

1

00:00:00,000 --> 00:00:06,010

2

00:00:06,010 --> 00:00:09,070

This is a recording for  
the United States Holocaust

3

00:00:09,070 --> 00:00:12,160

Memorial Museum with  
Mr. Fritz Schonbach.

4

00:00:12,160 --> 00:00:15,610

The interviewer is Margaret  
Garrett on July 23,

5

00:00:15,610 --> 00:00:18,820

1996, in Arlington, Virginia.

6

00:00:18,820 --> 00:00:22,390

Tape number two, side  
A. Mr. Schonbach,

7

00:00:22,390 --> 00:00:26,870

could you tell me about the  
beginning of your internment?

8

00:00:26,870 --> 00:00:27,370

Yes.

9

00:00:27,370 --> 00:00:30,700

10

00:00:30,700 --> 00:00:32,470

The actual mechanics  
of the thing

11

00:00:32,470 --> 00:00:40,150

where that apparently a  
large contingent of the CID,

12

00:00:40,150 --> 00:00:44,860

which is the equivalent of,  
I believe, of the FBI here,

13  
00:00:44,860 --> 00:00:46,300  
was sent out.

14  
00:00:46,300 --> 00:00:51,407  
And all the people who  
had been classified B--

15  
00:00:51,407 --> 00:00:52,990  
and there was a  
distinction, actually.

16  
00:00:52,990 --> 00:00:54,790  
The people who had  
been classified B

17  
00:00:54,790 --> 00:00:56,590  
were interned in May.

18  
00:00:56,590 --> 00:01:00,880  
And the people who  
had been classified

19  
00:01:00,880 --> 00:01:04,599  
C, who were not to be  
interned at the time when

20  
00:01:04,599 --> 00:01:08,050  
the tribunals took place, were  
then subsequently interned

21  
00:01:08,050 --> 00:01:09,560  
in June and July.

22  
00:01:09,560 --> 00:01:10,780  
So you were interned in May?

23  
00:01:10,780 --> 00:01:11,890  
I was interned in May.

24

00:01:11,890 --> 00:01:14,140

I believe it was the  
14th or 16th of May.

25

00:01:14,140 --> 00:01:16,605

26

00:01:16,605 --> 00:01:17,980

Things had been  
leading up to it.

27

00:01:17,980 --> 00:01:20,800

The newspapers had been  
writing editorials.

28

00:01:20,800 --> 00:01:23,470

And it was something  
that I really expected.

29

00:01:23,470 --> 00:01:25,840

And I think many  
of us did expect.

30

00:01:25,840 --> 00:01:28,240

At the time, I was  
in school, I was

31

00:01:28,240 --> 00:01:32,110

in class, when the  
headmaster of that school

32

00:01:32,110 --> 00:01:33,640

came into the classroom.

33

00:01:33,640 --> 00:01:36,182

And the moment he entered the  
classroom, and he looked at me,

34

00:01:36,182 --> 00:01:37,850

I knew what was going on.

35

00:01:37,850 --> 00:01:42,730

So he said, Mr. Schonbach, would

you mind coming into my office?

36

00:01:42,730 --> 00:01:46,600

And in his office there  
were the two CID men.

37

00:01:46,600 --> 00:01:50,440

And they were like something  
out of a picture book.

38

00:01:50,440 --> 00:01:53,800

One wore-- I think  
he wore a bowler hat,

39

00:01:53,800 --> 00:01:54,940

and he wore a dark suit.

40

00:01:54,940 --> 00:01:56,590

And the other one  
was a sporty type

41

00:01:56,590 --> 00:01:59,050

with a trench coat and a cap.

42

00:01:59,050 --> 00:02:02,500

And they were sort  
of the ideal pair who

43

00:02:02,500 --> 00:02:05,890

would go and round up people.

44

00:02:05,890 --> 00:02:07,420

And they asked me  
a few questions,

45

00:02:07,420 --> 00:02:08,889

who I was, and so on.

46

00:02:08,889 --> 00:02:11,440

And then they said, would  
you please accompany us?

47

00:02:11,440 --> 00:02:14,230

They took me in their  
car, their unmarked car,

48

00:02:14,230 --> 00:02:19,600

to the house which I shared  
with these other refugees.

49

00:02:19,600 --> 00:02:24,430

And one of them stayed with me.

50

00:02:24,430 --> 00:02:27,610

And he said, would  
you go to your room

51

00:02:27,610 --> 00:02:30,190

and please pack a few  
things, small suitcase,

52

00:02:30,190 --> 00:02:32,810

just for a couple of days?

53

00:02:32,810 --> 00:02:36,340

And I took him literally,  
and I took few things.

54

00:02:36,340 --> 00:02:39,730

And then when he saw me  
take a pair of light shoes,

55

00:02:39,730 --> 00:02:41,080

he obviously had pity on me.

56

00:02:41,080 --> 00:02:43,270

He said, well, maybe you  
should take some heavier

57

00:02:43,270 --> 00:02:46,180

shoes, because it might  
be muddy in the place

58

00:02:46,180 --> 00:02:47,560

where you're going.

59

00:02:47,560 --> 00:02:50,170

So he helped me a little bit.

60

00:02:50,170 --> 00:02:54,400

But on the whole, the  
stuff I took was minimal.

61

00:02:54,400 --> 00:02:56,650

And then they  
said, come with us.

62

00:02:56,650 --> 00:03:00,310

And they took me to  
a police station,

63

00:03:00,310 --> 00:03:03,130

where they already  
had a group of people,

64

00:03:03,130 --> 00:03:05,420

and more and more were coming.

65

00:03:05,420 --> 00:03:09,600

And they, again,  
interrogated us, and--

66

00:03:09,600 --> 00:03:13,210

some minor questions.

67

00:03:13,210 --> 00:03:18,220

Eventually, we were shipped  
to a big stable, which

68

00:03:18,220 --> 00:03:23,740

was, I believe, the stable  
of one of the mounted guard

69

00:03:23,740 --> 00:03:25,060

regiments in London.

70

00:03:25,060 --> 00:03:28,780

And was this is by  
truck, by train?

71  
00:03:28,780 --> 00:03:33,640  
Well, the first transport, of  
course, was by unmarked car.

72  
00:03:33,640 --> 00:03:36,850  
But then it was by bus.

73  
00:03:36,850 --> 00:03:38,458  
And we spent the  
night in the stables.

74  
00:03:38,458 --> 00:03:40,000  
And there were still  
people coming in

75  
00:03:40,000 --> 00:03:42,190  
from the various  
gathering points.

76  
00:03:42,190 --> 00:03:46,990  
And it was rather sad  
and terrible, really,

77  
00:03:46,990 --> 00:03:48,220  
to see some of the people.

78  
00:03:48,220 --> 00:03:51,790  
We had some severely  
handicapped people.

79  
00:03:51,790 --> 00:03:55,540  
The age groups  
were from 16 to 60.

80  
00:03:55,540 --> 00:03:58,090  
Anybody below 16 was spared.

81  
00:03:58,090 --> 00:04:03,220  
And anybody above 60,  
which to me was ancient,

82  
00:04:03,220 --> 00:04:04,358  
was also spared.

83  
00:04:04,358 --> 00:04:06,400  
So there were some elderly  
people and some people

84  
00:04:06,400 --> 00:04:07,670  
who were severely handicapped.

85  
00:04:07,670 --> 00:04:13,240  
In fact, I remember one  
young boy who was spastic--

86  
00:04:13,240 --> 00:04:16,149  
his movements were  
very strange--

87  
00:04:16,149 --> 00:04:19,120  
and some rather sick people too.

88  
00:04:19,120 --> 00:04:22,060  
I believe that, later on,  
they made another selection

89  
00:04:22,060 --> 00:04:25,030  
and sort of sent some  
of the people back.

90  
00:04:25,030 --> 00:04:26,950  
But the first  
selection was rather

91  
00:04:26,950 --> 00:04:29,500  
gruesome to see some of  
the people being delivered

92  
00:04:29,500 --> 00:04:34,570  
into this holding camp at  
these barracks, these stables.

93



00:04:34,570 --> 00:04:38,180

It was actually a stable,  
I believe, a horse stable.

94

00:04:38,180 --> 00:04:41,800

Anyway, in the morning,  
they loaded us onto buses.

95

00:04:41,800 --> 00:04:45,820

And we were guarded by  
members of some crack

96

00:04:45,820 --> 00:04:50,680

regiment, full uniform,  
rifles, and bayonet.

97

00:04:50,680 --> 00:04:53,770

And we were paraded,  
practically, through London.

98

00:04:53,770 --> 00:04:56,980

I think they took some  
very circuitous route

99

00:04:56,980 --> 00:04:59,920

through London, in order to show  
the population that they had

100

00:04:59,920 --> 00:05:03,190

caught those fifth columnists,  
as they called them,

101

00:05:03,190 --> 00:05:05,760

those spies, and they  
were taking them away.

102

00:05:05,760 --> 00:05:07,800

And there were big  
headlines in the papers,

103

00:05:07,800 --> 00:05:09,330

as I found out later.

104

00:05:09,330 --> 00:05:13,710

And we ended up at a  
racecourse outside London,

105

00:05:13,710 --> 00:05:17,220

quite a well-known  
racecourse, Kempton Park.

106

00:05:17,220 --> 00:05:23,838

And at Kempton Park,  
we were put into--

107

00:05:23,838 --> 00:05:25,380

Kempton Park was  
not really prepared.

108

00:05:25,380 --> 00:05:27,005

They were sort of  
half prepared for us.

109

00:05:27,005 --> 00:05:28,680

They had set up  
some field kitchens.

110

00:05:28,680 --> 00:05:31,530

And they gave us some  
blankets, I believe.

111

00:05:31,530 --> 00:05:34,140

And I don't remember  
things very well.

112

00:05:34,140 --> 00:05:38,280

They gave us some palliasses,  
straw-filled mattresses,

113

00:05:38,280 --> 00:05:44,430

and put us up in the grandstand  
of the racecourse, where

114

00:05:44,430 --> 00:05:48,000

we spent, all together,  
I believe, a week

115

00:05:48,000 --> 00:05:50,850  
or two, maybe three.

116

00:05:50,850 --> 00:05:54,550  
And the whole place was  
surrounded by barbed wire.

117

00:05:54,550 --> 00:05:56,730  
Of course, it had been  
abandoned as a racecourse.

118

00:05:56,730 --> 00:05:58,710  
Racing, I think, was  
altogether abandoned

119

00:05:58,710 --> 00:06:00,780  
at the beginning of the war.

120

00:06:00,780 --> 00:06:03,580  
The beginning of the war  
was a very traumatic time

121

00:06:03,580 --> 00:06:05,340  
for everybody in Britain.

122

00:06:05,340 --> 00:06:07,770  
As I said, people  
expected to be bombed.

123

00:06:07,770 --> 00:06:09,490  
There were several bomb alarms.

124

00:06:09,490 --> 00:06:12,750  
Nothing ever came of it, but, of  
course, you couldn't know that.

125

00:06:12,750 --> 00:06:16,890  
You didn't know what Hitler  
had in store for Britain.

126

00:06:16,890 --> 00:06:20,100  
So, anyway, we spent

about, I don't know,

127

00:06:20,100 --> 00:06:21,910  
one, two, three weeks, maybe--

128

00:06:21,910 --> 00:06:24,150  
I believe it was three  
weeks in Kempton Park,

129

00:06:24,150 --> 00:06:26,190  
under heavy guard.

130

00:06:26,190 --> 00:06:28,920  
And there was some--

131

00:06:28,920 --> 00:06:34,800  
well, as far as I was concerned,  
it was a very mixed experience.

132

00:06:34,800 --> 00:06:37,950  
I became a member  
of-- obviously,

133

00:06:37,950 --> 00:06:40,770  
people form into groups  
in a situation like that--

134

00:06:40,770 --> 00:06:46,540  
and I became a member of a group  
of youngsters who were rather,

135

00:06:46,540 --> 00:06:49,800  
how can I say, somewhat,  
I would say exuberant

136

00:06:49,800 --> 00:06:52,500  
about it, because,  
first of all, we'd

137

00:06:52,500 --> 00:06:55,350  
had this sword hanging over us.

138

00:06:55,350 --> 00:06:57,480  
We knew we'd been interned.

139  
00:06:57,480 --> 00:07:01,470  
A lot of them had been  
working as apprentices

140  
00:07:01,470 --> 00:07:04,440  
and weren't too happy  
with their jobs.

141  
00:07:04,440 --> 00:07:07,980  
And all of a sudden, there  
they were on a racecourse.

142  
00:07:07,980 --> 00:07:09,680  
It was in summer.

143  
00:07:09,680 --> 00:07:10,830  
It was June, I believe.

144  
00:07:10,830 --> 00:07:12,510  
The weather was very good.

145  
00:07:12,510 --> 00:07:15,750  
And there was nothing to do.

146  
00:07:15,750 --> 00:07:18,630  
We organized ourselves  
into, I don't know,

147  
00:07:18,630 --> 00:07:21,100  
we did some gymnastics.

148  
00:07:21,100 --> 00:07:25,680  
And I don't remember what  
else, just hanging out.

149  
00:07:25,680 --> 00:07:28,440  
And a lot of us were very happy.

150  
00:07:28,440 --> 00:07:29,130

To me--

151

00:07:29,130 --> 00:07:31,170

Were you one of the  
ones who was happy?

152

00:07:31,170 --> 00:07:33,150

Well, it was a mixed  
thing, of course.

153

00:07:33,150 --> 00:07:34,830

Nobody wanted to be  
interned and to be

154

00:07:34,830 --> 00:07:36,960

suspected of being a Nazi spy.

