21:17,680

And in a way, this 25-word  
message was an ethical will.

308

00:21:17,680 --> 00:21:20,400

And then how did you hear  
what happened to her?

309

00:21:20,400 --> 00:21:20,930

Never.

310

00:21:20,930 --> 00:21:23,960

We never found out  
anything definite.

311

00:21:23,960 --> 00:21:31,010

After the war, we made  
every conceivable effort.

312

00:21:31,010 --> 00:21:33,890

313

00:21:33,890 --> 00:21:44,060

One of my sisters had a friend  
who was on the family staff,

314

00:21:44,060 --> 00:21:47,000

not officially employed with  
the Canadian ambassador--

315

00:21:47,000 --> 00:21:52,700

not the embassy, but she was a  
maid or a companion or whatnot

316

00:21:52,700 --> 00:21:56,570

in the household of the  
Canadian ambassador in Moscow.

317

00:21:56,570 --> 00:21:58,590  
And [PERSONAL NAME]  
naively thought

318  
00:21:58,590 --> 00:22:01,070  
the Russians might  
have information, which

319  
00:22:01,070 --> 00:22:02,810  
of course they did not have.

320  
00:22:02,810 --> 00:22:06,560  
I myself, as soon  
as I had heard said

321  
00:22:06,560 --> 00:22:10,810  
Rabbi Leo Baeck had  
been saved, freed

322  
00:22:10,810 --> 00:22:17,570  
Theresienstadt concentration  
camp to London Wrote Baeck.

323  
00:22:17,570 --> 00:22:21,020  
And Baeck-- this is a  
very strange story--

324  
00:22:21,020 --> 00:22:23,730  
without having any  
basis whatever,

325  
00:22:23,730 --> 00:22:27,680  
just to be nice to  
my sister, said to me

326  
00:22:27,680 --> 00:22:29,750  
he thought our mother was alive.

327  
00:22:29,750 --> 00:22:31,970  
It turned out later that  
there was absolutely

328  
00:22:31,970 --> 00:22:34,020

no basis for that hope.

329

00:22:34,020 --> 00:22:37,930

And it was well intended, but it was really quite irresponsible.

330

00:22:37,930 --> 00:22:50,340

And it was years later when the contents of SS files,

331

00:22:50,340 --> 00:22:54,460

[INAUDIBLE] Gestapo files captured by the American army

332

00:22:54,460 --> 00:22:58,140

were publicized, that we found out

333

00:22:58,140 --> 00:23:05,950

that our troops had captured the Gestapo files accounting

334

00:23:05,950 --> 00:23:08,050

for the deportations.

335

00:23:08,050 --> 00:23:14,470

And the train by which my mother was deported from Berlin

336

00:23:14,470 --> 00:23:20,080

on October 26, 1942 was one of the very, very few

337

00:23:20,080 --> 00:23:22,600

listed with destination unknown.

338

00:23:22,600 --> 00:23:26,200

Virtually all of these trains had destinations.

339

00:23:26,200 --> 00:23:28,810

The most typical one, of course, was Auschwitz,

340  
00:23:28,810 --> 00:23:31,690  
and there were other  
concentration camps

341  
00:23:31,690 --> 00:23:34,270  
which were the destinations  
of these trains.

342  
00:23:34,270 --> 00:23:40,410  
And the one of October 26 is  
listed as destination unknown.

343  
00:23:40,410 --> 00:23:44,515  
And we never found anybody  
who had anything to report.

344  
00:23:44,515 --> 00:23:49,220

345  
00:23:49,220 --> 00:23:54,000  
I might say here as long as we  
are talking about my mother,

346  
00:23:54,000 --> 00:23:58,860  
in Berlin, my parents had  
friends who like my parents

347  
00:23:58,860 --> 00:24:01,770  
had come to Berlin  
from Stuttgart.

348  
00:24:01,770 --> 00:24:08,730  
He was an actor who had lost  
his job at the state theater

349  
00:24:08,730 --> 00:24:12,150  
company right after the  
Nazis had come to power,

350  
00:24:12,150 --> 00:24:15,600  
and went to Berlin to be  
one of the leading actors

351  
00:24:15,600 --> 00:24:23,070  
and producers of the Juedischer  
Kulturbund, the Jewish Cultural

352  
00:24:23,070 --> 00:24:26,820  
Association, which was so  
very successful in Berlin

353  
00:24:26,820 --> 00:24:30,110  
during the early years  
of the Nazi regime.

354  
00:24:30,110 --> 00:24:37,596  
And he was a Viennese.