155

00:07:36,960 --> 00:07:41,070

On the other hand,  
the way I remember it,

156

00:07:41,070 --> 00:07:46,950

and it's hard to recall it  
after, what, 50-odd years,

157

00:07:46,950 --> 00:07:49,620

but there was a  
feeling of relief--

158

00:07:49,620 --> 00:07:55,477

the pressure, the dread of  
being interned and going

159

00:07:55,477 --> 00:07:57,060

to an internment  
camp, which we didn't

160

00:07:57,060 --> 00:07:59,010

know what internment camp was.

161

00:07:59,010 --> 00:08:02,040

In a way, I guess, at  
the back of our minds,

162  
00:08:02,040 --> 00:08:04,740  
we had concentration camps.

163  
00:08:04,740 --> 00:08:07,470  
But this was a very  
so relaxed place.

164  
00:08:07,470 --> 00:08:12,150  
And the one, as I said, I  
joined a group of youngsters.

165  
00:08:12,150 --> 00:08:15,160  
And we tried to  
occupy ourselves.

166  
00:08:15,160 --> 00:08:18,300  
And one of us, a  
couple of us, were

167  
00:08:18,300 --> 00:08:26,430  
very good at gymnastics, what  
they call the floor exercises

168  
00:08:26,430 --> 00:08:27,990  
now out there in the Olympics.

169  
00:08:27,990 --> 00:08:30,450  
And they taught us to do  
somersaults and things

170  
00:08:30,450 --> 00:08:31,223  
like that.

171  
00:08:31,223 --> 00:08:32,640  
And I don't know  
what else we did.

172  
00:08:32,640 --> 00:08:34,470  
We sang.

173  
00:08:34,470 --> 00:08:37,100

I don't think I did any drawing.

174

00:08:37,100 --> 00:08:38,669

I didn't have any paper there.

175

00:08:38,669 --> 00:08:40,169

That was rather unfortunate.

176

00:08:40,169 --> 00:08:43,169

In any case, it  
was not a bad time.

177

00:08:43,169 --> 00:08:47,970

And above all, my  
real predominant--

178

00:08:47,970 --> 00:08:52,170

the way I remember it now,  
that I was being socialized.

179

00:08:52,170 --> 00:08:55,950

In other words, I had been  
an only child, who had,

180

00:08:55,950 --> 00:08:58,830

of course, gone to  
school with other boys,

181

00:08:58,830 --> 00:09:02,100

but who had not really  
formed any great attachments

182

00:09:02,100 --> 00:09:03,390

to anybody.

183

00:09:03,390 --> 00:09:07,950

And I had had no intimate  
friends, or very few.

184

00:09:07,950 --> 00:09:14,100

I was an only child, and it was  
a rather isolated existence.



185

00:09:14,100 --> 00:09:16,830

And then, all of a sudden,  
there was this community

186

00:09:16,830 --> 00:09:18,120

of youngsters.

187

00:09:18,120 --> 00:09:21,510

And we had one thing in common,  
and that was we were hungry.

188

00:09:21,510 --> 00:09:24,900

Apparently, those  
Army cooks, as is

189

00:09:24,900 --> 00:09:27,270

the tradition in many places--

190

00:09:27,270 --> 00:09:30,360

rations weren't very big  
in England at the time,

191

00:09:30,360 --> 00:09:33,450

but I believe that a good  
percentage of the rations

192

00:09:33,450 --> 00:09:36,480

were being stolen  
by the Army cooks.

193

00:09:36,480 --> 00:09:39,620

And what we eventually  
got was very small,

194

00:09:39,620 --> 00:09:44,700

a tin cup with rice, supposedly  
some bits of meat mixed in.

195

00:09:44,700 --> 00:09:47,550

But it was prison fare.

196

00:09:47,550 --> 00:09:50,520

It wasn't bad, but  
it wasn't sufficient.

197  
00:09:50,520 --> 00:09:52,710  
And all the young  
ones were hungry.

198  
00:09:52,710 --> 00:09:55,450  
I mean, that was something  
that we all had in common.

199  
00:09:55,450 --> 00:09:57,900  
So we said, what do we do?

200  
00:09:57,900 --> 00:09:59,400  
How can we get some money?

201  
00:09:59,400 --> 00:10:01,050  
Because there was a canteen.

202  
00:10:01,050 --> 00:10:03,540  
You could buy, I don't  
know, bread and jam,

203  
00:10:03,540 --> 00:10:04,990  
but you had to have money.

204  
00:10:04,990 --> 00:10:07,630  
And most of us had no money.

205  
00:10:07,630 --> 00:10:13,713  
So we decided, we'll  
do some chores.

206  
00:10:13,713 --> 00:10:15,130  
And there were  
some elderly people

207  
00:10:15,130 --> 00:10:16,420  
who were completely helpless.

208  
00:10:16,420 --> 00:10:19,120

I mean, they acted helpless.

209

00:10:19,120 --> 00:10:21,070

We'd say, oh, we'll  
get their laundry.

210

00:10:21,070 --> 00:10:22,540

We'll do their laundry.

211

00:10:22,540 --> 00:10:27,220

And we'll sweep around their  
bunks or whatever, their straw

212

00:10:27,220 --> 00:10:28,120

mattresses.

213

00:10:28,120 --> 00:10:29,080

So we did that.

214

00:10:29,080 --> 00:10:31,930

And, of course, nobody had  
any idea how to do laundry.

215

00:10:31,930 --> 00:10:33,700

And I don't know what  
we used for soap.

216

00:10:33,700 --> 00:10:35,740

We must have gotten some  
soap from somewhere.

217

00:10:35,740 --> 00:10:40,420

But I remember huge kettles  
with laundry stuffed into them,

218

00:10:40,420 --> 00:10:42,580

and the whole  
thing being boiled.

219

00:10:42,580 --> 00:10:45,160

That's all I remember,  
boiling stuff.

220

00:10:45,160 --> 00:10:47,860

I don't know how clean  
they got, but we boiled it.

221

00:10:47,860 --> 00:10:49,120

And they paid us.

222

00:10:49,120 --> 00:10:51,970

The older people had  
probably been more provident,

223

00:10:51,970 --> 00:10:54,610

or they had more money.

224

00:10:54,610 --> 00:10:56,950

So we got a little bit  
of money and bought

225

00:10:56,950 --> 00:10:58,420

bread and jam, which we shared.

226

00:10:58,420 --> 00:11:01,120

It was a real community.

227

00:11:01,120 --> 00:11:03,220

And that was a good thing.

228

00:11:03,220 --> 00:11:04,400

It was a pleasant thing.

229

00:11:04,400 --> 00:11:06,940

And there were some  
friendships, some attachment

230

00:11:06,940 --> 00:11:11,230

formed in those first  
few weeks of internment.

231

00:11:11,230 --> 00:11:12,850

Anyway, it was the time--

232

00:11:12,850 --> 00:11:15,610  
and I can't quite remember.

233  
00:11:15,610 --> 00:11:17,050  
The Germans were still--

234  
00:11:17,050 --> 00:11:19,420  
I think the Allies were  
fighting in France.

235  
00:11:19,420 --> 00:11:22,090  
The Germans were  
victorious everywhere.

236  
00:11:22,090 --> 00:11:24,700  
And we had some  
news, I believe--

237  
00:11:24,700 --> 00:11:27,023  
not direct, but  
I can't remember.

238  
00:11:27,023 --> 00:11:28,690  
There were some  
bulletins and something.

239  
00:11:28,690 --> 00:11:31,150  
There was one situation,  
which was really bad,

240  
00:11:31,150 --> 00:11:34,810  
when it was announced that--  
a lot of our folks, of course,

241  
00:11:34,810 --> 00:11:38,410  
were married, and with  
their wives left behind--

242  
00:11:38,410 --> 00:11:42,730  
when it was announced that  
the wives of B class internees

243  
00:11:42,730 --> 00:11:44,740

had been interned.

244

00:11:44,740 --> 00:11:49,450

That really put a  
tremendous pall on people.

245

00:11:49,450 --> 00:11:52,306

And there was actually a--

246

00:11:52,306 --> 00:11:54,130

some people thought  
they might try

247

00:11:54,130 --> 00:11:58,090

to commit suicide or  
try to run at the wire

248

00:11:58,090 --> 00:12:00,100

and be shot by the guards.

249

00:12:00,100 --> 00:12:05,650

So I remember, we young ones  
who had no wives or anybody who

250

00:12:05,650 --> 00:12:09,460

had been interned,  
we formed guards,

251

00:12:09,460 --> 00:12:12,940

or we formed ourselves  
into watches,

252

00:12:12,940 --> 00:12:16,450

to see that nobody  
tried to commit suicide

253

00:12:16,450 --> 00:12:18,430

or ran against the wire.

254

00:12:18,430 --> 00:12:20,840

Well, that subsided  
after a while.

255

00:12:20,840 --> 00:12:24,790

And I said, after  
two or three weeks,

256

00:12:24,790 --> 00:12:31,260

we were transported  
in buses and trains.

257

00:12:31,260 --> 00:12:33,070

First, by bus to  
a train, and then

258

00:12:33,070 --> 00:12:38,320

by train to a place near  
Manchester, I believe.

259

00:12:38,320 --> 00:12:41,500

It was the manufacturing  
area of Britain.

260

00:12:41,500 --> 00:12:44,270

And it was a cotton  
mill near Manchester.

261

00:12:44,270 --> 00:12:45,430

It was called Bury.

262

00:12:45,430 --> 00:12:46,840

And nobody seems to know it.

263

00:12:46,840 --> 00:12:49,000

It was probably a  
suburb of Manchester.

264

00:12:49,000 --> 00:12:51,760

And it was an  
abandoned cotton mill,

265

00:12:51,760 --> 00:12:55,720

which had been abandoned  
about two years before,

266

00:12:55,720 --> 00:12:59,740  
and left in a completely--

267  
00:12:59,740 --> 00:13:03,724  
in its original state.

268  
00:13:03,724 --> 00:13:05,560  
There was machinery.

269  
00:13:05,560 --> 00:13:11,740  
There were belts that drove  
the machinery, long shafts.

270  
00:13:11,740 --> 00:13:17,410  
I don't know if you know  
the looks of old factories.

271  
00:13:17,410 --> 00:13:19,900  
They had shafts,  
and wheels, and then

272  
00:13:19,900 --> 00:13:22,420  
belts that went to the  
individual machines,

273  
00:13:22,420 --> 00:13:29,020  
and lots of debris on the  
floor, rags and so on.

274  
00:13:29,020 --> 00:13:30,760  
It was an impossible place.

275  
00:13:30,760 --> 00:13:35,400  
And we were dumped there and  
given blanket and sleeping

276  
00:13:35,400 --> 00:13:36,130  
gear.

277  
00:13:36,130 --> 00:13:38,050  
And we decided that  
was really inhuman.



278

00:13:38,050 --> 00:13:39,717

We shouldn't we  
shouldn't be left there.

279

00:13:39,717 --> 00:13:41,650

And I think we also--

280

00:13:41,650 --> 00:13:44,680

the food was as bad  
as in Kempton Park.

281

00:13:44,680 --> 00:13:47,140

In any case, somebody  
started to organize us.

282

00:13:47,140 --> 00:13:50,200

And he decided we should  
go on a hunger strike.

283

00:13:50,200 --> 00:13:52,030

So we went on a hunger strike.

284

00:13:52,030 --> 00:13:56,650

And on top of that,  
there was a chimney,

285

00:13:56,650 --> 00:13:58,900

as part of this cotton mill.

286

00:13:58,900 --> 00:14:02,620

And somebody incredibly daring  
climbed up on the chimney

287

00:14:02,620 --> 00:14:05,410

during the night, got a  
hold of some whitewash,

288

00:14:05,410 --> 00:14:11,140

and painted on the chimney, we  
are refugees from the Nazis.

289

00:14:11,140 --> 00:14:13,307

So the population  
of the place, which

290  
00:14:13,307 --> 00:14:15,640  
had been very hostile-- we'd  
been marched through Berry,

291  
00:14:15,640 --> 00:14:17,410  
incidentally--  
and the population

292  
00:14:17,410 --> 00:14:20,050  
had started to  
throw things at us.

293  
00:14:20,050 --> 00:14:23,380  
We were considered Nazis.

294  
00:14:23,380 --> 00:14:27,010  
So the population, apparently,  
got a good look at this

295  
00:14:27,010 --> 00:14:30,010  
and realized that this  
was one horrible mistake.

296  
00:14:30,010 --> 00:14:33,380  
And some officers came.

297  
00:14:33,380 --> 00:14:37,120  
And it was clear that  
they were rather--

298  
00:14:37,120 --> 00:14:40,540  
they rather regretted this move.

299  
00:14:40,540 --> 00:14:43,810  
And after a week, we  
were shipped out again,

300  
00:14:43,810 --> 00:14:46,570  
to our, what was considered  
the final destination, which

301  
00:14:46,570 --> 00:14:47,710  
was on the Isle of Man.

302  
00:14:47,710 --> 00:14:51,520

303  
00:14:51,520 --> 00:14:55,990  
The Isle of Man had been a  
historical dumping ground

304  
00:14:55,990 --> 00:14:59,470  
for prisoners of war  
in the First World War.

305  
00:14:59,470 --> 00:15:02,350  
The Isle of Man, it  
was a summer resort

306  
00:15:02,350 --> 00:15:05,130  
for a lot of English people.

307  
00:15:05,130 --> 00:15:09,900  
And it consisted almost  
entirely of boarding houses.