355  
00:24:37,596 --> 00:24:40,140  
He had originally a  
little bit of protection

356  
00:24:40,140 --> 00:24:42,970  
since he was an  
Austrian citizen.

357  
00:24:42,970 --> 00:24:46,830  
She was Stuttgart-born,  
was not Jewish.

358  
00:24:46,830 --> 00:24:52,140  
And they offered  
to hide my mother,

359  
00:24:52,140 --> 00:24:55,920  
and my mother  
refused it, fearing

360  
00:24:55,920 --> 00:24:58,650  
that she would  
endanger this couple

361  
00:24:58,650 --> 00:25:01,650  
and reported for  
her deportation,



362  
00:25:01,650 --> 00:25:04,640  
whereupon upon this  
couple then offered

363  
00:25:04,640 --> 00:25:08,070  
to hide a young Jewish  
actor and successfully

364  
00:25:08,070 --> 00:25:11,520  
hid him for 2 and 1/2 years.

365  
00:25:11,520 --> 00:25:14,600

366  
00:25:14,600 --> 00:25:18,500  
Can we now talk just before we  
end about some of your thoughts

367  
00:25:18,500 --> 00:25:21,500  
and some of your feelings  
and some of your reflections

368  
00:25:21,500 --> 00:25:23,075  
on what you have lived through?

369  
00:25:23,075 --> 00:25:25,790

370  
00:25:25,790 --> 00:25:28,220  
You had said  
earlier when we were

371  
00:25:28,220 --> 00:25:31,130  
talking earlier about being  
German and being Jewish

372  
00:25:31,130 --> 00:25:35,150  
and how you felt you were  
both, considering all

373  
00:25:35,150 --> 00:25:38,330

that you have gone through  
and what your life history has

374  
00:25:38,330 --> 00:25:42,000  
been, do you still  
feel the same way?

375  
00:25:42,000 --> 00:25:43,340  
Do you feel very German?

376  
00:25:43,340 --> 00:25:46,070  
Do you feel very Jewish?

377  
00:25:46,070 --> 00:25:47,930  
I'm an American now, obviously.

378  
00:25:47,930 --> 00:25:51,260  
I am of German  
Jewish background.

379  
00:25:51,260 --> 00:25:59,660  
And to some extent,  
I have found not only

380  
00:25:59,660 --> 00:26:03,740  
an outlet in terms of how I  
spend my time and my efforts,

381  
00:26:03,740 --> 00:26:08,780  
but you might call it, if I  
should go into self-analysis,

382  
00:26:08,780 --> 00:26:12,980  
an emotional outlet in  
my genealogical work.

383  
00:26:12,980 --> 00:26:18,740  
I mean, I enjoy  
that very greatly.

384  
00:26:18,740 --> 00:26:23,570  
And I guess without it, I would  
probably not visit Germany,

385  
00:26:23,570 --> 00:26:27,840  
but going to Germany and  
doing genealogical research

386  
00:26:27,840 --> 00:26:31,770  
is a matter of great  
satisfaction to me.

387  
00:26:31,770 --> 00:26:35,310  
As I said earlier, I am very  
glad that all my children

388  
00:26:35,310 --> 00:26:36,440  
are interested in it.

389  
00:26:36,440 --> 00:26:39,230

390  
00:26:39,230 --> 00:26:40,880  
Why do you say  
that if it weren't

391  
00:26:40,880 --> 00:26:44,700  
for genealogical reasons, you  
wouldn't go back to Germany?

392  
00:26:44,700 --> 00:26:47,480  
Well, I would probably feel  
I had no business there.

393  
00:26:47,480 --> 00:26:49,400  
I might go back to  
visit some friends.

394  
00:26:49,400 --> 00:26:52,250  
I mean, I still have  
a few friends there,

395  
00:26:52,250 --> 00:26:57,260  
and the way our conversation  
develops okay right now,

396

00:26:57,260 --> 00:27:05,450

I might say that just these  
days, my sisters and I in

397

00:27:05,450 --> 00:27:07,820

thought very much in Stuttgart.

398

00:27:07,820 --> 00:27:11,510

A few days ago, a  
friend of our mother's

399

00:27:11,510 --> 00:27:15,680

died, a woman who  
was our mother's age

400

00:27:15,680 --> 00:27:20,910

and died a couple of weeks ago  
in Stuttgart at the age of 105.

401

00:27:20,910 --> 00:27:22,880

A Jewish woman who--

402

00:27:22,880 --> 00:27:26,930

this is very interesting  
from the standpoint of what

403

00:27:26,930 --> 00:27:28,310

we are discussing here--

404

00:27:28,310 --> 00:27:35,840

she was, when we were in  
the times before the Nazis,

405

00:27:35,840 --> 00:27:39,590

the only Jewish high school  
teacher in the state.

406

00:27:39,590 --> 00:27:45,860

The prejudice against Jews  
despite emancipation and legal

407

00:27:45,860 --> 00:27:50,630

equality and everything,  
in the field of education

408  
00:27:50,630 --> 00:27:53,420  
was still such that this lady--

409  
00:27:53,420 --> 00:27:54,790  
I don't know how she did it.

410  
00:27:54,790 --> 00:27:56,990  
Whenever we met, we  
talked about other things.

411  
00:27:56,990 --> 00:28:01,310  
She was the only one, and  
she was promptly fired

412  
00:28:01,310 --> 00:28:05,970  
from her job, became a  
teacher at a Jewish school,

413  
00:28:05,970 --> 00:28:10,160  
went to England where she  
survived tutoring children

414  
00:28:10,160 --> 00:28:16,750  
and so on, Was prevailed upon  
to go back to Germany to help

415  
00:28:16,750 --> 00:28:20,460  
in the re-education of the  
young generation in Germany,

416  
00:28:20,460 --> 00:28:22,570  
which she did.

417  
00:28:22,570 --> 00:28:24,440  
Even when we visited  
her, she felt

418  
00:28:24,440 --> 00:28:29,480  
she had to apologize for having  
gone back to Germany, and once

419  
00:28:29,480 --> 00:28:32,750  
during our half  
dozen or so visits,

420  
00:28:32,750 --> 00:28:35,070  
I had a very serious  
talk with her.

421  
00:28:35,070 --> 00:28:38,270  
And I said, well, please do  
not apologize to anybody.

422  
00:28:38,270 --> 00:28:39,530  
You had no family.

423  
00:28:39,530 --> 00:28:43,370  
You had no reason why you should  
not have returned to Germany.

424  
00:28:43,370 --> 00:28:45,080  
You did a marvelous  
job and you ought

425  
00:28:45,080 --> 00:28:48,290  
to be proud of yourself at  
least to never apologize

426  
00:28:48,290 --> 00:28:50,210  
to anybody for what  
you did, because you

427  
00:28:50,210 --> 00:28:51,620  
did the right thing.

428  
00:28:51,620 --> 00:28:59,600  
She retired at age 65 in  
1955 and volunteered services

429  
00:28:59,600 --> 00:29:03,200  
as a secretary for the  
local Stuttgart Association

430

00:29:03,200 --> 00:29:05,660  
for Christian-Jewish  
Collaboration.

431

00:29:05,660 --> 00:29:10,340  
And at age 99, she was awarded  
the Otto Hirsch Memorial

432

00:29:10,340 --> 00:29:13,130  
Medallion, and she  
went to the city hall

433

00:29:13,130 --> 00:29:14,840  
and made an acceptance speech.

434

00:29:14,840 --> 00:29:16,080  
What is her name?

435

00:29:16,080 --> 00:29:18,600  
Her name was Jenny Hyman.

436

00:29:18,600 --> 00:29:25,890  
And so one thing I felt in  
Germany, the title of professor

437

00:29:25,890 --> 00:29:28,550  
is the most cherished title.

438

00:29:28,550 --> 00:29:33,260  
It almost ranks as high  
as in Jewish circles

439

00:29:33,260 --> 00:29:35,540  
the title rabbeinu.

440

00:29:35,540 --> 00:29:41,420  
And when one of my  
own teachers at age 90

441

00:29:41,420 --> 00:29:44,510  
was awarded the title  
professor by the governor,

442  
00:29:44,510 --> 00:29:49,490  
I thought she ought to  
be similarly honored.

443  
00:29:49,490 --> 00:29:53,930  
And I made some informal  
contacts, but they led nowhere,

444  
00:29:53,930 --> 00:29:57,920  
and now that she's dead, I  
felt I should have tried harder

445  
00:29:57,920 --> 00:29:59,540  
to get her the title professor.

446  
00:29:59,540 --> 00:30:04,280  
But I only tried a little  
bit and was unsuccessful.

447  
00:30:04,280 --> 00:30:05,810  
What is the Otto Hirsch award?