308  
00:15:09,900 --> 00:15:16,440  
And somehow, the  
authorities had thrown out

309  
00:15:16,440 --> 00:15:18,300  
the owners of the  
boarding houses,

310  
00:15:18,300 --> 00:15:21,290  
or told them to  
go somewhere else,

311  
00:15:21,290 --> 00:15:25,140  
had surrounded a number  
of those places, groups

312

00:15:25,140 --> 00:15:27,480  
of boarding houses,  
with barbed wire,

313  
00:15:27,480 --> 00:15:31,380  
and billeted us in  
the boarding houses--

314  
00:15:31,380 --> 00:15:33,600  
two or three men to a room.

315  
00:15:33,600 --> 00:15:36,870  
And that was a more  
permanent camp.

316  
00:15:36,870 --> 00:15:39,120  
And it was an idyllic  
place, of course.

317  
00:15:39,120 --> 00:15:42,090  
It was a summer  
resort, with the--

318  
00:15:42,090 --> 00:15:47,130  
I was in and out of place, but  
200 or 300 feet above the sea.

319  
00:15:47,130 --> 00:15:50,880  
And we had a magnificent  
view of the sea.

320  
00:15:50,880 --> 00:15:55,710  
And that's where we stayed  
for another about four weeks.

321  
00:15:55,710 --> 00:15:59,850  
Again, rations were short,  
and we had to earn money

322  
00:15:59,850 --> 00:16:02,970  
to supplement our rations.

323  
00:16:02,970 --> 00:16:05,520

But on the whole, it  
was a pleasant place.

324  
00:16:05,520 --> 00:16:10,440  
Of course, the terrible  
downside was that by that time,

325  
00:16:10,440 --> 00:16:13,140  
the Germans had  
routed the British.

326  
00:16:13,140 --> 00:16:16,950  
And Dunkirk was  
part of the news.

327  
00:16:16,950 --> 00:16:23,160  
The British had retreated, had  
returned from the continent.

328  
00:16:23,160 --> 00:16:27,810  
And the Germans had  
completely conquered France.

329  
00:16:27,810 --> 00:16:29,140  
So we knew about that.

330  
00:16:29,140 --> 00:16:33,555  
And we literally expected  
the guards outside our camp,

331  
00:16:33,555 --> 00:16:37,830  
or outside these barbed  
wire encampments,

332  
00:16:37,830 --> 00:16:40,980  
to be changed from  
British to Nazis.

333  
00:16:40,980 --> 00:16:44,490  
And we seriously thought  
that any day now, there

334  
00:16:44,490 --> 00:16:47,310

might be SS men  
standing outside.

335  
00:16:47,310 --> 00:16:48,990  
So that was a terrible  
fear, of course.

336  
00:16:48,990 --> 00:16:51,480  
Other than that, we lived  
a very carefree life

337  
00:16:51,480 --> 00:16:54,270  
during those three weeks  
on the Isle of Man.

338  
00:16:54,270 --> 00:16:58,630

339  
00:16:58,630 --> 00:17:01,210  
So what happened at the  
end of the three weeks?

340  
00:17:01,210 --> 00:17:06,460  
At the end of the three weeks,  
there was a new order, ships,

341  
00:17:06,460 --> 00:17:08,829  
transports are going to Canada.

342  
00:17:08,829 --> 00:17:13,359  
You will all be sent to Canada.

343  
00:17:13,359 --> 00:17:19,180  
Groups formed of people  
who wanted to go to Canada.

344  
00:17:19,180 --> 00:17:22,210  
But after about three or four--

345  
00:17:22,210 --> 00:17:28,660  
I'm not very clear on the  
exact timing of what happened,

346

00:17:28,660 --> 00:17:32,710

but the fact was that about  
three or four days after this

347

00:17:32,710 --> 00:17:34,390

happened-- after  
my, incidentally,

348

00:17:34,390 --> 00:17:37,310

my 20th birthday  
on the 1st of July,

349

00:17:37,310 --> 00:17:41,230

I believe it was on the  
4th or 6th of July--

350

00:17:41,230 --> 00:17:46,480

there came terrible news  
that a transport of people

351

00:17:46,480 --> 00:17:48,850

on their way to Canada  
had been torpedoed,

352

00:17:48,850 --> 00:17:52,330

and most people had drowned.

353

00:17:52,330 --> 00:17:56,860

There were about 700 people  
lost on that transport--

354

00:17:56,860 --> 00:18:03,700

British troops,  
guards, and internees.

355

00:18:03,700 --> 00:18:06,710

And that was a pretty  
bad shock for us,

356

00:18:06,710 --> 00:18:11,830

sort of dampened our  
enthusiasm for going away,

357

00:18:11,830 --> 00:18:14,960

for leaving Britain, being  
sent off somewhere else.

358

00:18:14,960 --> 00:18:19,870

However, the organizing  
of transports went on.

359

00:18:19,870 --> 00:18:24,850

And on the 9th of July,  
groups were formed again.

360

00:18:24,850 --> 00:18:31,240

People were asked to  
volunteer to go to Canada,

361

00:18:31,240 --> 00:18:34,180

or to go on a transport,  
as it happened.

362

00:18:34,180 --> 00:18:36,220

And I was even--

363

00:18:36,220 --> 00:18:38,180

I had no reason to not to go.

364

00:18:38,180 --> 00:18:39,440

I had no reason to go.

365

00:18:39,440 --> 00:18:41,950

In fact, I was quite happy  
to leave Britain, of course,

366

00:18:41,950 --> 00:18:43,900

because I thought I'd be safer.

367

00:18:43,900 --> 00:18:49,690

And I had nobody in Britain who  
I was in any way attached to.

368

00:18:49,690 --> 00:18:53,680

So people offered me



money to take their place

369

00:18:53,680 --> 00:18:56,680

on the transport, whose  
name was on the transport.

370

00:18:56,680 --> 00:18:58,990

But I decided I wasn't  
going to volunteer

371

00:18:58,990 --> 00:19:01,120

for anything because you  
never know what happens.

372

00:19:01,120 --> 00:19:05,370

And it was sort of  
almost a feeling of--

373

00:19:05,370 --> 00:19:07,090

it was almost a superstition.

374

00:19:07,090 --> 00:19:09,190

I don't volunteer for things.

375

00:19:09,190 --> 00:19:12,760

So, eventually, I was put  
on one of those transports.

376

00:19:12,760 --> 00:19:15,730

And we were taken  
by motor launch

377

00:19:15,730 --> 00:19:18,880

to Liverpool on  
the 10th of July.

378

00:19:18,880 --> 00:19:24,310

And everybody had a little  
suitcase, coat, overcoat,

379

00:19:24,310 --> 00:19:25,570

or whatever.

380

00:19:25,570 --> 00:19:29,830

And we arrived in Liverpool.

381

00:19:29,830 --> 00:19:34,840

And there was this big  
ship with an opening,

382

00:19:34,840 --> 00:19:37,450

and the gangplank  
leading up to the ship.

383

00:19:37,450 --> 00:19:39,820

And the ship was  
called the Dunera.

384

00:19:39,820 --> 00:19:42,950

Well, we didn't know  
what the Dunera was.

385

00:19:42,950 --> 00:19:47,050

As it happened, it  
became almost a part

386

00:19:47,050 --> 00:19:50,410

of the language, because  
the Dunera was a prison

387

00:19:50,410 --> 00:19:57,370

ship, and sending us to an  
unknown place, as we thought,

388

00:19:57,370 --> 00:19:58,360

Canada.

389

00:19:58,360 --> 00:20:01,420

So anyway, they  
started to unload us,

390

00:20:01,420 --> 00:20:04,750

sent us up the gangplank, and  
the moment we went up there--

391

00:20:04,750 --> 00:20:07,130  
it was almost like  
a cattle transport--

392  
00:20:07,130 --> 00:20:09,910  
the moment we got up there,  
there was a group of soldiers.

393  
00:20:09,910 --> 00:20:13,210  
And they ripped those  
suitcases from our hands,

394  
00:20:13,210 --> 00:20:15,850  
and put them in a  
heap, and started

395  
00:20:15,850 --> 00:20:17,680  
ripping them open  
with their bayonets,

396  
00:20:17,680 --> 00:20:20,290  
and going through the stuff.

397  
00:20:20,290 --> 00:20:23,740  
Then, as we came closer,  
there was another group

398  
00:20:23,740 --> 00:20:28,720  
of soldiers inside the ship,  
and they started searching us,

399  
00:20:28,720 --> 00:20:32,380  
taking anything  
that was valuable--

400  
00:20:32,380 --> 00:20:35,950  
wallets, watches, you  
name it, they took it.

401  
00:20:35,950 --> 00:20:38,980  
And anything that was useless  
to them, they threw in a heap.

402

00:20:38,980 --> 00:20:41,483

Anything that was  
useful, they pocketed.

403

00:20:41,483 --> 00:20:42,400

So there was a second.

404

00:20:42,400 --> 00:20:43,790

And there was a third search.

405

00:20:43,790 --> 00:20:46,270

Then, finally-- I don't  
know-- by the time

406

00:20:46,270 --> 00:20:50,050

we got into the bottom of the  
ship, into the bottom hold,

407

00:20:50,050 --> 00:20:54,610

we had been thoroughly  
searched, and needless to say,

408

00:20:54,610 --> 00:20:56,710

the soldiers were  
not very friendly.

409

00:20:56,710 --> 00:21:00,340

They were rather rough with us.

410

00:21:00,340 --> 00:21:01,840

We ended up in the  
hold of the ship.

411

00:21:01,840 --> 00:21:03,190

There were long tables.

412

00:21:03,190 --> 00:21:08,150

And it turned out later that  
this was a troop transport.

413

00:21:08,150 --> 00:21:11,440

So it was equipped  
for transporting

414  
00:21:11,440 --> 00:21:13,120  
large numbers of troops.

415  
00:21:13,120 --> 00:21:14,320  
There were long tables.

416  
00:21:14,320 --> 00:21:17,770  
And we're sitting  
along the tables.

417  
00:21:17,770 --> 00:21:20,020  
But, of course, they  
put in about twice

418  
00:21:20,020 --> 00:21:25,960  
or three times as many people  
into one of those holds,

419  
00:21:25,960 --> 00:21:29,620  
two or three times more  
than had been planned.

420  
00:21:29,620 --> 00:21:32,260  
And in the end, we were  
terribly, terribly crowded

421  
00:21:32,260 --> 00:21:32,770  
in there.

422  
00:21:32,770 --> 00:21:35,740

423  
00:21:35,740 --> 00:21:39,950  
Then they handed out some--  
oh, they told us where to get

424  
00:21:39,950 --> 00:21:40,450  
some--

425  
00:21:40,450 --> 00:21:46,350

426  
00:21:46,350 --> 00:21:48,570  
god, I'm lapsing into German.

427  
00:21:48,570 --> 00:21:52,350  
I almost said HÃ¶ngenmatten,  
but what I meant was--

428  
00:21:52,350 --> 00:21:54,950  
what do you call them?

429  
00:21:54,950 --> 00:21:55,580  
Hammocks?

430  
00:21:55,580 --> 00:21:57,050  
Hammocks.

431  
00:21:57,050 --> 00:21:58,820  
It's terrible, isn't it?

432  
00:21:58,820 --> 00:22:01,940  
They handed out some  
hammocks and some blankets,

433  
00:22:01,940 --> 00:22:04,070  
and that was about all.

434  
00:22:04,070 --> 00:22:09,170  
So in the end, by that  
time, it was late at night,

435  
00:22:09,170 --> 00:22:10,850  
people were--

436  
00:22:10,850 --> 00:22:11,780  
I was lucky.

437  
00:22:11,780 --> 00:22:14,720  
I got a hammock, so  
that made it easier.

438

00:22:14,720 --> 00:22:16,730  
But a lot of people were  
sleeping on the floor.

439  
00:22:16,730 --> 00:22:18,590  
Some people were  
sleeping on the tables.

440  
00:22:18,590 --> 00:22:20,390  
Some people were  
sleeping on the benches.

441  
00:22:20,390 --> 00:22:22,460  
We were crowded in there.

442  
00:22:22,460 --> 00:22:26,830  
And it was the lowest  
part of the ship.

443  
00:22:26,830 --> 00:22:29,660  
It was below the  
waterline, actually.

444  
00:22:29,660 --> 00:22:39,050  
And the, how can I say,  
the physical necessities

445  
00:22:39,050 --> 00:22:41,530  
were taken care of by  
a number of buckets.

446  
00:22:41,530 --> 00:22:42,170  
That was all.

447  
00:22:42,170 --> 00:22:43,340  
Buckets were distributed.

448  
00:22:43,340 --> 00:22:44,630  
They were standing around.

449  
00:22:44,630 --> 00:22:46,910  
People had to do their  
business in a bucket.

450  
00:22:46,910 --> 00:22:50,540  
And those who needed to go  
to some kind of a toilet

451  
00:22:50,540 --> 00:22:56,390  
had to go across decks and  
down into another hold, where

452  
00:22:56,390 --> 00:23:00,320  
they actually had  
latrines and washrooms.

453  
00:23:00,320 --> 00:23:05,570  
So it was a very, very  
uncomfortable situation.

454  
00:23:05,570 --> 00:23:09,470  
During the night, we took  
off and started to move.

455  
00:23:09,470 --> 00:23:12,950  
And we got into the Irish Sea,  
and the seas were very choppy

456  
00:23:12,950 --> 00:23:14,390  
right from the start.

457  
00:23:14,390 --> 00:23:17,420  
And most of us got sick  
almost immediately--

458  
00:23:17,420 --> 00:23:19,220  
very sick.