448  
00:30:05,810 --> 00:30:09,590

449  
00:30:09,590 --> 00:30:13,200  
On the location of my  
father's 100th birthday,

450  
00:30:13,200 --> 00:30:19,200  
January 9, 1985, the city of  
Stuttgart, where my father had

451  
00:30:19,200 --> 00:30:24,810  
been on the city  
council as a young man,

452  
00:30:24,810 --> 00:30:30,660  
and the local Society for  
Christian-Jewish Corporation,

453



00:30:30,660 --> 00:30:35,880  
jointly sponsored an Otto  
Hirsch Memorial Award

454  
00:30:35,880 --> 00:30:39,630  
to be awarded annually  
on my father's birthday

455  
00:30:39,630 --> 00:30:42,450  
to a person who  
had distinguished

456  
00:30:42,450 --> 00:30:47,430  
himself or herself in the  
field of Christian-Jewish

457  
00:30:47,430 --> 00:30:50,220  
collaboration and understanding.

458  
00:30:50,220 --> 00:30:58,520  
And now we have, 1996, so  
far 12 awards were made.

459  
00:30:58,520 --> 00:31:03,780  
They all went to people with  
an academic education, most

460  
00:31:03,780 --> 00:31:12,210  
of them writers or teachers,  
some Protestant ministers,

461  
00:31:12,210 --> 00:31:19,690  
one a businessman, the very man  
who sponsored and inaugurated

462  
00:31:19,690 --> 00:31:20,610  
the thing.

463  
00:31:20,610 --> 00:31:22,630  
Our friend Heinz  
[PERSONAL NAME],,

464  
00:31:22,630 --> 00:31:26,190

on his retirement, he could  
not resist receiving one.

465  
00:31:26,190 --> 00:31:37,380

466  
00:31:37,380 --> 00:31:39,600  
This is tape 4, side  
B. And you were talking

467  
00:31:39,600 --> 00:31:42,300  
about the Otto Hirsch Award.

468  
00:31:42,300 --> 00:31:49,170  
And right now, June 1996, I  
am in the midst of pushing

469  
00:31:49,170 --> 00:31:53,220  
a recommendation to give  
the next award next January

470  
00:31:53,220 --> 00:31:58,410  
to a retired farmer, a man  
who was here last month

471  
00:31:58,410 --> 00:32:03,150  
as the guest of a group of  
local people here in Montgomery

472  
00:32:03,150 --> 00:32:07,980  
County who all either come  
from or had ancestral ties

473  
00:32:07,980 --> 00:32:12,750  
to a small village in southern  
Württemberg with a very large

474  
00:32:12,750 --> 00:32:14,130  
Jewish community.

475  
00:32:14,130 --> 00:32:19,530  
And he came to that  
place as a young farmer

476  
00:32:19,530 --> 00:32:22,830  
and rehabilitated  
the Jewish cemetery,

477  
00:32:22,830 --> 00:32:25,140  
personally restored  
the tombstones,

478  
00:32:25,140 --> 00:32:28,410  
personally restored the  
inscriptions on the tombstones,

479  
00:32:28,410 --> 00:32:32,170  
and more recently created  
a local Jewish Museum

480  
00:32:32,170 --> 00:32:35,350  
where he takes schoolchildren  
from the area to show them

481  
00:32:35,350 --> 00:32:37,440  
what Jewish life was like.

482  
00:32:37,440 --> 00:32:41,190  
And I have tried to get the  
Otto Hirsch Memorial Award

483  
00:32:41,190 --> 00:32:45,030  
to this man for some years.

484  
00:32:45,030 --> 00:32:49,440  
He would be a man who only  
went through a grade school

485  
00:32:49,440 --> 00:32:52,920  
education and an  
agricultural apprenticeship,

486  
00:32:52,920 --> 00:32:56,550  
and I felt he  
certainly deserved it.

487

00:32:56,550 --> 00:33:00,120

And I hope he will  
get it next January.

488

00:33:00,120 --> 00:33:03,600

Very early on, you said you  
decided not to study law

489

00:33:03,600 --> 00:33:06,390

in this society that  
had become lawless,

490

00:33:06,390 --> 00:33:10,140

but then you came to  
the United States.

491

00:33:10,140 --> 00:33:11,730

Can you just elaborate  
a little more

492

00:33:11,730 --> 00:33:15,210

why you then didn't  
turn to a study of law

493

00:33:15,210 --> 00:33:16,920

when you were in this country?

494

00:33:16,920 --> 00:33:22,750

Well, by that time I had  
worked on farms for many years,

495

00:33:22,750 --> 00:33:27,550

and I felt that I should  
stay in agriculture.

496

00:33:27,550 --> 00:33:31,140

And it was only  
gradually during my use

497

00:33:31,140 --> 00:33:35,160

of the University of  
Minnesota that I found out

498

00:33:35,160 --> 00:33:40,370

to my very great surprise  
that agricultural colleges

499

00:33:40,370 --> 00:33:43,050

in the United States  
typically tend

500

00:33:43,050 --> 00:33:49,440

not to educate their students to  
farm but to serve agriculture,

501

00:33:49,440 --> 00:33:52,530

and really to the extent  
to which most students came

502

00:33:52,530 --> 00:33:56,190

from the farm, to educate  
them away from the farm.

503

00:33:56,190 --> 00:34:05,010

And without capital, I  
found it simply impossible

504

00:34:05,010 --> 00:34:07,830

to establish myself in farming.

505

00:34:07,830 --> 00:34:13,170

My last serious attempt  
was after I graduated

506

00:34:13,170 --> 00:34:16,780

from the University of  
Minnesota in the summer of 1941

507

00:34:16,780 --> 00:34:21,449

when I had a summer job in  
the agricultural economics

508

00:34:21,449 --> 00:34:24,060

department of  
Cornell University.

509

00:34:24,060 --> 00:34:32,370

I pursued an application to be  
in charge of a karakul sheep

510

00:34:32,370 --> 00:34:36,449

ranch in Colorado since I  
had had special training

511

00:34:36,449 --> 00:34:37,949

in karakul sheep breeding.

512

00:34:37,949 --> 00:34:42,040

And together with my broad  
general agricultural education

513

00:34:42,040 --> 00:34:49,020

here in this country, I felt  
quite qualified to do this.

514

00:34:49,020 --> 00:34:52,679

And it turned out  
the fellow who wanted

515

00:34:52,679 --> 00:34:56,219

to look for somebody  
simply didn't

516

00:34:56,219 --> 00:34:58,290

want to pay me any wages.

517

00:34:58,290 --> 00:35:00,870

We were in serious  
correspondence,

518

00:35:00,870 --> 00:35:03,600

and I asked my animal  
husbandry professor

519

00:35:03,600 --> 00:35:06,960

for advice how much of  
a salary to ask for.

520

00:35:06,960 --> 00:35:10,770

And his advice was to  
ask for \$100 a month,

521

00:35:10,770 --> 00:35:16,630

and after I wrote the man with  
this, I never heard from him.

522

00:35:16,630 --> 00:35:19,130

Do you receive reparations?

523

00:35:19,130 --> 00:35:22,050

Well, yes.

524

00:35:22,050 --> 00:35:30,870

First, my sisters and I  
received a very small amount

525

00:35:30,870 --> 00:35:34,200

in additional payment  
for our parents' house.

526

00:35:34,200 --> 00:35:40,920

The parents had to sell a  
house at a very reduced price,

527

00:35:40,920 --> 00:35:43,590

and this was recognized  
after the war,

528

00:35:43,590 --> 00:35:45,690

although the house  
in the meantime

529

00:35:45,690 --> 00:35:50,760

been destroyed by  
American bombardment.

530

00:35:50,760 --> 00:35:54,850

There was a small  
additional payment made.

531

00:35:54,850 --> 00:36:05,340

But I was classified as  
having suffered injury

532

00:36:05,340 --> 00:36:14,190  
in my educational development,  
and quite long ago, I

533

00:36:14,190 --> 00:36:19,530  
received a small specific  
amount under that program.

534

00:36:19,530 --> 00:36:26,790  
That was in the 1950s, something  
like \$1,500 or whatever it was.

535

00:36:26,790 --> 00:36:31,320  
However, as I  
approached retirement,

536

00:36:31,320 --> 00:36:41,670  
I found out that I was a German  
program which would give me

537

00:36:41,670 --> 00:36:48,150  
credit for the German retirement  
program of which I would have

538

00:36:48,150 --> 00:36:50,370  
been a member for  
the short time that I

539

00:36:50,370 --> 00:36:52,440  
worked on farms in Germany.

540

00:36:52,440 --> 00:36:56,880  
And the gist of it  
is, you had to pay

541

00:36:56,880 --> 00:37:01,080  
in some additional  
amount, and then you

542

00:37:01,080 --> 00:37:04,440



were given credit not  
only for the time served

543  
00:37:04,440 --> 00:37:07,620  
but also for a number of  
years-- not your whole life,

544  
00:37:07,620 --> 00:37:11,640  
but for a number of years,  
I think the war years or so.

545  
00:37:11,640 --> 00:37:15,420  
And under this program,  
I'm getting a pension.

546  
00:37:15,420 --> 00:37:18,255  
How do you feel about  
getting these reparations?

547  
00:37:18,255 --> 00:37:21,720

548  
00:37:21,720 --> 00:37:30,020  
I mean, I think legally,  
it's a growing problem.