459  
00:23:19,220 --> 00:23:20,100  
Did you get sick?

460  
00:23:20,100 --> 00:23:22,430  
Yes, I got very sick.

461  
00:23:22,430 --> 00:23:23,630



We spent a day--

462

00:23:23,630 --> 00:23:25,940  
and I'm not even sure whether  
it was a day and a night

463

00:23:25,940 --> 00:23:30,410  
or just a part of a day, before  
there was a tremendous bump

464

00:23:30,410 --> 00:23:31,970  
against the side of the ship.

465

00:23:31,970 --> 00:23:35,450  
And the engine stopped,  
and we said, that's it.

466

00:23:35,450 --> 00:23:38,810  
The Irish Sea was  
a favorite place

467

00:23:38,810 --> 00:23:41,700  
for the German  
submarines, which were

468

00:23:41,700 --> 00:23:43,760  
at their best at that time.

469

00:23:43,760 --> 00:23:46,130  
It was in July, 1940.

470

00:23:46,130 --> 00:23:50,300  
And we thought we'd been  
torpedoed, which we had,

471

00:23:50,300 --> 00:23:51,290  
and we hadn't.

472

00:23:51,290 --> 00:23:54,020  
Because the torpedo,  
as it turned out later,

473

00:23:54,020 --> 00:23:57,530  
a torpedo had struck  
us, but hadn't exploded.

474  
00:23:57,530 --> 00:24:00,440  
So we heard this tremendous  
impact against the ship.

475  
00:24:00,440 --> 00:24:04,460  
The ship turned,  
stopped the engines,

476  
00:24:04,460 --> 00:24:08,840  
and within a very short  
time, officers came,

477  
00:24:08,840 --> 00:24:13,640  
or guards came to the top of the  
stairs and said, all is well.

478  
00:24:13,640 --> 00:24:15,620  
Nothing happened.

479  
00:24:15,620 --> 00:24:20,390  
But that was a moment when  
almost everybody in those

480  
00:24:20,390 --> 00:24:24,590  
rooms-- and there must have been  
about 300 people in this small

481  
00:24:24,590 --> 00:24:26,840  
part of the ship that I was in--

482  
00:24:26,840 --> 00:24:28,070  
thought we'd had it.

483  
00:24:28,070 --> 00:24:30,950  
We would drown like rats.

484  
00:24:30,950 --> 00:24:35,510  
Especially since we were  
aware of the disaster

485  
00:24:35,510 --> 00:24:40,760  
of the previous ship, which  
was called the Arandora Star.

486  
00:24:40,760 --> 00:24:42,740  
So we thought that  
was the end of us.

487  
00:24:42,740 --> 00:24:46,130  
It never got that terrible  
again from then on,

488  
00:24:46,130 --> 00:24:48,380  
but it was a big scare we got.

489  
00:24:48,380 --> 00:24:52,460  
So we traveled for eight weeks.

490  
00:24:52,460 --> 00:24:55,190  
We traveled the  
shortest way to--

491  
00:24:55,190 --> 00:24:58,730  
oh, we went west.

492  
00:24:58,730 --> 00:25:01,400  
Some of us were  
able to go on deck.

493  
00:25:01,400 --> 00:25:04,610  
And they had barbed wire fences.

494  
00:25:04,610 --> 00:25:08,060  
We were separated from the  
railing by barbed wire,

495  
00:25:08,060 --> 00:25:09,950  
but we were able to go on deck.

496  
00:25:09,950 --> 00:25:12,440  
Some other parts of

the ship with internees

497

00:25:12,440 --> 00:25:14,210

were not able to  
go on deck even.

498

00:25:14,210 --> 00:25:17,150

They just spent eight  
weeks underground.

499

00:25:17,150 --> 00:25:18,500

But we were able to go on deck.

500

00:25:18,500 --> 00:25:20,870

And we looked out,  
and we saw, we

501

00:25:20,870 --> 00:25:24,750

could tell we were going  
west, obviously to Canada.

502

00:25:24,750 --> 00:25:26,990

But what we didn't  
know that at night,

503

00:25:26,990 --> 00:25:29,840

we turned around and went south.

504

00:25:29,840 --> 00:25:33,860

The only thing that we realized  
that after about a week, it got

505

00:25:33,860 --> 00:25:34,700

hotter.

506

00:25:34,700 --> 00:25:36,170

It got warm.

507

00:25:36,170 --> 00:25:37,610

That's not Canada.

508

00:25:37,610 --> 00:25:40,520

And after two weeks,  
we saw flying fish.

509  
00:25:40,520 --> 00:25:43,550  
Now, that is clearly tropical.

510  
00:25:43,550 --> 00:25:48,830  
And we realized the ship  
was going south to Africa.

511  
00:25:48,830 --> 00:25:53,180  
And from then on, we  
realized that the destination

512  
00:25:53,180 --> 00:25:54,530  
was Australia.

513  
00:25:54,530 --> 00:25:58,070  
We traveled around  
the Cape, because--

514  
00:25:58,070 --> 00:26:00,500  
the reason why we didn't  
go through the Suez Canal

515  
00:26:00,500 --> 00:26:04,250  
was that you needed  
a heavy escort,

516  
00:26:04,250 --> 00:26:07,370  
because it was very dangerous,  
and we didn't rate an escort.

517  
00:26:07,370 --> 00:26:11,960  
So we just had an escort for  
the first two days near Britain,

518  
00:26:11,960 --> 00:26:13,130  
near Ireland.

519  
00:26:13,130 --> 00:26:16,880  
And then we just  
went on our own.

520

00:26:16,880 --> 00:26:22,730

And we went south, ended up  
in a couple of African ports,

521

00:26:22,730 --> 00:26:26,060

where we took on water  
and food and whatever.

522

00:26:26,060 --> 00:26:31,160

And the final stop in  
Africa was Cape Town,

523

00:26:31,160 --> 00:26:36,000

where some of the  
people were unloaded.

524

00:26:36,000 --> 00:26:40,460

There were-- well,  
that's another thing.

525

00:26:40,460 --> 00:26:44,780

Part of the internees on  
board ship were Nazis.

526

00:26:44,780 --> 00:26:47,480

They were  
dyed-in-the-wool Nazis.

527

00:26:47,480 --> 00:26:51,770

They were people who had been  
on a German ship that was

528

00:26:51,770 --> 00:26:54,930

promoting the cause of Hitler.

529

00:26:54,930 --> 00:26:59,250

They had sent some ships  
to the South Atlantic,

530

00:26:59,250 --> 00:27:02,670

and into South  
America and Argentina.

531

00:27:02,670 --> 00:27:07,440

And the people on board  
ship, the crews of the ship,

532

00:27:07,440 --> 00:27:13,560

were hand-picked, good-looking,  
blonde, blue eyed Aryan Nazis,

533

00:27:13,560 --> 00:27:17,720

who were supposed to propagate  
the Nazi creed in South

534

00:27:17,720 --> 00:27:18,220

America.

535

00:27:18,220 --> 00:27:22,020

Of course, it was a very  
fertile ground for that.

536

00:27:22,020 --> 00:27:24,760

All of South America  
was neutral at the time.

537

00:27:24,760 --> 00:27:27,270

But as luck would  
have it, their ships

538

00:27:27,270 --> 00:27:30,900

were intercepted and  
sunk by the British Navy.

539

00:27:30,900 --> 00:27:35,670

And those Nazis were  
put on the Arandora

540

00:27:35,670 --> 00:27:39,780

Star, which was a ship that was  
torpedoed on its way to Canada.

541

00:27:39,780 --> 00:27:43,680

We had the survivors on  
board, together with a lot

542  
00:27:43,680 --> 00:27:45,350  
of Italian internees.

543  
00:27:45,350 --> 00:27:47,100  
So there was a whole  
section on board ship

544  
00:27:47,100 --> 00:27:49,590  
that had Nazis and Italians.

545  
00:27:49,590 --> 00:27:51,210  
And we had to go  
through that section

546  
00:27:51,210 --> 00:27:53,970  
to get to the latrines  
and the washrooms.

547  
00:27:53,970 --> 00:27:55,960  
But the relationship wasn't bad.

548  
00:27:55,960 --> 00:27:57,660  
We just sort of got along.

549  
00:27:57,660 --> 00:28:01,770  
Were you able to do some  
drawing on the ship?

550  
00:28:01,770 --> 00:28:03,420  
Yes.

551  
00:28:03,420 --> 00:28:05,310  
I did a number of drawings.

552  
00:28:05,310 --> 00:28:07,410  
And those drawings were really--

553  
00:28:07,410 --> 00:28:08,520  
it was quite amazing.

554



00:28:08,520 --> 00:28:11,970  
And if you ask anybody who  
was on my part of the ship,

555  
00:28:11,970 --> 00:28:14,970  
they really helped the morale,  
because what I did was,

556  
00:28:14,970 --> 00:28:15,900  
we had--

557  
00:28:15,900 --> 00:28:21,900  
on those tables that we ate  
our food on and that we lived

558  
00:28:21,900 --> 00:28:25,470  
around and played cards  
on-- we had a few cards--

559  
00:28:25,470 --> 00:28:29,310  
they had a board at the  
end of the table that said,

560  
00:28:29,310 --> 00:28:32,670  
this table is for 20  
men and two officers.

561  
00:28:32,670 --> 00:28:36,420  
And they are rather  
elegant wooden tablets.

562  
00:28:36,420 --> 00:28:39,480  
And the reverse side was empty.

563  
00:28:39,480 --> 00:28:43,200  
It was wood, it was  
nicely finished wood.

564  
00:28:43,200 --> 00:28:46,590  
And some of us, of course--

565  
00:28:46,590 --> 00:28:49,110  
people get organized, and

they want to do things.

566

00:28:49,110 --> 00:28:52,020

They want to teach, they want to  
learn, they want to play games.

567

00:28:52,020 --> 00:28:54,970

It's almost a natural thing  
you'll find that everywhere.

568

00:28:54,970 --> 00:28:57,390

And, of course, it had  
started in internment.

569

00:28:57,390 --> 00:29:00,570

And in this new  
configuration of people,

570

00:29:00,570 --> 00:29:03,180

there were some who wanted  
to play chess, obviously.

571

00:29:03,180 --> 00:29:07,500

So no problem, they made  
chessmen out of bread.

572

00:29:07,500 --> 00:29:10,260

And, yeah, you can make  
chessmen out of anything,

573

00:29:10,260 --> 00:29:13,530

but I think the best chessmen  
were made out of bread.

574

00:29:13,530 --> 00:29:15,990

And chessboards, fine.

575

00:29:15,990 --> 00:29:18,637

They drew a chess  
board on those boards.

576

00:29:18,637 --> 00:29:20,220

But of course, the

boards were oblong,

577

00:29:20,220 --> 00:29:21,840

and the chess boards are square.

578

00:29:21,840 --> 00:29:25,440

So there was a lot of room  
around the chess boards.

579

00:29:25,440 --> 00:29:30,400

And I decided that  
that was my venue.

580

00:29:30,400 --> 00:29:32,490

And I did caricatures.

581

00:29:32,490 --> 00:29:34,590

Until then, I'd only  
done caricatures.

582

00:29:34,590 --> 00:29:36,240

That was my forte.

583

00:29:36,240 --> 00:29:38,400

And I wanted to be a  
caricaturist, especially

584

00:29:38,400 --> 00:29:41,580

as I was inspired  
by David Low, who

585

00:29:41,580 --> 00:29:46,080

was a famous British wartime  
cartoonist in London.

586

00:29:46,080 --> 00:29:49,290

So I drew some  
cartoons, showing people

587

00:29:49,290 --> 00:29:53,130

being interned and  
getting aboard ship,

588

00:29:53,130 --> 00:29:57,330

fighting for their places  
on the latrines, and rather

589

00:29:57,330 --> 00:29:58,890

crude caricatures.

590

00:29:58,890 --> 00:30:01,740

But I understand that some  
people were really, really

591

00:30:01,740 --> 00:30:02,910

cheered up by this.

592

00:30:02,910 --> 00:30:04,260

They made the rounds.

593

00:30:04,260 --> 00:30:05,310

They were passed around.

594

00:30:05,310 --> 00:30:06,720

And what about you?

595

00:30:06,720 --> 00:30:08,450

Did it help you to be able to--

596

00:30:08,450 --> 00:30:09,135

Oh, obviously.

597

00:30:09,135 --> 00:30:09,635

--drawings?

598

00:30:09,635 --> 00:30:13,680

Obviously, it was a  
morale booster for me.

599

00:30:13,680 --> 00:30:16,320

I don't remember  
seeing any paper.

600

00:30:16,320 --> 00:30:21,570

What I do remember is that the  
last guard who searched me,

601  
00:30:21,570 --> 00:30:25,620  
threw my belongings  
on a heap, and there

602  
00:30:25,620 --> 00:30:28,560  
was a little stump  
of a pencil there,

603  
00:30:28,560 --> 00:30:32,130  
and when he wasn't looking,  
I dived for the heap,

604  
00:30:32,130 --> 00:30:36,940  
took that stump of a  
pencil, and pocketed it.

605  
00:30:36,940 --> 00:30:39,580  
And that was what I  
was able to draw with.

606  
00:30:39,580 --> 00:30:43,980  
And it was a great relief  
to me to be able to draw.

607  
00:30:43,980 --> 00:30:46,860  
I did not sketch what I saw.

608  
00:30:46,860 --> 00:30:48,420  
I just wasn't used to--

609  
00:30:48,420 --> 00:30:50,550  
I got into the habit of  
sketching much later when

610  
00:30:50,550 --> 00:30:52,060  
I went to art school.