549  
00:37:30,020 --> 00:37:33,290  
I might say your  
question surprises me,

550  
00:37:33,290 --> 00:37:41,120  
but your question also  
reminds me of the fact

551  
00:37:41,120 --> 00:37:45,710  
that at first, I did not avail  
myself or want to avail myself

552  
00:37:45,710 --> 00:37:50,750  
of the program, and it was  
a step-cousin of my wife's

553  
00:37:50,750 --> 00:37:54,140

in Israel when we  
were visiting Israel

554  
00:37:54,140 --> 00:37:57,050  
over an extended visit  
in '83, at a time when

555  
00:37:57,050 --> 00:37:59,360  
I was 66 years old.

556  
00:37:59,360 --> 00:38:05,240  
And he said to me I had no  
business not availing myself

557  
00:38:05,240 --> 00:38:06,460  
of that program.

558  
00:38:06,460 --> 00:38:10,580  
And in a long evening  
conversation, he said,

559  
00:38:10,580 --> 00:38:15,170  
you owe it to the  
Jewish people, if you

560  
00:38:15,170 --> 00:38:17,270  
wish, quite aside  
from your family,

561  
00:38:17,270 --> 00:38:19,800  
to avail yourself  
of this program.

562  
00:38:19,800 --> 00:38:23,720  
And then you can do something  
good with your money

563  
00:38:23,720 --> 00:38:27,440  
and do things which otherwise  
you might not be able to do,

564  
00:38:27,440 --> 00:38:31,610  
but not to avail yourself

of this is wrong.

565

00:38:31,610 --> 00:38:35,270

And I remember we sat  
deep into the night

566

00:38:35,270 --> 00:38:38,150

until he convinced me.

567

00:38:38,150 --> 00:38:42,280

And to see a good friend  
of mine, a lifelong friend,

568

00:38:42,280 --> 00:38:46,100

a physician in Israel whom  
I met a few days later,

569

00:38:46,100 --> 00:38:49,700

she and I had a  
shorter conversation

570

00:38:49,700 --> 00:38:51,320

along the same line.

571

00:38:51,320 --> 00:38:54,870

And that sealed it, and  
I came home a year later,

572

00:38:54,870 --> 00:38:57,050

but there was no  
procedural problem.

573

00:38:57,050 --> 00:39:02,620

I applied and things were going.

574

00:39:02,620 --> 00:39:05,060

You really surprised me  
when you first asked me

575

00:39:05,060 --> 00:39:06,980

how I feel about it emotionally.

576

00:39:06,980 --> 00:39:11,000

I had to think very hard how  
to answer your question until I

577

00:39:11,000 --> 00:39:12,550

remembered what I just told you.

578

00:39:12,550 --> 00:39:15,680

579

00:39:15,680 --> 00:39:19,910

With all that you went through,  
and your parents, what happened

580

00:39:19,910 --> 00:39:24,290

to your parents, did  
that affect the way

581

00:39:24,290 --> 00:39:26,750

you raised your children?

582

00:39:26,750 --> 00:39:33,340

Well, Lanie and I mean,  
from the very beginning,

583

00:39:33,340 --> 00:39:38,300

we had very strong  
feelings about the need

584

00:39:38,300 --> 00:39:44,240

to continue Jewish life and  
to pass it onto our children,

585

00:39:44,240 --> 00:39:50,180

and we did everything we  
could do along that line.

586

00:39:50,180 --> 00:39:54,080

And during Lanie's lifetime,  
it was her greatest joy--

587

00:39:54,080 --> 00:39:57,510

and now that I am the survivor,

it is my greatest joy--

588

00:39:57,510 --> 00:40:03,500

that we have not only four  
children who are very devoted

589

00:40:03,500 --> 00:40:07,010

Jews, but we also  
have grandchildren

590

00:40:07,010 --> 00:40:11,610

who give promise of  
continuing this tradition.

591

00:40:11,610 --> 00:40:16,280

And this is really our  
greatest happiness.

592

00:40:16,280 --> 00:40:18,890

What do you  
attribute to the fact

593

00:40:18,890 --> 00:40:22,610

that you were able to  
continue on in your life

594

00:40:22,610 --> 00:40:24,940

after hearing of what  
happened to your parents?

595

00:40:24,940 --> 00:40:28,940

596

00:40:28,940 --> 00:40:32,900

Well, I mean, obviously  
I had to continue.

597

00:40:32,900 --> 00:40:38,080

598

00:40:38,080 --> 00:40:48,230

One question of course, was to  
what extent to volunteer first

599

00:40:48,230 --> 00:40:52,370

say to go to Israel to go  
into the Jewish contingent

600

00:40:52,370 --> 00:40:54,160

of the British army.

601

00:40:54,160 --> 00:40:56,420

And after Pearl  
Harbor, immediately

602

00:40:56,420 --> 00:41:00,580

to volunteer in the  
United States Army.

603

00:41:00,580 --> 00:41:07,880

But we learned of  
the wrong assignment

604

00:41:07,880 --> 00:41:13,110

given some friends who had  
not yet been naturalized.

605

00:41:13,110 --> 00:41:20,360

So the rational procedure was  
to be rather cautious about it.

606

00:41:20,360 --> 00:41:22,190

I mean a good friend  
of mine was assigned

607

00:41:22,190 --> 00:41:30,650

to some kind of snow shoveling,  
leaf raking assignment

608

00:41:30,650 --> 00:41:34,520

in northern Minnesota,  
because somebody's mistake

609

00:41:34,520 --> 00:41:36,710

classifying him as a Nazi.

610

00:41:36,710 --> 00:41:40,130

And it took quite a long time.

611

00:41:40,130 --> 00:41:45,680

He ended up in  
intelligence, and I

612

00:41:45,680 --> 00:41:48,110

think he received a  
battlefield commission.

613

00:41:48,110 --> 00:41:55,760

But in light of his  
and other experiences,

614

00:41:55,760 --> 00:41:59,120

I was quite anxious to  
enter the United States

615

00:41:59,120 --> 00:42:01,280

Army as a citizen.

616

00:42:01,280 --> 00:42:05,300

And as it turned  
out, I was inducted

617

00:42:05,300 --> 00:42:07,760

before I was  
naturalized, and I was

618

00:42:07,760 --> 00:42:12,170

naturalized during my three-week  
post-induction furlough.

619

00:42:12,170 --> 00:42:13,940

When you were  
young, you had said

620

00:42:13,940 --> 00:42:17,630

that you were very fortunately  
exposed to these German

621

00:42:17,630 --> 00:42:19,535  
Jewish intellectual leaders.

622  
00:42:19,535 --> 00:42:23,420

623  
00:42:23,420 --> 00:42:26,690  
And looking back, again  
how that affected you.

624  
00:42:26,690 --> 00:42:27,260  
Oh yes.

625  
00:42:27,260 --> 00:42:27,980  
In what way?

626  
00:42:27,980 --> 00:42:30,350  
Can you elaborate on  
that a little bit?

627  
00:42:30,350 --> 00:42:32,940  
Well I mean as I had  
mentioned earlier,

628  
00:42:32,940 --> 00:42:37,280  
my father had founded the  
Judische Lehrhaus Stuttgart,

629  
00:42:37,280 --> 00:42:42,050  
the Jewish Academy or the  
Foundation for Jewish Studies

630  
00:42:42,050 --> 00:42:44,930  
here in Washington, where we  
have this wonderful foundation

631  
00:42:44,930 --> 00:42:45,900  
of Jewish studies.

632  
00:42:45,900 --> 00:42:48,970  
The most meaningful translation  
of Judische Lehrhaus



633

00:42:48,970 --> 00:42:50,630

is Foundation for  
Jewish Studies.

634

00:42:50,630 --> 00:42:53,300

635

00:42:53,300 --> 00:42:59,630

And very often the out-of-town  
speakers were our house guests.

636

00:42:59,630 --> 00:43:07,330

And I mean, this was  
before my bar mitzvah,

637

00:43:07,330 --> 00:43:08,900

my bar mitzvah year.

638

00:43:08,900 --> 00:43:10,700

I was taken along  
to these lectures

639

00:43:10,700 --> 00:43:14,820

only after I was about  
14 or 15 years old.

640

00:43:14,820 --> 00:43:17,930

Most of these people I  
met only as house guests.

641

00:43:17,930 --> 00:43:21,290

And this was  
absolutely fascinating.

642

00:43:21,290 --> 00:43:25,820

Now Buber was the one who  
came regularly every year

643

00:43:25,820 --> 00:43:28,660

and was with us most often.

644

00:43:28,660 --> 00:43:32,930

But there were others.

645

00:43:32,930 --> 00:43:37,010

Talking in terms of our local  
neighborhood here in Montgomery

646

00:43:37,010 --> 00:43:42,230

County, a good friend of mine is  
Ruth [PERSONAL NAME] who lives

647

00:43:42,230 --> 00:43:47,900

in [INAUDIBLE] Springs, who  
unfortunately lost her father.

648

00:43:47,900 --> 00:43:51,650

Died of pneumonia at  
age 36, and I am not

649

00:43:51,650 --> 00:43:53,990

one of the few people  
around who remember him

650

00:43:53,990 --> 00:43:56,690

because he was one of  
those people who came

651

00:43:56,690 --> 00:43:58,880

and was one of the lecturers.