611  
00:30:52,060 --> 00:30:53,250  
But I drew cartoons.

612

00:30:53,250 --> 00:30:54,420

I wanted to draw.

613

00:30:54,420 --> 00:30:56,700

And so that was--

actually, I think

614

00:30:56,700 --> 00:31:03,300

I had drawn some cartoons also  
in Bury, in that cotton mill.

615

00:31:03,300 --> 00:31:04,740

But I think they got away.

616

00:31:04,740 --> 00:31:07,410

Somebody took them, or  
somebody collected them.

617

00:31:07,410 --> 00:31:10,110

Well, we're coming to the end  
of the tape, so we'll stop here.

618

00:31:10,110 --> 00:31:10,610

Right.

619

00:31:10,610 --> 00:31:26,360

620

00:31:26,360 --> 00:31:27,410

Mr. Schonbach.

621

00:31:27,410 --> 00:31:39,910

622

00:31:39,910 --> 00:31:47,420

Mr. Schonbach, you were talking  
about the voyage on the Dunera.

623

00:31:47,420 --> 00:31:49,640

Could you tell us  
more about that?

624

00:31:49,640 --> 00:31:51,230

Yes.

625

00:31:51,230 --> 00:31:56,930

There were some  
interesting circumstances.

626

00:31:56,930 --> 00:32:08,360

I mentioned before that  
my first arrival in camp,

627

00:32:08,360 --> 00:32:10,700

and the fact that  
for the first time

628

00:32:10,700 --> 00:32:15,020

I was exposed to a  
large number of people,

629

00:32:15,020 --> 00:32:20,900

and there was certain  
socialization taking place,

630

00:32:20,900 --> 00:32:26,480

which was something new for me,  
an only child, rather spoiled,

631

00:32:26,480 --> 00:32:29,540

and somewhat lonely.

632

00:32:29,540 --> 00:32:32,360

And there was more of  
that on board ship.

633

00:32:32,360 --> 00:32:36,590

And, of course, we were in  
very close contact, since we

634

00:32:36,590 --> 00:32:39,080

were crowded into a space.

635

00:32:39,080 --> 00:32:46,100

And, again, there were certain  
personal attachments formed.

636  
00:32:46,100 --> 00:32:51,530  
One of the most, I'd say,  
one of a number of people

637  
00:32:51,530 --> 00:32:56,870  
that I remember most vividly  
was what I considered an old man

638  
00:32:56,870 --> 00:32:57,750  
at the time.

639  
00:32:57,750 --> 00:32:59,930  
Obviously, as I said  
before, he couldn't

640  
00:32:59,930 --> 00:33:02,810  
have been over 60 because they  
didn't intern anybody over 60.

641  
00:33:02,810 --> 00:33:04,250  
But he was close on 60.

642  
00:33:04,250 --> 00:33:06,050  
To me, he was quite old.

643  
00:33:06,050 --> 00:33:10,018  
And we became good friends.

644  
00:33:10,018 --> 00:33:10,810  
And he has really--

645  
00:33:10,810 --> 00:33:13,730

646  
00:33:13,730 --> 00:33:16,190  
he did me a great service.

647  
00:33:16,190 --> 00:33:18,180  
Unfortunately, I



lost sight of him,

648

00:33:18,180 --> 00:33:22,160  
which was unavoidable,  
later on in Australia.

649

00:33:22,160 --> 00:33:31,550  
But at the time, he sort of  
helped me reconcile myself

650

00:33:31,550 --> 00:33:33,200  
to the fact of internment.

651

00:33:33,200 --> 00:33:36,215  
And he taught me the  
virtue of patience.

652

00:33:36,215 --> 00:33:39,050

653

00:33:39,050 --> 00:33:41,630  
He was a dentist,  
a Viennese dentist,

654

00:33:41,630 --> 00:33:46,100  
who had been a prisoner  
of war of the Russians

655

00:33:46,100 --> 00:33:48,470  
in the First World War.

656

00:33:48,470 --> 00:33:51,770  
And he was interned in  
a prisoner of war camp

657

00:33:51,770 --> 00:33:54,620  
in Russia for at  
least four years.

658

00:33:54,620 --> 00:33:56,840  
So he had learned to be patient.

659

00:33:56,840 --> 00:34:00,050

And to him, this  
was no big deal.

660

00:34:00,050 --> 00:34:04,730

He obviously could  
take it very well.

661

00:34:04,730 --> 00:34:14,000

And he was a strong aide.

662

00:34:14,000 --> 00:34:20,909

He helped me get over this  
time and to bear with it.

663

00:34:20,909 --> 00:34:24,514

And the other thing was that,  
obviously, each table-- and I

664

00:34:24,514 --> 00:34:25,639

don't know how many tables.

665

00:34:25,639 --> 00:34:27,590

There must have been  
at least 20 tables--

666

00:34:27,590 --> 00:34:32,659

and each table formed a kind  
of community, around which we

667

00:34:32,659 --> 00:34:34,520

sat and ate around the tables.

668

00:34:34,520 --> 00:34:39,500

And somebody produced a  
pack of cards on my table.

669

00:34:39,500 --> 00:34:42,960

And we played bridge  
quite regularly,

670

00:34:42,960 --> 00:34:46,460

which was a great

relief to most of us.

671  
00:34:46,460 --> 00:34:53,090  
And this man was--

672  
00:34:53,090 --> 00:34:57,260  
as I said, we played bridge,  
he and I, and two others.

673  
00:34:57,260 --> 00:35:01,370  
And although he was so  
much older than I, well,

674  
00:35:01,370 --> 00:35:04,070  
I guess he was some kind  
of a father figure for me.

675  
00:35:04,070 --> 00:35:06,660

676  
00:35:06,660 --> 00:35:10,760  
The third person  
in that was a, oh,

677  
00:35:10,760 --> 00:35:16,610  
fairly young German  
refugee, a Quaker,

678  
00:35:16,610 --> 00:35:20,950  
and highly intelligent and  
quite wonderful person.

679  
00:35:20,950 --> 00:35:25,730  
And, again, there was  
somebody I could look up to.

680  
00:35:25,730 --> 00:35:29,990  
And the third person  
was someone practically

681  
00:35:29,990 --> 00:35:32,360  
the same age as myself.

682

00:35:32,360 --> 00:35:35,900

And we are still friends.

683

00:35:35,900 --> 00:35:40,760

He lives partly in Australia,  
partly here in the States,

684

00:35:40,760 --> 00:35:42,290

in Georgia.

685

00:35:42,290 --> 00:35:46,940

And we talk twice,  
three times a year.

686

00:35:46,940 --> 00:35:51,390

He just lost his wife,  
and also one of his sons.

687

00:35:51,390 --> 00:35:57,110

But Peter and I, we're of  
the same age more or less.

688

00:35:57,110 --> 00:35:58,820

We liked to play bridge.

689

00:35:58,820 --> 00:36:05,720

And we also, we were  
somewhat physically alike.

690

00:36:05,720 --> 00:36:08,270

And Peter had a raincoat,  
which we shared,

691

00:36:08,270 --> 00:36:12,230

whenever I went on  
deck and was cold,

692

00:36:12,230 --> 00:36:17,750

because the passage from  
South Africa to Australia

693

00:36:17,750 --> 00:36:21,590

went through the, I don't know  
what the region is called,

694  
00:36:21,590 --> 00:36:24,590  
but it gets rather  
cold and stormy.

695  
00:36:24,590 --> 00:36:27,380  
And we shared that raincoat,  
and we shared a lot of things.

696  
00:36:27,380 --> 00:36:28,685  
And we became fast friends.

697  
00:36:28,685 --> 00:36:31,400

698  
00:36:31,400 --> 00:36:36,260  
So, personally, it was  
a time of attachments

699  
00:36:36,260 --> 00:36:38,390  
and of finding good people.

700  
00:36:38,390 --> 00:36:41,073  
And the rest of the  
people on my table--

701  
00:36:41,073 --> 00:36:42,740  
and that was another  
interesting thing--

702  
00:36:42,740 --> 00:36:44,330  
were not Jews.

703  
00:36:44,330 --> 00:36:46,160  
They were non-Jews.

704  
00:36:46,160 --> 00:36:47,730  
They were political refugees.

705  
00:36:47,730 --> 00:36:51,960

They were people who had  
left Germany because they

706  
00:36:51,960 --> 00:36:54,570  
were communists and socialists.

707  
00:36:54,570 --> 00:36:59,730  
And some of them were  
actually laborers.

708  
00:36:59,730 --> 00:37:04,020  
They were real  
blue collar people.

709  
00:37:04,020 --> 00:37:07,950  
And one father and son I  
remember quite vividly.

710  
00:37:07,950 --> 00:37:18,300  
And they were a great source  
of relief, because some of them

711  
00:37:18,300 --> 00:37:24,690  
had been in German prisons,  
as political prisoners.

712  
00:37:24,690 --> 00:37:29,200  
And to them, this was,  
again, it was no big deal.

713  
00:37:29,200 --> 00:37:36,060  
And as distinct from some of the  
Jewish internees on that ship,

714  
00:37:36,060 --> 00:37:40,150  
who were completely  
devastated by the fact,

715  
00:37:40,150 --> 00:37:42,270  
not only that they  
had been interned,

716  
00:37:42,270 --> 00:37:46,230

and that they had been treated  
roughly by the soldiers, when

717  
00:37:46,230 --> 00:37:49,200  
in reality they should  
have been, well,

718  
00:37:49,200 --> 00:37:52,920  
at least treated as  
friends, but they had also

719  
00:37:52,920 --> 00:37:56,700  
lost a lot of personal  
belongings and papers.

720  
00:37:56,700 --> 00:38:02,490  
And, really, it was  
very depressing.

721  
00:38:02,490 --> 00:38:05,140  
And you could see that some  
of the people were devastated.

722  
00:38:05,140 --> 00:38:08,700  
In fact, somebody jumped  
overboard, committed suicide.

723  
00:38:08,700 --> 00:38:15,818  
Whereas the people on my table,  
they took it rather lightly.

724  
00:38:15,818 --> 00:38:17,610  
Of course, it was part  
of their philosophy.

725  
00:38:17,610 --> 00:38:21,210  
They said, oh, the English,  
just capitalists, just

726  
00:38:21,210 --> 00:38:24,710  
like the Germans, no different.

727  
00:38:24,710 --> 00:38:26,610

It was funny.

728

00:38:26,610 --> 00:38:29,160

But the physical  
effect of it was

729

00:38:29,160 --> 00:38:34,098

that they were, it was  
just, oh, one more prison.

730

00:38:34,098 --> 00:38:34,890

What do you expect?

731

00:38:34,890 --> 00:38:36,098

And we're going to Australia.

732

00:38:36,098 --> 00:38:38,080

That's fine with us.

733

00:38:38,080 --> 00:38:40,110

So we had a good crowd there.

734

00:38:40,110 --> 00:38:45,480

And it made for an  
easier atmosphere.

735

00:38:45,480 --> 00:38:49,080

In some instances, the  
atmosphere was charged.

736

00:38:49,080 --> 00:38:54,360

And, again, another victim  
who died on the voyage

737

00:38:54,360 --> 00:38:57,690

was somebody who died in  
a fight, in a fistfight.

738

00:38:57,690 --> 00:39:01,950

A young boy, and he  
got into an argument,

739



00:39:01,950 --> 00:39:03,960  
and the boy knocked him out.

740  
00:39:03,960 --> 00:39:05,250  
And he was carried out.

741  
00:39:05,250 --> 00:39:07,200  
And we thought,  
well, he's just KO'd.

742  
00:39:07,200 --> 00:39:10,030  
But, no, he died  
of a heart attack.

743  
00:39:10,030 --> 00:39:12,150  
So I was lucky.

744  
00:39:12,150 --> 00:39:18,660  
Again, personally, I felt that  
we had a good crowd there.

745  
00:39:18,660 --> 00:39:20,370  
And then, of course,  
when it dawned on us

746  
00:39:20,370 --> 00:39:25,170  
that we were going to Australia,  
well, it was OK with us.

747  
00:39:25,170 --> 00:39:28,360  
So, personally, it was--

748  
00:39:28,360 --> 00:39:30,030  
And, of course,  
the drawings, and I

749  
00:39:30,030 --> 00:39:33,090  
was able to draw and  
cheer up some people.

750  
00:39:33,090 --> 00:39:39,810  
And my friend, my older friend,  
the Austrian dentist and I,

751  
00:39:39,810 --> 00:39:43,710  
he was a heavy smoker, and  
I was a bit of a smoker,

752  
00:39:43,710 --> 00:39:45,030  
but I could do without.

753  
00:39:45,030 --> 00:39:51,480  
So what we did, I think I had  
some cigarettes or something,

754  
00:39:51,480 --> 00:39:52,470  
and we traded.

755  
00:39:52,470 --> 00:39:55,740  
The guards very soon  
became accustomed to us,

756  
00:39:55,740 --> 00:39:59,550  
and we started trading  
and buying things

757  
00:39:59,550 --> 00:40:01,380  
from them, smuggling things in.

758  
00:40:01,380 --> 00:40:04,140

759  
00:40:04,140 --> 00:40:05,730  
He had to have his cigarettes.

760  
00:40:05,730 --> 00:40:07,210  
And he gave away his--

761  
00:40:07,210 --> 00:40:13,980  
the people who guarded  
us or, I don't know,

762  
00:40:13,980 --> 00:40:21,150  
or the crew of the ship decided  
that we had to have lime juice

763  
00:40:21,150 --> 00:40:25,830  
and/or one apple a week  
to guard against scurvy.