652

00:43:58,880 --> 00:44:00,620

So do you feel  
that the influence

653

00:44:00,620 --> 00:44:05,040

of these intellectual leaders  
still lives on with you?

654

00:44:05,040 --> 00:44:07,270

Oh yes, very, very much so.

655

00:44:07,270 --> 00:44:14,750

656

00:44:14,750 --> 00:44:17,960

I guess there is no  
need going into details

657

00:44:17,960 --> 00:44:19,560

of those whom I remember.

658

00:44:19,560 --> 00:44:22,380

I would have to-- if I  
were to talk about it,

659

00:44:22,380 --> 00:44:24,540

I would have to prepare  
myself a little bit.

660

00:44:24,540 --> 00:44:29,400

Because Buber was definitely  
the most outstanding influence.

661

00:44:29,400 --> 00:44:33,720

And of course, my wife and I  
had the wonderful opportunity

662

00:44:33,720 --> 00:44:40,470

of greeting and hosting Martin  
Buber when he was here in 1957.

663

00:44:40,470 --> 00:44:42,510

Well before we end,  
is there anything

664

00:44:42,510 --> 00:44:45,900

that we haven't touched  
on that you wanted to--

665

00:44:45,900 --> 00:44:48,030

You have been a wonderful  
interviewer, Gail.

666

00:44:48,030 --> 00:44:51,450

I admire you for your  
skill, and I also

667

00:44:51,450 --> 00:44:53,580

want to pay tribute  
to your teacher

668

00:44:53,580 --> 00:44:57,120

Ellen Epstein, for whom  
I have great admiration.

669

00:44:57,120 --> 00:44:57,960

And--

670

00:44:57,960 --> 00:45:01,200

Is there any message to your  
children or your grandchildren

671

00:45:01,200 --> 00:45:03,710

that you would like to say?

672

00:45:03,710 --> 00:45:10,680

Well, I am really giving thought  
to developing an ethical will,

673

00:45:10,680 --> 00:45:14,520

but I am not in a position  
sitting here relatively

674

00:45:14,520 --> 00:45:18,930

relaxed, doing this right now.

675

00:45:18,930 --> 00:45:24,000

I might say again in  
self-analysis, as you noticed,

676

00:45:24,000 --> 00:45:26,600

I was pretty relaxed about this.

677

00:45:26,600 --> 00:45:31,410

I let you lead me, and I  
appreciate your leadership

678

00:45:31,410 --> 00:45:33,840

and your skill in interviewing.

679  
00:45:33,840 --> 00:45:40,290  
And I did not attempt  
to prepare myself

680  
00:45:40,290 --> 00:45:46,300  
or to direct the interview.

681  
00:45:46,300 --> 00:45:48,232  
Well, you've given  
us a wonderful gift.

682  
00:45:48,232 --> 00:45:50,190  
Thank you so very much  
for doing the interview.

683  
00:45:50,190 --> 00:45:52,230  
I feel that I am the  
one to thank you,

684  
00:45:52,230 --> 00:45:54,590  
Gail, the more so  
since I might say that

685  
00:45:54,590 --> 00:45:59,330  
at the end, all my children  
but particularly my son Daniel,

686  
00:45:59,330 --> 00:46:02,670  
have been after me to do  
this very sort of a thing.

687  
00:46:02,670 --> 00:46:06,600  
And we are very, very lucky  
that we have you as a friend

688  
00:46:06,600 --> 00:46:09,900  
and as a neighbor who  
made herself available.

689  
00:46:09,900 --> 00:46:12,840  
And I am afraid without  
you and your initiative

690  
00:46:12,840 --> 00:46:14,730  
and your willingness,  
it might still

691  
00:46:14,730 --> 00:46:16,510  
be a thing for the future.

692  
00:46:16,510 --> 00:46:19,313  
Well, thank you again  
for doing the interview.

693  
00:46:19,313 --> 00:46:22,530

694  
00:46:22,530 --> 00:46:25,170  
This concludes the  
interview of Hans Hirsch.

695  
00:46:25,170 --> 00:46:29,490  
It took place on June  
11 and June 26, 1996,

696  
00:46:29,490 --> 00:46:31,380  
in Bethesda, Maryland.

697  
00:46:31,380 --> 00:46:33,330  
It was conducted  
by Gail Schwartz

698  
00:46:33,330 --> 00:46:37,550  
on behalf of the United States  
Holocaust Memorial Museum.

699  
00:46:37,550 --> 00:46:50,223