764  
00:40:25,830 --> 00:40:27,930  
That seemed to be a  
routine thing on ships.

765  
00:40:27,930 --> 00:40:32,430  
So this a friend of  
mine was happy to trade

766  
00:40:32,430 --> 00:40:35,430  
in his lime juice or his  
apple for cigarettes.

767  
00:40:35,430 --> 00:40:40,350  
And I helped him conduct  
this trade, this barter.

768  
00:40:40,350 --> 00:40:44,340  
So then, what happened when  
you landed in Australia?

769  
00:40:44,340 --> 00:40:48,100  
Well, we were  
taken off the ship.

770  
00:40:48,100 --> 00:40:53,790  
And we were very relieved  
because the guards

771  
00:40:53,790 --> 00:40:56,520  
had been quite nasty.

772  
00:40:56,520 --> 00:41:00,870  
And we were put on a train  
with Australian guards.

773  
00:41:00,870 --> 00:41:07,620  
The Australian guards  
were older men,

774

00:41:07,620 --> 00:41:11,580  
who were not active soldiers,  
who had been given guard duty.

775

00:41:11,580 --> 00:41:16,480  
And they started, immediately  
almost, making friends with us.

776

00:41:16,480 --> 00:41:18,510  
And it was a very  
impressive thing

777

00:41:18,510 --> 00:41:21,310  
to see how they put away  
their rifles and said,

778

00:41:21,310 --> 00:41:23,130  
hey, this is ridiculous.

779

00:41:23,130 --> 00:41:24,420  
Why would you be interned?

780

00:41:24,420 --> 00:41:25,470  
Why would they take you?

781

00:41:25,470 --> 00:41:28,410  
We told them we were  
Jewish, we were refugees.

782

00:41:28,410 --> 00:41:33,660  
And they just  
immediately relaxed.

783

00:41:33,660 --> 00:41:35,400  
And we traveled  
all night until we

784

00:41:35,400 --> 00:41:39,390  
came to our camp, which was  
several hundred miles inland,

785

00:41:39,390 --> 00:41:43,130  
Hay, in a sheep--

786  
00:41:43,130 --> 00:41:45,540  
it was mostly sheep country.

787  
00:41:45,540 --> 00:41:48,970  
Or I don't know whether  
they grew anything there.

788  
00:41:48,970 --> 00:41:51,370  
But it was sheep--

789  
00:41:51,370 --> 00:41:52,690  
it was grazing country.

790  
00:41:52,690 --> 00:41:55,640  
And that's where they had  
put the internment camp.

791  
00:41:55,640 --> 00:41:57,250  
There were two big camps.

792  
00:41:57,250 --> 00:42:01,270  
They divided us in two, and put  
a thousand men in each camp.

793  
00:42:01,270 --> 00:42:04,030

794  
00:42:04,030 --> 00:42:05,110  
We traveled all night.

795  
00:42:05,110 --> 00:42:07,750  
And in the morning,  
we started marching--

796  
00:42:07,750 --> 00:42:11,500  
it wasn't very far-- from the  
railroad station to the camp.

797  
00:42:11,500 --> 00:42:17,620

And that was a proper  
internment camp--

798  
00:42:17,620 --> 00:42:23,560  
three rows of barbed wire,  
guard towers with searchlights,

799  
00:42:23,560 --> 00:42:27,550  
armed guards on the towers,  
armed guards around the camp.

800  
00:42:27,550 --> 00:42:30,850  
But even there, the  
camp commandant,

801  
00:42:30,850 --> 00:42:37,270  
who was a lieutenant, started  
talking to our representatives.

802  
00:42:37,270 --> 00:42:40,360  
We found representatives,  
and almost immediately

803  
00:42:40,360 --> 00:42:42,280  
organized ourselves into groups.

804  
00:42:42,280 --> 00:42:44,410  
And they started talking  
to our representatives

805  
00:42:44,410 --> 00:42:50,920  
and found out our true  
identity and gave the orders,

806  
00:42:50,920 --> 00:42:53,740  
no armed guards in camp.

807  
00:42:53,740 --> 00:42:55,540  
Leave your rifles outside.

808  
00:42:55,540 --> 00:42:58,450  
If you go into camp, stay--

809

00:42:58,450 --> 00:43:01,000  
these are peaceful people.

810

00:43:01,000 --> 00:43:04,240  
And that's how we  
spent the next,

811

00:43:04,240 --> 00:43:07,250  
I don't know, nine  
months in this camp.

812

00:43:07,250 --> 00:43:10,630  
And, of course,  
there, immediately, we

813

00:43:10,630 --> 00:43:14,770  
became organized into groups  
of teachers and students.

814

00:43:14,770 --> 00:43:17,650  
And somebody who was  
a teacher in one group

815

00:43:17,650 --> 00:43:19,550  
became a student  
in another group.

816

00:43:19,550 --> 00:43:20,710  
And what about you?

817

00:43:20,710 --> 00:43:22,060  
What was your role?

818

00:43:22,060 --> 00:43:26,890  
Well, I got together with  
two other youngsters.

819

00:43:26,890 --> 00:43:31,480  
And almost immediately,  
we decided that this camp

820

00:43:31,480 --> 00:43:34,330

needed a camp newspaper.

821

00:43:34,330 --> 00:43:37,340

And the newspaper, we  
couldn't print anything.

822

00:43:37,340 --> 00:43:43,900

So what we decided to do was  
to type and handwrite the news.

823

00:43:43,900 --> 00:43:47,320

The other two boys were  
obviously aspiring journalists.

824

00:43:47,320 --> 00:43:49,750

And I was an  
aspiring cartoonist.

825

00:43:49,750 --> 00:43:55,300

So I suppose I found  
paper fairly soon

826

00:43:55,300 --> 00:44:01,760

and drawing materials, and  
we formed a camp newspaper,

827

00:44:01,760 --> 00:44:07,460

which was put on a board  
and came out twice a week,

828

00:44:07,460 --> 00:44:08,470

I believe.

829

00:44:08,470 --> 00:44:13,240

It was called Der Lager Spiegel,  
which means The Camp Mirror.

830

00:44:13,240 --> 00:44:14,590

And it was a very--

831

00:44:14,590 --> 00:44:19,930

people came and went at  
the date of publication,



832  
00:44:19,930 --> 00:44:22,000  
came and stood in front  
of it, and looked at it,

833  
00:44:22,000 --> 00:44:26,150  
and laughed at my cartoons, and  
read what there was to read.

834  
00:44:26,150 --> 00:44:27,880  
And it was a  
satisfying occupation

835  
00:44:27,880 --> 00:44:31,580  
for quite a long time, for me.

836  
00:44:31,580 --> 00:44:34,450  
Other people did chores.

837  
00:44:34,450 --> 00:44:37,460  
They got paid minimal amount.

838  
00:44:37,460 --> 00:44:44,290  
And after a while, I was  
able to order paper and art

839  
00:44:44,290 --> 00:44:49,580  
materials from Sydney  
through the camp authorities.

840  
00:44:49,580 --> 00:44:57,430  
And I started doing drawings,  
again, cartoons, reproductions

841  
00:44:57,430 --> 00:44:59,740  
of my cartoons,  
copies of my cartoons.

842  
00:44:59,740 --> 00:45:03,850  
And I had some rather  
devoted customers.

843

00:45:03,850 --> 00:45:07,450  
And I started making  
money, selling my cartoons,

844  
00:45:07,450 --> 00:45:08,680  
selling the drawings.

845  
00:45:08,680 --> 00:45:10,870  
What kinds of cartoons?

846  
00:45:10,870 --> 00:45:15,070  
Well, you've seen  
The Dunera Scandal,

847  
00:45:15,070 --> 00:45:20,020  
the book that was published  
by an Australian journalist,

848  
00:45:20,020 --> 00:45:21,910  
long after the end of the war.

849  
00:45:21,910 --> 00:45:27,490  
And some of my cartoons  
were published in that book.

850  
00:45:27,490 --> 00:45:30,850  
Could you describe what  
the cartoons were like?

851  
00:45:30,850 --> 00:45:36,295  
Cartoons were topical events,  
what occupied us most.

852  
00:45:36,295 --> 00:45:39,070

853  
00:45:39,070 --> 00:45:40,870  
It's hard to remember.

854  
00:45:40,870 --> 00:45:45,040  
Well, somebody, for  
example, we were

855

00:45:45,040 --> 00:45:49,090

very much occupied,  
obviously, with our release.

856

00:45:49,090 --> 00:45:51,940

And we found out soon that  
the British government

857

00:45:51,940 --> 00:45:55,810

was trying to make amends for  
this horrible mistake which

858

00:45:55,810 --> 00:45:57,550

had been perpetrated.

859

00:45:57,550 --> 00:46:00,970

And they were sending a  
representative to Australia

860

00:46:00,970 --> 00:46:03,370

to negotiate with the  
Australian government

861

00:46:03,370 --> 00:46:08,230

to either release us or  
send us back to Britain.

862

00:46:08,230 --> 00:46:11,770

In other words, there was  
action taking place there.

863

00:46:11,770 --> 00:46:16,030

And we were terribly, obviously,  
worried about this man.

864

00:46:16,030 --> 00:46:16,780

Who would he be?

865

00:46:16,780 --> 00:46:17,680

What would he do?

866

00:46:17,680 --> 00:46:18,970

When would he come?

867

00:46:18,970 --> 00:46:22,930

And these were subjects  
for my cartoons.

868

00:46:22,930 --> 00:46:26,290

Now were they the cartoons  
that people bought in the camp?

869

00:46:26,290 --> 00:46:27,580

No.

870

00:46:27,580 --> 00:46:28,480

Well, yes.

871

00:46:28,480 --> 00:46:30,760

Yeah.

872

00:46:30,760 --> 00:46:33,220

Some of the cartoons,  
also, were reminiscences

873

00:46:33,220 --> 00:46:35,230

of the ship, what  
happened on the ship,

874

00:46:35,230 --> 00:46:38,580

because on the ship  
itself I had no paper.

875

00:46:38,580 --> 00:46:41,470

Apart from those two  
boards or three boards

876

00:46:41,470 --> 00:46:43,750

that I did cartoons  
on, I had nothing.

877

00:46:43,750 --> 00:46:45,760

There was no permanent record.

878

00:46:45,760 --> 00:46:49,600  
And I started providing a  
record of what had happened,

879  
00:46:49,600 --> 00:46:53,020  
how we had been interned, and  
what happened on the ship.

880  
00:46:53,020 --> 00:46:55,180  
And there was, of course,  
a wealth of material--

881  
00:46:55,180 --> 00:46:59,770  
how they chased us around  
the ship with bayonets,

882  
00:46:59,770 --> 00:47:02,050  
and what the  
soldiers, the guards,

883  
00:47:02,050 --> 00:47:05,800  
did to us, and then  
the arrival in camp,

884  
00:47:05,800 --> 00:47:09,160  
and then the first days  
in camp, the problems

885  
00:47:09,160 --> 00:47:12,550  
we had in camp, the  
enormous amount of flies.

886  
00:47:12,550 --> 00:47:14,470  
We were plagued by flies.

887  
00:47:14,470 --> 00:47:15,970  
There was no insect .

888  
00:47:15,970 --> 00:47:19,420  
Screen or anything those huts  
we lived in were half open.

889  
00:47:19,420 --> 00:47:25,173

And I can't remember  
the different things,

890  
00:47:25,173 --> 00:47:26,590  
but there were a  
number of things.

891  
00:47:26,590 --> 00:47:32,680  
And then, finally, what I  
did, I imagined myself a bird,

892  
00:47:32,680 --> 00:47:35,800  
and I flew over the camp and  
had these bird's-eye views

893  
00:47:35,800 --> 00:47:36,940  
of the camp.

894  
00:47:36,940 --> 00:47:41,310  
And they were very  
graphic, very distinct.

895  
00:47:41,310 --> 00:47:45,550  
I showed people playing  
soccer, people in their huts,

896  
00:47:45,550 --> 00:47:51,130  
and people in the kitchen  
and in the mess halls,

897  
00:47:51,130 --> 00:47:55,720  
and officers coming and  
inspecting us and counting us.

898  
00:47:55,720 --> 00:47:59,800  
And there was an enormous,  
a wealth of material.

899  
00:47:59,800 --> 00:48:03,220  
And those were the drawings,  
mainly, that I sold.

900  
00:48:03,220 --> 00:48:07,120

And one man in  
particular, who came

901  
00:48:07,120 --> 00:48:10,150  
from a wealthy German family  
and apparently managed

902  
00:48:10,150 --> 00:48:13,870  
to transfer quite large  
amounts to Australia--

903  
00:48:13,870 --> 00:48:15,230  
there was no problem with that.

904  
00:48:15,230 --> 00:48:17,950  
I mean he'd had it  
in a London bank,

905  
00:48:17,950 --> 00:48:19,540  
and eventually it  
was transferred,

906  
00:48:19,540 --> 00:48:21,130  
and he opened a bank account.

907  
00:48:21,130 --> 00:48:24,130  
And he had a good  
amount of money there.

908  
00:48:24,130 --> 00:48:27,410  
And he became my  
permanent customer.

909  
00:48:27,410 --> 00:48:32,110  
And so I was able to buy more  
art materials, and extra food,

910  
00:48:32,110 --> 00:48:32,890  
and so on.

911  
00:48:32,890 --> 00:48:34,510  
So you developed  
a little business.

912  
00:48:34,510 --> 00:48:36,040  
I developed a little--

913  
00:48:36,040 --> 00:48:37,750  
Yes, I did indeed.

914  
00:48:37,750 --> 00:48:42,100  
And the wonderful thing was,  
of course, five years ago when

915  
00:48:42,100 --> 00:48:46,600  
we met in Australia, this  
man had died rather young,

916  
00:48:46,600 --> 00:48:49,420  
but he had two sons.

917  
00:48:49,420 --> 00:48:54,070  
He himself had formed a rather  
large export-import business,

918  
00:48:54,070 --> 00:48:57,040  
well-known, and his two  
sons had taken over.

919  
00:48:57,040 --> 00:49:00,070  
And his two sons had also  
taken over my drawings,

920  
00:49:00,070 --> 00:49:01,480  
which they treasured.

921  
00:49:01,480 --> 00:49:03,050  
And they kept them safe.

922  
00:49:03,050 --> 00:49:08,860  
And one of his sons  
offered me as a present one

923  
00:49:08,860 --> 00:49:12,670  
of my own drawings, which



I then brought back here.

924

00:49:12,670 --> 00:49:17,170

But, yes, I developed a little  
business, and it kept me busy.

925

00:49:17,170 --> 00:49:21,190

So I didn't suffer from  
too much depression.

926

00:49:21,190 --> 00:49:23,170

But you did still  
have some depression?

927

00:49:23,170 --> 00:49:24,010

Oh god, yes.

928

00:49:24,010 --> 00:49:27,310

I mean, it was--  
yes, a young person.

929

00:49:27,310 --> 00:49:31,420

I found-- in fact,  
Cyril Pearl, the author

930

00:49:31,420 --> 00:49:37,450

of that book, The Dunera  
Scandal, found two views,

931

00:49:37,450 --> 00:49:42,230

and they were rather  
different views.

932

00:49:42,230 --> 00:49:46,330

Some people told him that they  
were rather sorry for the older

933

00:49:46,330 --> 00:49:50,200

people, people who were  
close to between 50 and 60

934

00:49:50,200 --> 00:49:52,780

because it was harder for them.

935  
00:49:52,780 --> 00:49:57,535  
I found that it was much  
harder for us young ones.

936  
00:49:57,535 --> 00:50:01,540

937  
00:50:01,540 --> 00:50:06,220  
Obviously, we suffered from  
many things-- a lack of freedom,

938  
00:50:06,220 --> 00:50:11,740  
the lack of sex, the fact that  
we were losing valuable time,

939  
00:50:11,740 --> 00:50:17,620  
and that we really felt that we  
should be fighting the Nazis.

940  
00:50:17,620 --> 00:50:21,070  
And so there were  
different views about this.

941  
00:50:21,070 --> 00:50:23,380  
But it was  
depressing, of course.

942  
00:50:23,380 --> 00:50:24,940  
We knew there was  
a war going on.

943  
00:50:24,940 --> 00:50:25,690  
We could not help.

944  
00:50:25,690 --> 00:50:30,220  
We couldn't do anything,  
and the injustice of it,

945  
00:50:30,220 --> 00:50:35,740  
and the fact that we should be  
utilized, which, eventually, we

946

00:50:35,740 --> 00:50:37,420  
were, of course.

947

00:50:37,420 --> 00:50:40,420  
We were released, bit by bit.

948

00:50:40,420 --> 00:50:43,000  
We were allowed to join  
the British forces,

949

00:50:43,000 --> 00:50:46,060  
if we decided to go  
back, which I didn't.

950

00:50:46,060 --> 00:50:49,690  
And as it turned out,  
two transports were sunk,

951

00:50:49,690 --> 00:50:53,800  
and the people perished  
on their way back.

952

00:50:53,800 --> 00:50:56,770  
Before we get to  
that time, did you

953

00:50:56,770 --> 00:50:59,980  
have any contact with your  
family while you were interned?

954

00:50:59,980 --> 00:51:02,860  
Well, yes, while I  
was interned, yes.

955

00:51:02,860 --> 00:51:05,140  
Immediately, no.

956

00:51:05,140 --> 00:51:10,210  
We were in our first  
internment camps

957

00:51:10,210 --> 00:51:14,260

in Britain at the racecourse  
on the Isle of Man.

958  
00:51:14,260 --> 00:51:20,950  
I believe we were given the  
standard prisoner-of-war

959  
00:51:20,950 --> 00:51:28,720  
letters, which were an  
ingeniously prepared paper,

960  
00:51:28,720 --> 00:51:32,500  
where allegedly you couldn't  
write in invisible ink,

961  
00:51:32,500 --> 00:51:34,150  
and it was a kind of--

962  
00:51:34,150 --> 00:51:40,210  
I believe it had a  
certain layer of something

963  
00:51:40,210 --> 00:51:43,630  
on it, which prevented you  
from writing in invisible ink.

964  
00:51:43,630 --> 00:51:46,170  
And we were given  
the opportunity

965  
00:51:46,170 --> 00:51:47,520  
to write short messages.

966  
00:51:47,520 --> 00:51:51,720  
And, eventually, my  
parents heard about me.

967  
00:51:51,720 --> 00:51:54,510  
But then, of course,  
came this long pause

968  
00:51:54,510 --> 00:51:56,430  
when we were on board ship.

969

00:51:56,430 --> 00:52:00,870  
And I can't remember what they  
knew, as I found out later,

970

00:52:00,870 --> 00:52:02,760  
when I joined them.

971

00:52:02,760 --> 00:52:05,280  
They knew that we  
were on board a ship,

972

00:52:05,280 --> 00:52:07,230  
but they didn't  
know any details.

973

00:52:07,230 --> 00:52:09,570  
And eventually in  
Australia then, of course,

974

00:52:09,570 --> 00:52:12,660  
we were able to write to them  
and write proper letters.

975

00:52:12,660 --> 00:52:13,680  
But it took a long time.

976

00:52:13,680 --> 00:52:15,510  
And they were terribly,  
terribly worried,

977

00:52:15,510 --> 00:52:18,480  
like hundreds of  
others too, of course--

978

00:52:18,480 --> 00:52:22,500  
relatives of people who were  
put on board ship and sent away.

979

00:52:22,500 --> 00:52:25,260  
Was that hard on you, to  
hear from your parents

980

00:52:25,260 --> 00:52:26,430

how worried they were?

981

00:52:26,430 --> 00:52:28,260

No.

982

00:52:28,260 --> 00:52:30,060

Quite frankly, I was very--

983

00:52:30,060 --> 00:52:33,760

984

00:52:33,760 --> 00:52:35,460

I don't know what

it was, but I--

985

00:52:35,460 --> 00:52:40,325

986

00:52:40,325 --> 00:52:43,030

While I was in Vienna,

while I was a boy,

987

00:52:43,030 --> 00:52:45,370

I was very dependent.

988

00:52:45,370 --> 00:52:47,290

But I wanted to be independent.

989

00:52:47,290 --> 00:52:54,100

And in a way, I chafed

under the sort of the way

990

00:52:54,100 --> 00:52:56,260

I was kept at home.

991

00:52:56,260 --> 00:52:59,080

It wasn't strict, but

it was also not free.

992

00:52:59,080 --> 00:53:02,200

And I wanted freedom.

993

00:53:02,200 --> 00:53:04,240

It was a strange thing.

994

00:53:04,240 --> 00:53:07,090

And it was a great  
relief when I left home.

995

00:53:07,090 --> 00:53:09,610

And that relief really lasted.

996

00:53:09,610 --> 00:53:12,520

997

00:53:12,520 --> 00:53:13,900

I wanted to do things.

998

00:53:13,900 --> 00:53:15,760

I was adventurous.

999

00:53:15,760 --> 00:53:17,470

And it was a kind of adventure.

1000

00:53:17,470 --> 00:53:21,050

1001

00:53:21,050 --> 00:53:23,120

I was glad my parents  
were out of Vienna

1002

00:53:23,120 --> 00:53:25,770

because a lot of  
relatives didn't get out.

1003

00:53:25,770 --> 00:53:27,170

And so I knew they were fine.

1004

00:53:27,170 --> 00:53:30,260

1005

00:53:30,260 --> 00:53:33,660  
They were doing their own thing.

1006  
00:53:33,660 --> 00:53:35,420  
But I did not--

1007  
00:53:35,420 --> 00:53:38,660  
no, it didn't worry me  
that they worried about me.

1008  
00:53:38,660 --> 00:53:40,320  
That didn't worry me.

1009  
00:53:40,320 --> 00:53:42,440  
I was on a great adventure.

1010  
00:53:42,440 --> 00:53:43,432  
That's all.

1011  
00:53:43,432 --> 00:53:45,140  
And I was able to do  
what I wanted to do.

1012  
00:53:45,140 --> 00:53:46,182  
And you were on your own.

1013  
00:53:46,182 --> 00:53:47,220  
I was on my own.

1014  
00:53:47,220 --> 00:53:48,240  
It was very important.

1015  
00:53:48,240 --> 00:53:52,280  
And I was able to do  
my drawing, my art.

1016  
00:53:52,280 --> 00:53:54,650  
Of course, I had  
done it in Vienna.

1017  
00:53:54,650 --> 00:53:58,610  
I was sort of doing cartoons



in school and all that.

1018  
00:53:58,610 --> 00:54:01,880  
But now, I knew it  
was my profession,

1019  
00:54:01,880 --> 00:54:03,190  
and it would be my profession.

1020  
00:54:03,190 --> 00:54:04,273  
When did you realize that?

1021  
00:54:04,273 --> 00:54:05,973  
That's what I was going to do.

1022  
00:54:05,973 --> 00:54:07,265  
That it would be my profession?

1023  
00:54:07,265 --> 00:54:08,240  
Yes.

1024  
00:54:08,240 --> 00:54:10,010  
I couldn't think  
of anything else.

1025  
00:54:10,010 --> 00:54:11,390  
I mean, when did you start?

1026  
00:54:11,390 --> 00:54:13,180  
Or was it always  
true that you knew

1027  
00:54:13,180 --> 00:54:14,347  
it would be your profession?

1028  
00:54:14,347 --> 00:54:15,050  
Always, always.

1029  
00:54:15,050 --> 00:54:17,150  
I mean, I was under--

1030

00:54:17,150 --> 00:54:22,290  
I felt, yeah, it was all right  
to be a whatever-- lawyer,

1031  
00:54:22,290 --> 00:54:24,770  
engineer, or doctor--

1032  
00:54:24,770 --> 00:54:26,420  
but it wasn't me.

1033  
00:54:26,420 --> 00:54:28,460  
I wanted to be an artist.

1034  
00:54:28,460 --> 00:54:29,705  
And it's very strange.

1035  
00:54:29,705 --> 00:54:32,210  
Or a cartoonist,  
as I thought then.

1036  
00:54:32,210 --> 00:54:34,580  
Later on, I went to art  
school, and I got away

1037  
00:54:34,580 --> 00:54:37,100  
from cartooning somewhat.

1038  
00:54:37,100 --> 00:54:39,200  
So in the camp,  
you were an artist?

1039  
00:54:39,200 --> 00:54:41,060  
In the camp, I was an artist.

1040  
00:54:41,060 --> 00:54:46,430  
And I did, I believe, take  
some classes in certain things.

1041  
00:54:46,430 --> 00:54:48,950  
But that's what I was doing.

1042  
00:54:48,950 --> 00:54:53,120

And later on, of course,  
when I was in the army,

1043  
00:54:53,120 --> 00:54:56,780  
very soon after I  
joined up, I was

1044  
00:54:56,780 --> 00:54:59,900  
able to publish some cartoons  
in the local newspaper.

1045  
00:54:59,900 --> 00:55:01,580  
And that was it.

1046  
00:55:01,580 --> 00:55:03,780  
That's what I  
always wanted to do.

1047  
00:55:03,780 --> 00:55:06,080  
So I mean, by that  
time, I was hooked.

1048  
00:55:06,080 --> 00:55:09,920  
And when I got out of the army,  
I wanted to be a cartoonist.

1049  
00:55:09,920 --> 00:55:13,260  
And, fortunately, people said,  
look, you have things to learn.

1050  
00:55:13,260 --> 00:55:14,780  
I said, me learn, no.

1051  
00:55:14,780 --> 00:55:15,890  
I know it all.

1052  
00:55:15,890 --> 00:55:20,690  
Well, as it turned out,  
good sense prevailed,

1053  
00:55:20,690 --> 00:55:22,140  
and I went to art school.

1054

00:55:22,140 --> 00:55:25,280

And I realized that  
I knew very little.

1055

00:55:25,280 --> 00:55:28,640

So my three years of art  
school were a great blessing.

1056

00:55:28,640 --> 00:55:35,510

Let's go back to when  
you got out of the camp,

1057

00:55:35,510 --> 00:55:37,550

how that came about.

1058

00:55:37,550 --> 00:55:45,830

Well, first, the  
people who volunteered

1059

00:55:45,830 --> 00:55:51,290

for the British army, which  
was strictly auxiliary work--

1060

00:55:51,290 --> 00:55:54,440

Pioneer Corps, it was called--

1061

00:55:54,440 --> 00:55:58,070

they knew that they would  
not be, at least immediately,

1062

00:55:58,070 --> 00:56:01,760

allowed to join  
the regular forces.

1063

00:56:01,760 --> 00:56:05,180

I mean, we were still  
under a shadow, let's say.

1064

00:56:05,180 --> 00:56:08,570

But the British had enough  
sense to realize that this

1065

00:56:08,570 --> 00:56:11,180  
was a waste of good manpower.

1066  
00:56:11,180 --> 00:56:14,520  
It was a waste of talent.

1067  
00:56:14,520 --> 00:56:15,770  
It was an injustice.

1068  
00:56:15,770 --> 00:56:18,650  
We sent those people away.

1069  
00:56:18,650 --> 00:56:21,690  
We should have known better.

1070  
00:56:21,690 --> 00:56:24,590  
So anyway, those people who  
wanted to join the forces,

1071  
00:56:24,590 --> 00:56:28,340  
and who had  
relatives in Britain,

1072  
00:56:28,340 --> 00:56:29,810  
volunteered to go back.

1073  
00:56:29,810 --> 00:56:34,010  
And several transports  
went back to Britain.

1074  
00:56:34,010 --> 00:56:37,340  
I decided that this was not for  
me because it was dangerous,

1075  
00:56:37,340 --> 00:56:38,480  
and I had nobody there.

1076  
00:56:38,480 --> 00:56:41,480  
And I had no particular desire  
to go back to Britain when

1077  
00:56:41,480 --> 00:56:45,290

I was in Australia, and I would  
much rather stay in Australia.

1078  
00:56:45,290 --> 00:56:46,670  
That was exciting.

1079  
00:56:46,670 --> 00:56:50,480  
So we stayed.

1080  
00:56:50,480 --> 00:56:52,520  
We didn't go back.

1081  
00:56:52,520 --> 00:56:55,670  
And then, of course, finally,  
the Australian government

1082  
00:56:55,670 --> 00:56:59,720  
said, yes, all  
right, you can join

1083  
00:56:59,720 --> 00:57:02,030  
the Australian forces,  
in the same capacity,

1084  
00:57:02,030 --> 00:57:04,250  
auxiliary troops, et cetera.

1085  
00:57:04,250 --> 00:57:06,500  
But you can join.

1086  
00:57:06,500 --> 00:57:08,150  
Do you want to volunteer?

1087  
00:57:08,150 --> 00:57:11,810  
And that's when a lot of  
us said, this is blackmail.

1088  
00:57:11,810 --> 00:57:12,920  
What's the alternative?

1089  
00:57:12,920 --> 00:57:14,930  
Stay in camp, rot?

1090  
00:57:14,930 --> 00:57:19,220  
And I was seriously  
considering not volunteering.

1091  
00:57:19,220 --> 00:57:21,170  
In fact, I said, no, I won't go.

1092  
00:57:21,170 --> 00:57:27,260  
And that is when my good  
friend Dr. Scharf, the dentist,

1093  
00:57:27,260 --> 00:57:27,890  
came in.

1094  
00:57:27,890 --> 00:57:32,250  
And I went to him, desperate,  
because by that time,

1095  
00:57:32,250 --> 00:57:33,890  
it became a very  
burning question.

1096  
00:57:33,890 --> 00:57:35,630  
Should I volunteer or not?

1097  
00:57:35,630 --> 00:57:38,960  
And I went to him, and  
I said, what do I do?

1098  
00:57:38,960 --> 00:57:39,950  
And he just laughed.

1099  
00:57:39,950 --> 00:57:42,950  
He said, you damn fool.

1100  
00:57:42,950 --> 00:57:44,780  
What's your worry, he said.

1101  
00:57:44,780 --> 00:57:48,410  
If I were your age and  
in good health, I mean,

1102  
00:57:48,410 --> 00:57:49,880  
I wouldn't consider it twice.

1103  
00:57:49,880 --> 00:57:51,380  
You want to rot in camp?

1104  
00:57:51,380 --> 00:57:52,130  
You're crazy.

1105  
00:57:52,130 --> 00:57:53,870  
Go, go for it.

1106  
00:57:53,870 --> 00:57:54,600  
And I did.

1107  
00:57:54,600 --> 00:57:56,690  
And that was really  
the decisive factor.

1108  
00:57:56,690 --> 00:57:59,120  
I don't know how long  
I would have held out.

1109  
00:57:59,120 --> 00:58:00,740  
I know of some  
youngsters who were

1110  
00:58:00,740 --> 00:58:03,800  
younger than I who held  
out throughout the war,

1111  
00:58:03,800 --> 00:58:05,180  
practically.

1112  
00:58:05,180 --> 00:58:07,850  
And eventually, they had to be  
kicked out because the camp was

1113  
00:58:07,850 --> 00:58:09,590  
being abandoned.



1114

00:58:09,590 --> 00:58:13,465

And they had to kick them out  
of there, go, go, do something.

1115

00:58:13,465 --> 00:58:15,590

They realized that these  
were not dangerous people.

1116

00:58:15,590 --> 00:58:17,660

There's no reason to  
keep them, to hold them.

1117

00:58:17,660 --> 00:58:19,990

But I was glad I went  
when I went, of course,

1118

00:58:19,990 --> 00:58:24,700

because it was at the beginning  
of the formation of our unit,

1119

00:58:24,700 --> 00:58:26,590

of our military unit.

1120

00:58:26,590 --> 00:58:28,870

And it was the thing to do.

1121

00:58:28,870 --> 00:58:32,230

And my friends all went  
and joined the army.

1122

00:58:32,230 --> 00:58:35,890

But I volunteered,  
after I had talked it

1123

00:58:35,890 --> 00:58:39,970

over and found that there was  
no reason not to volunteer.

1124

00:58:39,970 --> 00:58:41,780

Now, this was called  
the Pioneer Corps?

1125

00:58:41,780 --> 00:58:42,280  
No.

1126  
00:58:42,280 --> 00:58:43,822  
In England, it was  
the Pioneer Corps.

1127  
00:58:43,822 --> 00:58:45,940  
In Australia, it was  
called the Labor Corps.

1128  
00:58:45,940 --> 00:58:46,610  
Labor Corps.

1129  
00:58:46,610 --> 00:58:47,440  
Labor Corps.

1130  
00:58:47,440 --> 00:58:50,680  
And this was  
auxiliary to the army?

1131  
00:58:50,680 --> 00:58:52,270  
No weapons, nothing.

1132  
00:58:52,270 --> 00:58:55,540  
It was an auxiliary unit.

1133  
00:58:55,540 --> 00:58:57,400  
What would you call it here?

1134  
00:58:57,400 --> 00:58:59,530  
Well, you don't have that  
here, because everybody

1135  
00:58:59,530 --> 00:59:02,530  
in the US Army is armed.

1136  
00:59:02,530 --> 00:59:03,370  
We weren't armed.

1137  
00:59:03,370 --> 00:59:05,440  
We weren't given any arms.

1138  
00:59:05,440 --> 00:59:09,000  
And we were strictly  
a labor unit.

1139  
00:59:09,000 --> 00:59:14,470  
They had three-- we were  
part of a battalion.

1140  
00:59:14,470 --> 00:59:18,340  
The labor company, our company,  
was strictly ex-internees--

1141  
00:59:18,340 --> 00:59:20,710  
German and Jewish refugees.

1142  
00:59:20,710 --> 00:59:27,670  
Another one was composed of  
Greeks, who apparently had not

1143  
00:59:27,670 --> 00:59:29,890  
been naturalized and--

1144  
00:59:29,890 --> 00:59:30,940  
mostly Greeks.

1145  
00:59:30,940 --> 00:59:33,640  
And then there was a third  
one, I don't remember.

1146  
00:59:33,640 --> 00:59:38,950  
But we formed a labor  
battalion, three companies.

1147  
00:59:38,950 --> 00:59:42,575  
And each company had  
500 people, I think.

1148  
00:59:42,575 --> 00:59:44,200  
And then there were  
platoons and so on.

1149

00:59:44,200 --> 00:59:46,090  
We were a proper military unit.

1150  
00:59:46,090 --> 00:59:48,820  
And it was an  
interesting unit because

1151  
00:59:48,820 --> 00:59:51,220  
the Australian authorities--

1152  
00:59:51,220 --> 00:59:54,640  
the Southern Command, to  
be specific, in Melbourne--

1153  
00:59:54,640 --> 00:59:56,570  
still were very  
suspicious of us.

1154  
00:59:56,570 --> 00:59:59,050  
That's why they didn't  
give us any weapons.

1155  
00:59:59,050 --> 01:00:01,120  
In fact, we were sent  
down to the docks

1156  
01:00:01,120 --> 01:00:03,760  
to load and unload ammunition.

1157  
01:00:03,760 --> 01:00:06,730  
And that was stopped very  
soon because it was also

1158  
01:00:06,730 --> 01:00:09,790  
considered too  
dangerous, too risky,

1159  
01:00:09,790 --> 01:00:12,070  
to let these people  
handle ammunitions.

1160  
01:00:12,070 --> 01:00:16,120  
But the funny thing was that

they put in charge of us

1161  
01:00:16,120 --> 01:00:19,360  
a captain of the  
Australian army, who

1162  
01:00:19,360 --> 01:00:24,520  
was a veteran of the first  
war, a magnificent man, who was

1163  
01:00:24,520 --> 01:00:27,280  
half-Maori New Zealand native.

1164  
01:00:27,280 --> 01:00:31,360  
And he looked it,  
and he acted it.

1165  
01:00:31,360 --> 01:00:38,080  
He was 60 or so, and beautifully  
built, and beautiful looking,

1166  
01:00:38,080 --> 01:00:41,500  
and with an English diction  
that you wouldn't believe.

1167  
01:00:41,500 --> 01:00:43,870  
It was like the stage.

1168  
01:00:43,870 --> 01:00:48,460  
And he referred to us as, we  
Jews, which was hilarious.

1169  
01:00:48,460 --> 01:00:51,160  
The man was half-Maori  
and half-English.

1170  
01:00:51,160 --> 01:00:53,350  
But he took such  
interest in us, and he

1171  
01:00:53,350 --> 01:00:56,350  
was so sympathetic to us.

1172

01:00:56,350 --> 01:00:59,920

And he considered himself  
a little Napoleon.

1173

01:00:59,920 --> 01:01:04,090

He knew the personal  
history of as many people

1174

01:01:04,090 --> 01:01:06,430

as he could accommodate  
in his memory.

1175

01:01:06,430 --> 01:01:07,630

And he picked me out.

1176

01:01:07,630 --> 01:01:11,830

And on one occasion, we were  
working in some filthy place,

1177

01:01:11,830 --> 01:01:14,560

and he came down and  
inspected the troops.

1178

01:01:14,560 --> 01:01:17,530

And he said,  
Frederic, come here--

1179

01:01:17,530 --> 01:01:21,010

he called us by our first name,  
not Private Schonbach, no.

1180

01:01:21,010 --> 01:01:25,480

He said, how are your  
folks in South America?

1181

01:01:25,480 --> 01:01:26,710

This kind of thing.

1182

01:01:26,710 --> 01:01:28,210

I couldn't believe it.

1183

01:01:28,210 --> 01:01:29,800

And that's the kind  
of person he was.

1184  
01:01:29,800 --> 01:01:32,200  
And as I said, he  
said, we Jews have

1185  
01:01:32,200 --> 01:01:33,760  
to do this, that, and the other.

1186  
01:01:33,760 --> 01:01:37,390  
And he tried and succeeded  
in making a very good unit

1187  
01:01:37,390 --> 01:01:39,010  
of this company.

1188  
01:01:39,010 --> 01:01:43,180  
We started out like  
a bunch of nothing,

1189  
01:01:43,180 --> 01:01:45,090  
had no military  
discipline at all.

1190  
01:01:45,090 --> 01:01:47,830  
We never went through any  
kind of boot camp or anything.

1191  
01:01:47,830 --> 01:01:50,380  
The first day, we came,  
we joined the unit,

1192  
01:01:50,380 --> 01:01:51,400  
we got our uniforms.

1193  
01:01:51,400 --> 01:01:54,370  
We were sent out to do some  
loading and unloading of goods.

1194  
01:01:54,370 --> 01:01:55,870  
And that's what we  
did, essentially,

1195  
01:01:55,870 --> 01:01:59,050  
for four years, or three years.

1196  
01:01:59,050 --> 01:02:01,840  
But this man took  
it onto himself

1197  
01:02:01,840 --> 01:02:04,210  
to make a proper  
military unit out of us.

1198  
01:02:04,210 --> 01:02:08,020  
And he actually put us  
on parade and on marches

1199  
01:02:08,020 --> 01:02:10,030  
in some of the places  
where we were stationed.

1200  
01:02:10,030 --> 01:02:11,920  
It was a remarkable thing.

1201  
01:02:11,920 --> 01:02:15,580  
And how did you feel  
about being made into--

1202  
01:02:15,580 --> 01:02:17,980  
I mean, we felt very good  
because it was the next best

1203  
01:02:17,980 --> 01:02:22,480  
thing to being a part of  
the active proper forces

1204  
01:02:22,480 --> 01:02:25,180  
that were sent abroad to fight.

1205  
01:02:25,180 --> 01:02:28,150  
We were not a fighting  
unit, but we were aware.

1206



01:02:28,150 --> 01:02:31,240  
And a lot of the work we  
did was absolutely necessary

1207  
01:02:31,240 --> 01:02:38,350  
because the Australian railroad  
system was sadly deficient.

1208  
01:02:38,350 --> 01:02:43,762  
They had three railway  
gauges of different sizes.

1209  
01:02:43,762 --> 01:02:45,220  
They had bought  
their rolling stock

1210  
01:02:45,220 --> 01:02:48,970  
from different European nations  
after the First World War,

1211  
01:02:48,970 --> 01:02:49,540  
I think.

1212  
01:02:49,540 --> 01:02:52,480  
And there was a break of gauge  
at the border of New South

1213  
01:02:52,480 --> 01:02:53,830  
Wales and Victoria.

1214  
01:02:53,830 --> 01:02:57,640  
And the only thing you  
could ship goods up North

1215  
01:02:57,640 --> 01:02:59,728  
to help the troops was

1216  
01:02:59,728 --> 01:03:00,228